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“REAL TIME WITH BILL MAHER”

BILL MAHER

SEYMOUR HERSH

[via satellite]

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[via satellite]

All “Real Time with Bill Maher” transcripts are prepared immediately following the initial HBO broadcast. Due to the speed with which these transcripts are prepared, complete accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

[COLD OPEN: PROMO FOR “IN SEARCH OF SANTA CLAUS”]

ANNOUNCER: This Sunday on The Discovery Channel, director James Cameron takes you on an incredible journey... “In Search of Santa Claus.” [laughter] Cameron and his team of TV scientists uncover the truth behind the beard.

SANTA CLAUS: Ho-ho-ho-ho-ho.

ANNOUNCER: Does this half-eaten cookie prove Santa was here?

WOMAN’S VOICE: Oh my God! Look at this!

ANNOUNCER: If not, who ate it? Is this mysterious scroll the actual “List of Who’s Naughty and Who’s Nice”? [laughter]

MAN’S VOICE: This is unbelievable!

ANNOUNCER: And how does Santa make that determination: Wiretaps?

MAN’S VOICE: It’s incredible.

ANNOUNCER: Did Santa secretly father a son one Christmas Eve? And is that son the actor, Jason Alexander? [laughter] Find out Sunday on “In Search of Santa Claus.” You may never believe in fairy tales again. [applause]

[OPENING CREDITS]

[applause] [cheers] [standing ovation]

BILL MAHER: Thank you very much. How you doin’ today? Thank you. Aw, stop it. Thank you very much. You’re too kind. Please. Thank you. I... I know. I know. Thank you. Stop. Oh, please. I’m humbled. Thank you. I... [laughs] I know why you’re happy. Afghanistan reported a record opium crop. [laughter] I think that explains why Dick Cheney came back from his trip saying, “Hey! They greeted us with flowers.” [laughter] “And they blew my mind.” [laughter]

Have you heard about this, this week? The Taliban tried to blow up Dick Cheney. Don't worry, he's okay. [laughter] [audience reacts "aw"] [laughter] No, he was never in danger. At the time of the attack he was safely asleep in his coffin. [laughter] So... [applause] I'm joking. I just hope that this attempt on his life doesn't turn him bitter, vicious and paranoid. Because that... [laughter]

Well, speaking of vicious, we are 10 months away from anyone even casting the first vote in the Presidential election, already the mud is flying. Did you hear the latest about Barak Obama? That he comes from a family of slave owners? [smattering of laughter] And he's black. This is – but he's half white. And apparently on his mother's side, the white side, they owned slaves. And the Barak Obama camp was going to deny it, but his approval ratings in the South shot up 27 points. So... [laughter] [applause]

But that's nothing. Apparently President Bush's entire family is owned by Saudi Arabia. [laughter] [applause] [cheers]

Now, in other slave-owning news this week. [laughter] I don't know why this was a big week for slave-owning news, I couldn't make this up, I'm not making this up, one of Al Sharpton's ancestors – you heard this? – yes – was owned by one of Strom Thurmond's ancestors. But they sold him because his medallion kept getting caught in the cotton gin. [laughter] But is this really relevant to the presidential campaign, whose ancestors owned whose ancestors? To me that's more “first date” conversation. [laughter]

And you heard about the big John McCain gaffe. No, he was on the David Letterman show announcing his presidential campaign., and he pulled a Joe Biden. He – right off the gate – he said the wrong word. He used the word “wasted” to describe the lives lost in Iraq. And he, next day, said, “No, I should have used the word ‘sacrificed.’” But to put it in perspective, when McCain was a prisoner in Vietnam, George Bush was wasted. [laughter] And... [applause] Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I meant to say he was “sacrificing brain cells.” [laughter]

And they're going after Al Gore. He's not even in the race yet. They're going after him. He had won the Oscar, Sunday, not even a day goes by when the busted him, because apparently –[laughs]—listen to this – his house in Tennessee uses 20 times the electricity of the average house in Tennessee. But that's because Gore's house has electricity. [laughter] [applause] I kid the – I love the people in Tennessee.

But, you know, Gore has done so much for the environment, what do they care if he heats his house by leaving the refrigerator door open? And by the look of him, [laughs] he does his heat his house by leaving the refrigerator – that is “an inconvenient girth” this man has. [laughter] He is a big, fat lout.

Anyway... our long national nightmare is finally over, I'm probably sure you heard. Anna Nicole Smith's body was sent to the Bahamas. And it sounded like such a good idea, James Brown's body is going skiing. [laughter] [applause]

All right. We've got a great show. We've got John Ridley, we've got Joe Scarborough, and we've got Congressman Barney Frank. And a little later, I'll be talking to Mia Farrow. But first up, he's a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author. Please welcome *The New Yorker's* Seymour Hersh, ladies and gentlemen. Seymour! [applause]

SEYMOUR HERSH [via satellite]: Hello.

MAHER: Thank you so much for being here. I am truly a fan of yours. You are a real investigative journalist. I'm grateful the *New Yorker* prints you so much. You broke the stories on the My Lai massacre, Abu Ghraib, and Iraq. You truly do 'see more.' [laughter] [Hersh laughs] And what do you see now? I know from your latest article, we should probably be worrying about a war with Iran?

HERSH: Well, sure, we should be worrying every day about everything. We've got 1-1/2 years left, a little bit more than that, and I think we just have to wait it out, and maybe we can get to 2009 without every Muslim in the world coming after us. Maybe not.

MAHER: But what I get from your recent article is that Dick Cheney thinks that Iran is going to have a nuclear bomb soon, and he's going to give it to Hezbollah. And Hezbollah is going to use it on us. And I understand that you interviewed the head of Hezbollah, which is a very hard thing to do. How did you get in to see Mel Gibson? [laughter]

HERSH: [laughs] You know...

MAHER: Oh, I kid Hezbollah.

HERSH: I would do that to Hassan Nasrallah. I guess he wouldn't worry about it too much. Nasrallah, the head of Hezbollah, is very hard to see right now because as you know, there's a death threat on his head from the Israelis, since his group became the first people in the Middle East to defeat the Israelis. And so he's pretty much on the line right now. And he's very concerned because he thinks that this White House is trying to create civil war. That is, war between Sunnis and Shia all over the Middle East. We have it in Iraq right now and that's – that's a goner. But he thinks they're trying to spread it—

MAHER: Right. And if we're going to really understand what's going on in the Middle East right now, we do have to understand what's going on with the Sunnis and the

Shiites. Now, our audience, very bright people, I think they probably know. But let's pretend that they know only as much as George Bush. [laughter] So let's review a little primer here, okay? The Sunnis, they're the majority of the Muslim world. Right? The Muslim world has two divisions: the Sunnis and the Shiites. Right?

HERSH: And the Sunnis are 90%.

MAHER: Sunnis are 90%, and they include big countries like Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, and Jordan, and, of course, Al Qaeda – our real enemies.

HERSH: Absolutely.

MAHER: Now, the Shiites, they're, of course, all over Iran, that's a Shiite country. That's the minority. And—

HERSH: [overlaps] But there's a lot of oil, Bill. A lot of oil.

MAHER: [overlaps] A lot of oil. We'll get to the oil later. And Iraq. Most of Iraq is Shiite, but they had always been ruled by the Sunnis, like Saddam Hussein was a Sunni. Now, we upended that country; we got rid of the Sunnis. The Shiites are now in control. So, we're kind of worried now that the Shiites are ascendant. So I understand from your article that we have been funding some radical Sunni groups, which would be Al Qaeda. So it seems to me, in five years we've gone from threatening to wipe out Al Qaeda, to watching them become resurgent, to now joining them.

