

**NBC "MEET THE PRESS" HOST: TOM BROKAW; GUESTS: GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER (R-CA); GOVERNOR DAVE FREUDENTHAL (D-WY); GOVERNOR BILL RITTER (D-CO); MR. CHUCK TODD**

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## Body

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NBC "**MEET THE PRESS**" HOST: TOM BROKAW GUESTS: **GOVERNOR** ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER (R-CA); **GOVERNOR** DAVE FREUDENTHAL (D-WY); **GOVERNOR** BILL **RITTER** (D-CO); MR. CHUCK TODD TIME: 9:00 A.M. EDT DATE: SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2008

MR. BROKAW: Our issues this Sunday -- **Obama** versus McCain -- and this year, the American **West** will be a crucial battleground.

SEN. BARACK **OBAMA** (D-IL): (From videotape.) So I think we will win the **West**.

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-AZ): (From videotape.) The **West** will make the difference as to whether I am the next President of the United States or not.

MR. BROKAW: But how will they navigate the key issues of that region, the environment, **energy**, social values, gun ownership, and the economy? With us, two **Western** Democratic **governors**, Dave Freudenthal of Wyoming and Bill **Ritter** of Colorado. And then California's Republican **Governor** Arnold Schwarzenegger; plus the insights and analysis on the changing political landscape of the **Western** battleground from NBC's political director, Chuck Todd.

But, first, we are in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, which is the site of this week's **Western Governors'** Association annual meeting, and we're joined by two Democratic **governors**, Bill **Ritter** of Colorado and Dave Freudenthal of Wyoming, who is the chair of the **Western Governors'** Association.

We will also hear from a well-known Republican, **Governor** Arnold Schwarzenegger of California later here on "**Meet the Press**".

GOV. **RITTER**: Thank you, Tom.

MR. BROKAW: Gentlemen, welcome to both of you. The **West** is going to be the big political battleground this time. We are all looking at the same numbers -- Colorado, Nevada, and New Mexico all went Republican last time, 19 electoral votes. If **Obama** can win those states, and win the same states that John Kerry did, he can be elected President of the United States.

In Colorado, where he is up by about 5 points now, Senator **Obama** is known primarily as the guy who has been running for captain of the home team, he is in the Democratic primaries, but the Republicans are beginning to identify him as a big-city liberal Democrat. Is that going to change his chances in Colorado, **Governor**?

GOV. **RITTER**: Oh, I think that Senator **Obama** has a great opportunity to win in Colorado. The people of Colorado are independent thinkers, they are future-looking, and they are also optimistic, and I think he's captured

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that language. In his campaign, the things that he's talked about are very much things that resonate with the people of the West and certainly the people in Colorado.

MR. BROKAW: If he chooses Hillary Clinton as his running mate, will that help or hurt his chances?

GOV. RITTER: That's a good question. I don't know, really, if it will help or hurt. What I can tell you is if you think about the play in the West, independent voters, independent registered, who are not registered Democrat or Republican, they are really where the play will be, and the language that he speaks is very much like the language the governors have spoken who have won seats out here in the West.

MR. BROKAW: Governor Freudenthal, in Wyoming, obviously, Republicans have been winning by huge margins the last several election cycles. In December, you were saying you didn't like any of the people in either party, and you were thinking about not even going to the Democratic convention. But then in April you endorsed Senator Obama, but you also said you were favorably inclined to John McCain. What changed all that?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: Well, I think the transition that's occurred is that John McCain is not the John McCain of 2000 and 2002. In that time, his appeal in this region was pretty real because very independent. At this stage, he's really molded into kind of a Bush- Cheney lookalike, and that is not an attractive thing to see continued in this country.

MR. BROKAW: There have been some scurrilous things about Barack Obama out on the blogosphere. When you announced your endorsement, did you hear any of that in Wyoming or did you hear from bloggers who are not happy with him either as a result of his political positions -- they have attacked his name and even raised questions about his faith?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: You know, not much of it originates in Wyoming. Most of what I got was from outside the state. Most people in Wyoming, they're sort of -- what they really want to know is who is this guy? And it's not so much a -- the race issue as it is just getting introduced to him.

MR. BROKAW: Is there any chance that Senator Obama can carry Wyoming in the fall against McCain?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: I wouldn't bet the ranch on it. I mean, this state is 67 percent Republican. The last Democrat we voted for was Lyndon Johnson. I think Obama will do much better than expected because there is a real independent attitude and a pretty candid view in terms of how we assess people, and Obama has struck a pretty good chord here.

MR. BROKAW: Colorado has a very significant Hispanic vote. Senator Obama did not do well with Hispanics during the primaries. Hillary Clinton was able to win most of those, and Senator McCain next week is going to Mexico thinking that will appeal to Hispanic voters come the fall. Is that going to be an issue for Senator Obama?

GOV. RITTER: Again, I think when the campaign is really Obama and McCain, and Hispanic voters are paying attention to what the two different candidates are saying about their issues and how they view the future, Obama wins, I think, among Hispanics, hands down, and he does that because he has a language about education that really is -- again, it's about optimism, but it's also about reform in the system, and I think Hispanic voters pay attention to that. They care that the job creation happens across all kinds of lines, socioeconomic lines, and I think they're going to be excited about Barack Obama in a far bigger way once the spotlight is on him and on his issues that really will matter to them.

