



## Transcript: Republican Presidential Primary Debate

Wednesday, September 05, 2007

### FOX NEWS

DURHAM, N.H. —

*The following is the complete transcript of the Sept. 5, 2007, Republican presidential primary debate at the University of New Hampshire's Whittemore Center:*

FOX NEWS HOST BRIT HUME: And now let's meet the candidates.

Congressman Tom Tancredo of Colorado, a former state legislator and current five-term member of the House.

(APPLAUSE)

Congressman Ron Paul of Texas, the 1988 Libertarian Party nominee for president, who is currently serving his 10th term in Congress.

(APPLAUSE)

Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, who served two full terms as his state's governor and is also a Baptist minister.

(APPLAUSE)

Rudy Giuliani of New York City, former U.S. attorney and two-term mayor.

(APPLAUSE)

Mitt Romney of Massachusetts, most recently governor of that state and the man who ran the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics.

(APPLAUSE)

Senator John McCain of Arizona, now serving his fourth term in the Senate after two previous terms in the U.S. House.

HUME: Senator Sam Brownback of Kansas, a former Congressman, currently serving his second term in the U.S. Senate; and Congressman Duncan Hunter of California, a 14-term representative.

(APPLAUSE)

Here now is the format of this debate. Each candidate will be asked a series of questions on foreign policy, domestic issues and perhaps others matters. Answers are limited to one minute each.

If we decide rebuttal time is needed, that will be 30 seconds. We have green, yellow and red lights to help the candidates keep track of their time. And, if an answer runs long, candidates and every else will hear this sound.

(BELL RINGS)

We ask the audience please to limit applause during the question- and-answer portion of the debate so we can devote as much time as possible to the candidates themselves.

Let's get started. We will cover a number of issues tonight, but first a political question about the man who isn't here and will not even announce his candidacy for president until tomorrow. I'm talking, of course, about Senator Fred Thompson.

Now, a Thompson ad has just run on the Fox News Channel.

HUME: He will be a guest later tonight with Jay Leno. Polls have him in second or third place, depending on whether you're looking at national polls or some of the early state polls.

So the question is: Who has made the smart moves here, you guys who are here and who have been out on the trail all this time or Senator Thompson?

(LAUGHTER)

Let me start with you, Governor Huckabee. What do you think?

FORMER ARKANSAS GOV. MIKE HUCKABEE: Well, Brit, I was scheduled to be on Jay Leno tonight, but I gave up my slot for somebody else because I'd rather be in New Hampshire with these fine people.

(APPLAUSE)

You know, Fred is from Nashville, Tennessee, home of George Jones, who was often called "no-show George" for not showing up at his concerts. And maybe Senator Thompson will be known as the no-show for the presidential debates.

TEXAS REP. RON PAUL: But I'm proud to be sharing the stage with these guys because we're running for president and we're delighted to be here, and I certainly appreciate getting this opportunity.

HUME: Congressman Paul, you've been out beating the bushes, looking for votes and getting your ideas out all this time. And look where he stands and look where the rest of you guys stand. What do you think?

PAUL: Well, I welcome him to the race because, very specifically, he will help dilute the vote for my benefit...

(LAUGHTER)

... because he will be pro-war and I'm the anti-war candidate representing the Republican traditional position.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Senator McCain, the guy's a former colleague of yours. How do you feel about the way he's handled it?

ARIZONA SEN. JOHN MCCAIN: Well, I think that's a decision that Fred should make. Maybe we're up past his bed time, but the point is...

(LAUGHTER)

You know, one thing I know about New Hampshire, and I know well, is that the people of New Hampshire expect to see you. They expect to see you a lot. And they expect to see you at townhall meetings and at places all over this great state of New Hampshire, and they expect to examine you before they make up their mind.

MCCAIN: One of the many Arizonans who ran for president of the United States, unsuccessfully, like all of us...

(LAUGHTER)

Maurice Udall, once -- he was a very funny man, as you know -- once he said, a fellow in Manchester said to the other one, "what do you think about Mo Udall for president?" And the guy said, "I don't know; I only met him twice."

And you know, the reason why that joke is funny is because it's true. And my advice to Fred is: Get out into the arena, Fred. It's a lot of fun.

HUME: Governor Romney?

(APPLAUSE)

FORMER MASSACHUSETTS GOV. MITT ROMNEY: You know, the only question I have for Senator Thompson is: Why the hurry? Why not take some more time off?

(LAUGHTER)

Maybe January, February might be a better time to make a final decision about getting in this race.

(LAUGHTER)

But, for all of us, we're going to welcome him into the race. He's going to bring a lot to it. He's a great personality. He'll have new ideas.

ROMNEY: I think he's going to bring more entertainment and vigor and ideas to the Republican platform.

So I welcome him into this. But I agree with all those that have spoken: There's nothing like getting to know the folks in New Hampshire and Iowa, South Carolina, Michigan.

In New Hampshire and Iowa alone over this last year I have done 462 events -- town meetings, one-on-one meetings -- and that's the way to get to know people.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Mr. Mayor, your thoughts?

FORMER NEW YORK MAYOR RUDY GIULIANI: I like Fred a lot. I think Fred is a really, really good man. I think he's done a pretty good job of playing my part on "Law & Order."

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

I personally prefer the real thing.

(LAUGHTER)

But I think Fred will add something to this race. I think this is a nomination you have to earn, though. Nobody's going to give it to you. Nobody's going to grant it to you. Nobody is going to crown you.

GIULIANI: You've got to go out there and like these gentlemen have done and I've done you've got to -- you gotta meet people in Iowa and New Hampshire and all over the country. You gotta work hard for this.

And finally I think it's gonna to come down to experience. This is not a time that the United States should be electing someone who's gonna to get on-the-job training. You need people with executive experience.

And my real concern is, you'll have three leading Democratic candidates, none of which have ever run a city, a state or a business. And this is not...

(APPLAUSE)

... this is -- America's at war. America's got some big problems. It's not the time for on-the-job training as an executive.

HUME: Thank you, gentlemen.

Let's continue the questioning with my colleague Chris Wallace.

Chris?

WALLACE: Thank you, Brit.

Good evening, gentlemen.

Let's talk about illegal immigration.

Governor Romney, in recent weeks you have gone after Mayor Giuliani for running what you say was a sanctuary city for illegals. But as governor of Massachusetts, you did nothing to stop Cambridge, Somerville (inaudible) all of which proclaimed themselves to be sanctuaries.

WALLACE: In fact, you didn't even catch the illegals who were mowing your front lawn. So the question is -- so the question is, why should we believe that you would be any tougher on illegal immigration than Mayor Giuliani?

ROMNEY: Well, Chris, first of all, with regards to front lawns, people don't go to their contractors and inspect their ID cards of employees.

Secondly, with regards to sanctuary cities, the governors aren't responsible for mayors who are not following the law. And, actually, in my case, as soon as I learned about a program in the department of ICE that we could have our state police authorized to enforce the law, I did just that so that in sanctuary cities in our state -- and nonsanctuary cities -- the law would be enforced.

But this is a place where Mayor Giuliani and I just simply disagree. I think we should reduce federal funding to cities that call themselves sanctuary cities.

ROMNEY: I think saying as he did, if you happen to be an undocumented alien, we want you in New York, we'll protect you in New York, I think that contributed to 3 million illegals in this country becoming 12 million illegals coming into this country.

And I also disagree on the issue of what I'll call amnesty. And that is, I just don't think you say to people who've come here illegally that if you work here, we're going to sign you up. That's the wrong answer. Amnesty is not the right answer for this problem.

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Mayor Giuliani, I want to follow up on what Governor Romney said. In New York City, you allowed illegals to report crime and to seek medical treatment, you said in the interests of public safety. But, in fact, you went a lot further than that as mayor.

Back in 1994, you said the following: "If you come here and you work hard and you happen to be in an undocumented status, you're one of the people who we want in this city. You're somebody that we want to protect, and we want you to get out from under what is often a life of being a fugitive, which is really unfair."

WALLACE: As president, would you continue to protect illegals from what you then called unfair enforcement of our borders?

GIULIANI: Chris, you haven't really described the entire extent of the executive order. The first part of the executive order points out that the police should report all illegals suspected of committing a crime, or who have committed a crime.

In fact, the year before I was mayor, the immigration service stopped taking names from the police department of people that the police department were reporting.

So the problem that I had was, I had 400,000 illegal immigrants, roughly, in New York City. And I had a city that was the crime capital of America. I had to do something intelligent with them.

I didn't have the luxury of, you know, political rhetoric. I had the safety and security of the people of New York City on my shoulders.

So what I did was, I said -- and I think this a sensible policy: If you are an illegal immigrant in New York City and a crime is committed against you, I want you to report that.

GIULIANI: Because lo and behold, the next time a crime is committed, it could be against a citizen or a legal immigrant. I said, if you are a child in New York City, of which we had 40,000 to 50,000 to 60,000 illegal immigrant children, did it make sense to leave them on the streets? The federal government deported only 758 people that year from New York City.

So the reality is, my programs and policies led to a city that was the safest large city in the country, so they must have been sensible policies.

WALLACE: Mr. Mayor, time.

Senator McCain...

(APPLAUSE)

Senator McCain, when you were backing comprehensive immigration reform this spring, you accused Governor Romney of flip-flopping on this issue. In fact, you said, "Maybe his solution will be to get his small varmint gun and run the Guatemalans off his lawn."

