

**A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON ARGUMENTATIVE STATEMENTS
DELIVERED BY DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES IN THE
2008 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES OF USA DURING
PRIMARY ELECTIONS SEASON**

THESIS

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By
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MOTTO

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدِّ لَهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ

رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

“Invite (all) to the way of Thy Lord with wisdom and preaching; and argue with them In ways that are best and Most gracious: for Thy knoweth best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance.”

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My honorable and beloved Father & Mother

My honorable teachers

My sweetest Sisters

All My Friends supporting me in every single time

Thanks for everything you all have been giving to me



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Praise and gratitude always be to Allah having mercies upon all His creatures, and He is the Lord of universe who has given graces to the researcher, so she can finish her thesis. This thesis is intended to fulfill the requirement for achieving the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S) in English Letters and Language Department/S1 at the State Islamic University of Malang.

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Finally, the researcher truly realizes that this thesis still needs constructive criticism and suggestions from the readers in order to make it perfect and hopefully it can be useful, especially for the English Letters students. The last, the researcher prays to Allah SWT, may this thesis is useful and may Allah blesses us. Amin.

Malang, June 21st, 2008

The Writer

ABSTRACT

Rosyidah, Naeli. 2008. *A Discourse Analysis on Argumentative Statements delivered by Democratic Presidential Nominees in the 2008 Presidential Debates of USA during Primary Elections Season*. Thesis, English Letters and Language Department, Faculty of Humanities and Culture, The State Islamic University of Malang.

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Key words: Discourse Analysis, Argumentation, Debate

This study aims at finding out how the two presidential nominees “Hillary Clinton” and “Barack Obama” from Democratic Party formulate their claim, data, warrant, rebuttal, qualifier, and backing on their argumentative statements.

This is a descriptive qualitative research. The data of this study are the transcripts which were taken from three times debates during primary elections season. Those three debates are debate on January 31st, 2008 in Hollywood, California sponsored by CNN, The Los Angeles Times and Politico, on February 21st, 2008 in Austin Texas sponsored by CNN, and debate on February 26th, 2008 in Cleveland, Ohio sponsored by MSNBC. The debates were taken from www.cnn.com and www.nytimes.com. The Toulmin’s model and the criteria of recognizing argumentative elements by Zahro are utilized to recognize the argumentative elements in the candidates’ statements. The procedure proposed by Miles and Huberman is applied to analyze the data.

The result of this study is that both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton had delivered convincing arguments in the debates due to the fact that they had fulfilled criteria of forming an argument as stated by Toulmin. The domestic policies which were mostly debated are Health care issue, Mortgage crisis, Immigration, and Economy. There are many ways of Obama and Clinton in formulating their argumentative statements. Obama had eighteen ways in delivering his arguments. Those are he proposed policy claim followed by fact, policy claim followed by data and motivational warrant, policy claim followed by rebuttal, policy claim and no data supporting the claim, policy claim followed by fact and substantive warrant, factual claim followed by rebuttal, factual claim followed by fact, factual claim followed by statistical data, factual claim but no data supporting the claim, factual claim with qualifier followed by fact, value claim with data inside the claim, value claim but no data supporting the claim, value claim followed by information and motivational warrant, value claim followed by information, value claim followed by rebuttal, fact followed by policy claim and motivational warrant, authoritative warrant followed by policy claim and data, and fact followed by value claim.

Meanwhile, Clinton had twenty one ways in delivering her arguments. Those are policy claim followed by information, policy claim followed by fact, policy claim with qualifier followed by information, policy claim followed by observation result, policy claim with fact inside the claim, policy claim with qualifier followed by information and authoritative warrant, policy claim followed by statistical data, policy claim followed by rebuttal, policy claim with example inside the claim, policy claim with fact inside followed by motivational warrant,

policy claim but no data supporting the claim, policy claim followed by information and authoritative warrant, factual claim with qualifier followed by information, factual claim followed by narrative, factual claim but no data supporting the claim, value claim with qualifier followed by rebuttal, value claim followed by information, value claim followed by substantive warrant and narrative, value claim followed by fact, value claim but no data supporting the claim, value claim with fact inside followed by substantive warrant.

Generally, Obama and Clinton proposed their claims in the form of complete declarative sentence. The most common words Obama and Clinton used are the words “I think” and “I believe” before they proposed their claims. Moreover, they used the linguistic indicator “so” and “consequently” in proposing claims. And, oftentimes, they used reason indicator “because”, “the reason is..” in their data. In those three debates Obama used qualifier “extensively” and “absolutely” in his claim, while Clinton used qualifier “absolutely”, “necessarily”, “obviously”, “passionately”, and “certainly” in her claims. In proposing rebuttal, Obama used linguistic indicator “but”, “if..”, and “otherwise”, while Clinton used linguistic indicator “if..”, “but,if..” and “except”.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

As having interaction, human beings as social creatures need a means to communicate with others because communication is a central role of life. It refers to the process of human beings responding to the face to face. It satisfies most of people's needs such as physical needs, ego needs, social needs, and practical needs (Adler and Rodman, 1985:9). The obvious means to communicate is language. Communication is one of the functions of language besides in order to tell others about circumstances, to ask information, and to exchange facts and opinions (Crystal, 1987:10).