HERSH: You know—

MAHER: [overlaps] Are we actually the next country that's in the Axis of Evil? [smattering of laughter]

HERSH: You know, it's – the only thing I would change slightly is we're throwing a lot of money, we're not – it's not appropriated money, it's not money that came from Congress, Congress isn't cut in on this. This White House simply ignores Congress, ignores the laws when it comes to national security covert operations. And working with the Saudis, we have pumped an awful lot of money into Lebanon. And some of that money, and some of the money we're pumping in, could have come from the money that has been wasted in Iraq. You know, there's talk of billions of dollars missing. It's hard to trace black, dirty money, undercover money.

But some of that money that we've thrown in, and some of the money the Saudi money – the Saudis have thrown in, has ended up in the hands of three jihadist, hard-line groups. The kind of guys that two or three years ago, if we had learned about, we would have

them in Gitmo, in Guantanamo. Instead, we're letting them stay – and this is in Lebanon – because eventually in the Bush world, there's going to be, we think, a war between the Sunnis in Lebanon and Hezbollah in Lebanon. We want – we don't want Hezbollah to get anyplace in Lebanon.

MAHER: But if there is a war between the Sunnis and the Shiites, could that not sort of be good for us, in a selfish way? I would never say that George Bush planned this, because before the war, he didn't even know that there were Sunnis and Shiites. [smattering of laughter] But in a Clouseau kind of way, could have kind of bungled into a solution that would be good for America? That they hate each – because don't they hate each other more than they even hate us?

HERSH: Well, if you're a Sunni, if you're a jihadist Sunni, a radical Sunni out of Saudi Arabia, a Salafi or a Wahhabi, you think that anybody that doesn't practice your faith the way you do is an infidel, and you can wipe them out. And don't forget, you're right, 15 of the 19 guys that flew into the Twin Towers in New York, were Saudis. So, we – by supporting those groups, we are supporting people who may be useful in a war against Hezbollah – the jihadists are very tough, Hezbollah's very tough – but ultimately they will turn on us, too. That's the real issue.

MAHER: [overlaps] Okay.

HERSH: If you give money to bad guys, the bad guys will – yes, they'll run around killing Shia and maybe in the short run doing something we want to do. In the long run, of course, we'll just be making more enemies.

MAHER: So, our friend Frank Rich, over at the *New York Times* wrote a scary column this week. And he said, "The system is blinking red, just like it was right before 9/11." And he talked about the fact that Al Qaeda is reconstituted in Pakistan. He always says – Bush always says, "Al Qaeda is on the run." But actually, no, they've settled down. They've got a lovely spot in Waziristan. [smattering of laughter] And he quotes this Michael Scherer, who was the head of the bin Laden group at the CIA, the guy who was trying to get bin Laden for all those years. And Michael Scherer says, "Al Qaeda is in Afghanistan and Pakistan. If you want to address the real threat to America, that's where it is." Why do you think we keep fighting them where they aren't?

HERSH: I think this is without question the most dangerous administration we've ever had in the history of the country, just in terms of what you're saying. They don't understand the Middle East, they – right now they have a disaster on their hands in Iraq, and they're trying to "fail forward," as somebody in the military told me. Failing forward by just pushing into Iran. Maybe we'll bomb Iran, maybe we won't.

But what they're doing is we're running clandestine covert operations with the help of the Saudis. In effect, we're outsourcing clandestine operations to the Saudi government, which is pretty amazing for an American government.

We're outsourcing the most sensitive operations there are. We're not telling the Congress. We're disobeying the law. We're using money that isn't appropriated. The system is completely broken, and it's – and these guys are really marching to their own tune. They do believe, as you said at your opening, Cheney does believe that – it doesn't matter what the facts are, that Iran's going to get a bomb – they don't have one now, there's no intelligence that says – they may get one in five or ten years, but he thinks they're going to get the bomb.

He thinks their “brown shirts,” to use the old World War II, you know, the Nazi analogy, is Hezbollah. He thinks that Hezbollah has cells hidden, tucked away, here in America. He believes that. I think the President does, but I know he does. I know that more or less firsthand. And I've been doing this for five years, since 9/11. No other story. And I do have some access. He believes that Hezbollah can – once they – if Iran gets a bomb, they'll give it to Hezbollah. Hezbollah can get it to New York, Washington, L.A., what you will, and “poof.”

So, in other words, the President and the Vice President, they're not defending the Middle East, they're defending Western Europe. In their own world, they believe they're defending us. And therefore, they're going to take the actions they think they have to do. And maybe they won't be appreciated now, but in the next 20, 30 years, George Bush believes he's going to be hailed as a visionary president. This is what I really think he believes. [audience reacts]

MAHER: Well, I hope the next time I see you, we're both alive. [laughter] Seymour Hersh, ladies and gentlemen. All right. [applause] [cheers] Thank you, Mr. Hersh. And it's time to meet our panel.

All right, he is a National Public Radio commentator and author whose latest book is *The American Way*. John Ridley is over here. John, how are you doing? [applause]

He is the former U.S. congressman who hosts “Scarborough Country” weeknights on MSNBC, my friend, Joe Scarborough right over here. [applause] Joe, how are you?

And the 14th term U.S. Representative from Massachusetts, who chairs the House Financial Services Committee, you all know our friend, Congressman Barney Frank. Barney? [applause] [cheers]

Okay, so you heard that interview. And, according to a lot of people, it's getting to look a lot like 9/11. And, you know, I have to ask you first, Barney, what are the Democratic plans? I know it's easy to make fun of the Republicans for what they have and haven't done about the war on terror, but I don't hear a lot about how the Democrats are going to kill the people that need killing.

I hear a lot about "Hillary Clinton should apologize for what she didn't vote on Iraq," and "should she change her pantsuit," [laughter] but how are the Democrats going to kill the right people?

BARNEY FRANK: Well, in fact, Nancy Pelosi has been very firm on saying that one of the problems is that we're not doing enough in Afghanistan. And what you have – remember, one of the arguments we've heard is, "Oh, you Democrats, you don't want to stand up for America." The war in Afghanistan was supported by every Democrat in the Senate and every Democrat but one in the House. And when we went to war in Afghanistan, by the way, we had a united country and a world that said, "You're right, because those people did come and kill innocent people, and the Taliban's a pretty bad bunch; you can go after them."

Many of us have been arguing that one of the great costs of the war in Iraq – there are a lot of costs – has been a diversion of the energies from Afghanistan. Had we not gone to war in Iraq, had we put a small percentage of those resources into Afghanistan, it would be a lot safer now. And there is a Democratic push now to do more in Afghanistan and much less in Iraq.

MAHER: Does anyone think that if we got attacked again, this government is up to protecting us, after Katrina and 9/11 and Iraq? Does anyone—

JOHN RIDLEY: Is California in the poll? You including Democrats and Republicans?

MAHER: Yeah, I am.

RIDLEY: No, I don't think so. I mean, you talk about the systemic failure. Look, 9/11 didn't have to happen. People knew – 9/11 as we know it, didn't have to happen. There were people trying to rush into cockpits long before these guys did it. The fact that it was dangerous, and that a few hundred dollars, several hundred dollars in the airlines, would have stopped it, as we know it. It's going to happen again at some point, whether it's Al Qaeda, whether it's Tim McVeigh. It's difficult to stop zealots.

But the idea that the government has got their eyes on what needs to be done, I don't think they do. Democrat or Republican.