MR. BROKAW: Energy is obviously a very important issue not only in Wyoming but throughout the American West. Senator McCain has said that we should drill offshore to get oil now to deal with \$4 gasoline. He has also talked about 45 new nuclear plants, and there will be additional pressure to drill in environmentally sensitive areas in the American West. You were opposed to that four years ago, but with the reality of gasoline prices where they are, would you change your mind on all of that?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: No, I wouldn't.

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I think -- and that's part of the problem with McCain, it's an extension of the short-sighted, one-legged stool approach to energy that this administration has had. Their answer to everything is drill for oil and gas. They've ignored coal, they've ignored nuclear, they've ignored wind, and just a couple of days ago they decided that they're going to suspend all activity on solar on public lands. And I think, if you look at it, even by McCain's own admission, we're not going to change the price of gasoline by going into these sensitive areas. I think you need a -- and it's one thing that appeals about Obama -- if you read his material and listen to him, he actually has an understanding that there is a relationship between a diverse energy package and a sound environmental policy, which you don't see, and I think this whole dance about -- it's sort of the same song, second verse, and but, unfortunately, it's the same as the first.

MR. BROKAW: You're sitting on a mountain of coal here in Wyoming. Montana is doing the same thing. Jim Hansen, who is one of the leading climate scientists in the world working for NASA said just last week we have to have a moratorium on new coal-driven power plants in the country. Isn't that a wise decision given what global climate change is doing to this country?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: Yeah, I mean, the problem with that is it assumes that somehow if you do it in the United States, it's going to happen worldwide. But, more importantly, when people do that, they need to take a look at what that drives. What that drives is a shift to natural gas, and a lot of the natural gas that's produced, including some of it in Wyoming, has higher CO2 emissions than anybody envisions. There are places in Wyoming where you do processed gas that for every unit of natural gas that's produced, you produce and emit two units of CO2 into the air.

So I think the need is to have a more balanced approach that has actually thought about where we need to be 20 years from now not where we need to be in the November election.

MR. BROKAW: Do you think nuclear power is in our future?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: Absolutely. I think that ultimately there is a such a growth both in the United States and worldwide in terms of demand for energy, we're going to have to have greater emphasis on the energy efficiency, and all of the other sources, including the renewables, because to say, like, Wyoming is known for fossil fuel, but our greatest growth in energy production right now is in wind energy. We're one of those states that if they can figure out transmission, which we're working on and it's in Obama's --

MR. BROKAW: But that's, at best, only a partial answer, isn't it?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: It is only a partial answer, which is why if this country doesn't come to grips with the fact you've got to have a diverse energy portfolio, and one of those elements is energy conservation, we're going to stumble, and we're going to stumble hard. People are going to be stunned, I think, by the price increases in their utility bills over the summer in the Southwest as they deal with air conditioning and in this part of the country, currently -- the current filings for utility rate increases in Wyoming are about 70 percent increase in the fall.

MR. BROKAW: Governor Ritter, would you take a nuclear power plant in Colorado?

GOV. RITTER: Well, I think that Governor Freudenthal is right. It's going to be part of our future as a country. It already provides about 20 percent of the energy to this country, but I think the thing that we both are saying is we have to have a national energy policy, and it has to be a combination of how we produce traditional resources and how we do it in a clean way. We should load up on research and development for clean coal, and, quite frankly, we have not done that. But, as well, have renewable portfolio standards that make a difference that get up to 20 percent or 25 percent and then, in addition to that, just ask how we put them on the grid and finally look at the place, the nuclear place -- not finally -- then do conservation and efficiency as a part of that as well, an incentivize conservation and efficiency. And you do all of that, you get to the place where you have a national policy, and you really begin to address greenhouse gases.

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MR. BROKAW: You're going to be the host of the Democratic National Convention in Denver this summer. It's only a guess, but I'll bet there are going to be some activists there who are going to say, just as Jim Hansen did last week, "We can't have any new coal- driven power plants in this country." Are you going to pick up the phone and call your friend, Governor Freudenthal, and say, "Sorry about that?"

GOV. RITTER: Well, what I think we'll do is talk to them about all the things we were doing. That convention is going to be the greenest convention since the invention of electricity. Woody biomass was used, you know, back in the day.

But since the invention of electricity, this will be the greenest convention, and we're making every effort to do that because we think, number one, it's the right thing to do, but we also believe we can showcase the kinds of ways that you can really run green electricity into a major site like the convention, use recyclables, use reusable material - all sorts of ways of us thinking about it because, Tom, at the end of the day, I believe that my kids will consume energy differently than we do today, but as a country, we will produce it differently and who better than a national political party to say, "These are the ways that we can do it as a country."

MR. BROKAW: As I don't have to tell the two of you, last week the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the District of Columbia ban on handgun ownership was unconstitutional. Senator Obama had this to say about it, "I have always believed that the Second Amendment protects the right of individuals to bear arms, but I also identify with the need for those communities that are ravaged by crime to do something for their children. It gives local communities now much-needed guidance for handguns."