Dealing with communication, Cook (1989:6) examines that the use of language in communication is called discourse even in spoken or written. And, a discipline to study discourse is discourse analysis which is necessarily, the analysis of language in use. Brown and Yule (1983:68) explain that discourse analysis apparently appeared in 1952 by the popular linguist, Zellig S, who stated his dissatisfaction on grammatical discussion which only discussed sentence. In his accordance, many issues of language still had not been discussed by grammatical sentence. Moreover, discourse analysis was truly developed in 1980s. Hatch and Long assert that discourse analysis is not only important to understand the essence of language but also to understand learning process of language and language behavior. Moreover, studying discourse analysis can express the acquisition of communicative competence (Rani, Arifin, and Martutik,

1980:1). Hence, the researcher undoubtedly chooses discourse analysis as the subject of research. And, she takes the type of argumentative discourse as the object of the research because argumentation is a fact of life according to Hill and Leeman (1996:1). They say:

“No matter who you are, where you live, what your professional goals are, what your religious beliefs are, how old you are, or how shy you are, you likely engage in argumentation on a daily basis”

Besides, Al Qur'an also mentions the term of argumentation in surah An Nahl 16:125 that is:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَدِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

The meaning of this verse in the translation of Yusuf Ali's (2006) is:

“invite (all) to the way of Thy Lord with wisdom and preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and Most gracious: for Thy knoweth best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance.” (QS. An Nahl:125)

While, Mukhsin Khan (2006) translates the verse with:

“invite (mankind, O Muhammad) to the Way of Your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Inspiration and the Qur'ān) and fair preaching, and argue with them In a Way that is better. Truly, Your Lord knows best who has gone astray from his path, and He is the best Aware of those who are guided.” (QS. An Nahl:125)

Both these translations of surah An Nahl:125 are same in defining the word “jaadil” to be “argue”. The word “argue” is the bare infinitive of “argumentation”. From this verse, it is known that Prophet Muhammad is allowed to argue with mankind but in the better way.

Argumentative discourse is one of the types of discourse, based on the purpose of communication perspective, besides descriptive, expository, persuasive, and narrative discourse (Rani et all, 1989:46), in which its purpose is to change attitudes (Renkema, 1993:128). A discourse categorized as

argumentation is if it appears from the controversial issues between speaker and his or her partner. Hence, the speaker attempts to explain logical reasons to convince his or her partner. In most basic sense, Hill and Leeman (1996:9) define argumentation as the communicative process in which individuals present and test reasons (argument) supporting opposing points of view. It occurs when two or more people express differing points of view, have sufficient motivation to engage in an argumentative interaction, construct reasons to support their particular point of view, and test the reasons offered by each other (Keraf, 1982:3).

Basically, the power of argument is on the ability of speaker in proposing principles of argument. A modern useful method for understanding argument is good to choose Stephen Toulmin's model. It is because Toulmin outlines a new way of thinking about human argument. Toulmin's approach is a reaction to the models of formal logic then popular in philosophical circles. He feels that such models are too static to deal with something as dynamic as human thought, and so he proposes a better system adapted to the actual logics used by actual people (Hart, 1990:138). Therefore, the researcher uses Toulmin model of argumentation to analyze the object.

Toulmin proposes a layout containing six interrelated components for analyzing arguments those are: Claim, Data, Warrant, Backing, Rebuttal, and Qualifier. The first three elements "claim", "data", and "warrant" are considered as the essential components of practical arguments, while the second triad "qualifier", "backing", and "rebuttal" are the complement and may not be needed in some arguments.

Firstly, claim is disputable assertions that require evidence or backing in order to be accepted, for the example is “I am a British citizen”. Secondly, data is evidences offered to support a claim by using facts, examples, narratives, quotations, statistics, and literal and figurative comparison, for example is if the claim introduced that is “I am a British citizen”, it can be supported with the supporting data “I was born in Bermuda”. Thirdly, warrant is justifications or reasoning that connect the claim and the evidence. To move from the data established in “I was born in Bermuda”, to the claim in “I am a British citizen”, the person must supply a warrant to bridge the gap between data and claim with the statement “a man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen”. Fourthly, qualifier is words and phrases that limit or narrow the scope of a claim, and some common qualifier are *in most cases, always, never, in males between the ages of...* Rebuttal is arguments that counter or disagree with a claim, for instance “But what about, unless..., if..so” (Jaffe, 2001:361-362). Finally, backing is data for warrant which explain why the warrant is legitimated and offers grounds in which the warrant should be accepted (Hill and Leeman, 1996:36). For the example of backing is if the listener does not deem the warrant above as credible, the speaker will supply the legal provisions as backing statement to show that it is true that “a man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen.”

Related to argumentative discourse, the researcher takes Presidential Debates of USA as the data source or corpus. Debates share a common purpose. They are argumentative interactions designed to allow competing advocates to present and test arguments (Hill and Leeman, 1996:7). The debates contain about argumentative statements delivered by Illinois Senator, Barack Obama, and New

York Senator, Hillary Clinton, as the 2008 presidential nominees from Democratic Party which have been transcribed. Mackenzie (1986:63) states that Democratic Party is one of the oldest parties with Republican Party in USA, arguably, in the world.

Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton have highest rates in primary elections than those other democratic presidential nominees. Both nominees compete tightly to be the only one nominee from Democratic Party. Then, argumentative statements in the debates are sharply delivered. Graham (2008, para.47) said:

“Clinton led the field of candidates competing for the Democratic nomination in opinion polls for the election throughout the first half of 2007. Most polls placed Senator Barack Obama of Illinois as Clinton's closest competitors in the early caucus and primary election states”.

Consequently, the researcher attempts to investigate their argumentative statements from their three debates transcripts. The transcripts are from debates on January 31st, 2008 in Hollywood, California sponsored by CNN, The Los Angeles Times and Politico, on February 21st, 2008 in Austin Texas sponsored by CNN, and on February 26th, 2008 in Cleveland, Ohio sponsored by MSNBC. Debates here, however, are conducted from presidential debates during primary season in which the purpose is to nominate candidate. The researcher chooses those dates due to merely Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama attending the debates after the other nominees had withdrawal from Democratic presidential nominees.