JOE SCARBOROUGH: Well, I want to say this, though. And I've been very critical of George Bush—

MAHER: God bless you.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—and the war, as a Republican that supported this war from the beginning.

MAHER: Yeah.

FRANK: He's not that crazy about you either.

SCARBOROUGH: No, he doesn't like – he doesn't like me a lot. Neither does Karl Rove or the rest of them. But I will say this, though. We all do bear a responsibility, going back to 2003, for this war in Iraq. Republicans rubber-stamped everything George W. Bush wanted to do—

MAHER: Yeah.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—in '03, '04, '05, '06. And there are a lot of Democrats who were timid. They were timid because they were being told that they didn't love America, that they weren't patriots, or they were soft.

Now, the question is, what are we going to do, going forward? And when I hear Sy Hersh, who – by the way, the *New Yorker* article is one of the more important articles I think has been written in a while – but you hear Sy Hersh talk, it's as if somebody anointed George W. Bush dictator. That's not the case. Democrats are in charge of the House. Democrats are in charge of the Senate. They've got the power to stop George W. Bush if they want to.

RIDLEY: But will they? Will they step up and do this?

FRANK: [overlapping] Can I say – well, yes—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] Well, that's the question.

FRANK: [overlapping]—all right. Well, for the first – yeah, there've been two months since Congress took over. Less than two months. Secondly, the problem in the Senate is that there are 50 Democrats, not 51, because Tim Johnson, sadly, was sick. Look, these are facts. And you have one Democratic senator, Joe Lieberman, who was defeated in the primary, got elected anyway, who was isn't supportive. So—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] But you've got Democrats, though, in the—

FRANK: [overlapping] Joe, give me—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] Hold it a second, Barney—

FRANK: [overlapping] No, no, no, no. New York – Joe – no, Joe, I'm sorry—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—if every – if everybody were like you and took your position—

FRANK: [overlapping] Joe, please don't do this.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—then you'd be able to at least cut spending.

FRANK: [overlapping] Joe, let's have rational – let's stop—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] What? Am I not being rational here?

FRANK: [overlapping] No – no, because you're interrupting—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] Because I'm saying that Democrats have the checkbook in the House of Representatives?

FRANK: No, because you're interrupting, and you can't have coherent conversation if every ten seconds, there's an interruption. The problem—[applause]

SCARBOROUGH: Hey, thank you for that lecture, Barney. [applause] [cheers] [voices overlap]

FRANK: Joe, now can I finish a sentence?

SCARBOROUGH: Well, yeah.

FRANK: Thank you. The fact is that in the Senate, the Democrats don't have the votes because of that situation. In the House, while there is a Democratic opposition to new money, here's the problem. The Republicans, when they were in power, managed to pass two of the 13 Appropriations bills. One was for the military.

George Bush now has legal authority to spend over \$400 billion. The Supreme Court has, for many years, deferred to the president in that regard. And that's our dilemma. Yeah,

we are trying to figure out a way to stop it. But the problem is, he doesn't need the new money. It's with the additional money.

I did want to say one other thing about when you asked about the 9/11 thing. One thing that we did do was to take some of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission that hadn't been enacted and enact them.

But, I want to say this, when you asked, "Can we stop it?" And John talked about this. This is a free society. This isn't China. This isn't North Korea. We have hundreds of millions of people here. Yeah, the law enforcement people can do the best they can to try to stop it, but, you know, part of the – risk is part of the price of freedom.

MAHER: Well, I'm glad you mentioned freedom, because, two weeks ago on this show, I was promoting the idea that candidates who are running for president should get their gaffes out of the way. Okay, so John McCain apparently took me very seriously the other night on "David Letterman," and he used the "w" word, "wasted." He said, "We've wasted a lot of our most precious treasure: American lives."

Now, this is the same gaffe Barack Obama made a couple of weeks ago. And if we all agree that Iraq is a sideshow and it's just making the problem worse, then it's a "rude but true." These lives are wasted. I feel terrible—

RIDLEY: The thing is, it's not a gaffe, though. That's the problem. It is the truth, and it's not being dishonorable to the service of these individuals. In fact, that's what makes it a waste. These are committed, dedicated individuals who decided to put on the uniform, and they're being put in a meat grinder.

What's problematic is Barack Obama backed off of it and John McCain backed off of it. If anybody deserves to say it's a waste, it's John McCain.

SCARBOROUGH: Exactly—

RIDLEY: And he can't say it in this—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] And John McCain—[applause]

RIDLEY: [overlapping]—he can't say it.

SCARBOROUGH: John McCain—

MAHER: So, in essence, we are China.

FRANK: No. No.

SCARBOROUGH: Well, John McCain—

RIDLEY: [overlapping] No, unfortunately, because nobody has jobs here. We're not China.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] No, no, the thing is, John McCain said it; John McCain understood it because he lived through it during Vietnam. John McCain also hears generals saying it everyday. If you don't think that generals aren't saying, behind closed doors at the Pentagon, that the decisions that we've been making over in Iraq over the past two to three years, are wasting guys' and women's lives that are under their command, then you're living in a dream world. Because they are saying it.

RIDLEY: Why aren't the politicians saying it? Why aren't—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] Well, we need to say it.

FRANK: [overlapping] We are saying it. First of all—

RIDLEY: But not – they're not saying “wasted.”

FRANK: No, and I'll tell you why. First of all, I voted against the war in Iraq. I didn't believe them then. I thought they were lying. [applause] [cheers] They've now been lying about lying. I don't have a lot – I don't have a lot of sympathy for my colleagues who said, “Oh, poor me, how was I to know?” I'm no wizard. I knew. [laughter] You just listen to them, and they were wrong.

But I'll tell you what the thing about “wasted” is, it's this. And I don't think there's anything the matter with worrying about people's feelings. I've been very critical of the war. I voted against it. I have never voted money for it. I'm trying to stop it. There are families of people who have been killed, and I am careful when I talk about it, because I think I can get my point across about what a terrible mistake this war is and how urgent it is to stop it, without adding further pain to them.

There are families who, when they hear the word “wasted,” cringe, and it adds pain to them.

MAHER: Yes, and I agree with that. [applause]

FRANK: And if I can get my point – if I can get my point across—

MAHER: [overlapping] But, until we—

FRANK: [overlapping]—if I can get my point across without further—

MAHER: Oh, I'm going to get yelled at next, I know. [voices overlap] [laughter]

SCARBOROUGH: Wait. Hold on a second, Bill. If you support rational thought, you'll let Barney continue to talk. [laughter] Sit back and shut up.

FRANK: [overlapping] No, I just—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] It's not your show.

RIDLEY: [overlapping] Because it ain't China.

FRANK: Joe, I know, as a talk show host, interruption is your new—

SCARBOROUGH: No, no, the thing is—

FRANK: [overlapping]—there you go. It's interruption.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—I wish we had – you know what? I'm going to go back and look at the TiVo and we're just going to see how much time you got, Barney and how much time the rest of us got. Go ahead.

FRANK: It's not a question of overall time. If—

SCARBOROUGH: You're hinting about – you get stop watches?

RIDLEY: But, wait a minute. Now we're talking about – we're talking about interruptions and we're not talking about the point.

SCARBOROUGH: The point is, we are China, actually. [voices overlap]

MAHER: The word, “wasted.”