Are we at a stage in this country where we're going to have to have one set of laws for one region and another set of laws for the inner city and the urban areas when it comes to gun ownership?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: I don't know that we have to, but I think that's where you end up, and is that -- one of the things I asked Obama when he was out here before I made my decision was on this question about his perception of that right. But I think you are going to end up with the recognition that the question on guns is more an urban/rural split than it is a political split in terms of people's attitudes and how they want it handled.

MR. BROKAW: Governor Ritter?

GOV. RITTER: You know, on that question, the Supreme Court said we're not doing anything to strike down provisions that prohibit felons from carrying guns, people with mental illnesses, there are certain restrictions you can still put in place, and I think that's an important distinction. Both of us, actually, are former prosecutors. He was a federal prosecutor, I was a district attorney at Denver, and it's really important that communities have some ability beyond just everybody being able to carry a gun; some ability to restrict to carry -- that restrict carrying concealed, those kinds of things, because they deal with whole different problems, and I just think that the Supreme Court looked at Washington, D.C. and said, "The ban goes too far, but we're not saying that there aren't reasonable restrictions that communities could put in place."

MR. BROKAW: Governor Ritter, you are a practicing Catholic, you are anti-abortion. The abortion debate will come up at the Democratic convention as well. Do you expect that there will be a plank that will be emphasizing pro-choice for the Democratic Party?

GOV. RITTER: You know, it's interesting. In Colorado, when I ran in 2006, I actually ran without a primary, and it tells you a little bit about the West and how I think the Democratic Party in the West has been able to say that that's not going to be a litmus test for candidates.

I suspect it will be a plank in the platform, and it has been a plank in the platform for a very long time, but that doesn't mean that, as a party, that we don't very much embrace people who might have different views, and I'm a great example of that.

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MR. BROKAW: Governor Freudenthal, Wyoming has gone to war. National Guard units and others who have volunteered for duty in Iraq and in Afghanistan -- where is the war now as an issue as we go into the presidential election in 2008?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: I think it remains an issue. I mean, I've been to every funeral, went to one just this week. But I think it has fallen down in terms of people's concerns. Right now it's the economy, it's energy prices, it's what are they doing about health insurance. The war is still very much on people's mind, and there is clearly a support for the soldiers, it's very strong in this state. The question is about sort of the tactic and the strategy for the war. I mean, people are all the way across the board on it, one way or the other, but I don't think it's going to be -- frankly, I don't think it's going to be determinative about how people vote come November, because I don't think it's going to be the priority issue for them.

MR. BROKAW: You have endorsed Senator Obama.

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: Yes.

MR. BROKAW: Do you also endorse his idea that we've got to start getting out of Iraq as quickly as possible?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: Probably not. I mean, I think, I think, from my point of view, that is a circumstance that probably has a life of its own. Both candidates, I think, are, as they say in the West, kind of "talking through their hat," about what they may be able to do if there are certain realities. The touchstone that they are all using on the end is they're going to take the advice from the commanders on the ground, and I expect that will determine policy. What you have from the two of them is a predisposition about how they want to go, but then I think the thing that always happens, and I think it's the difference between the West and the East is that here, I mean, I endorsed Obama, but I'm not taking him off my income tax as a dependent, you know, I'm proud to have endorsed him. I believe he'd be a great president for this country, but just as Bill points out, there are things that -- people believe that somehow because you're in a party that you believe everything the party does. The truth is, I decided how I'm going to register. I joined the Democratic Party, they didn't pick me, and I think there's in independence here that underlies the way that these states end up being in play that they might not be in other parts of the country.

MR. BROKAW: Governor Ritter, in Colorado, where is the war in Iraq as an issue of primary concern?

GOV. RITTER: The same as Governor Freudenthal described it. The economy is the number-one issue. It remains the second issue, the second-largest issue, but it's quite a ways under in terms of just the public opinion surveys. I think the people -- Colorado has a great military presence, and so obviously we do all we can to support our soldiers.

I went to Iraq and Afghanistan because -- in December. We had the highest number of National Guard troops deployed that anyone can remember in the history of the state, so I went there and visited with our troops in both places, and it's going to be very important, I think, to the voters, but I think the economy is what both of these candidates are going to have to deal with, going forward.

MR. BROKAW: Your state also has a substantial concentration of evangelical voters, especially in the Colorado Springs area. Values always come up during a presidential debate. Is Senator Obama going to be able to win the evangelicals or will they stay on the Republican side?

GOV. RITTER: We've seen some movement among evangelicals that relate to what I would call environmental concerns. And it's not that they have, you know, joined the Green Party, but it's that they really view the earth as a sacred trust. And, really, as a created entity, and that as a created entity, we should really respect it and that we should view it as sacred, and we should treat it as stewards. That has actually, I think, caused them to think differently than voting just a straight-line Republican ticket. There are moral conservatives that will absolutely be with John McCain and will not be with Obama, but there has been some other play happening that really has to do with the things that are happening in the West around public lands and around land use.