The previous studies the researcher found related to this research are the thesis by Nostal Nuans Saputri (2006) which studies a discourse analysis on Argumentative Statements delivered by the 2004 USA Presidential Candidates in the 2004 Political Debates, and the thesis by Zahro (2000) which studies Argumentasi Dalam Jati Diri Jawa Pos. The previous studies help the researcher

in analyzing argumentative statements delivered by Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton in their presidential debates.

1.2 Problem of the Study

There is a problem appearing in this research that is:

How do the two presidential nominees from Democratic Party formulate their argumentative statements?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study is intended to find out how the two presidential nominees “Hillary Clinton” and “Barack Obama” from Democratic Party formulate their argumentative statements.

1.4 Significances of the Study

This study is expected to give useful information about the usage of Toulmin’s model in analyzing argumentative discourse from his six features. The result of this study gives both theoretical and practical contributions especially to the area of linguistics. Theoretically, this study provides us with better insights into the relationship between words and their functions under the study of discourse. While practically, there are some other benefits which can be taken from this study, such as:

1. The argumentative statements of the two presidential candidates from Democratic Party can help students to develop their argumentation ability because Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton are the popular figures in USA.

2. In linguistic field, the result of this study can provide information about:
 1. How language is used by two USA Presidential Candidates from Democratic Party to win support for their points of view and to justify their political perspectives.
 2. Materials which can be utilized by the instructor of Discourse Analysis and Mass Communication to teach Argumentative discourse.
3. The Islamic scholars can learn how to have good argumentation in order to be success in Islamisation.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The focus of this study is on investigating the formulation of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton's arguments during the 2008 Presidential debates during Primary elections season and their formulation of argumentative elements. There are three debate transcripts to be analyzed. The transcripts are from debate on January 31st, 2008 in Hollywood, California sponsored by CNN, The Los Angeles Times and Politico, on February 21st, 2008 in Austin Texas sponsored by CNN, and on February 26th, 2008 in Cleveland, Ohio sponsored by MSNBC. The researcher chooses those first three debates after the other candidates just have had withdrawal from being Democratic Presidential Nominees in which merely Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama attending the debates. The researcher analyzes only arguments from Domestic Policy topics which are strongly debated by the candidates by using six argument elements of Toulmin's.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

Discourse is a contemporary study and this research is conducted based on that, particularly, on argumentative discourse. The following descriptions are some terminologies displayed in order to explain the concepts utilized in this study:

1. Discourse Analysis is a discipline to study discourse, which is necessarily the analysis of language in use. The researcher uses argumentative discourse to be analyzed.
2. Argumentation is a communicative process in which individuals present and test reasons (argument) supporting opposing points of view. The argumentation is taken from argumentative statements delivered by Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton as Presidential nominees of USA from Democratic Party in Primary Elections season and to be analyzed by using Toulmin's approach.
3. Debate here, is debates delivered by Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton as Presidential Nominees of USA from Democratic Party in Primary Elections Season which were transcribed.
4. Democratic Party is one of two major political parties in the United States, the other being of Republican Party. It is the oldest political party in the United States and arguably the oldest party in the world.
5. Primary is the elections before general elections in USA which those purpose are to nominate candidates (Mackenzie, 1982:59).

CHAPTER II

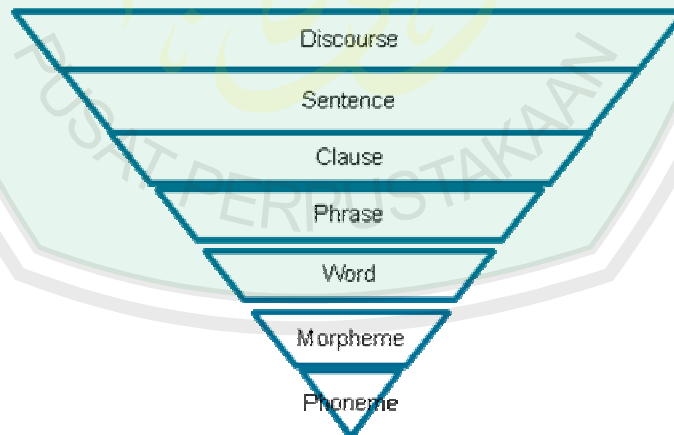
REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In order to understand the study about the arguments delivered by Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton – the presidential nominees from Democratic Party during Primary Elections Season – in the presidential debates completely, it is crucial to understand the following concepts:

2.1 Discourse and Discourse Analysis

The word *discourse* is originally from Latin language “discurrere”. Mulyana (2005:4) defines discourse as the most complex and complete language unsure. Its supporting language unsure includes phoneme, morpheme, word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, until full composition.

Figure 2.1: The Position of Discourse in Language Unit (in Mulyana,2005)



In recent years, linguists agree that discourse is the largest language used in communication even in written or spoken (Rani, Arifin, and Martutik. 2006:3). Chaer (2007:269) examines that a perfect discourse can be achieved if the

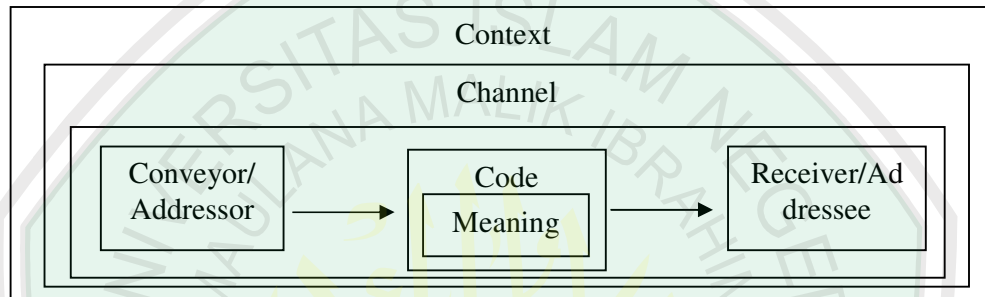
discourse is cohesive and coherence by using grammatical aspect or semantic aspect.