RIDLEY: The point is the word, “wasted.” And my problem is that you don't have individuals, and say the tough things. Respect for the families, but there are some families, when Barack Obama said it, who stood up and said, “Yes.” [voices overlap]

MAHER: My question – one question, Barney. If we admitted that it was “wasted,” would not it solve the problem of the war itself? In other words, people are going to die in the future because we can’t step up to this right now. [applause]

FRANK: [overlapping] No, Bill, you’ve missed my point entirely. No, I asked – no, the point is – by the way, if you think calling it one word rather than another stops the war, you’re wrong. What stops it is people voting against it. People in Congress voting against it.

MAHER: But words...

FRANK: I guess I’m going to use the “interruption” word again. That may be a bad thing to do, but I am trying to get a thought out here. What you call it doesn’t affect – going forward – I said it was a terrible mistake from the beginning. Morally, it was a mistake. It’s been badly run. I’m against it. I’m trying to stop it. I don’t understand why I have to add to the pain of some families to do that.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] You know, the thing is—

FRANK: [overlapping] It doesn’t help politically—

MAHER: [overlapping] Okay.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—that is important right now as we move forward is, you know, you go to the Vietnam War Memorial, you see the names who are on there. I guess over half of the names on the memorial are of young men who died after we knew Vietnam was not going to end well. And the question is, you can talk about lives that have been wasted, as we go back. You need to talk about the lives, moving forward, that are going to be wasted, if people don’t step up and realize—

MAHER: Yeah.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—that we can’t solve this problem in Iraq. And instead of 3,000 people being killed, we’re going to have 6,000, 7,000, before we get out. [applause]

MAHER: And also, I’d like to – I’d like to address that. I do think words matter. I think – I think slogans get people killed. When George Bush says, “We’re fighting them over there so we don’t have to fight ‘em over here” – don’t interrupt me, Barney. [laughter]

FRANK: I’m not interrupting.

MAHER: You were about to. I saw that look on your face.

SCARBOROUGH: He was. [laughter]

FRANK: No.

MAHER: You had the look of interruption.

FRANK: No, I was looking askance. I was not interrupting. [laughter]

MAHER: Okay, but when George Bush puts that slogan out there, “We fight ‘em over there so we don’t have to fight ‘em over here,” and lots of people in this country don’t think past that, go, “Okay, the Bush team, they got it. We’re fighting them over there. They got it, we’re done.” And that’s the problem.

RIDLEY: But “sacrifice” – the word “sacrifice” – we’re talking about human sacrifice.

FRANK: [overlapping] Except, again—

RIDLEY: [overlapping] Even that, even that in semantics, doesn’t make things any better. The idea that we’re taking young men and women and we’re taking them up to the Mayan temple and slaughtering them, that’s what’s being done.

FRANK: I agree with that. By the way, I voted against it. [laughter] Again, this notion – this notion that—

MAHER: We’re not – okay.

FRANK: [overlapping]—no, but, Bill, you said the slogans do it. No, it’s – people are – the votes aren’t cast basically on slogans. And if people want this war to stop, they should insist that members of Congress vote not to fund it. And the way to do that is to try and build political support for it.

Frankly, if you use words that may drive some people away, you’re making it less likely that you win. I don’t think there’s any problem with trying to be politically effective in a moral cause. And the moral cause is stopping the war.

MAHER: But a lot of people, these families that you talk about – and I agree, it’s horrible for them to have to face this idea that their kid died in vain – but what they have to tell themselves are lies. “We’re fighting for…” “He died for freedom.” “He died fighting for our freedom.” This is not World War II where they died to prevent Tojo and Hitler

coming to our shores. They died because George Bush wanted to play “war president.” [applause]

FRANK: You’re making a false dichotomy here. I agree – I agree that they should not have died. I voted against—

MAHER: [overlapping] Okay, all right, all right.

FRANK: [overlapping] No, excuse me, there is a – you were saying if you don’t say it’s a waste, then you must be saying it’s World War II. There are – there are ways that you can talk about what a terrible mistake this was from every perspective without adding to people’s pain. And I think that’s a—

MAHER: [overlapping] Let me get back to China and how we’re not China. We’ve all heard about Walter Reed Army this week, okay? So, you know about this. They told the soldiers, now, you can’t talk to the press. Walter Reed, there was a wing in Walter Reed – and this is not all Walter Reed – I visited that hospital; I saw some good stuff going on there – but, obviously not all of it is effective. “Don’t talk to the press,” this is what they told the soldiers.

So, these guys who are fighting for freedom and the American way are told, “Shut up. If you come home dead, we can’t photograph your coffin, and if you come home alive, shut up.” Well, that does sound like China. [applause]

RIDLEY: Well, to me, it’s – it goes back to language. There are things that politicians should say, the things that – ways they should say them. But, you go back to individuals, again, like John McCain is not allowed to use a particular word. Now, you’re saying to these young soldiers – whatever age they are, young, old, what have you – they’re coming back – don’t say things, don’t talk about things; let’s just sweep it under the table.

It’s wrong in every way, shape and form.

SCARBOROUGH: Well, it’s also stupid. It’s just not going to work. When you tell these young men and women who are in Walter Reed that they can’t talk to the press, they’re going to figure out a way to talk to the press. When you tell CNN and our network and other networks that you can’t go into Walter Reed, you’re exactly right. People are going to bring up the point that you’re bringing up. The very freedoms that we’ve been saying they’ve been fighting and dying for over the past four years are now being squelched.

And again, bottom line, it's just stupid. And it's a policy that's not going to stand.
[applause]

FRANK: And it's not going to stand. You know, these are people who – and, in fact, it is appalling to see the administration in this posture. And, of course, we could make – these are the people who say that those of us who want the war to end and say it was a terrible mistake, and are not going to vote money to keep it going – we're not supporting the troops, when, of course, they are the ones who are apparently guilty of abuse of the troops.

And, yeah, you're right, this notion that they shouldn't talk to the press is ludicrous. Of course, the argument is, well, the military can't talk to the press because of military reasons. This is a misuse of that doctrine, and I think it will just get swept away.

MAHER: What about the people who got onto the HuffingtonPost – and these weren't even the bloggers, these were just the “comments” section – who said they – they expressed regret that the attack on Dick Cheney failed. [laughter]

SCARBOROUGH: Right.

RIDLEY: More than regret.

MAHER: Well, what did they say? They said they wished—

RIDLEY: They said, we wish he would die. I mean, they were – it was direct hate language. [voices overlap]

MAHER: Okay, but—

FRANK: [overlapping] They said the bomb was – they said the bomb was wasted.
[laughter] [applause]

MAHER: All right, but, seriously, if this isn't China, shouldn't you be able to say that? Why did Arianna have to – my girlfriend, I love her – but why did she take that off right away?

FRANK: [overlapping] Bill, Bill, first of all, you know, it's clearly not China. You shouldn't trivialize democracy. The fact that we are talking about if this was China, we couldn't do it. And I don't think we ought to sort of make this kind of comparison. It's one thing to say that the administration made a stupid and unfair thing with the – with the soldiers. It's another saying that makes us China. That's just not sensible.

As far as the HuffingtonPost is concerned, I gather she decided, as the person who runs this, that she didn't want to be associated with it. I think that's her right. People are free to say whatever they want to say for her. I think the person in charge of the forum can say, "You know what? I don't want to be associated with that. Say it somewhere else."

SCARBOROUGH: Well, and not only that, if she had left it up, she would have opened herself up to attack. She took it down immediately. She was still attacked by people that took the hate language and tried to make it stick to her. And obviously, she's trying to build to site where you can have reasoned debate. And it's probably not in her best interests to allow that to stay there.

MAHER: But—

RIDLEY: Yeah, I don't think it's about having to take it off. It's actually trying to be responsible and say, look, you can have a discourse and dialogue and say – it's one thing to say you hate Dick Cheney—

SCARBOROUGH: Right.