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MR. BROKAW: What would happen in Colorado if all the illegal immigrants in the state, the so-called "undocumented" workers were forced to go back to Mexico?

GOV. **RITTER**: We passed some serious reforms in 2006, and it's had its impact, it's had its impact on farms and ranches and hotels and the service industry, and some of it is not because illegals aren't there but because legal immigrants viewed it as becoming a less friendly place.

So it is -- we rely on foreign-born workers in the construction industry, the service industries, and the agricultural industry, and it really does hamper our ability to get foreign-born workers in if we don't have, really, a sensible immigration policy, which I think the country currently lacks.

MR. BROKAW: One of the issues that the governors here are looking at, the so-called "wildlife corridors," the freedom to roam. Global climate change is having an effect on the wildlife in this country and how they move around. Are you able to get regional cooperation on that issue? It's always a tough issue, I think, in the American West.

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: It is. I actually think, for the first time, we actually have got the states talking to each other. What we don't have is a decent federal partner, and that's the problem for us, is that the Feds own so much of the -- the federal government controls so much of the land in this region that for the states to make policy without a federal partner has been incredibly difficult. And one of the things you hope for in a new administration is we start talking about it, because people just kind of take wildlife for granted. They forget that they have to move, they have to migrate, they have to be able to work within an area and, unfortunately, in this region, there's quite a bit of conversation between the states, not a lot of cooperation from the federal government. I think Secretary Kempthorne tries, but he doesn't have any support from an administration because the only variable they want to maximize in all of the public lands is the production of oil and gas.

MR. BROKAW: Is that a tough sell in Colorado?

GOV. **RITTER**: It's a big issue right now for us. We are going through a whole rule-making process. We view oil and gas as a resource. We also view wildlife as a resource, and right now it is the big fight is where the swords are crossing on the rule-making, because we think that you can have both; that you can protect wildlife, but you have to have some really serious regulation in play to say, "If you're going to drill on this land, you've got to show us a plan that allows us to believe that the wildlife is going to be here in the numbers it is when you came," and, really, you find ways even to foster it.

There are some companies that have actually done that, but there are others that have not, and so, for us, it is a big fight.

MR. BROKAW: Governor Freudenthal, Vice President Cheney has a home not too far from here. He is a regular visitor to Jackson Hole, born and raised in Wyoming. In Washington, D.C., his numbers are very low, as you know, in terms of approval. A lot of his oldest friends in politics are saying, "We don't know what happened to the Dick Cheney that we used to know." What's his standing here in Wyoming?

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: I think his standing here has declined like it has elsewhere, but he is still a native son. I mean, if you look at it, Iowa is still proud of Herbert Hoover; we're going to end up being proud of Dick Cheney. Dick Cheney has a good history in this state as our congressman, and I've heard the same thing you say, even from his friends in Wyoming who say, "Now, we didn't expect Dick would turn out this way," but I think he enjoys some support here. We'll continue to, but it's not what it was.

MR. BROKAW: Western governors have an opportunity, in many ways, to show the country cooperation in a state that's always been deeply divided and very independent in this region by state lines.

Do you think you'll become a template for what the national dialog should be?

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GOV. RITTER: Well, I think there's a good chance of that, and I think the Democratic Party in the West has a way to talk about that because we reach across party lines to find answers to pretty big solutions. We're not afraid to tackle them, and we do it in an independent and sometimes bipartisan way. The governors of Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Kansas, Arizona, and New Mexico, Oklahoma, they're all Democrats, they were all preceded by Republicans because of the way, I think, we answer questions.

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: I might have a little different slant, which is that this is an incredibly bipartisan group -- the Western governors -- and it reflects that -- that -- I mean, if you take Arnold Schwarzenegger's positions relative to others, you'd argue that he's probably more liberal than most of the Democrats. But what you really have is the willingness of people to say, "Look, this is really -- policy and politics are about the art of the possible." How do you do something pragmatic as opposed to something that's just sort of for the, frankly, for the 6:00 news, no disrespect intended.

MR. BROKAW: Governor Freudenthal and Ritter, thank you very much for being with us.

GOV. RITTER: Thank you.

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: Thank you.

MR. BROKAW: And we'll have to remind everybody, that's not a set, obviously.

GOV. FREUDENTHAL: No. We'd like them all to come visit Wyoming.

MR. BROKAW: That's the Western edge of Wyoming. Coming up next -- another Western governor -- California's Arnold Schwarzenegger. We sat down earlier this week at the Reagan Library in California and talked about the presidential campaign and some of the tough issues that he's facing with his state's budget and faltering economy.

(Announcements.)

MR. BROKAW: Welcome back to the special edition of "Meet the Press" concentrating on the American West, which will be a crucial battleground in this election year, and we are joined now by the familiar figure of Governor Schwarzenegger of California here at the Reagan Library in California and, Governor, you were the guest of Tim Russert several times.

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Several times, and he always did great interviews with a lot of humor, tough questions, but we had a great time, and I really miss him, I have to say that. And he was -- I remember when I ran for governor, he called me, and he says, "If you make that, if you win, then I will take care of the rest." I said, "What are you talking about?" And he says, "I will get you to run for president. I will make sure that we change the Constitution."