(LAUGHTER)

MCCAIN: I thought that was a pretty good line.

(LAUGHTER)

(CROSSTALK)

MCCAIN: I wish I would have written it myself.

(LAUGHTER)

WALLACE: Is the governor playing politics on immigration, and are you now doing the same thing, backing a new plan which would enforce the borders but without any longer a path to citizenship?

MCCAIN: Look, this is an emotional and passionate issue, and one that -- very seldom have I seen an issue that aroused this much passion with the American people.

No one, by the way, is for amnesty. I and the president of the United States, both of us from border states, came forward with a plan that we thought was comprehensive and workable with the priority being border security, which remains my position.

Why we failed is because the American people have lost trust and confidence in us -- our failure in Katrina, our failures in Iraq, our failures to control runaway spending. And so we failed.

So, obviously, we have to succeed. Because there's 12 million people who are in this country illegally, which is de facto amnesty, and we need a temporary worker program.

I commit to securing the borders first. We can secure those borders. As president, I would have the border state governors certify that those borders were indeed secure.

MCCAIN: We can sit down together. Governor Romney less than a year ago had the exact same position that I did.

WALLACE: Governor Huckabee, two years ago, as governor of Arkansas, you said legislation that was then before the state legislature to crack down on illegal immigration was, quote, "inflammatory and race-baiting."

Last year, you said this about opposition to immigration reform that was then in Congress: "If I were to say some of it is driven by sheer racism, I think I would be telling you the truth."

Governor, why do you feel that some of the people who oppose illegal immigrants who have broken the law -- why do you feel some of them are racist?

HUCKABEE: Well, first of all, because I've listened to some of them. And it's not the concern that people are coming here for opportunities or even that they're illegal.

Look, I want to be very clear: I agree, we ought to have sealed borders. People in this country are essentially good folks. They're not angry at immigrants who want to come here for the same reason that our ancestors came.

But they're angry at a government that has completely ignored borders and allowed this problem to fester to the point that it's now overrunning us in a position that people don't even understand how to fix it.

The reality is that we track packages from UPS and FedEx every time we order from Amazon.com. And, yet, we've got a government that says we don't know what to do and how to keep up with people.

If necessary, we ought to outsource this whole issue to FedEx and UPS. They seem to have a better way of keeping up with packages than our government does with people.

(APPLAUSE)

But I want to be clear: If someone is looking for a president who is going to have a mean spirit toward other human beings, I'm not their guy.

HUCKABEE: I'll fix the borders, I'll secure them, but what I won't do is to do it because I'm angry at them for wanting to come here for the same reason that the rest of us love America.

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Congressman Tancredo, you have made cracking down on illegal immigration the centerpiece of your campaign.

Do you think any of the four gentlemen that you have heard speak so far tonight are serious about this problem, and do you agree with Governor Huckabee that some of the people who oppose illegals are in fact mean-spirited and racist?

COLORADO REP. TOM TANCREDO: You know, I listen to my colleagues up here talk about this, and I ask -- and I listen to the questions that are finally being asked about this and the answers that are finally being given on this issue, that happens to be one of the most serious domestic problems that we face in America.

And for, of course, how many months did my colleagues up here stay silent or were on the other side of it? You wonder why people in the United States are cynical about politics and politicians. It could be -- it just could be that when the wind is blowing in one direction -- and that is, you know, we're not going to say anything about illegal immigration -- we will be silent on the issue.

TANCREDO: But when it sounds like the people are getting uptight about this and we can make hay out of it, we're all going to be the strongest supporters of secure borders that you ever saw in your life.

Well, I'll tell you. I'd like to see more than rhetoric. I wish that I could feel in their hearts that that's exactly where they were going. And it's got nothing to do with disliking people who are coming into this country. It's got everything to do with the rule of law.

Does anybody understand that?

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Congressman Hunter, I have a question for you from one of our viewers. Pat Scott (ph) from Leander (ph), Texas asks, "What are you going to do as the next president to start and complete the border fence from California to Texas?"

Now, I know that your idea is to complete 854 miles of fence from California all the way to Texas along our Southern border.

WALLACE: But top Texas officials now say that doing so would infringe on the property rights of some of the ranchers and farmers in that area, and they also say trying to maintain a fence in open desert would be impractical.

So what do you say to those top Texas officials, as well as to Pat Scott (ph)?

CALIFORNIA REP. DUNCAN HUNTER: Here's what we tell them, Chris: It's the law. And you know, I built that border fence in San Diego. And it's really two fences. It's a double fence. And incidentally, since this is FOX, it's not that scraggly little fence that they keep showing on CNN with people hopping over it.

(LAUGHTER)

If you get over my fence, we sign you up for the Olympics immediately.

(LAUGHTER)

Now, that fence is a double fence with a road in between, and it reduced the smuggling of people and drugs in San Diego, coming across the border into San Diego, which was the number one smugglers corridor in America, by 90 percent. And that's the reason I wrote the law that extends it 854 miles across Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

It's now the law that that fence be built. The president signed the bill October 26th. They've only done 17.9 miles.

As president, I will complete all 854 miles in six months. That's my commitment. I'm going to build the fence. It's the law.

(APPLAUSE)

HUNTER: The president signed the bill October 26. They've only done 17.9 miles. As president, I'll complete all 854 miles in six months. That's my commitment. I'm going to build the fence; it's the law.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Thank you, Chris. Let's go down to Young's Restaurant and see what Carl Cameron is picking up from voters down there.

Carl?

CAMERON: Hi, Brit.

Well, they've been served UNH customers and Granite State voters here at Young's since 1916, and we're going to talk a little bit here to Pam and John Rogers. She is an attorney involved with illegal immigration issues, and he is a law enforcement official who deals with it virtually every day.

Lieutenant, give us an idea of what it is you see, and then what it is you are worried about?

J. ROGERS: Well, we're overwhelmed in the street. I mean, just the crimes are getting more violent. They're out of control. We can't communicate with these immigrants. My concern is these illegal immigrants get here, you know -- what makes you think that they're going to follow any of these rules put in place?

They're not. Either you can build all the fences you want. If you don't man them, they're going to go over them, they're going to go under them. They're still going to get in here.

What are you going to do with the illegal immigrants that are already here? How are you going to handle that problem? There's millions of them.

The opportunities I've had to deal with the situation -- you call INS; they won't even come down and talk to you. They're just understaffed, undermanned. What are you going to do about that?

CAMERON: So we're going to spin this one back to both John McCain and Rudy Giuliani and ask the lieutenant's question: How can you not call it amnesty?

GIULIANI: Well, I think the officer made the point I was just making earlier. What he said was they turn over the names to ICE, ICE to turn them over to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and nobody is deported.

As I said, I had 400,000 illegal immigrants. The best year they ever had for deportations was 2,000. I figured out I was stuck with 398,000. It's like simple arithmetic.

GIULIANI: So the reality is that we do have to stop illegal immigrants from coming in at our borders. It is a national priority. And a physical fence isn't going to do the whole thing.

We need a technological fence. We need photographic equipment, heat-seeking equipment, motion detection equipment. It all exists. It didn't exist 10 years ago, didn't exist 20 years ago. It exists today. Other countries do it.

And we need a tamper-proof single ID card for every single person who's in this country from a foreign country.

And if we can secure our borders, end illegal immigration, we will then be able to do what Governor Huckabee is talking about with legal immigrants. We want to encourage legal immigration. And we want to end illegal immigration.

HUME: Senator McCain?

GIULIANI: And it is a very, very sensible policy. Most countries accomplish it. Most countries do not allow you to walk in without identifying yourself.

HUME: Senator McCain, the same question to you. How do you not call the circumstances the officer described -- as an amnesty?

MCCAIN: Well, because amnesty, according to the dictionary, is forgiveness. The proposal that we had would require fines, would require back in the line, would require deportation for some. It would require others to go back to the country of their origin. It would require an enormous amount before anyone, as long as 13 years, could even be eligible for citizenship in this country.

There's 12 million people who are here illegally. We were trying to find a way to identify, track, deport those necessary, and those who have been here for some 40 or 50, then give them, after everybody else whose come here legally, a place in line behind everybody else. It was a comprehensive proposal.

I was in Baghdad over the 4th of July and I was present at a ceremony where 688 brave, young Americans re-enlisted. 128 brave, young Americans who were green card holders were given citizenship in this country.

MCCAIN: Two of them that were supposed to be there had sacrificed their lives prior to that.

HUME: Governor Romney...

MCCAIN: These people -- these people are brave, they're wonderful and they want to be citizens of this country. And I'm proud of them.

HUME: Governor Romney, I'm seeing you were itching to get...

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: ... in on this. Let me just give you just a quick answer here.

ROMNEY: First of all, the Z visa that was offered in that Senate bill let everybody who's here illegally, other than criminals, stay here for the rest of their lives. And that may not be technically amnesty, but it is certainly amnesty in fact.

I was at the San Diego border and met with our border patrol agents. They told me that more than half of those that try and come across those fences are able to do so. They said there's no way to stop them at the border unless you close down the magnets.

And the magnets are sanctuary cities and having employers sign people up that have come here illegally to do work here. You have to end sanctuary cities. You have to cut back on federal funding to cities that continue to call themselves sanctuary cities and welcome people in, as New York has done.

ROMNEY: And you have to say to employers that hire people illegally, that's also going to be sanctioned.