Based on the purpose of communication, discourse is divided into (1) descriptive, (2) expository, (3) narrative, (4) persuasive, and (5) argumentative discourse. These types cannot be separated purely. It is impossible if there is a type of discourse in the other type of discourse.

The first type is *descriptive discourse*. It is a type of discourse purposed to shape imagination of something to the message receiver. The characteristics of descriptive discourse are descriptive, declarative and objective words. It is many used in catalogue and police data. The second type is *expository discourse* in which the purpose is explaining something to make understand the message receiver. It answers questions related to the questions word “why”. So, the discourse can be used to explain the process or procedure of something. The third is *narrative discourse*. It contains a story. In narration, there should be a time, doer, and event. It purposes to move emotional aspect. The fourth is *persuasive discourse* in which the purpose is to influence others. It sometimes uses irrational reason. The last is *argumentative discourse*. It purposes to influence readers or listeners in order to receive propositions maintained, either derived from logics or emotion. To maintain argument, it needs the supporting evidence. In argumentative discourse, the “appeal” function of language is central, so listeners or readers must be convinced of something (Renkema, 1993:128). The clearest examples of argumentative discourse are discussions, advertisements, and information pamphlets.

The use of language in communication as the definition of discourse involves some components. Those components are message conveyer/addressor that is speaker or writer, message receiver/addressee that is listener or reader, message meaning, language codes, channel, and context. Context involves all communication events. The components can be visualized as follows:

Figure 2.2: The Components of Communication Situation



The functions of the language used in communication (discourse) can be identified. They are transactional function and interactional function. According to Brown and Yule (1983), in transactional function, the content of communication is the most important thing. It can be used as information distributor. The written transactional discourse is for instance: story, thesis, and invitation letter. While, the spoken transactional discourse is for instance: speech, declamation, and radio advertisement. Furthermore, reciprocal relationship (interaction) between addressor and addressee is emphasized in interactional function. That function often appears in daily conversation. The example of spoken interactional discourse is debate, interview, and discussion. And, the written interactional discourse is for example mutual correspondence and polemics.

The analysis of discourse or discourse analysis is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use. It is a way of understanding social interactions (Fulcher,

2005). In addition, Stubbs' textbook (in Slembrouck, 2004:1) states that discourse analysis is (a) concerned with language *use* beyond the boundaries of a sentence/utterance, (b) concerned with the interrelationships between language and society and (c) as concerned with the interactive or dialogic properties of everyday communication.

2.2 Argumentation

Argumentation is a type of rhetoric that is to persuade attitude and others' opinion, in order to believe and do as the speaker said (Keraf, 2007:3). "It is a fact of life, you likely engage in argumentation on a daily basis" Hill and Leeman (1996:1) say. In most basic sense, argumentation is the communicative process in which individuals present and test reasons supporting points of view. Argumentation occurs when two or more people express differing points of view, have sufficient motivation to engage in an argumentative interaction, construct reasons to support their particular point of view, and test the reasons offered by each other. So, it describes an interaction between two or more people.

Argumentation is actually initiated when individuals offer reasons to support their respective points of view which called as an argument. Arguments are the substance of argumentation and the focus of the argumentative interaction (Hill and Leeman, 1982:2). Argument here, Crusius and Channel (1995:4) defines it as mature reasoning. Mature means worked out fully by the mind. By mature, people mean an attitude and approach to argument. And, reasoning means an opinion plus a reason (or reasons) for holding that opinion.

Zahro (2000:16) proposes that argument consists of minimally two parts those are (1) one or more statement or proposition which is called premise or evidence, and (2) a proposition which is called conclusion. Argument is usually used to influence others. Characteristics of argument according to Zahro, therefore, are (1) there is conclusion wanted by communicator then being accepted by communicant, or can be called *claim*, (2) there is evidence or *ground/data* supported to claim which can be connected by *warrant*, and (3) there is an effort to influence others.

2.2.1 The relationship between argumentation and Persuasion

Some are confused with the term of argumentation and persuasion. They consider that persuasion is the synonym of argumentation. However, both of them apparently have closed relationship and little differences. Keraf (2007:120-121) describes some differences between argumentation and persuasion. According to him, the characteristic of argumentation is trying to proof trustworthy. It is a process to achieve conclusion. Persuasion, on the other hand, is a skill to achieve agreement communicator and communicant. It is a process to persuade others to accept what the speaker or writer).

Hence, the primary differences between argumentation and persuasion are related to the truth and agreement. Those are the result of thinking process, yet the trustworthy is the result of argumentation and the agreement is the result of persuasion. The thinking process of argumentation target is on the subject of truth, while the thinking process of persuasion is on the audiences that is how to catch agreement from audiences. Consequently, argumentation needs accurate analysis

on facts to proof the truth, and persuasion needs accurate analysis on audiences and situation.

The other difference between argumentation and situation is on the situation enclosed. At the time of arguing, the dominant situation appeared is hesitation and conflict situation of the truth from issues being argued. So, to minimize the conflict, he or she should create the same basic by using logical thinking process. In persuasion, meanwhile, the speaker always tries so far avoiding conflict situation, then appear agreement from audiences.