Well, it never happened but, anyway, I miss him very much.

MR. BROKAW: Well, I can't make the same promise.

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Come on, Tom, you can. You have the power.

MR. BROKAW: I continue the tough questions.

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Okay.

MR. BROKAW: When you ran for governor in 2003, you ran as a fiscal conservative who would change the system; you would bring businesslike techniques. Now you are facing a \$15 billion deficit here in California; unemployment is running at about 6.8 percent; you've got the worst housing crisis since the Great Depression. If you were the CEO of a public company, the board would probably be saying, "It's time to go."

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GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Are you always this positive? I can't believe it. First of all, let me just say that we are very happy that since I have come into office that we've changed a lot of things and improved California, and got California back on its feet, and started paying off some of the debt, and started to rebuild California for the first time in four decades and fixed workers' compensation and all kinds of great things happened, and the most important thing is that I was able to bring Democrats and Republicans together.

Now, that doesn't mean that when you are doing a good job that the economic doesn't go down eventually. What goes up must come down, and I think that we see that nationwide. We see other states are struggling, the country is struggling, people are struggling, and I think we see it now all over the world. And I think the key thing is just to, again, bring everyone together and to start right away with an economic stimulus package, which, of course, is done on a national level but also each state has the responsibility to do that.

MR. BROKAW: But when you came in, Governor, you said that spending was out of control here, and your rate of increase in spending is about the same as your predecessor, Governor Gray Davis. It's running about, what, 34 percent since you took office -- upward.

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Well, Tom, as you know, you've been around long enough to know that the numbers are misleading because we have paid off a lot of debt, and that's discounted in the spending. So I am very proud that we've paid off a lot of the debt and that we got the economy going again, and that we also got the state jump-started in rebuilding, again, the roads, the levees, the schools, expanding our universities, building more career big educational facilities, and we are now in the middle of negotiating water infrastructure so that we can secure the water and provide reliable, safe, and good water for the people of California -- not two or three years from now but 40, 50 years from now.

So I think there are all kinds of great things happening. The key thing is to continue moving on and moving forward. If it is infrastructure, if it is health care reform, education reform, and all the things that we set out to do, and we are going to continue one. Like I said, the most important thing is that both of the parties work together to accomplish all of those things because with just one party you could never do it.

MR. BROKAW: It appears that the people, however, have some real questions about your leadership -- your approval rating has gone from what, 60 percent in December down to about 40 percent recently. That's tough to govern under those circumstances.

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Not at all. I am having a great time as governor of California, and it is a very challenging job, and I have always known that when I get into that it will be a challenging job, but it's the most exciting job, and it also is a job that gives me the satisfaction to serve the people of California, because I think that California has given me everything that I have. If it is my bodybuilding career, my acting career, the money that I've made -- everything, my family, everything, is because of California. So it is a way of giving something back, and I don't shy away from the challenges; never did. And I am very persistent in continuing moving forward. So, you know, it's all about leadership and bringing people together and solving those problems is the key thing.

California is the greatest place in the world, and we're going to keep it this way.

MR. BROKAW: Let's talk national politics for a moment. Most analysts that I know say that John McCain would have a very, very hard time carrying this state in the fall. I don't think that that will come as any surprise to anybody who watches politics, but you also have 19 congressional seats held by Republicans here in California. How many of them will survive?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: I think that the Republicans have a good shot of keeping all their seats. I mean, it all depends in the end of what the mood of the state of the nation is at the time of the election. I think the key thing is for Washington to show that they can work together and get things done. This year, I have to say, I am very disappointed at what has happened is a lack of action in Washington.



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They cannot even get done the littlest things -- just recently with the tax credit for renewable energy, which, you know, started in the early '90s and now that it runs out at the end of the December, by the end of this year, and they cannot even get that done. Immigration reform or the infrastructure of the United States, health care, there are so many issues that are so important, they can't get anything done.

So I think that the people are frustrated, people are angry because they look at that, and they say, "Well, wait a minute, we just changed leadership there. First, with the Republicans in, and we thought that they can't get anything done, let's put the Democrats in power," but they can't get anything done, either.

So I think that the people are angry about that and rightfully so. So I think it depends of what the mood is. If anyone would lose a seat or two, I doubt it.

MR. BROKAW: You endorse Senator McCain as the presidential candidate saying he was a crusader who had the best interests of the environment in mind. Now he's in favor of offshore oil drilling, and he wants to build 45 nuclear plants. Do you still stand by his record in that regard?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: I am very proud of him. I am 100 percent behind him. That we don't agree on everything, that's clear, nor do I with my wife. I mean, it doesn't mean that we should split, it just means that we don't agree on certain things.

I don't think that you will find that everyone agrees on everything, and he is terrific with the environment. He has been there four years ago and stood by my side when I talked about the environment, and I talked about fighting global warming and putting together a good energy policy and starting with the green building initiative or to start building the hydrogen highway in California and the million solar roof initiative. He was there, and he supported me on every step of the way, so he is the real deal when it comes to the environment.

I think he has great ideas, and there are some things, like I said, I don't agree with, but there's a lot of things I do agree with, and I think that he will be a breath of -- fresh -- a breath of air in Washington when he becomes president because we really would have, for the first time, a really strong energy agenda and a great way of fighting global warming.