This is the way we're going to have to finally -- and the other key point is this, which is having amnesty and saying to individuals, as the mayor has said, if you come here and you're willing to work here and pay taxes, we'll sign you up. That's not the right message. We've got to enforce the law, welcoming legal immigration, but ending illegal immigration.

HUME: Thank you, Governor.

(APPLAUSE)

Senator Brownback, I know you're itching to get in this. You're in the next round. We'll come to you in a moment. Please bear with us.

Wendell Goler has the next round of questions.

Wendell?

GOLER: Gentlemen, I want to talk to you about family values.

Senator Brownback, you're itching for a question; I have one for you. Your colleague, Senator Larry Craig of Idaho, is making it difficult for the Republican Party to claim to be the party of family values. Now, I know that as his friend, you may forgive him.

Can you expect voters to do the same? And what do you say to Senator Craig's second thoughts about resigning?

KANSAS SEN. SAM BROWNBACK: Well, I'd say on his second thoughts, he's already pulled that trigger, and he's decided what he's going to do. And I think he needs to stick with that.

BROWNBACK: And this is a terrible situation, the factual setting on it.

What I think is good about it is that he's taking responsibility in the sense of resigning from office, and I think he ought to stick with that.

What I think was also good about it -- for as far as the Republican Party leadership saying, "We think we ought to get to the bottom of this, that we shouldn't hide people. We should put it in an ethics process," and that there's a process to do that.

But let me back up and -- to talk about the bigger picture. I think it is important that the party stand for family values. I'm running saying that the lead thing we need to do is rebuild the family in this country.

And I think we need to be clear about our efforts and willingness to do that. And if we're going to solve problems of education, crime, what's taking place in some of our areas where we're not getting the growth, we've got to rebuild the family. That's at the core of what we need to do.

And we shouldn't walk away from family values for fear that instances like this happen within our party.

BROWNBACK: We should be bolder about standing up for family. Family's important for us, and it's important for America.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Congressman Hunter, another e-mail question for you. Scott Baker of Boise, Idaho, says: "For the sake of the GOP, should Larry Craig resign immediately?"

HUNTER: Yes, I think he should. And I think he ought to stick with the commitment that he made.

And, you know, that's one thing about our party. When our guys have problems like this, they leave. They leave the Senate or they leave the House. When the Democrats have problems like this, they often make them chairmen of their respective committees.

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

And, Wendell, let me just give you -- you know, these presidential debates help to define our party. You know, my model is my dad, who left the Marines after World War II, came back, worked for a year as a volunteer for the Republican Party, never asked for a job, never asked for a position, but only wanted to help our country, and asked me everyday while he was alive, "What did you do for America today?" That's my model of a Republican.

QUESTION:

GOLER: Thank you, Congressman.

Governor Romney, your aides say you see ending abortion as a two- step process: rolling back Roe v. Wade, which would leave it legal in some states; and then a constitutional amendment to ban it nationwide.

If abortion is murder, how can you live with it being legal in some parts of the country and for how long could you do so?

ROMNEY: Well, I think all of us -- I believe almost all of us in the room would say that we'd love to have an America that didn't have abortion. But the truth of the matter is...

(APPLAUSE)

... that's not what America is right now. That's not what the American people are right now. And so I'd like to see Roe v. Wade overturned and allow the states and the elected representatives of the people, and the people themselves, have the ability to put in place pro-life legislation.

ROMNEY: And of course it's our aspiration that at some point we'll see a nation that doesn't have abortion. But until that time, I certainly believe that allowing states and citizens and their representatives to fashion their own laws to protect the sanctity of life is very, very important.

I recognize that for many people, that is considered an act of murder, to have an abortion. It is without question the taking of a human life. And I believe that a civilized society must respect the sanctity of the human life.

But we have two lives involved here -- a mom, an unborn child. We have to have concern for both lives and show the expression of our compassion and our consideration and work to change hearts and minds, and that's the way in my view we'll ultimately have a society without abortion.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Governor Huckabee, do you see any real difference between Governor Romney's willingness to allow legalized abortion in some states and Mayor Giuliani's support -- effective support -- for a woman's right to choose?

HUCKABEE: Wendell, I'm going to let them sort out whatever differences they have.

HUCKABEE: I would love to see us have in this country what I helped lead in our state in Arkansas, and that's a human life amendment to our state constitution, Amendment 65, that says that we believe life begins at conception, and that we ought to do everything in the world possible to protect it until its natural conclusion.

And that means that we truly value and respect, elevate and celebrate every life.

The reason this country has been extraordinarily interested in what's going on to those miners out in Utah is because even though we don't know them, they represent us in the sense that they are human beings, and we don't know their fate.

We need to show the same kind of respect for life whether a child is in the womb, or whether in a coal mine, or in a long-term care facility. It's about the fact that in our culture, the greatest testament that we can give is that we have an undying respect for every human life as having intrinsic worth and value.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Thank you, Governor.

GOLER: Mayor Giuliani, Senator Fred Thompson -- and we do wish he was here -- says the Virginia Tech tragedy might have been lessened if some of the students had been allowed to carry guns. He also says that...

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

He also says he never felt safe in your city because of its gun control laws. What do you have to say to him about either of these assertions?

GIULIANI: Well, I would say to him the FBI would disagree with that. New York City was, during the years that I was mayor, the safest large city in the United States. In fact, in 2000, which was one of the last years that I was mayor, it was 191 for crime in the country.

For example, in Boston, there was a 59 percent greater chance you'd be the victim of a crime than in New York City. In many other cities, there was 100 to 300 percent greater chance that you'd be a victim of a crime than in New York City.

One of the things I accomplished as mayor of New York City was the impossible.

GIULIANI: I took a city that was the crime capital of America, and I made it not only the safest large city in America, I made it safer than 189 small cities. So, I mean, people have their right to their own feelings. The reality is, you were safer in New York than just about any other city in the United States after I was mayor for about three or four years.

GOLER: And the idea of letting college students carry weapons?

GIULIANI: I think states have a right to decide that. I mean, states have a right to decide their gun laws. The second amendment grants you the right to bear arms.

We have a federal system. A lot of these issues work in America where we have people of different views and different conscience because we are a federal system. We allow states to make different decisions.

The focus of our laws should be on criminals. That's what I did in New York City. I reduced shootings in New York City by 75 percent. And I did it by focusing not on guns but on criminals. Putting them in jail, putting them in jail for long periods of time when they committed crimes with guns, and it worked.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Congressman Paul, another gun issue for you, if you will. You have said that the 9/11 attackers might have had second thoughts if they'd felt that some of the passengers aboard the airplanes might have been armed.

We have seen airplanes -- airflights diverted because people heard Arabic on planes, because they heard Muslims praying. What do you think it would do to the travel industry of this country if passengers felt others were carrying guns aboard, sir?

PAUL: Well, first off, you're quoting me incorrectly.

GOLER: I'm sorry.

PAUL: I said the responsibility for protecting passengers falls with the airline, not the government -- not the passengers. The airline's responsible for the aircraft and the passengers.

If we wouldn't have been dependent on the federal government to set all the rules, which meant no guns and no resistance, then the terrorists may well have had second thoughts, because the airlines would have had the responsibility.

PAUL: But we assumed the government was going to take care of us. After 9/11, instead of moving toward the direction of personal responsibility and private property and second amendment, we moved in the opposite direction. We turned it over to the federal government. And look at the mess we have now at airports.

I mean, the airlines -- private industry protects their property all the time. People who haul around money in armored trucks protect their money all the time. But here is one example when the federal government was involved and they messed it up, and if we put the responsibility on the right people, respected the second amendment, I sincerely believe there would have been a lot less chance of 9/11 ever happening.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Thank you, Congressman.

Let's check in, once again, down at Young's Restaurant with Carl Cameron.

Carl?

CARL: Hi, Brit. Well, in this country, any discussion of family values now has sort of gone into what constitutes a marriage -- a man and a man, a man and a woman, gay marriage.

CAMERON: A lot of conservatives would like to see a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage.

And we have a chance here to talk to Heidi Turcotte of Dover, state employees -- a state employee, Health and Human Services social worker.

What do you think, should we be banning -- should there be a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage?

HEIDI TURCOTTE, N.H. STATE EMPLOYEE: Absolutely not. We're the state of live free or die, and people should be able to marry the person they love.

(APPLAUSE)

CAMERON: OK. So let's take that question from Heidi Turcotte -- and there you hear the reaction from Granite Staters, the "Live Free or Die" state -- and pose this to Sam Brownback.

Senator Brownback, should there be a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage? And if so, why?

BROWNBACK: The answer to that is yes. And the reason is this is a foundational institution.

(APPLAUSE)

(AUDIENCE BOOING)

BROWNBACK: It is a foundational institution.

I understand this is a divided audience on this. And I understand we as a country are struggling with this question. But these issues aren't done in a vacuum.

I had a question earlier about family values. And I think this is important for us to rebuild the family structure.

In countries that have redefined marriage, where they've said, OK, it's not just a man and a woman, it can be two men, two women, the marriage rates in those countries have plummeted to where you have counties now in northern Europe where 80 percent of the first-born children are born out of wedlock.

BROWNBACK: We don't need more children born out of wedlock; we need more children born into wedlock, between a mom and a dad bonded together for life.

When you do these vast, social experiments -- and that's what this is, when you redefine marriage -- it's a vast, social experiment. They're not done in isolation. They impact the rest of the culture around you. When you take the sacredness out of marriage, you will drive the marriage rates down.