2.2.2 Toulmin's Model of Argument

So as to have a significant stimulus to contemporary argumentation, Renkema (1993:130) says that Stephen Toulmin (1958), an English philosopher, has a model of argumentation which can be used for the analysis of argumentation in everyday language. In addition, Toulmin's approach is a reaction to the models of formal logic. He feels that such models are too static to deal with something as dynamic as human thought (Hart, 1990:138).

Toulmin is dissatisfied with the prevailing model of logical argument, a model that had dominated argumentation theory for twenty-four centuries: the syllogism. Here is the syllogism used by Henry Highland Garnet in his famous 1843 "Appeal to the Slaves" (in Hart, 1990:33). Garnet countered: "if the ignorance of slavery is a passport to heaven, then it is a blessing, and no curse, and you should rather desire its perpetuity than its abolition". Garnet's syllogism can be modeled this way:

Major Premise : We should desire the perpetuity of anything that ensures us of a passport to heaven.

Minor Premise: Anyone who endures slavery has a passport to heaven.

Conclusion : We should desire the perpetuity of slavery.

Therefore, Toulmin develops six elements of argument as reaction to dissatisfaction to syllogism. Toulmin proposes a layout containing six interrelated components or elements for analyzing arguments those are: Claim, Data, Warrant, Backing, Rebuttal, and Qualifier. The first three elements “claim”, “data”, and “warrant” are considered as the essential components of practical arguments, while the second triad “qualifier”, “backing”, and “rebuttal” are the complement and may not be needed in some argument.

2.2.2.1 Claim

Claim, according to Mullins (in Jaffe, 2001:361), is disputable assertion that requires evidence or backing in order to be accepted, and it can be called major premise in syllogism. It is also conclusions in which the merit must be established. In the other side, Warnick and Inc (in Zahro, 2000:17) state that main criteria of claim are controversial, clear, balance, and challenge. Then, Dawud (in Zahro, 2000:17) explains the meaning of controversial that is the claim should be debatable of the rightness. Claim is clear means that it should focused on definite issue. And, claim is challenge means that it confronts with value, belief, or communicant attitude. Fisher, Copy, and Cohen (in Zahro, 2000:18) use *conclusion indicators* to identify claim, for example so, therefore, then, and consequently.

To review, claim is divided into three those are factual claim, value claim, and policy claim (Jaffe, 2002:361; Rottenberg in Zahro, 2000:18). Factual claim argues about what exists, what causes something else, or what the future will bring. Value claim deals with the rightness, the goodness, or the worth of a thing. Finally, policy claim argues over action or proposal for change. The example of claim is. For example, if a person tries to convince a listener that he is a British citizen, the claim would be “I am a British citizen.”

2.2.2.2 Data (ground)

Data or ground is evidence offered to support a claim. It could be facts, examples and narratives, quotations, statistics, and literal and figurative comparisons (Jaffe: 361). Fisher (in Zahro, 2000:20) states that there are *reason indicators* to sign data, yet Copy and Cohen (in Zahro, 2000:20) mention it as *premise indicators*. Those indicators are because, due to the fact that, since, for, based on the data., it is supported by... The example of data is “the increased presence of handguns yields an increased number of homicides”. For example of data is, the person introduced in claim can support his claim with the supporting data “I was born in Bermuda.”

2.2.2.3 Warrant

On a strictly logical plane, data by itself can never yield a claim. It needs bridge or connector between data and claim which is called warrant by Hill and Leeman (1996:34). It can be defined as justification or reasoning used to connect evidence with claim (Jaffe, 2001:361). Syafi'ie (in Zahro, 2000:21) proposes that

representation of warrant is general principle, principle of particular field (formula, theory, and manual), nature law, constitution or formal resolution. In order to move from the data established in , “I was born in Bermuda,” to the claim in, “I am a British citizen,” the person must supply a warrant to bridge the gap between data and claim with the statement “A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen.” Ehninger and Brockriede (in Hart, 1990: 143) describe three types of warrants commonly found in public argument: (1) Substantive warrants, (2) Motivational warrants, and (3) authoritative warrants.

Substantive warrants are ideas based on what is thought to be actual fact [such as “Ransom money should never be paid to free U.S. hostages seized abroad” (claim) because “you can’t deal with terrorist” (data), the “missing” part of the argument is something of the sort: “Only terrorists would seize an airplane” (warrant)]. *Motivational warrants* are ideas suggesting that some desirable end must be achieved or that some desirable condition is being endangered [for example, the argument “we must pay the ransom money” (claim) because “the people will crucify us in the upcoming elections if we don’t” (data). Somehow depends for its reasonability on the notion that “getting re-elected is a good thing” (warrant)]. And, *authoritative warrants* are ideas based on the credibility of the speaker or on the source of testimony offered by the speaker [for example, “we can’t pay the ransom” (claim) because “I’ve told the people in the past I wouldn’t do so” (data), a speaker would be depending on some such notion as “inconsistent people are crucified in politics” or “this ransom issue isn’t worth my political scalp” (warrant)].

2.2.2.4 Backing

Warrant connecting ground and claim has not accurately valid itself.

Validity and relevance of warrant must be able to test. Validity and relevance of warrant must be supported by *backing*. It also can be thought of as the data for warrant. With backing, the argument seems more credible. In justifying warrant, the backing explains why the warrant is legitimate and offers data on which the warrant should be accepted. Hence, backing could be experience based on beliefs of rightness. Besides, backing could also be in facts, or historical facts, information from expert, results of interview, results of research or observation, and theories from expert (Zahro, 2000:22). For example, if the listener does not deem the warrant “A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen.” as credible, the speaker will supply the legal provisions as backing statement to show that it is true that “A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British Citizen.”