MR. BROKAW: Let me ask you about something that Tom Friedman has written in The New York Times about President Bush and energy policy. It was entitled, "Lead or Leave." He said, "The president, two years ago, said we're addicted to oil. Now he says we have a new Bush energy plan -- get more addicted to it. It's hard," according to Mr. Friedman, "to find words to express what a massive, fraudulent, pathetic excuse for an energy policy this is." Do you agree with him on that very harsh assessment of the president?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Well, I tell you, that we have always had a good relationship with the White House and with President Bush and there were certain things that were done very well, and we worked together very well, and there were other things where I have spoken out where I disagree with, which was on environmental issues. I don't dwell on the negative, the fact is that we have had a good relationship with him.

I think that, you know, it's easy to, you know, kick someone when they are down and to just be part of, you know, let's attack Bush type of thing, but I don't go for that. I think that he has done great work and in some things that he has failed, and I think that everybody knows that.

The key thing is now to look forward. We, in California, have never paid much attention to the federal government's action when it comes to the environment because there was a lack of leadership. We moved forward very aggressively here, and we started looking into the future and really did things that were, you know, very unique for the United States, and we led the way.

MR. BROKAW: We talked about the housing crisis here in California -- you have 72,000 homeowners who are in one stage or another of foreclosure; 20,000 have already lost their jobs -- or lost their homes. In California, especially, when real estate goes south, it drags the economy with it. It's about construction and home furnishings

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and appliances; it's about tax revenues. Is this going to be bad for a long time? Is it going to be a longer recovery than anybody anticipates at this point?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Well, first of all, let me just say that it is sad when you see the kind of people that are unemployed and how tough it is to get a job, and that is why we want to pump in as quickly as possible the billions of dollars to get people back to work, especially in the construction business.

But I am amazed, as everyone else, of how quickly that came, and -- the housing crisis, the subprime mortgage crisis and all of these kind of things, because I have had, last year, in the spring meetings with economist, and they said to me that for the next two years the economy in the United States is going to be strong, the economy worldwide is going to be strong. There is nothing that is indicating any decline at all. Sure enough, two, three months later, we have seen the slowdown in the housing market; we have seen the subprime mortgage crisis appearing; we have seen our revenues shrinking in Sacramento, and \$200 million a month came in less than anticipated. Then it went up all the way to \$600 million by December already.

So this, really, I think was a big surprise to everyone, and I don't think anyone can really guess of how long it would take. We are very fortunate here in California because we have so many different economies. We have the real estate, we have the entertainment economy, we have biotechnology, we have high technology, we have agriculture. We have all these different economies, so that gives us some strength even though we are suffering because of the decline of the housing market.

MR. BROKAW: But has been California been on a binge that was just unrealistic? A lot of speculation about cashing in on the real estate market, buying the big SUVs that drive on the freeways, one passenger using all that energy?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Well, no, I think that, you know, there were big mistakes made by borrowers, there were big mistakes made by lenders, and I think that everyone was on such a roll, and the real estate market always, every year, went up and up and up, and so people started speculating, and, of course, what happened was the housing market is just like the dot-com bubble -- it was a housing bubble, and it finally -- the whole thing collapsed, and now we have to just wait until we grow our way out of this situation, and I think by next year we will grow out of it.

MR. BROKAW: You have a lot of propositions on the ballot again this fall. One of them would mean a constitutional ban on gay marriages. Do you support that?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: No, not at all. As a matter of fact, I think the Supreme Court made a good decision there. It was apparently unconstitutional to stop anyone from getting married. It's like 1948, the interracial marriage, when the Supreme Court of California has, you know, decided it was unconstitutional and then later on the Supreme Court of the United States followed, I think, 10 to 12 years later.

So I think it's good that California is leading in this way. I, personally, believe that a marriage should be between a man and a woman but, at the same time, I think that my, you know, belief -- I don't want to force on anyone else, so I think that we should stay with the decision of the Supreme Court and move forward. There are so many other more important issues that we have to address in California, so I think to spend any time on this initiative I think is a waste of time.

MR. BROKAW: There is another proposition that would require a waiting period and parental permission before a minor could get an abortion or the termination of a pregnancy. Do you support that?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Yeah, I support that. I think there should be a notification of the parents, and I was always for that. And I have two daughters myself. I would not want to have someone in the school take my daughter to a clinic to get an abortion without telling me or my wife. I think one or the other should know. If my daughter decides she doesn't want to let me know, but she feels more comfortable with my wife, it's perfectly fine

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with me because my wife and I, we're partners in raising our kids. But someone, one of us both should know, and I believe in that 100 percent.

MR. BROKAW: It's well known that your wife, Maria Shriver, endorsed Senator Obama early.