And currently in this country -- currently -- we're at 36 percent of our children born out of wedlock. You can raise a good child in that setting, but we know the best place is between a mom and a dad, bonded together for life.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Senator, thank you.

It is time now for a break, and we will be back with more of our debate live from the Whittemore Center Arena on the Campus of the University of New Hampshire, right after these messages.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: And we are back at the University of New Hampshire in the Whittemore Center Arena as our Republican presidential debate continues.

Wendell resumes the questioning.

Wendell?

GOLER: Senator McCain, Mayor Giuliani says his leadership after the 9/11 attacks shows he is the best candidate for national security, and you say nothing he has done shows any real experience in foreign policy or national security affairs. Tell me why, sir.

MCCAIN: Well, I say that Mayor Giuliani did a great job as mayor of New York City and led the country and inspired us after the tragedy of 9/11, and I admire that and appreciate it.

I've spent my life in national security issues. I've taken unpopular stance because I knew what was right. Back in 2003, amid criticism from my fellow Republicans, I spoke strongly against the then Rumsfeld strategy, which I knew was doomed to failure and cause so much needless sacrifice.

MCCAIN: I advocated very strongly the new strategy that some Democrats have called the McCain strategy -- which it is not. And I believe that this strategy is winning.

I know the conflict. I know war. I have seen war. I know how the military works. I know how the government works. I understand national security.

I have led -- I once the commanding officer of the largest squadron in the United States Navy. I didn't manage it. I led it.

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Good.

Mayor Giuliani, I'd like you, first of all, to respond to Senator McCain's comments that for all you did in New York on 9/11, it doesn't translate into national security experience.

And also, last May, when I asked you why you have never been to Iraq you said you would like to go by the end of this year. Are you in fact going to make that deadline?

GIULIANI: I hope so. I hope we're able to go. I hope we can do it without creating a great deal of publicity.

GIULIANI: I have tremendous respect for Senator McCain. I think I've said more than once, if I wasn't running, I'd probably be supporting him for president of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

GIULIANI: I just happen to think that there's a better candidate: Me. But, you know...

(LAUGHTER)

The reality is that I'm not running on what I did on Sept. 11. I'm running on the fact that I was mayor of the largest city in the country, the third largest government in the country. I was tested in that position with crisis almost every day.

And when I came into office, I took over a city with a massive fiscal crisis. I took over a city with a massive crime crisis. We were on the front page of Time magazine as the rotting of the Big Apple. And I turned over a city that was the safest city in America, just about.

GIULIANI: I turned over a city that where we had reduced taxes 23 times. I turned over a government that George Will said was the most conservative government of anyone in the last 50 years. And I turned over a city where people had hope that hadn't had hope before.

And before that, I was the third ranking official in the Justice Department. I've had a great deal of experience; I think it's the kind of experience that helps to prepare you for president, if there's any experience that does.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Governor Romney, you have suggested that U.S. troops in Iraq move to a support phase after the surge, which pretty much has to end in the spring, and a standby phase after that in Kuwait in Qatar.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but it seems even Hillary Clinton is willing to commit troops to Iraq longer than that, sir.

ROMNEY: I don't have a time frame that I've announced. What I've indicated is very consistent with what the president is speaking about and what we're hearing from Iraq right now, and that is that the surge is apparently working.

We're going to get a full report on that from General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker very soon. But the Center for Strategic and International Studies and Brookings have come back with positive reports.

ROMNEY: If the surge is working, then we're going to be able to start bringing back our troops levels slowly but surely, and play more of a support role over time. Ultimately, down the road, I would anticipate that we're not going to have a permanent presence in Iraq, and we'll be in a standby mode in surrounding nations.

But, of course, when we consider moving to a support role and bringing, at some stage, our troop levels back, we're going to be doing that from a position of strength because the surge has worked.

There's no question it's essential for America to show that we are committed to success in Iraq. Our men and women are the bravest and most patriotic in the world that are over there fighting. We deserve to give them the kind of support they need to make this mission successful.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Do you see that support phase, sir, in 2008?

ROMNEY: I'm sorry?

GOLER: Do you see the support phase in 2008?

ROMNEY: I think you're going to begin to see if the surge is working, and I think we're going to get that report very soon, that we're going to begin to slowly but surely pull back to a support role.

ROMNEY: But the timetable for that I hope will be as soon as possible. We all hope for that. We all hope for that. But the question of timetable will depend upon how successful the surge is.

And the key is, we don't start pulling back troops; we don't go into a support mode until we are successful with this surge and we are providing the security and the stability that we anticipate for this country.

GOLER (?): Senator McCain?

MCCAIN: Governor, the surge is working. The surge is working, sir.

ROMNEY: That's just what I said.

MCCAIN: It is working. No, not "apparently"; it's working. It's working because we've got a great general. We've got a good strategy. Anbar province, things have improved.

The Maliki government is not doing the things we want it to do, the police are not functioning the way we want them to do, but we are succeeding.

And the great debate is not whether it's apparently working or not, the great debate is going to take place on the floor of the United States Senate the middle of this month. And it's going to be whether we set a date for withdrawal, which will be a date for surrender, or whether we will let this surge continue and succeed.

MCCAIN: And I can assure you, it's more than apparent, it is working and we have to rally the American people.

People in New Hampshire are saddened and frustrated and angry over our failures in Iraq. I share their anger, their frustration and their failure, and I want them home too. But I want them home for the right reasons. I want our troops home with honor. Otherwise, we will face catastrophe and genocide in the region.

WALLACE: Congressman Paul...

(APPLAUSE)

Congressman Paul, your position on the war is pretty simple: Get out.

What about, though, trying to minimize the bloodbath that would certainly occur if we pull out in a hurry? What about protecting the thousands of Iraqis who have staked their lives in backing the U.S.? And would you leave troops in the region to take out any al Qaeda camps that are developed after we leave?

PAUL: The people who say there will be a bloodbath are the ones who said it will be a cakewalk or it will be a slam dunk, and that it will be paid for by oil. Why believe them? They've been wrong on everything they've said.

PAUL: So why not ask the people...

(APPLAUSE)

... why not ask the people who advised not to go into the region and into the war? The war has not gone well one bit.

Yes, I would leave. I would leave completely. Why leave the troops in the region? It was the fact that we had troops in Saudi Arabia -- was one of the three reasons given for the attack on 9/11.

So why leave them in the region? They don't want our troops on the Arabian Peninsula. We have no need for our national security to have troops on the Arabian Peninsula.

And going into Iraq and Afghanistan and threatening Iran is the worst thing we can do for our national security. I am less safe, the American people are less safe for this.

It's the policy that is wrong. Tactical movements and shifting troops around and taking in the 30 more and reducing by five -- totally irrelevant.

We need a new foreign policy that said we ought to mind our own business, bring our troops home, defend this country, defend our borders...

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Congressman Paul -- and I'd like you to take 30 seconds to answer this -- you're basically saying that we should take our marching orders from Al Qaida? If they want us off the Arabian Peninsula, we should leave?

(LAUGHTER)

PAUL: No.

(APPLAUSE)

PAUL: I'm saying we should take our marching orders from our Constitution. We should not go to war...

(APPLAUSE)

PAUL: We should not go to war without a declaration. We should not go to war when it's an aggressive war. This is an aggressive invasion. We've committed the invasion of this war. And it's illegal under international law.

That's where I take my marching orders, not from any enemy.

(APPLAUSE)

(AUDIENCE BOOING)

(CROSSTALK)

WALLACE: Senator Brownback, you want in on this. What do you have to say, sir?

BROWNBACK: I didn't hear your question, so I'm going to...

WALLACE: What do you have to say to what you heard?

BROWNBACK: Thank you. I think what we need to do now is look at the situation we have and now have a political surge taking place. This is Thomas Friedman's statement, but it is true.

BROWNBACK: You've got the military that has made a number of progressive steps, particularly in the west -- Al Anbar Province -- they've made progress.

But we don't have a political solution on the ground that works in Iraq. Iraq is less a country than it is three groups held together by exterior forces. It's the Kurds in the north, the Sunni in the west, the Shia in the south, and a mixed city in Baghdad. And, yes, there are groups that are mixed around in that.

I think we need to recognize that reality. We ought to now push for establishment of a Sunni state in the West. Still one country -- still one country, but separate states. That's a political solution that you can take advantage of what the military has done on the ground. That's what we need to do to move forward now.

GOLER: Senator, let me ask you, quickly, if you do that kind of less federation, how do you keep the Kurds in the north from fighting with Turkey, how do you keep the Shia from allying with Iran, and how do you keep the Sunnis from rebelling over having no oil resources?

BROWNBACK: How do you do it now? I mean, I think you're going to need a long-term U.S. presence in - particularly in the Kurdish region in the north and the Sunni region in the west that you're going to have a long-term -- invited by those governments.

BROWNBACK: And you're going to need it to assure the Turks that the Kurds aren't going to pull out and to assure the Kurds that the Turks aren't going to come in. I think that's what you have to do in looking at the reality.

And the next president needs to come in and know foreign policy and not learn it on the job. This is something we need to know going in. The world is flat. I ought to know that. Being from Kansas, I understand flat.

(LAUGHTER)

WALLACE: Governor Huckabee, the latest national intelligence estimate, which was out recently, says that even if we continue the troop surge -- and we're going to put it up on the screen -- "Iraq's security will continue to improve modestly during the next six to 12 months, but levels of insurgent and sectarian violence will remain high and the Iraqi government will continue to struggle to achieve national-level political reconciliation and improved governance."