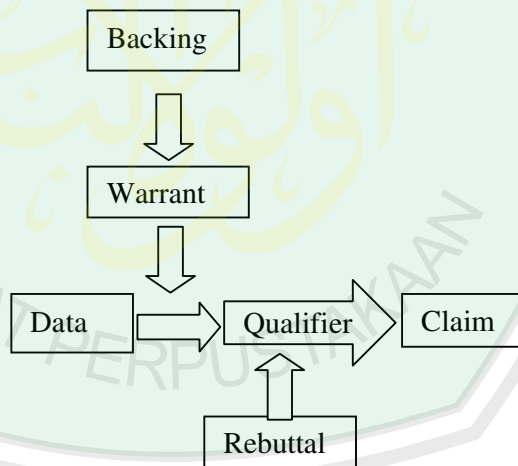
2.2.2.5 Qualifier

Qualifier is used to admit element of uncertainty. It is used to limit or narrow the scope of claim. Qualifier is in the shape of word or phrase expressing the speaker’s degree of force or certainty concerning the claim. Such words or phrases include “possible,” “probably,” “impossible,” “certainly,” “presumably,” “as far as the evidence goes,” or “necessarily.” Jaffe (2001:361) adds “always”, “never”, “in most cases”, and “usually”. The claim “I am definitely a British citizen” has a greater degree of force than the claim “I am a British citizen, presumably.”

2.2.2.6 Rebuttal

Not all listeners will agree with the speaker's claim. The speaker has to prepare to counter listener's arguments which will raise. This preparation is called *rebuttal*. It is statements recognizing the restrictions to which the claim may legitimately be applied. Jaffe says (2001:362) "it might help you to think of rebuttals as arguments your audience raises that begin with the phrase 'but what about..?'" The indicators used in rebuttal are "except", "if", "if...so..", "unless". The rebuttal is exemplified as follows, "A man born in Bermuda will legally be a British citizen, unless he has betrayed Britain and has become a spy of another country."

Figure 2.3: Toulmin's Model of Argument



2.3 Debate and Presidential Debates in USA

All forms of debate, whether consciously or not, make certain assumptions about argumentation theory. The core concept of argumentation theory is the notion of advocacy. In most cases, at least one side in a debate needs to maintain the truth of some proposition or advocate some sort of personal or political change or action. A debate could also potentially be between two or more competing propositions or actions. Or debate could also be a purely performative exercise of charisma and emotion with no assumption of fixed advocacy, but it would possibly lose much of its coherence (2008). Most people have seen or even participated in some form of debate. Debates occur in many different contexts. Candidates for public office debate about the critical issues of the campaign, leaders of groups of debate about social issues with those who oppose their point of view, and legislators of debate about public policy actions. Hill and Leeman (1996:7) define debate as argumentative interactions designed to allow competing advocates to present and test arguments. It is communicative interaction. Regardless of the context in which it occurs, every human communicative encounter has a *source*, *receiver*, and *message*. When a debater advances a claim or series of claims about either the proposition or some claim or series of claims his opponent has advanced, he is the primary source in the interaction and the claim he advances is the message. The debater, judge, or auditor who processes the message is the receiver in the interaction.

Debate according to Hendrikus (1991:128) has high establishment because it can train to prepare discussion modal rigorously, rationale and sharp thinking, and it can train the speakers to speak briefly, fully, and clearly.

Debates between presidential contenders have become a mainstay of political campaigns, both in the primary season and in the fall campaigns after the parties have chosen their nominees. Debates in the primary and caucus season, when candidates are trying to win their party's nomination, have become common since the number of primaries increased in the 1970s. These debates may be the most useful in helping voters and political pundits sort out and get to know the candidates of each party. Especially in the early stages of a campaign, debates are important because they offer the only large event at which candidates can be judged.

Unlike formal, academic debates, the presidential confrontations have been loosely structured, at first with a panel of journalists or audience members asking the questions. Beginning in 1992 debates sponsors began having a journalist moderator question the candidates, with the audience sometimes allowed to participate. Throughout, there have been no judges to award points and therefore no way to determine who "won" or "lost" except by public opinion polling. Media commentators make immediate assessments of winners and losers, however, and their judgments undoubtedly influence the public's opinion about which candidate "won" the debate.

Early in the presidential debate era, the television networks or the League of Women Voters sponsored the debates. Since 1988 they have been sponsored by bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD).

2.4 Elections in USA

Elections in the United States are held at every level in the federal system. For many offices, three types of elections are held. They are usually called *primary elections*, *caucus* and *general election*.

2.4.1 Primary Elections

If a candidate decides to seek a major party nomination, he or she must enter the primaries and caucuses where Democratic and Republican Party members select delegates to their national conventions. The states and parties have a wide variety of rules for *ballot* access qualifications and allocation of delegates. The primary season culminates in the two national party conventions, usually held in late July or August. The primary in 2008 is held since May 6th, 2007 until July, 12th 2008.

Most states today use primary elections to narrow candidate fields and choose the party nominees who will compete in the general election for congressional, state, and local offices. The presidential primaries fall into two basic categories: the *preference* primary in which the voters vote directly for the person they want to see nominated for president and the *delegate-selection* primary in which the voters elect delegates to the national party conventions.

In states holding them, presidential primary elections are open to all registered voters. Just like in general elections, voting is done through a secret ballot. Voters may choose from among all registered candidates and write ins are counted. There are two types of primaries, closed and open. In a closed primary, voters may vote only in the primary of the political party in which they registered.

For example, a voter who registered as a Republican can only vote in the Republican primary. In an open primary, registered voters can vote in the primary of either party, but are allowed to vote in only one primary. Most states hold closed primaries.