RIDLEY: [overlapping]—which sort of applies to his politics. It's another thing to say, "I'm sorry he didn't die in an explosion." And I think that—

MAHER: But – but, you should be able to say it.

FRANK: [overlapping] You can say it, you can—

MAHER: [overlapping] And, by the way—[voices overlap]—she took it off—

RIDLEY: [overlapping] You can't use any language—

FRANK: [overlapping] Because it's her forum!

RIDLEY: [overlapping] No, it's not. You cannot have language that incites violence.

FRANK: [overlapping] Excuse me, Bill, can I ask you a question? Do you decide what the topics are for this show?

MAHER: Yeah, I decide the topics. They don't go there. [laughter] And I—

FRANK: [overlapping] But you – you exercise control over the show—

MAHER: [overlapping] But, listen—

FRANK: [overlapping]—the way she does with her blog.

MAHER: [overlapping] But I have zero doubt that if Dick Cheney was not in power, people wouldn't be dying needlessly tomorrow. [applause]

RIDLEY: Okay, but—[voices overlap under applause]

SCARBOROUGH: But, let's talk – let's talk about your show for a second, very quickly. If somebody on this panel said they wished that Dick Cheney had been blown up, and you didn't say—

FRANK: I think he did. [laughter]

SCARBOROUGH: Okay, did you say--?

MAHER: No. No, I quoted that.

FRANK: You don't? Oh, you don't believe that?

MAHER: No, I'm just saying that if he did die—

SCARBOROUGH: [laughter] Okay, but if – oh, let's just say—

MAHER: [overlapping]—other people – more people would live. That's a fact.

SCARBOROUGH: Okay, then – but, let's put it this way then. If somebody came on here and said that they wished all abortion clinics had been blown up—

MAHER: Right.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—and you didn't step forward and say, “I disassociate myself with those remarks,” and it just floats out there in the transcripts, then you're going to be connected with those words. Arianna Huffington has every right to say, “I don't want to be associated with this hate language.”

MAHER: Right.

SCARBOROUGH: “I'm going to take it down from my site so right-wing talk show hosts aren't going to try to wrap those words around me.

FRANK: And you can say it on your own blog. You can say it elsewhere. [voices overlap]

SCARBOROUGH: And you'd do the same thing.

MAHER: Okay.

FRANK: You can say it on your own Internet.

RIDLEY: Can't she – can't these individuals express themselves without going to the furthest extremes? I mean, here's my thing. If you can actually express what you're going to say—

SCARBOROUGH: No.

RIDLEY: [overlapping]—well, obviously, those individuals can't. But, what Arianna wants to do – and as disclosure, I blog on Huffington – I think what she wants to do is actually to try to have some responsibility in the blogosphere.

MAHER: Okay, I want to show you a little clip from Dick Cheney a second, but first I want to just say, here was Dick Cheney's quote today. He said, "Like it or not, the enemy we face in the war on terror has made Iraq the primary front in that war." Yeah, they made Iraq the primary – is that not through the looking glass?

Okay, anyway, a lot of people talked about what happened over there in Afghanistan with Dick Cheney almost getting blown up. Not a lot of people noticed what he was traveling in. Look at the picture of this—[slide of airplane]—this is the plane. It's called the "Spirit of Strom Thurmond." [audience reacts] That's the plane Dick Cheney flies around in.

RIDLEY: I take back what I said maybe about wanting him to die. I'm sorry.

MAHER: Yeah. Anyway, this is an airline—

SCARBOROUGH: You need to dissociate yourself from those remarks, by the way. They're on the transcripts forever, baby. [voices overlap]

MAHER: This is an airline I didn't know a lot about. Take a look at this clip.

[CLIP SHOWN: MOCK AD FOR "SPIRIT OF STROM THURMOND"]

SOUTHERN COUNTRY ANNOUNCER: The next time you fly, choose the airline that makes you master of the sky. [laughter] Choose the old-world elegance that only the

“Spirit of Strom Thurmond” can provide. On the “Spirit of Strom Thurmond,” there are only two classes: first, and luggage. [laughter] Enjoy a cocktail served by our bar staff. [laughter] Then sit down to an elegant meal created by our executive chef. [laughter] The “Spirit of Strom Thurmond.” Fly the Segregated Skies. [laughter] [applause] [cheers]

MAHER: Okay, let me go to our satellite. We all know this lady. She’s both a movie icon and a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF who just made her fourth visit to the Darfur region. Please welcome Mia Farrow. [applause] Hey, Mia Farrow, how are you doing?

MIA FARROW [via satellite]: Hey, Bill, thank you for having me on.

MAHER: Thank you so much for coming on. And thank you for telling the country about a subject that, you know, quite frankly, a lot of people don’t want to hear about. It’s not funny. It’s not entertaining. But, worst of all, it apparently is not changing. Is that right? You just got back.

FARROW: Yes – yeah, we are – we have completed four years of – into a genocide, and the only reaction for the international community has been four years of hand-wringing, sadly. I – I first went to Darfur in 2004, and if I could tell a brief story about this that I’m wearing. It’s called a *gris-gris* or a *hijab*, and it was given to me by a wonderful woman who I will never forget. Her name was Halima, and she had five of these around her neck. And she had nothing.

We were in a refugee camp, and she took it from her neck and she gave it to me. And she described the day that the Janjaweed attacked her village. And she had been holding her baby son, and her son was torn from her arms, she said. And she felt compelled to tell me how she had struggled, how she had fought to hold onto her son, as if somehow it was her fault that she didn’t hold hard enough. And her son was torn from her arms and bayoneted before her eyes. Three of her five children were killed similarly that day.

“Janjaweed,” she said, “they cut them and threw them into the well.” Halima clasped my two hands and said, “Tell people what is happening here. Tell them we will all be slaughtered. Tell them we need help.”

MAHER: But, as much as people—

FARROW: That was four years ago.

MAHER: As much as people are told this – and we’ve had other celebrities on our show – George Clooney, Don Cheadle – telling the same story.

FARROW: I know you have. Yeah, yeah.

MAHER: Nothing seems to change. And if you ask people in this country, they do want to help. But I think they hear, first of all, is that they're not even sure if they give money it would get to the people who need it, because that's the situation over there.

FARROW: Right, well, we should support our humanitarian workers who – who are there working at great risk, at great personal risk to themselves. And there are 14,000 of them. And, actually, 13 of them have been killed since June.

But what really needs to happen is we have to have a political solution, and have to have U.N. Peacekeepers sent into the region. And, you know, this has been denied by the government of Sudan. [applause] And we don't have the so-called stick-and-carrot, apparently, to influence Sudan. But, China does. And this is the key thing.

MAHER: China!

FARROW: We do have a relationship – yes, China. You've got to know, China – China pours billions of dollars—

MAHER: yes.

FARROW: [overlapping]—into Sudan every year. China has two huge oil companies—

MAHER: Yeah, on the wrong side. They support the government.

FARROW: PetroChina and ChinaPec. What?

MAHER: Yes. They support the wrong side.

FARROW: Yeah.

MAHER: Yeah, because they get oil from the Sudan. China: bad. [laughter]

FARROW: And they are – well, they are complicit in a genocide.

MAHER: Yes.

FARROW: And they're launching the Olympics.

MAHER: Okay.

FARROW: And they sort of this one-world theme. But, what – we’ve got to link China to this genocide and say, you know, China has the capacity, China has the carrots and sticks that could move Sudan into, a) stopping the genocide, b) admitting the Peacekeepers that are so desperately needed.