WALLACE: Governor, if that's the best we can hope, should we continue the surge?

HUCKABEE: We have to continue the surge, and let me explain why, Chris. When I was a little kid, if I went into a store with my mother, she had a simple rule for me: If I picked something off the shelf at the store and I broke it, I bought it. I learned I don't pick something off the shelf I can't afford to buy.

Well, what we did in Iraq, we essentially broke it. It's our responsibility to do the best we can to try to fix it before we just turn away. Because something is a stake.

HUCKABEE: Senator McCain made a great point -- and let me make this clear: If there's anybody on this stage that understands the word honor, I've got to say Senator McCain understands that word...

(APPLAUSE)

... because he has given his country a sacrifice the rest of us don't even comprehend.

And on this issue, when he says we can't leave until we've left with honor, I 100 percent agree with him because, Congressman, whether or not we should have gone to Iraq is a discussion the historians can have, but we're there.

We bought it because we broke it. We've got a responsibility to the honor of this country and to the honor of every man and woman who has served in Iraq and ever served in our military to not leave them with anything less than the honor that they deserve.

PAUL: Can I respond...

(APPLAUSE)

HUME (?): Go ahead. You wanted to respond. He just addressed you. You go ahead and respond.

PAUL: The American people didn't go in. A few people advising this administration, a small number of people called the neoconservatives hijacked our foreign policy. They're responsible, not the American people. They're not responsible. We shouldn't punish them.

(APPLAUSE)

HUCKABEE: Congressman, we are one nation. We can't be divided. We have to be one nation, under god. That means if we make a mistake, we make it as a single country: the United States of America, not the divided states of America.

(APPLAUSE)

PAUL: No, when we make a mistake -- when we make a mistake, it is the obligation of the people, through their representatives, to correct the mistake, not to continue the mistake.

(APPLAUSE)

HUCKABEE: And that's what we do on the floor of the Senate.

PAUL: No, we've dug a hole for ourselves and we've dug a hole for our party. We're losing elections and we're going down next year if we don't change it, and it has all to do with foreign policy and we have to wake up to this fact.

HUCKABEE: Even if we lose elections, we should not lose our honor, and that is more important (inaudible) the Republican Party.

(APPLAUSE)

PAUL: We have lost over 5,000 Americans killed in -- we've lost over 5,000 Americans over there in Afghanistan, in Iraq and plus the civilians killed. How many more you want to lose? How long are you going to be there?

How long -- what do we have to pay to save face? That's all we're doing, is saving face. It's time we came home.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Gentleman, thank you.

Wendell?

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Congressman Hunter, you've been wanting to weigh in on this.

HUNTER: Hallelujah.

(LAUGHTER)

GOLER: Senator Brownback says we need a long-term U.S. presence in Iraq. Congressman Paul says we need to bring the troops home now. Which is it?

HUNTER: Wendell, first, let's remember that we've got troops, those 157,000 folks in Iraq -- lots of them in Afghanistan are watching us tonight.

HUNTER: And let me just tell you what they've done. In Anbar Province, we were having 1,350 attacks a month last October. By the blood, sweat and tears of the U.S. Marines out there, we pulled it down 80 percent. They've pulled down civilian casualties 74 percent.

(APPLAUSE)

And I couldn't let this one go, because the Democrats made an entire debate never complimenting what the troops have done.

This is how we do it.

We've got 129 battalions in the Iraqi army that we're training up. We're training them up, we are getting them into the fight. When those Iraqi battalions are battle-hardened and they start to rotate into the positions on the battlefield displacing American forces, the American forces can then rotate out, come back to the U.S., or go to other places in Central Command.

That's the right way to win. It's called victory. That's how we leave Iraq.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: No matter how long it takes, sir? No matter how long it takes?

HUNTER: What's that?

GOLER: No matter how long it takes?

HUNTER: Well, let me tell you.

HUNTER: Right now, we've seen an 80 percent depression in the attacks in Anbar Province, those tough towns of Fallujah and Ramadi, which were incidentally the toughest, most difficult towns, where gun battles were being waged daily. We've now knocked that down 80 percent.

And my answer is, if you think we're going to be there for a long time, you don't understand the determination of the U.S. Marines and the U.S. Army. We're going to turn it over.

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Congressman Tancredo, you opposed the troop surge from the start. You advocate pulling forces back from the front lines to strategic positions across the Middle East. Is there anything that General Petraeus could say when he reports to Congress next week that would change your mind?

TANCREDO: Well, I hope and pray that of course the surge works. I hope and in fact I believe there are indications that certain aspects of it are. I don't doubt that for a moment.

TANCREDO: And I want to commend General Petraeus. I want to commend every single person serving in the theater.

But let me get back to a central point here, and that is why we're there and in fact, with whom we are at war.

The war is not actually in Iraq. The war is with radical Islam. That's who we are at war with.

(APPLAUSE)

And we have to understand it, Iraq is a battlefield in that war. And we -- in order for us to be successful there, a number of things are going to have to happen, and I think part -- when we talk about the disengagement, that is exactly what I believe has to happen.

We have to disengage as the police force in Iraq. But we cannot leave the country. We cannot leave because this is not a war that will end with our departure.

I wish that were the case. Wouldn't that be wonderful if that's all it would take, for us to say we'll withdraw all of our troops and we'll never have another thing to worry about?

But we were not attacked because we had troops in Saudi Arabia; I don't believe it. We were attacked because radical Islam wants to destroy the United States of America and any part of this world that they do not agree with.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Well, it's been a lively round here in the hall. Let's see if that's reflected down in at Young's Restaurant where Carl Cameron is standing by.

Carl?

CAMERON: Hiya, Brit.

During part of this exchange, I sort of asked our group gathered here what they thought of what was going on. And the consensus was that there was a lot of skirting of the issues and not a great degree of clarity.

New Hampshire, in fact our hosts here at UNH, have all had sacrifices. There was a UNH grad, Ben Keating, who was the head of the College Republicans who gave up his life in Iraq for this mission.

And we want to talk now with Mark and Deb Riss. Mr. Riss is a deputy sheriff here in Strafford County. And their son Dan comes back after his second tour in just two weeks.

You've heard a great deal about this. Tell us what it is that you are most interested in -- and there's a question, I guess for Mr. Romney, about the timing of all this.

MARK RISS: Yes, what I'm obviously most interested in is how we can bring in an end game to the war in Iraq, and yet, still do it so that it's a victory for us and a victory for a people of Iraq.

And my question is to Governor Romney, and that is I've heard the other people up there articulate themselves a little bit better. But, in your answer, I didn't hear how you would end it. I didn't hear an end game plan from you, and I would like a response on that.

And also, along those same lines, sir, a comment. I don't think you fully understand how offended my wife and I were, and probably the rest of the people who have sons, daughters, husbands and wives serving in the war on terror to compare your son's attempts to get you elected to my son's service in Iraq.

(APPLAUSE)

I know you apologized a couple of days later after a firestorm started, but it was wrong, sir, and you never should have said it.

ROMNEY: Well, there is no comparison, of course. There's no question but that the honor that we have for men and women who serve in our armed forces is a place of honor we will never forget and nothing compares to it.

ROMNEY: People who are willing to put their life on the line for American freedom are in a league of their own, and we owe them our respect. And the sacrifice they make is something we'll never forget.

The issue that I think -- Congressman Tancredo hit the nail on the head. This is not about broken pottery and it's also not about just getting out because we made a mistake. This is a global conflict going on, radical violent jihad. This effort ranges from Indonesia to Nigeria, and through Europe into America.

And this battlefield of Iraq is a place where we have to be successful because the consequences of what will happen on this global battlefield are enormous.

And that's why it's so important for us to be successful with the surge. And I agree, it looks successful. I certainly hope it's going to be fully successful. And as we are able to do that, we're going to see ourselves able to continue in our efforts to overwhelm jihad.

The key is this: We need a global strategy -- and on my Web site you'll see it -- a global strategy to help us overcome jihad globally because this is the threat which faces the entire civilized world.

HUME: Governor, let me follow up on one point. You again said it looked successful. Senator McCain disagreed with you on that point.

ROMNEY: I'm going to wait...

HUME: Is it or isn't it?

ROMNEY: Well, you know, we haven't heard from General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker. I believe it's successful.

HUME: OK.

ROMNEY: But I'm going to hold out until we hear the report. I'm going to give them the benefit of hearing that. I know there's some early reports that they're going to say it's successful. And I certainly hope that's the case, but let's listen to their report.

And assuming success, let's start bringing our troops back when they feel it's the right time to do so to make sure that we move to the support stage out of a posture of strength, and not of a posture of bowing to the Democrats.

The Democrats want to remove Al-Maliki. They want to remove the head of the government and withdraw; that's a policy for chaos.

HUME: Thank you. Thank you, Governor.

New subject, new round.

Wendell?

GOLER: I want to talk, gentlemen, about presidential power and the war on terror here at home.

GOLER: Governor Romney, I'll start with you. You had said that the government should wiretap some mosques to keep tabs on Islamic extremists. Would you do this even without a judge's approval, sir?

ROMNEY: No, of course not. But use the law to follow people who are teaching doctrines of terror and hate, and make sure that if they're doing that in a mosque, in a school, in a playground, wherever it's being done, we know what's going on.

There's no question but that we're under threat from people who want to attack our country in this global effort. And I know there's a lot of attention paid to, if you will, trying to respond to what would happen if we were attacked. And that's appropriate.