2.4.2 The Caucus

Caucuses are simply meetings, open to all registered voters of the party, at which delegates to the party's national convention are selected. When the caucus begins, the voters in attendance divide themselves into groups according to the candidate they support. The undecided voters congregate into their own group and prepare to be "courted" by supporters of other candidates.

Voters in each group are then invited to give speeches supporting their candidate and trying to persuade others to join their group. At the end of the caucus, party organizers count the voters in each candidate's group and calculate how many delegates to the county convention each candidate has won. As in the primaries, the caucus process can produce both pledged and unpledged convention delegates, depending on the party rules of the various states.

2.4.3 General Election

General election is also a term used in opposition to primary election. In the United States, primary elections serve to narrow down a field of candidates, and general elections actually elect candidates to offices. The general election is usually held on Election Day, the Tuesday after the first Monday in November of even-numbered years.

Compared to presidential primaries, general elections are short and streamlined. The major parties normally hold their nominating conventions in July and August of the election year. At the conventions, the presidential candidates are selected by groups of delegates from each state. After a series of speeches and demonstrations in support of each candidate, the delegates begin to vote, state-by-state, for the candidate of their choice. The first candidate to receive a preset majority number of delegate votes becomes the party's presidential candidate. The candidate selected to run for president then selects a vice presidential candidate.

Delegates to the national conventions are selected at the state level, according to rules and formulas determined by each political party's state committee. While these rules and formulas can change from state-to-state and from year-to-year, there remain two methods by which the states choose their delegates to the national conventions: the caucus and the primary.

2.5 Previous studies

The previous studies the researcher found related to this research are the thesis by Nostal Nuans Saputri (2006) which studies a discourse analysis on Argumentative Statements delivered by the 2004 USA Presidential Candidates in the 2004 Political Debates. Her study is descriptive qualitative study. She intended to reveal the way of the two 2004 presidential candidates, George W Bush and John Kerry, of USA provide their arguments with qualified claims, data and warrant. The final objective of her study is to describe the weaknesses and the strengths of the candidates' arguments. The result of her study reveals that both candidates proposed claims equipped with sufficient justifiable reasons (data), and

logical warrant though occasionally they include subjective personal opinion as reason for their claims. There are three forms of sentences they use as claims: complete declarative sentence, direct rhetorical questions, and indirect rhetorical questions. The data supporters found in the debates transcript are mainly facts, statistic information, testimonies, and small proposition of personal prejudice. After proposing claims and providing data supporters, the candidates state the warrants explicitly and implicitly. The researcher found that the candidates' warrants were not necessarily drawn from general principles, theorems, formula or constitutions, but rather those were drawn from the data supporters in order to build a claim.

Besides, the related research is the thesis by Zahro (2000) which studies Argumentasi dalam Jati Diri Jawa Pos. She studied the elements of argument implemented in *Jati Diri Jawa Pos* which was counted from the appearing frequency by using Toulmin's model of argumentation. She chose reformation topics to analyze and design the research with quantitative research. The result of her study shows that argumentative discourse in *Jati Diri Jawa Pos* as macro argument consists of: 1) main claims mostly are policy claim, 2) grounds (data) used as basis of claim are mostly micro argument, 3) warrants are only found in three arguments, 4) backing is used only twice, 5) modal qualifier as certainty degree element is used mostly in arguments, and 6) possible rebuttal is not found.

Different from both studies, the researcher focuses her research on A Discourse Analysis on Argumentative Statements delivered by Presidential nominees from Democratic Party in the 2008 Presidential Debates Transcript of USA during Primary Elections Season. She uses descriptive qualitative research

as the research design of her research. She also uses the argumentation theory of Toulmin's those are six elements to analyze the data. She finds out how the two presidential nominees from Democratic Party "Hillary Clinton" and "Barack Obama" formulate their claim, data, warrant, backing, qualifier, and rebuttal in their argumentative statements.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

The methodological activities concerning with research design, data sources, research instrument, data collection, and data analysis are conducted in order to answer the problems of the research properly. This section is devoted to describe these points in details.

3.1 Research Design

The research design of this research is descriptive qualitative research, because it analyzes the argumentative statements of the transcripts of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton debates in primary elections period descriptively based on Toulmin's model of argumentation in which the elements of argument are "Claim", "Data", "Warrant", "Backing", "Qualifier", and "Rebuttal". The study depicts the arguments made by Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton in providing the elements of argument to persuade their prospective voters.

3.2 Data Sources

In this study, the researcher analyzes argumentative statements uttered by Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton within the 2008 presidential debates during primary elections season which were transcribed. The transcripts were taken from three times debates during primary elections season. Those three debates are debate on January 31st, 2008 in Hollywood, California sponsored by CNN, The Los Angeles Times and Politico, on February 21st, 2008 in Austin Texas sponsored by CNN, and debate on February 26th, 2008 in Cleveland, Ohio sponsored by MSNBC. The debates are taken from www.cnn.com and www.nytimes.com.

3.3 Research Instrument

Considering that this study is qualitative, the main instrument of this particular study is the researcher herself. She selects and analyzes the data of this study based on her knowledge of argumentative discourse and Toulmin's model of argumentation equipped with the checklist tables to collect the reduced data from the original debates transcript.

3.4 Data Collection

Collecting the data, the researcher uses documentation technique that is the researcher collects the debates transcript from www.CNN.com and www.nytimes.com website. The debates are three debates on January 31st, 2008 in Hollywood, California, on February 21st, 2008 in Austin Texas, and on February 26th, 2008 in Cleveland, Ohio. Then, she takes the candidates' arguments about factual topic under the headline of domestic policies.