Is that off limits in discussion in your household? And, if he wins and says he'd like to have her join him in Washington in some capacity, will you think that's a good idea?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: First of all, I think that it's great that she has her own opinion about this, and I supported it 100 percent when she called me before she did the appearance at UCLA. I told her "Go ahead, do it." You know, "I think that you feel very passionate about that," and I feel very passionate about, you know, the person I endorse, which is McCain, and I think that we have always been like that. She has always endorsed -- you know, supported Democratic candidates, I have always supported Republican candidates. It makes it interesting discussion at night at home when we have dinner. Sometimes she pulls in the cutouts of Obama or the candidate she's for, and is putting it right next to my breakfast table and so I have to look at it. And then, of course, when he screws up in one way or the other, the kids carry out the cutout, and it has to be outside the house for a while. And then they carry him again. So we have those kind of things going on.

But, I, you know, I can only take all of this thing for so long. Eventually, you know, I also am sick of tired of this. One day, at night, I remember we had dinner. I got up because I'd had it. And I got up, and I said, you know, "McCain is the man. He is the best man for this country and for the future. And Maria is absolutely wrong with that Obama fellow. Absolutely wrong." I was so lucky that Maria was out for dinner that night. It was easier to do that.

MR. BROKAW: Her very closest friend in her family is Caroline Kennedy who is on the Obama vice presidential selection committee.

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: I can't believe that. When I got that, I was, like, "I can't believe this." I mean, for --

MR. BROKAW: Do you have any inside information? I mean, does Maria talk in her sleep or anything?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Well, I've been talking to Caroline, but she is working, I'm sure, very hard at this, and she's taking it seriously, and, you know, she has been a big supporter of Obama right from the beginning. So I think it's terrific for her. She's a very smart woman, and she will be very good in helping them making a decision.

MR. BROKAW: Did Senator McCain asks you for advice about how he should run against Senator Obama?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: He did not, no (chuckles).

MR. BROKAW: What would you tell him?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: I would say, "Look, you have a lot of smart people around you -- ask them." I'm going to give Senator McCain advice on how to run against you.

MR. BROKAW: You had talked recently and, again, in this interview, about the importance of the two sides getting together and finding common ground, people working together again. Here at the Reagan Library, and the LBJ Library in Texas, they'd like to have a series of town halls using both libraries in a kind of bipartisan fashion. Do you think that that would advance the interests of the country during this campaign year?

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: I think so. I mean, I think it would be interesting to have a debate between the two candidates and have town hall meetings together so that people can hear from both of them without having this formal kind of question-and-answer sessions where they stand behind a podium. I think those are fake. I don't buy in on what they say when they do those kind of -- when they do this kind of format.

I think a town hall meeting would be much better, and I think that it will be also very important for them to talk about reaching across the aisle, and I think this is the very attractive part about Senator McCain because he doesn't just

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talk about that, he has proven it over and over again that he can reach across the aisle; he can bring people on board and create some action. I think that's what we need in the future.

We need to have someone there that can bring both of the parties together because there is no way that we can reshape and fix our country, the various different ills that we have and create again a better image overseas with just one party. You have to have both parties work together, and this is why I am a big believer in the post-partisanship. It has worked here in our state, and it's a whole new way of looking at it to be willing to compromise and to be a public servant and not a party servant.

MR. BROKAW: Governor, thank you very much.

GOV. SCHWARZENEGGER: Thank you. Good to see you again.

MR. BROKAW: And I'll be back from Jackson Hole with NBC's political director, Chuck Todd. He'll put the 2008 Western battleground all in perspective.

(Announcements.)

MR. BROKAW: We're back here on "Meet the Press" from Jackson Hole, Wyoming, with NBC's political director, Chuck Todd. Chuck, the political landscape in this part of America has been changing pretty profoundly.

MR. TODD: It's stunning, you know, when you go back to the 2000 election, you could go from the border of Canada to the border of Mexico, from Montana all the way through New Mexico and only travel through states governed by Republicans. Fast-forward eight years, you do that same path, and it's only states governed by Democrats. So we've seen a big shift locally in elected governors out here, out West, and even in some of the state legislatures.

MR. BROKAW: And these governors are no ideologically centered. They're really can-do governors, and a lot of them work with Republican legislatures; in fact, most of them do.

MR. TODD: It is. It's sort of -- it's very -- they're non- ideologues, and what it is, it's almost as if the Libertarian streak of the West, you know, the whole -- the Reagan/Goldwater Republicans were Libertarian in nature, secular, actually. They might have been religious, but they didn't wear it on their sleeves. And as the Republican Party locally, in a lot of these states, Colorado, in particular, has had a lot of sort of religious right dominating of their primaries. It's allowed these Democrats to start targeting the sort of center right Libertarians, the sort of -- the freedom that -- not wanting to talk about religion, and they've been winning those voters over.

MR. BROKAW: Let's talk about the fall and strategy in the West. Senator McCain represents Arizona; war hero; maverick. Why isn't he getting more traction in the West at this stage of the process?

MR. TODD: He's the perfect candidate, if you thought about it, for out West, because of everything you just described. But he's getting punished on a couple of things. First of all, the West is the youngest region of our four major regions, and Obama appeals to this young, and these youngest -- Colorado is one of the five youngest states in the union, so already -- and McCain being older is appealing to older voters. So that's one problem he's having.