We need to have first response up to the best standards. But our focus has to be on preventing an attack. And preventing attack means good intelligence work.

It means that people who are coming to this country terrorizing or talking about terror in such a way that it could lead to the violent death of Americans, we need to know about that, track them, follow them, and make sure that in every way we can, we know what they're doing and where they're doing it.

ROMNEY: And if it means we have to go into a mosque to wiretap or a church, then that's exactly where we're going to go. Because we're going to do whatever it takes to protect the American people.

And I hear from time to time people say, hey, wait a second. We have civil liberties we have to worry about. But don't forget, the most important civil liberty I expect from my government is my right to be kept alive, and that's what we're going to have to do.

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Congressman Tancredo, along those lines, you have said the president should have the power to approve enhanced interrogation techniques, like waterboarding in cases where conventional interrogation is not getting the job done.

Sir, I want to ask you, is there a line you won't cross in this regard to keep Americans safe? Would you approve the use of torture if you felt it would prevent a terrorist attack?

TANCREDO: Torture. I mean, we get into this debate all the time, and as to what exactly is the definition of torture, and I'm telling you that what we need to do -- remember, the question that I was originally asked that elicited the response that you mentioned was, what do we do in the response to a nuclear -- or the fact that a nuclear device or some bombs have gone off in the United States.

TANCREDO: We know that there are -- we have captured people who have information that could lead us to the next one that's going to go off and it's the big one. That was the question that I responded to, and I told you, yes, I would do -- certainly, waterboard -- I don't believe that that is, quote, "torture."

I would do what is necessary to protect this country. That is the ultimate responsibility of the president of the United States. All of the other things that we do, all of the other things -- all of the other powers vested in him pale in comparison to his responsibility to keep the people of this country safe. And that is ultimate. And, yes, I would go to great lengths to keep this country safe.

GOLER: Senator McCain, what do you think about what Congressman Tancredo just said. And more broadly, do you feel President Bush may have overreached his constitutional authority in some actions after the 9/11 attacks, sir?

MCCAIN: I have a very dear and beloved friend whose name is General Jack Vessey, who was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under President Reagan. He served in four wars, and he's one of the great leaders I've ever known.

I called him, and I said, "General Vessey, do you think we ought to ever torture anybody?"

General Vessey said, "Any information that we may gain through the use of torture can never, ever be counterbalanced by the damage it does to America's reputation..."

(APPLAUSE)

... and the risk...

(APPLAUSE)

... and the risk that when an American is in the hands of an enemy that they will use the fact that we tortured people as an excuse to torture our brave men and women in the military."

I'm not prepared to...

(UNKNOWN): They don't need an excuse.

MCCAIN: ... for that.

It was interesting during the debate on torture, retired military, from Colin Powell on down, and others, sided with me.

MCCAIN: Those who had no military experience took the other side.

By the way, Governor Huckabee, thank you for your kind words.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Mayor Giuliani, if you don't think we should close the prison camp at Guantanamo Bay, how long are you prepared to live with the international criticism it's causing? And how long do you think we should hold people there that we feel we can't gain a conviction on, but are too dangerous to set free?

GIULIANI: Well, this reminds me of a period of time in New York when judges would release criminals into the street, or threaten to do it. We can't close Guantanamo because nobody will take the people there.

(APPLAUSE)

I mean -- the president is attempting to move those people to other countries, and those countries are intelligent enough to say, "We don't want people as dangerous as this in our country." So what are you proposing? That we release them in New York or in Boston or in Los Angeles?

GIULIANI: So there's a reality to this that the liberal media and some of the Democratic politicians seem to try to avoid.

Also this discussion of fighting a war where we're constantly discussing when we're going to withdraw, when has a nation ever won a war when the constant discussion was: What kind of timetable are we going to set for our retreat?

In order to...

(APPLAUSE)

In order to win, you have to set an objective. The objective should be an Iraq that is going to help us in the terrorists' war against us. If Iraq is a battle in the terrorists' war against us, then the winning of that battle constitutes an Iraq that will help us, not an Iraq that will become a headquarters for Islamic terrorism.

GOLER: Congressman Hunter...

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: ... the prisoners at Gitmo right now have little to do with the war in Iraq, so let me ask you basically the question that I asked Mayor Giuliani: Are you prepared to hold terrorism suspects at Guantanamo Bay indefinitely if you feel that we can't convict them and they're too dangerous to set free?

HUNTER: Well, absolutely.

And let me tell you that the proof of that is the fact that we have conducted these combatant review tribunals. And we've actually sent back to the battlefield or sent back to Afghanistan some of the people that we thought were no longer a threat.

Some of those people have shown up on the battlefield bearing arms against our soldiers and sailors and airmen and Marines, back on the battlefield after we sent them back.

If anything, we've been too liberal with the release of terrorists.

And let me tell you, you got guys like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who said that he planned the attack on 9/11. You got Osama bin Laden's bodyguards. Those guys get taxpayer-paid-for prayer rugs. They have prayer five times a day. They've all gained weight.

(LAUGHTER)

The last time I looked at the menu, they had honey-glazed chicken and rice pilaf on Friday. That's how we treat the terrorists.

They've got health care that's better than most HMOs. And they got something else that no Democrat politician in America has: They live in a place called Guantanamo, where not one person has ever been murdered. And there's not one politician, one Democrat politician in America, that can say that about one of the prisons in his home district. We've got to keep Guantanamo open.

(APPLAUSE)

GOLER: Senator Brownback, I want to turn to you, but I want to ask you a different question. On the issue of executive power, would you grant your vice president as much authority and as much independence as President Bush has granted to Vice President Cheney?

BROWNBACK: No, but I would lean heavily on the vice president for advice and thoughts. Because I think it's important that the two people come in as a team. I think the president and the vice president ought to come in as a team. I think they ought to have complementarity. I think they ought to have division

of duties in some respects, so as far as the president says I really want to focus on these areas, I'd like for you to do these particular fields.

But it's still the president that decides. And it's the president that should have all the information feeding in there to him in that position of authority, and you need somebody that has a good, broad base of experience to be able to do it. Good, broad base of foreign policy experience.

BROWNBACK: And if I could say one thought on this presidential power, because it's important, we've got hundreds of millions of entries into the United State legally each year, of individuals that are U.S. citizens and individuals that are not U.S. citizens. This is a big, international country.

You have to have the ability to be able to find and to understand what's taking place. And I think the president needs to go through judicial power to be able to put wiretaps on different individuals, but particularly on calls that go overseas.

We need this because we're not talking about just a needle in a haystack; we're talking about a needle in a hay field of millions of people that we have to -- need to watch, and we need to find, with good intelligence...

HUME: Thank you, Senator.

BROWNBACK: ... who it is that seeks to do us harm.

HUME: Thank you very much, Senator. New round, new subject.

Chris?

WALLACE: Gentlemen, let's talk about taxes and spending.

WALLACE: As you all well know, pledges not to raise income taxes are a big deal here in New Hampshire.

Six of you on this stage...

(APPLAUSE)

Six of you on this stage have signed the pledge of the Americans for Tax Reform to oppose any increase in marginal tax rates, while two of you have not.

Senator McCain, why have you refused to sign and why do you feel that six of your seven colleagues here on the stage are mistaken in deciding to take that pledge?

MCCAIN: Because I stand on my record. And my record is 24 years of opposing tax increases. And I opposed them and I'll continue to oppose them.

I think it's very clear that the increase in revenue that we've experienced is directly related to the tax cuts that were enacted and they need to be made permanent, rather than the family budgets and businesses being uncertain about their future.

But my proposal in 2000 and 2001 was not just to cut taxes but to stop spending.

MCCAIN: And we let spending get out of control. We destroyed the trust and confidence of our Republican base of fiscal conservatives. We allowed spending to get out of control to the point where it bred corruption. And I don't say that word lightly.

We have former members of Congress in federal prison as we speak.

I pledge to the American people, I will veto every pork barrel bill that comes across my desk. And I will make the authors of those pork barrel projects famous, and that's what I've been doing for a lot of years.

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Senator McCain, if I can follow up the 30 seconds. Those tax cuts that you talk about that have given so much revenue -- in fact, you voted against those -- and why not, if you are determined to not raise taxes, why not sign the pledge?

MCCAIN: Because there's no point. I stand on my record. I don't have to sign pledges.

MCCAIN: My record stands for itself. It's very clear to the American people. I've been in this business for a long, long time. But the point is that I voted against the tax cuts because there was no restraint in spending.

We had automatic restraints in spending included in my tax-cut package, and we would be talking about additional tax cuts today if we hadn't let spending get out of control and preside over the largest increase in the size of government since the Great Society. Not a record we should be proud of.

WALLACE: Senator Brownback, are you persuaded by Senator McCain's argument against taking the pledge not to increase marginal tax rates?

BROWNBACK: Well, he has his own record. He stands on his own record. I think he should sign a pledge. That's why I signed the pledge. I think it's not just a pledge to a group that has it. I think it's a pledge to the American public.

We're already taxed to the max. In most states, you're working until about the middle of May to pay your taxes. It is too long. You're working too much for the government, and you need to be working more for yourself.

BROWNBACK: And I've pushed these topics based on I think we need to grow the economy, plus I'd like to be able to see families keep more of their money so that possibly maybe one of them doesn't have to go to work instead of both having to go to work, if more families could keep more of their money instead of it going to the government.