MAHER: But, don’t you understand, China makes the toys that go into our Happy Meals. [laughter]

FARROW: Right, but we’ve got to take a position.

MAHER: [overlapping] So we can’t fuck with China. [laughter] So, can I ask you if you have plans to adopt any—

FARROW: [overlapping] Do we not take—

MAHER: [overlapping]—of the – I know you have adopted – how many children have you adopted from overseas?

FARROW: Ten. [scattered applause]

MAHER: Ten. And are you going to adopt another one?

FARROW: I have no immediate plans to, Bill. Do you need an adoption? [laughter]

MAHER: Why are you – why are you being so selfish? [laughter]

FARROW: [she laughs]

MAHER: And we heard today on the news, Angelina Jolie is going to adopt another child, I think, this one from Vietnam. Do you think that she’s sort of your spiritual heir in the “adopting foreign kids” game?

FARROW: I have nothing but admiration for Angelina Jolie.

MAHER: Me, too.

FARROW: And, you know, God bless her. She’s doing great things.

MAHER: But, if she does—

FARROW: [overlapping] Now, when she gets to her ninth child, I’ll see if I feel competitive. [laughter] [applause]

MAHER: Right. If – if she breaks your record—

FARROW: [overlapping] Let's not even go into the Brad thing.

MAHER: [overlapping]—will you cheer her on, or will you be like Dan Marino, you know, kind of like...

FARROW: [she laughs] I'm on her side all the way.

MAHER: [overlapping] And what if you find out that she used steroids to do it? [laughter] I'm kidding you, of course. Listen, thank you so much for doing this.

FARROW: We're way off topic.

MAHER: I know. But thank you for coming on—

FARROW: [overlapping] China. China, Olympics.

MAHER: [overlapping]—and sharing this with us, and making America look at this issue. Mia Farrow, thank you very much.

FARROW: Thank you. Thank you. [applause] [cheers]

MAHER: That is a shame, that we keep talking about it and nothing seems to – nothing seems to get done.

SCARBOROUGH: You know, back in, I think, 1998, I had a resolution, and we laid out all the particulars – Abe Rosenthal, former editor of the *New York Times*, came around and was talking about it. At that time, over a million Sudanese had been killed in the civil war – 1998! But, you know, it's so interesting, we go to Kosovo, we go to Bosnia—

MAHER: Right.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—we go to Iraq. We're going to go to Iran. And yet 2 million Rwandans get slaughtered in 1994, we do nothing. The United Nations does nothing. In '97, '98, one to two million Sudanese get slaughtered, we do nothing. Why? What's the difference? [pause]

MAHER: Black guy?

SCARBOROUGH: Black guy?

RIDLEY: Let me jump in right here.

SCARBOROUGH: Yeah, black guy.

MAHER: Black guy, I think that's your cue. [laughter]

RIDLEY: It's about time. You know, I wish I could reduce it to the density of the color of their skin. I don't know that I can. But the problem is, is when you have the government saying – one of the many reasons to go to Iraq is because he was a bad guy, Saddam Hussein was a bad guy.

MAHER: Right.

RIDLEY: There are a lot of bad guys out there. So I can't say exactly why we're not doing things in the Sudan. But it bothers me when that's used as an excuse in Iraq, and clearly that's not a reason. There's an excuse and there's a reason. It's not a reason to go into the Sudan. That's where it's problematic.

SCARBOROUGH: Well, the thing – you talk about Kosovo or Bosnia, and we have a report this past week that, what, how many, many 10,000 white people were slaughtered. They called it genocide. Again, 2 million in Rwanda. Up to 2 million in the Sudan. We do nothing. It's hard not to say it's because the people in Sudan don't look like the majority of Americans.

MAHER: I don't know why we—

RIDLEY: [overlapping] But they've got oil.

SCARBOROUGH: Right.

RIDLEY: They've got oil—

FRANK: [overlapping] There are other – there are other factors.

RIDLEY: [overlapping]—so, unfortunately, you can't even take that out as a reason.

FRANK: [overlapping] First of all, Iraq – Iraq is relevant. And America is not the major problem here. We haven't done as much as we should. We're not the source of all the evil in the world. And in fact, China has been outrageous here. And the Arab world has been terrible. Part of the problem has been that there's an ethnic element here, and it is a

largely Arab group in the Sudan who is in power. And these are blacks in Darfur. And the Arab world has used its influence against the kind of intervention that the U.N. ought to take.

Iraq is a problem in this sense, though. To the extent that you would get a U.N. Peacekeeping force – and there has been some interest in it – they would need American logistical support for it to work. And we are unable to offer that in any significant degree because we are so tied up with this terrible mistake in Iraq. So, we are not as able to be helpful as we should be.

But it is also a case where the Arab world's refusal, collectively – and in this, it seems to me that the Sunni and the Shia appear to have gotten together on the wrong side – they have been running with the Sudan – for the Sudanese government in the U.N., and ought to be severely criticized for it.

MAHER: Okay, let me ask about Jesus, because he was in the news this week. And, Joe, I want you to know—

SCARBOROUGH: Come on, I've got a target on my head.

MAHER: [overlapping]—I'm not bringing this – no, no, no, I'm not bringing this up – because I know we've talked about religion before—

SCARBOROUGH: Right.

MAHER: [overlapping]—on your show, and I just don't want you to think that I brought this up just because—

SCARBOROUGH: Just because I came here, yeah.

MAHER: [overlapping]—it was in the news this week. I can't help it. [voices overlap]

SCARBOROUGH: You and James Cameron were working together.

MAHER: James Cameron—

FRANK: [overlapping] Are you a religious—

SCARBOROUGH: No, I'm not – but it's hard not to defend Jesus when he [Maher] comes on my show and says that if you believe in Jesus, you're delusional. [laughter]

FRANK: [overlapping] Who comes on your show?

SCARBOROUGH: But, go ahead.

MAHER: Okay, I won't say that tonight. [laughter] But – but, if you don't know the story, “The Lost Tomb of Jesus” is the name of the show that's going to be on the Discovery Channel on Sunday. Director James Cameron you all know – “Titanic,” “Terminator” – he says that this crypt that was unearthed 27 years ago in Jerusalem, that had the bones of Jesus, and I guess they buried the bones 27 years ago, but now he says, they have proof that this was the crypt, and they were buried together as a family. Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and they had a son, Judah. And I guess my first question is, if it's true – this is “Da Vinci Code” story also – if Jesus was married and had a family, why does that take away from him being the cool god that he is? [laughter]

RIDLEY: [laughs] I don't know that it takes away from anything, and I don't know that, you know, people say this is controversial—

MAHER: [overlaps] Well, people are upset about it.

RIDLEY: People are upset about this. I personally don't care about the Jim Cameron version. I want to see the Spike Lee “Jesus is black” version. [laughter] [applause] That... is what I want to see. Because we know Jesus was black.

MAHER: We know Jesus was black?

RIDLEY: Of course, Jesus is black in my house. So, Jesus is black. So the idea that [laughter] pretend-light Jesus had a girlfriend, who cares? [laughter]

SCARBOROUGH: But, you know, the thing is, whether you're talking about “The Da Vinci Code,” or whether you're talking about James Cameron, of whether you're talking about the Judas Gospels, you have a lot of people that are making a lot of money right now, irritating Christians. [laughter] Talking about everything that you believed your entire life is false. That Jesus didn't die and didn't rise from the grave, and ascend into Heaven. So, you know again, it's a big money maker, but it does offend a lot of Christians, because it goes against 2,000 years of Christian doctrine.