The Republican brand is a mess. That's the other thing. And, you know, we can focus simply on Hispanics. While John McCain has been proactive in trying to push for comprehensive immigration reform, and, you know, really been very friendly with Hispanics, the Republican brand has been terrible. I mean, the Tom Tancredo stuff has really hurt the Republicans' image.

MR. BROKAW: He's the Republican congressman from Colorado.

MR. TODD: Very, sort of, on a crusade on anti-immigration, and it's really hurt the Republican image here, and that hurts McCain, even though he's got a stance that should sell well.

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MR. BROKAW: The Democratic convention will be in Denver not by accident. Howard Dean has said, "If we win the West, we'll win the American presidency." Is everything up to date in Denver for the Democratic convention?

MR. TODD: Not really. They've got a financial issue.

Part of that is they had a nominee very late in the process; they've had donors not ready, particularly a lot of Obama donors, were not ready to give money to the convention if they thought somehow their guy wasn't going to be the nominee. But it looks like they're going to get the money, but we'll see.

There's not a lot of corporate money in Denver. They've got economic problems there, and so suddenly -- they've had some struggles, but the convention has to go on. So they'll figure it out.

MR. BROKAW: Wherever I go these days and wherever you go these days, they say to you or to me, "Who is Obama going to pick as a running mate and then who is McCain going to pick as a running mate?"

MR. TODD: Right. Well, it's interesting on the McCain front. I think the West could have an influence on him, because he's already struggling a little bit in the agricultural Midwest. Basically every state that touches Illinois, he's underperforming, and Obama is over- performing. So the West could end up being a battleground. Obviously, McCain wants to do well in the industrial Midwest -- Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania. But he wants to not lose these Western states.

You pointed out in the beginning -- New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada -- if Obama sweeps those and holds all the Kerry states, it's over. He gets his 270. McCain's got to figure out how to hold a couple of those. Mitt Romney, being a Mormon, could actually help him in Colorado and Nevada, in particular. You spike up some --

MR. BROKAW: Idaho, of course, they're going to win that, anyway, but --

MR. TODD: Sure, but also in some other parts of the West where you've got -- Obama is trying to win Montana and North Dakota, too. Those are two states he thinks he can do well. He's not going to win them, but he is going to sort of drive McCain and Republicans crazy.

MR. BROKAW: Now, be careful about what you say it's a state about what he's going to win and what he's not going to win.

MR. TODD: It's true.

MR. BROKAW: But he's going to Montana next week, right?

MR. TODD: Well, it's interesting -- both of them are targeting the West this week. McCain's doing it by going to Colombia and in Mexico. By showing up there, the Hispanic-American media is going to cover McCain's visit, when he's going to see the statue of Guadalupe in Mexico, that's going to be a big deal, and it's going to get a lot of coverage, and that's going to help him potentially in New Mexico and in Colorado.

But then you've got Obama, he's showing up -- he's going to be in Colorado on Wednesday, he's going to be in North Dakota on Thursday, and he's going to celebrate the Fourth of July in Montana -- we don't know where yet in Montana, but we'll find out.

MR. BROKAW: Looking at all the numbers that you look at on all the polls, there was a fair amount of dialog last week -- Senator Obama deciding that he wouldn't take public financing; that he would take money from his online supporters. Does that resonate very much across the country?

MR. TODD: It doesn't resonate, but what it has allowed McCain to begin to pain is this narrative of you know what? This guy, Obama, you know, he makes all these promises, and then suddenly he acts like a typical politician. And I think that a couple of more of these things, and suddenly McCain might be able to sell this message that, you know, as much as you might think Obama is going to be the guy that might challenge his party, look at John McCain.

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He's the guy that has been challenging his party for seven years; has been doing these things. So it's not that the campaign finance issue, per se, will resonate. It's that it allows McCain to start saying, "You know what? He's flipping on this, he's now flipping on guns, he's now flipping on these other issues and it possibly paints a picture of a guy who will just say and do anything to get elected."

The Democratic convention in Denver -- what do you hear about the role of Senator Clinton?

MR. TODD: Well, this is what we do know -- she is going to speak -- shocking, right? But the question is, how many Clintons will speak? And I think what we don't know is will there be Clinton speaking on multiple nights -- unlikely. The Obama campaign doesn't want to have that. Senator Clinton -- does she want to have President Clinton speak? And I think you're likely to see the Obama campaign leave it up to her. If she wants to have President Clinton introduce her, that's going to be fine with them -- but does she?

We've seen what happens when the two of them do back-to-back speeches. It's usually not that great for Senator Clinton. Maybe Chelsea Clinton introduces Senator Clinton. That's probably more likely, and we'll see some sort of almost baton passing from one generation of Clintons to another generation of Clintons.

So I think a tribute video is in the future of President Clinton.

MR. BROKAW: Chuck Todd, thanks very much. I'll be right back with a final word from "Meet the Press" this Sunday.

(Announcements.)

MR. BROKAW: That's all for this edition of "Meet the Press." Our thanks to the Jackson Hole Golf and Tennis Club for hosting us here in Wyoming. We'll be away next way due to NBC's coverage of the Wimbledon Tennis Finals, but we'll see you back the following week.

If it's Sunday, it's "Meet the Press."

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