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Mayor Giuliani, you say that you were a big tax-cutter in New York, but you did raise fees and fines and, in fact, you even went to court to fight elimination of the commuter tax. Why -- and you're the other person in addition to John McCain -- why not take the Americans for Tax Reform Pledge not to increase marginal rates, sir?

GIULIANI: It's a matter of principle. I think if you're president of the United States, you take one pledge: to uphold the Constitution of the United States.

GIULIANI: It is my intention to lower taxes. I have without any doubt of all the people running for president the strongest record of lowering taxes. I did it 23 times in a city that never lowered a tax before. Well over

\$9 billion. I lowered the personal income tax 25 percent, and I was collecting 40 percent more in revenues from the lower tax than the higher tax.

I made supply-side economics work in a city that didn't understand it. And I ended up having a very positive impact on the economy of the city as the result of that.

I lowered 23 different taxes in a city that had a city council with 45 Democrats and six Republicans. So my record is very, very strong as a tax cutter.

But I only think a man running or a woman running for president should take one pledge, and that is to uphold the Constitution of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Governor Romney, you have taken the pledge.

WALLACE: You like to say that you don't just talk about pledges, that, in fact, you actually had to operate one as government of Massachusetts.

But according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, in your first year as governor, you raised fees and fines by \$500 million, including fees paid by the blind, by gun owners, by those seeking training against domestic violence, and even by used car shoppers.

In fact, the Associated Press says you earned a nickname back then in Massachusetts. It was "Fee-fee".

(LAUGHTER)

How do you respond, sir?

ROMNEY: Well, that's the first I've ever heard that, Chris, but it's pretty good -- as a matter of fact, a little exaggeration. The total fees raised were \$260 million, and that's a big number.

We had a \$3 billion budget gap. The Democrats -- you probably know that Massachusetts is a bit of a Democratic state -- the Democrats wanted to raise taxes. I said, "No way."

And in fact we did not raise taxes on our citizens, and we lowered them across that state time and again. We put an investment tax credit permanently in place. We provided help to senior citizens on real estate taxes. We changed the capital gains tax increase to a capital gains tax refund.

ROMNEY: I'm proud of what we were able to do to lower taxes. I'm also going to lower taxes for the American people, and that's the key thing.

Right now, you can listen to the Democrats. Their pledge is clear. They're going to raise taxes. I want to lower them. Make the Bush tax cuts permanent. Kill the death tax once and for all.

(APPLAUSE)

And a savings plan -- a savings plan for middle income Americans. If you earn less than \$200,000 a year, the new tax rate on interest, dividends and capital gains ought to be absolutely zero.

And by the way...

(APPLAUSE)

... John Edwards has his own savings plan for the middle class. He says you can save \$250 a year tax-free. Whopty-doo. That's not going to buy you retirement, it's not going to buy you a house, and someone yelled out it's not going to buy him a haircut, either.

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

WALLACE: Governor Huckabee, you may be the biggest supporter of the FairTax on this stage, that you say replace the income tax with a 23 percent national sales tax.

WALLACE: Now, back in 2005, President Bush's tax reform commission did a study about the FairTax. They said the sales tax rate would have to be 34 percent, not 23 percent, and that no state, no country, has ever put in a 34 percent sales tax.

How do you respond to that and also the fact that President Bush's tax commission says that with a FairTax that high, there are only two income groups that would benefit -- those making less than \$30,000 a year and those making more than \$200,000?

HUCKABEE: Well, Chris, the first problem is that the Bush tax panel did not look at the FairTax proposal. They looked at something that called itself that, but it was not.

The true FairTax proposal is the 23 percent. And what it does do is empower everyone in the economy, not just the people at the bottom and the very top, but all of the middle class, which is a desperate need.

It's pretty sad right now that the average American is more afraid of an IRS audit than getting mugged.

HUCKABEE: But that's the truth, and the reason is because the IRS has the power not just to come after us for a few seconds, but to keep coming after us.

What we would do with the fair tax is to eliminate all the taxes on productivity, which means you could earn anything you want. You wouldn't be penalized for saving, earning, for having a capital gain, making an investment.

What you what do is you'd pay a tax when you consume something, and it ends the underground economy of illegals, prostitutes, drug dealers. Everybody has to pay.

And if people would look at this objectively, they'd find that it's the best way to get rid of the corruption in government because it eliminates those 35,000 lobbyists out there trying to make winners and losers. And most of us end up being losers in the process.

WALLACE: Congressman Paul, your answer is to cut both taxes and spending. You say that you would eliminate the IRS, the CIA, the Federal Reserve, the Department of Homeland Security, Medicare.

WALLACE: I know that you used to want to end the FBI. I'm not sure whether you still support that idea, sir. Perhaps you can tell us. But if you get rid of the CIA, let alone the FBI, how would President Paul have any idea, any intelligence of what our enemies, foreign and domestic, are up to?

PAUL: Well, you might ask a better question. Before 9/11, we were spending \$40 billion a year, and the FBI was producing numerous information about people being trained on airplanes, to fly them but not land them. And they totally ignored them.

So it's the inefficiency of the bureaucracy that is the problem. So, increasing this with the Department of Homeland Security and spending more money doesn't absolve us of the problem. Yes, we have every right in the world to know something about intelligence gathering. But we have to have intelligent people interpreting this information.

(APPLAUSE)

PAUL: But you know, just going for increasing presidential powers, as has been discussed, is rather disturbing to me. This whole idea that we're supposed to sacrifice liberty for security, we're advised against that. Don't we remember that when you sacrifice liberty for security, you lose both? That's what's happening in this country today.

(APPLAUSE)

PAUL: We have -- we have a national ID card on our doorsteps, it is being implemented right now. We have FISA courts. We have warrantless searches. We've lost habeas corpus. We've had secret prisons around the world and we have torture going on.

That's un-American, and we need to use the power of the presidency to get it back in order, in order to take care of us and protect this country and our liberties.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Thank you, Congressman. Let's see what the people down at Young's restaurant are making of all this.

Carl?

CAMERON: Well, what we're making of it is that we've reached the desert course of the debate here tonight at Young's.

We have a poli-sci major, a senior at UNH here, James Tautkus.

So with a bow to the Wildcats, poli-sci major, go ahead, James. Have at it.

JAMES TAUTKUS, UNH STUDENT: For Rudy Giuliani, I was curious, the subject of family values is separated from the rest because it's something that you can only lead by example. You can talk all you want, but it doesn't necessarily mean you believe in it. And I just wanted to hear what he -- his comments on that.

CAMERON: So, a question for Rudy Giuliani about family values. Why specifically, James; what's prompting this?

TAUTKUS: Because you don't see as strong of family as Mitt might present. I don't mean to target him, but it is a concern of mine and something I certainly believe a good candidate should have.

CAMERON: James Tautkus, poli-sci major at UNH.

GIULIANI: I gather that question was for me.

CAMERON: Yes.

GIULIANI: OK. The reality is that I think someone's private life, someone's family life is something that you all look into to determine how are they going to conduct themselves in public office. And in my case, you have about 30, 35 years of experience to figure out how I would.

GIULIANI: I held one of the most difficult jobs in the country, sometimes described as the second or third most difficult job in the country.

I held it under very difficult times. I'm not talking about September 11. I'm talking from the day I came into office, with a fiscal crisis, a crime crisis, a welfare crisis. I turned all those things around.

So, quite obviously, any issues that go on in my private life, which I don't think are terribly different than at least some people in this country.

I certainly haven't lived a perfect life. I am not running as the perfect candidate for president of the United States. I'm running as a human being who has been very successful as a leader and had definable results in a situation in which people thought it was impossible to accomplish these things.

They thought it was impossible to take on the Mafia. I succeeded in doing it. They thought it was impossible to reduce crime. I did. They thought it was impossible to reduce welfare. I removed 640,000 people from the welfare rolls.

And they thought it was impossible to manage New York City.

GIULIANI: It was described as an unmanageable city. Now they're writing books about how well I managed it.

HUME: Thank you.

GIULIANI: So, obviously, any issues in my private life do not affect my public performance.

HUME: Thank you, sir.

(APPLAUSE)

We've got to take a quick break here, but when we come back, we're going to ask the candidates to respond to a scenario the next president might very well face. Stay tuned.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HUME: And we are back, from the University of New Hampshire and the Whittemore Center Arena, known to all here in Durham as the WIC.

This round of questions is going to be based on a scenario which we think is quite plausible, that any of you as president might well end up facing. It concerns Iran.

And these are the circumstances: It's nuclear program has continued to advance. U.N. weapons inspectors are now saying that it appears that Iran is on the verge of being able to produce and may even be producing nuclear weapons.

Iran has suspended its cooperation with the U.N. nuclear agency and asked the inspectors to leave the country.

Cross-border incidents in Iraq involving elements of the Revolutionary Guards have continued to increase and are a continuing problem for U.S. forces there and for the Iraqis as well.

HUME: The U.N. Security Council has imposed some economic sanctions on Iran, but has refused to authorize the use of force against that country. In addition, the threats by Iran's leader against Israel have become more pronounced and more extreme. What do you do?

Congressman Paul?

PAUL: Well, one thing I would remember very clearly is the president doesn't have the authority to go to war.

HUME: So what...

PAUL: He goes to the Congress.

HUME: ... do you do? So what do you do?