MAHER: Philosophically, is it wrong to re-examine things you've believed your entire life, especially if, as in my case, they were shoved into your head when you were three, before you had any capacity for critical thinking? [applause] Is it so wrong to do that?

RIDLEY: I don't think it's wrong. But the problem is, you know, Jim Cameron is not the guy to do it. He's not a theologian. It's theatrics.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlaps] Who the hell is this guy? He's the director of the friggin' "Titanic." [laughter] Is this really the guy that is going to prove that Jesus was a hoax? No! But he's going to get great ratings. And you've helped him. So, God bless you. [laughter]

MAHER: I don't know if he's concerned about – he's got all the money in the world, I don't know if he really needs money. I think he's just interested. I agree this is – he's cherry picking the intelligence.

SCARBOROUGH: Right.

MAHER: I don't necessarily think this is Jesus' tomb. But I am interested in the idea that, first of all, in Christianity, Jesus – it's very important to them, the idea that Jesus ascended to Heaven bodily. Right?

SCARBOROUGH: Right.

MAHER: That's why the thing about the bones. You know, if Jesus' bones were there, then he couldn't have—

RIDLEY: [overlaps] But they don't have the bones. They didn't take the DNA from that. They took the DNA—

MAHER: [overlaps] Right.

RIDLEY: [overlapping]—off the crypt. Jim Cameron said, "Look, I'm not saying he didn't ascend after three days. I'm saying at some point, in the return or something—

FRANK: [overlaps] But how do they know it was – even if they got DNA, how do they know whose it was? You need to compare it to something.

RIDLEY: Well, they couldn't compare the – they couldn't extract for a Y chromosome. They don't know who the dad is.

FRANK: [overlaps] It doesn't make sense. It doesn't make any sense.

RIDLEY: [overlaps] They know who the mom is. [laughter] They don't know who the dad is. [laughter]

FRANK: DNA doesn't make any sense.

RIDLEY: They don't! That's the thing. They couldn't extract the Y chromosome.

MAHER: [overlaps] Jesus' dad is...

FRANK: [overlaps] It's not science!

MAHER: But Jesus' dad is God.

SCARBOROUGH: Right.

MAHER: Right?

RIDLEY: [overlaps] But unfortunately God didn't show up in court for the paternity test, okay? [laughter] [applause] So they don't know who daddy was. They don't know who Baby Daddy was. They don't know. [laughter]

MAHER: But why, to begin with, does Jesus go up to Heaven bodily, and everybody else, it's just the spirit goes up to Heaven, right? You and I don't go up to Heaven bodily. Why does Jesus need his body up there and the rest of us...

FRANK: Are you sure you're going to make it anyway? [laughter]

MAHER: Well, I don't—

FRANK: [overlaps] Well, you know, metza-metz on that now.

MAHER: I don't believe that there's a vacation village up in the sky. [laughter]

FRANK: I personally don't believe we're talking about this on the show. So...

RIDLEY: But it is people's faith. I don't think there's really something wrong in talking about it. I don't think there's something wrong in exploring it. I would agree that I don't think Jim Cameron is the guy to explore it. I think there is value in exploring your faith, and coming out on it. At some end you still have your faith. But I don't think that a guy – for whatever reason he's doing it.

SCARBOROUGH: Right.

RIDLEY: Whether he believes, whether it's entertainment, look people are talking about it, it's going to be on TV. It's "Al Capone's Vault," that's all that this is.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlaps] Right. Yeah. And the thing is, again, right now there is a big cottage industry in ticking off Christians. I mean, not—[laughter]—not only with

Cameron, but with “The Da Vinci Code.” And if you look – go to Amazon and look at the top 100 non-fiction books right now, you’ve got books out there that are called *American Fascists: Why Evangelicals Are So Evil, The God Delusion*. You know, everybody’s been talking over and over again... [smattering of applause] Yeah. Yeah. Whatever. Yeah.

MAHER: [overlapping] They’re not—Joe, excuse me, they’re not—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlaps] The thing is, the point is – no, the point is, though, that people are making a lot of money right now attacking—

FRANK: But, Joe—

MAHER: [overlapping] But get over yourself. It’s not just – it’s not to attack Christians. But you’re—

SCARBOROUGH: It’s not about me.

MAHER: But, you’re—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlaps] Oh, it is about – *American Fascists*? You’re calling evangelicals fascists?

MAHER: I’m not.

SCARBOROUGH: That’s not about attacking Christians? No!

MAHER: No.

SCARBOROUGH: But this book that people are clapping out about there, and telling people that everything they’ve ever believed in—

MAHER: [overlaps] Okay. All right.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—is a lie. You know, the thing is, everybody likes to talk about being open-minded and—

FRANK: [overlaps] But, Joe, can I ask you a question?

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—accepting everybody’s — hold on, Barney. Come on. [laughter] Let’s have a rationale discussion here. [voices overlap] Let me finish my point. Everybody talks about – you know, you believe what you want to believe, that’s

fine with me. Let me believe what I want to believe. I'm not going to call you a fascist because you don't believe that Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven after three days. Don't call me a fascist because I do.

MAHER: I'm not calling anybody a fascist! [laughter]

SCARBOROUGH: I'm talking about these books and the *God Delusion*.

MAHER: [overlaps] Right.

SCARBOROUGH: I'm not calling you delusional.

MAHER: [overlaps] Okay.

SCARBOROUGH: You believe what you believe, because you believe what you believe.

MAHER: Okay. All right. I believe Al Gore is going to run for president. [applause] And I believe... he's running by not running.

SCARBOROUGH: There you go. [laughter]

MAHER: Deal with that! [he laughs] [applause]

RIDLEY: [overlapping]—an approach to getting into the White House?

MAHER: For a guy who's not running for president, he is everywhere all the time. He is the most ubiquitous – and again, I hate to keep bringing this up – but he looks like he's wearing the David Byrne "Talking Heads" suit from about 1980. [laughter] This guy must weigh 600 pounds. [laughter]

RIDLEY: Because he's insulated. He doesn't need heat from the outside. [laughter]

MAHER: Yes. [applause]

RIDLEY: Is that not correct?

SCARBOROUGH: Yeah.

RIDLEY: Yes?

MAHER: I'm not worried about his carbon—

RIDLEY: We all need to eat a little bit more.

MAHER: [overlaps] I worry about his carbon ass print, not his carbon footprint.

FRANK: I'm worried – part of that, though, I think is this attitude towards politicians in which they can do nothing right. Because most of the people who are running for president are being criticized because they're running too early. I don't think Al Gore should be criticized for not running too early.

MAHER: [overlaps] I'm not criticizing him. I'm just—

FRANK: [overlaps] It didn't sound like a great boost. I have to be honest with you. [laughter] It did sound – you said, “Running by not running” sounded a little bit like...

MAHER: You're so sensitive, Barney. [laughter]

FRANK: I am, Bill.

MAHER: All I said was, “I think he's running by not running.” I'm just—

FRANK: And that he weighs 600 pounds.

MAHER: Well, he... [laughter]

FRANK: A great endorsement. But the point is, I think that Al Gore is—

MAHER: [overlaps] I'm a comedian, he's a fatty. Come on, give me a break. [laughter] I gotta – I gotta make a living, Barney. I gotta make a living.

FRANK: [overlaps]—But just don't act like you're not. That's all.

MAHER: Okay. All right.

SCARBOROUGH: He is – Al Gore really is the guy that Republicans should fear the most, because Al Gore was the first of the major Democratic candidates to come out – or non-candidates – to come out and say the war was wrong. Went to San Francisco, gave a fiery speech. Everybody distanced themselves from Gore. He was right on that. He wrote a book in 1992 about global warming. Everybody called him a fruitcake.

MAHER: “Ozone man.”

SCARBOROUGH: Right. “Ozone man.”

FRANK: [overlaps] Wait minute. Not everybody.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlaps] He was—

MAHER: [overlaps] Right.

FRANK: Some of us have been on that side—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlaps] All right, Barney.

FRANK: [overlaps] Not everybody.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping] You were right, we were wrong. But anyway—

FRANK: [overlapping] Yeah.

SCARBOROUGH: [overlapping]—the point is—

FRANK: [overlaps] Hey, Joe! We’re together on something.

SCARBOROUGH: We’re together on more things than you’d like to admit. But Gore is a guy that, if he decides to run, I think he’s going to be a heck of a candidate.

MAHER: [overlaps] Right. [applause]

RIDLEY: [overlaps] Look, tell him not to run, though. Here’s why. Democrats in particular make better states people than they do presidents. Jimmy Carter, better states person post-office than he was in office. Bill Clinton, I would say the same thing. I love him as a president, but the things he’s doing now outside of office are terrific. Al Gore has found himself—

FRANK: [overlaps] John, there’s a problem.

RIDLEY: [overlapping]—by losing. And we need – and this goes back to the “wasted” comments. We need more states people who aren’t worried about getting elected, and aren’t worried about saying what needs to be said. And I appreciate that Al Gore is doing it right now, [applause] I don’t want him to have to say what he wants to say to get votes. I’d rather him not run. I want him to do good work as a states person.

FRANK: I would strongly disagree with this kind of denigration of democracy.

RIDLEY: I'm shocked. You're disagreeing with me. [laughter]

FRANK: Well, yeah. In the first place—

SCARBOROUGH: [overlaps] But he's agreeing with me.

MAHER: [overlaps] Barney, quickly, because I've got to go to New Rules. So...

FRANK: Well, this notion that – I mean, John, it's so denigrating. Yeah, you want people to do things. It may be clever to say, "Oh, you're better to be the not president than president." John, I've got to finish. I know these people have to – but I just listened a long time to you say—

RIDLEY: [overlaps] Long time?

FRANK: [overlapping]—don't have good people – don't have good people run for president, let them be better as – first of all, you can't be an ex-president until you've been a president. But the fact is that, you know, we want to stop a war, you want to do some very good things, you do need people in power. And this distaste for the fact that politicians have to not ignore the people, that sometimes try to phrase things in the way that gets the most votes, I'm proud of trying to do that. I think the notion that you just ignore people and that in fact it's wrong to say, "Okay, here are my values, I want to try and phrase those in the way that's going to get me into the kind of governmental powers so I can do something," I hope Al Gore does think that that's a good thing to do.

RIDLEY: [overlaps] So, the last five years worked out terrific under that—

MAHER: [overlaps] All right, I've got to New Rules. But I agree with that. All right, thank you, panel.

SCARBOROUGH: Thanks. [applause]

MAHER: I promise I won't interrupt any of you again. All right. New Rules!
[applause]

Now that a new study has confirmed that this younger generation has way too much self-esteem, parents must start telling their kids every day that they're stupid and lazy. [laughter] And I'd like to add that you're also uninformed, obsessed with your looks, lack moral standards, and dress like a whore. [laughter] [applause] And what are you doing Saturday? [laughter]

New Rule: Shorten the Oscars by getting rid of Live Action Short, Animated Short, Documentary Short. Why should your 12-minute movie make our TV show take four hours? Give them their own special night and air it only in Hungary, Germany and Quebec. [laughter] The apparent mega-hubs of the short film industry. Have it hosted by a violinist, a Holocaust survivor and a bear made out of clay. [laughter] And make it four minutes long. [laughter]

New Rule: The Chinese community must explain why Chinese restaurants are never open for breakfast. There's a billion of you. You can't all be sleeping in. [laughter] I'll make you a deal. You tell me why you're not open for breakfast, and I'll tell you how to get back on the freeway. [laughter] [applause] I kid the Asians. I got mad love for the Asians. Don't write me.

New Rule: Dick Cheney must be shown this picture to see if it elicits any sort of human response whatsoever. [laughter] Look, Dick, it's a kitten playing with a bird. Isn't it cute? "Aw, no, Wolf, I see a fitter cat excited sighted for the kill." [laughter] "Ripping off the head of a clearly weaker species, orgasmic in its desire to consume and savor the taste of blood." [laughter] Okay, just checking. [laughter]

New Rule: George Bush can't have any more visitors until he finishes his homework. [laughter] [applause] He can't see you now, he's losing a war to Arab teenagers. [laughter] Three weeks ago it was the Carolina Hurricanes. This week it was the Miami Heat. From now on, if he wants to meet any more sports heroes, he has to get in line behind all the other retarded kids. [laughter] [applause] [cheers]

And finally, New Rule: If you don't think your daughter getting cancer is worse than your daughter having sex, you're doing it wrong. [laughter] Last year, modern medicine came up with a way to greatly reduce cervical cancer in young women. It's a vaccine that can virtually wipe out the sexually-transmitted disease called HPV, which leads to the cancer.

But not everyone is pleased with this vaccine. There are Christian values groups and churches nationwide who are fighting it. Briget Maher – no relation—[laughter]—and none planned—formerly of the Family Research Council—says giving girls the vaccine is bad because – quote – “the girls may see it as a license to engage in pre-marital sex.”

Hey, Mrs. Maher, let me tell you something. Your daughter is already on the Internet exchanging bondage fantasies with a German boy she met on MySpace. [laughter] Forget HPV. She's on to S&M. [laughter] And Mrs. Maher, I'm sure I don't have to tell you there's only one foolproof method to make a woman abstinent: marry her. [laughter] [applause]

So, let's review here. HPV is a new STD that the CDC wants teens vaccinated for PDQ. [laughter] And that's not sitting well with the Harper Valley PTA. [laughter] They think if a teenage girl feels a little prick, she's going to want to feel a whole lot more. [laughter] [applause]

But, HPV shots don't cause promiscuity. Tequila shots do. [laughter] [applause] And MTV. And having moron parents you want to escape from. Hey, when you're 15 years old, breathing encourages sexual activity. [laughter]

But, let's be frank. These values groups aren't just against the HPV shot. They're against family planning and condoms and morning-after pills. They want to make sure sex is as dangerous as possible, so that kids know if they sleep around and get an STD, that's God teaching them a lesson. And that lesson is: "You should never have tried out for 'American Idol' in the first place!" [laughter]

Now, I know our kids are dumb. I just read it in a New Rule. [laughter] But, will they really have sex with anything that moves just because they know there's a vaccine? People don't get the vaccine for typhoid and say, "Great, now I can drink the sewer water in Bombay!" [laughter] [applause] It's like being against a cure for blindness because it'll encourage masturbation! [laughter] [applause]

It's like being for the salmonella poisoning in peanut butter because it will discourage weirdos from spreading it on their ass and calling the dog! [laughter] [applause]

If this is the nonsense you're teaching your kids, they're already screwed. [laughter]

All right, that's our show. I want to say happy birthday to the real Mrs. Maher, my mother. Thank you. [applause] [cheers] Remember to join us for "Overtime" on HBO.com in just a minute. And I want to thank John Ridley, Joe Scarborough, Barney Frank, Mia Farrow and Seymour Hersh. Thank you, folks. [applause] [cheers]

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