PAUL: He goes to the Congress and finds out if there's any threat to our national security. And thinking back to the 1960s, when I was in the Air Force for five years, and there was a Cold War going on, and the Soviets had 40,000, and we stood them down, and we didn't have to have a nuclear confrontation, I would say that we should go very cautiously.

We should back off. We should be talking to Iran right now. We shouldn't be looking for the opportunity to attack them. They are at the present time, according to the IAEA, cooperating. And by the end of the year, they're supposed to be willing to reveal all that they are doing.

HUME: So instead of looking for this scenario where it is inevitable that we have to attack, I think that we ought to be talking about how to get along with some people that are deadly, like the Soviets and the Chinese and the many others. We don't have to resort to war every single time there is a confrontation.

They are not a threat to Israel. Israel has 200 or 300 nuclear missiles, and they can take care of themselves. So you shouldn't assume that we have to jump in and go to war, and we certainly shouldn't do it without the consent of the Congress.

HUME: Thank you, sir, thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

Congressman Tancredo, let us add to this mix of circumstances...

(CROSSTALK)

HUME: Let's add to this mix of circumstances a statement from Israel that says that we can't wait. If you don't act, we're going to. What do you do?

TANCREDO: Well, the scenario laid out is not one, of course, that leaves you many options, leaves the president of the United States or anybody else many options.

TANCREDO: You have to actually look -- the use, I think one of the most important things we can do with Iran is to look at the Iranian people themselves to the extent that we can. There is a great deal of dissent inside Iran. And I agree we certainly don't immediately, you know, use the button. We immediately don't go to war.

But I also tell you that we cannot back away from this situation, and we cannot be threatened in that way. If it takes it -- if it takes it -- action must be -- I mean, if it's required, action has to be taken and a president has to do that.

We can no longer -- you know, one of the things that has really bothered me during this whole discussion is the fact that we continue to be politically correct when we face these situations. Political correctness is going to get us all killed.

(APPLAUSE)

It is absolutely the thing we have to fear, and just, if I could, for just a minute -- listen, it is already the thing that has gotten us killed in other places.

TANCREDO: I will never, however, go to war under any circumstances by putting men and women of the armed forces in places of danger with their hands tied behind them with rules of engagement that they cannot live by. That's never going to happen.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Thank you, sir. Thank you.

Congressman Hunter?

HUNTER: Well, I hate to answer a hypothetical. I think you don't want a president who's going to answer this question in 60 seconds, but here's a few considerations.

First, you have the need to use precision systems -- precision, very accurate weapons, some of them with earth-penetrating capability.

You need to be able to isolate, if you have to strike. And if you get close to a 90 percent refinement of weapons-grade fuel, uranium, at that point, the danger is, if you don't eliminate it, then it could be passed to a terrorist group or to another nation, which at some point might make a nuclear device.

So you have to isolate -- the reaction force would be coming, obviously, from the Iraqi side.

HUNTER: And you would look, probably, at the pattern of what the Israelis did with the Osirak reactor that Saddam Hussein built back in the 1980s, when eight F-16s came over the horizon and took care of that problem.

I would say this: You can't allow them to have a nuclear device. You would have to obviously work very closely with all allies, not just the Israelis, but hopefully have help from Europe, help from the Brits, help from the Aussies.

And my answer would be that you would have to ensure that they had no nuclear device in the end of the operation and had no material, no weapons-grade material of available...

HUME: Governor Huckabee, your thoughts on this?

HUNTER: And that would ultimately require some ground forces to do a battle damage assessment...

HUME: Thank you, sir.

HUNTER: ... after a strike.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Thank you, sir.

Governor?

HUCKABEE: The problem with the question is it's hypothetical and it's a very detailed question. And I appreciate that you've given it to us.

HUCKABEE: But the reality is when a president is...

HUME: Wait a minute, would you not acknowledge it's not an unrealistic scenario based on what we've seeing there?

HUCKABEE: But what I'm saying is, when a president is elected president, he's elected president to make decisions that are going to be basically balanced between two immovable things that ought to govern every decision he makes. One is the Constitution, that he's sworn to uphold. And the other is his own conscience and character.

And that's what people really ask for in a president, because you don't know all the scenario that may be painted, whether it's this one or some other. And at that point, you hopefully have not only surrounded yourself with very, very wise people, but you've also come to the conclusion that you don't know everything.

And you get on your knees and then you get on your feet and you make a decision, knowing full well the responsibility for the rest of the human race may in fact be on your shoulders.

That's why, rather than just say here's what button I would push, I'd say I would go with every bit of preparation, not only in my head by in my heart, to make a decision that would best protect the American people for generations to come.

HUME: Senator Brownback?

(APPLAUSE)

BROWNBACK: I think the problem with your question and scenario is that it is an all too likely scenario. What you're describing is much of the situation that we're facing today. And you have to also recognize that the founder of the current Iranian regime, Ayatollah Khomeini, said, if we destroy Israel, Allah will reward us. That was his stated policy. That is something that he stated.

I think you have to take the factual setting of what you put forward, take it to the American public and to the Congress, and ask for the authority to use military force for two purposes. Number one purpose is to go after the military forces being developed on the ground and trained on the ground in Iran to attack our people in Iraq, and number two, towards the nuclear weapons development program that the Iranians are working on.

HUME: Mayor Giuliani?

GIULIANI: Well, I think that we have to look at Iran really in a different way than just the Cold War analysis. It's a different situation.

GIULIANI: Iran is right now the single biggest state sponsor of Islamic terrorism. I think everyone agrees on that. So the real risk to me is not their launching an attack, which they could do, and that's a plausible scenario.

The more realistic one is, they're going to hand nuclear material off to the terrorists that they are presently supplying. It's not as if they're going to have to go find them to give it to. They're giving them weapons right now.

They're giving them armaments right now. They're giving them money right now. So America has to have a clear position. The position should be that Iran is not going to be allowed to go nuclear.

Senator McCain put it very well a few months ago. He said it would be very, very dangerous to take military action against Iran, but it would be even more dangerous if Iran were a nuclear power. And I think a president has to make that very clear.

And exactly when you would act and how you would act, it would be foolish for anyone running for president to answer a hypothetical like that. You want an element of surprise. You want the other side to understand that there's a step beyond which you will not go.

Ronald Reagan won the Cold War without firing a shot.

GIULIANI: But it was because he pointed, like, a thousand missiles at Soviet cities.

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Thank you, sir.

GIULIANI: And he negotiated with them...

(APPLAUSE)

I heard this confusion in the Democratic debate about when to talk and when not to talk. Well, he talked to them with a thousand missiles pointed directly at their cities.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: Governor Romney, your thoughts.

ROMNEY: Well, clearly your hypothetical suggests that everything we've done, up until this point and beyond, didn't work. And there's a lot we can do to keep that scenario from occurring.

But assuming that has not worked and we've been unsuccessful and your hypothetical is real and it is all too possible, you're dealing with a nation that talks about genocide; that talks about Israel being a one-bomb state. And it is unacceptable for a nation that talks about genocide and contemplates using nuclear weaponry to have nuclear weapons.

ROMNEY: And, as a result, we're going to have to do something else to persuade them not to go forward. What do you do next before you actually take out the military action?

What you do next is this: the president meets with leaders, Republican and Democrat, to make sure we're all on the same page. We want to make sure that Democrats sign up, that we're all part of this on a unified basis.

(CROSSTALK)

ROMNEY: Number two -- well, my experience is being able to build consensus, and I'm not going to take that. I believe good Democrats love America just like good Republicans, and I'll find a way to get us to work together.

Number two, you meet with our allies around the world and make sure we're on the same page on this.

Number three, you work with the people on the Arabian Peninsula and you say to them, "We want you to put some pressure on people like China, like Saudi Arabia. They depend on your oil. We want you to put pressure on China to also be part of this."

Now we take the military option off the table. We hold in our hand -- when they see our military in our hand, a possible blockade or possible aerial strikes, they recognize we mean business.

ROMNEY: And that's going to make them think twice and, hopefully, abandon their folly.

Because it is unacceptable to the world for us to have a nuclear Iran, and there's no price of oil which would justify that outcome.

(APPLAUSE)

HUME: All right, Senator McCain, you have the last word here, sir.

MCCAIN: At the end of the day, we cannot allow Iran to have nuclear weapons.

Now, I believe that we can do a lot of things. We can have a league of democracies to impose sanctions and to cut off the -- many of the things and benefits that the Iranians are now getting from other democracies.

I think it's clear that the United Nations Security Council will not act effectively with Russia and China behaving as they are. But let's see what Iran has been doing.

Your hypothetical is closer than reality than many of us appreciate. Iranians are sending lethal IEDs that are killing American soldiers. They're training and equipping terrorists. They have dedicated themselves to the destruction of the state of Israel.

MCCAIN: They are arming Hezbollah. They are supporting Syria, and there is no doubt they are moving forward with the acquisition of a nuclear weapon.

We need to work together with our allies, but at the end of the day, it's the United States of America that will make the final decision.

In January of 1981, Ronald Reagan came to power and raised his hand as president of the United States of America. By more than coincidence, the Iranian hostages returned on that same day. I would employ some of his methods.

HUME: Thank you, Senator McCain.

And thank all of you.

(APPLAUSE)

That is it for us tonight. Our thanks to the candidates and their staffs, to our debate partner, the Republican Party of New Hampshire, and also to all the great people here at the University of New Hampshire.

Candidates, please know that our next debate is in Orlando, Florida, Sunday, October 21st. We will see you there.

(APPLAUSE)

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