3.5 Data Analysis

There are three steps in analyzing the data. The first is data reduction. It means that the transcripts examined come from three stages of democratic presidential debates in Primary Elections Season. The major topic of all debates is domestic policies. Based on her interpretation, the researcher selects the candidates' arguments about main factual issues during the debates. The procedures are that she reads the whole texts rigorously, selects the important data which are categorized into health care issue, mortgage crisis, immigration, and economy, and sets up criteria of good claim, data, warrant, backing, qualifier, and

rebuttal. Further procedures are then she identifies the claim, data, warrant, backing, qualifier, and rebuttal from the statements delivered by the two presidential candidates from Democratic Party in the 2008 Presidential debates in Primary Elections season based on the criteria set up, and then puts these to the checklist tables. Then, she codifies the data selected by giving:

- a. The speakers' initials, which are BO for Barack Obama and HC for Hillary Clinton.
- b. Text numbers will be written as T1 for debate on January 31st, 2008 in Hollywood, California sponsored by CNN, The Los Angeles Times and Politico, T2 for debate on February 21st, 2008 in Austin Texas sponsored by CNN, and T3 for debate on February 26th, 2008 in Cleveland, Ohio sponsored by MSNBC.
- c. Page numbers, from which the quote is taken, will be written after a slash. These are written as P1, P2, P3, etc.
- d. The line numbers of quoted statements were written after a comma; for example the symbol of BO-T3/P12, L39 indicated that the quote came from Barack Obama's statement, text number 3, page 12 and line 39.

Table 3.1: Criteria of argumentative elements from Zahro (2000:34)

Elements	Criteria
1. Claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In sorts of opinion, attitude, or controversial statement that needs further evidence or needs to be defended. – Usually it is a kind of complete declarative statements. – It is the essence of every argument (Toulmin, 1979) – It has linguistic indicators: therefore, consequently, in brief, it can be concluded that.. (Fisher, 1988:16) – It is in the form of fact conclusion (factual claim), judgement (value claim), or an advice, solution of a certain problem (policy claim)

	(Rotenberg in Zahro, 2000:34)
2. (Ground) Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It is in the form of a fact that can be observed objectively, an observation result, a conclusion, information, narrative, literal and figurative comparisons, and statistical data. – It functions as claim supporters so that it can be accepted (Toulmin, 1979). – It has linguistic indicators: for, because, due to the fact that, that..., since (Fisher, 1988:17)
3. Warrant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It is a general principle, principle of a particular field (formula, theory, and manual), nature law, constitution or formal resolution. – It is the connector between the claim and the data (ground).
4. Backing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It is the result of research, observation, interview, historical facts, or experts' opinion. – It supports and completes data. – It strengthens warrant (Toulmin,1979)
5. Qualifier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It shows certainty or possibility. – Such words or phrases include possible, probably, certainly, presumably, as far as the evidence goes, necessarily, usually, and of course. (Toulmin, 1979)
6. Rebuttal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It can be conditions which strengthen or weaken a claim. – There are linguistic indicators such as: unless, if...so..

The second step is data display. It means that after the data have been selected, the next step is showing the data that have been classified and codified into each table provided, and then she analyzes the data, which is presented in the forms of arguments from the claim, data, warrant, backing, qualifier, and rebuttal structure inside the texts. The Table is written as follows:

Table 3.2: Checklist table of argumentative elements.

Claim	Warrant	Data	Backing	Qualifier	Rebuttal

The last step is Conclusion Drawing. The conclusion is taken from the researcher's analysis in the data display stage. It ends with final conclusion after rechecking the previous analysis for several times using the steps in analyzing the data until they meet the condition of data saturation.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings and the discussions. The data are classified based on the research questions. The findings and discussions are the domestic policies which were mostly debated by Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. Those are Health Care Issue, Mortgage crisis, Immigration, and Economy which are presented per topic as follows:

4.1 Health care issue

Clinton answered Doyle's question about her differences with Barack Obama's policies. The first she proposed is on health care policy. She proposed as follows:

“I believe absolutely passionately that we must have universal health care”. (HC-T1/P4,L3)

The claim of policy is clear that people must have universal health care, and she gave linguistic indicator of qualifier “absolutely” and “passionately”. She was confident of the claim by using the term “believe”. The term “believe” is Clinton's belief on her policy. Then, she presented the data:

“I have put forth a plan similar to what senator Edwards had before he left the race that would move us to universal health care.” (HC-T1/P4,L6)

It shows that Clinton had attempted to apply universal health care. The data seems as information of her application of universal health care by putting a plan similar to what senator Edwards had. She used explicit warrant to connect her claim and data:

“It is a moral responsibility and a right for our country.” (HC-T1/P4,L4)

The warrant is a general principle. It is a kind of authoritative warrant.

Clinton knew that the audiences admitted it was a moral responsibility and a right for their country to have universal health care. But, the warrant is not reliable because there is no backing supporting it.

After Clinton had explained that there was a difference on health care policy with him, Obama refuted his opponent with claim:

"We both set up a government plan that would allow people who otherwise don't have health insurance". (BO-T1/P4,L32)

It is policy claim. He used the pronoun “we” which means Clinton and himself. He wanted to show that his policy and Clinton’s were not different. They were the same in setting up a government plan about health insurance because they knew the preexisting condition like he said:

"..because of preexisting condition, like my mother had, or at least what the insurance said was a preexisting condition". (BO-T1/P4,L34)

It is a fact about preexisting condition that is the experience of his mother and the preexisting condition of insurance. Those are the kind of exemplification of the data. The data is indicated because of its reason indicator "because of". Then, he delivered the next claim which showed that his policies and Clinton's are similar that is:

"We both want to emphasize prevention " (BO-T1/P5,L1)

It is policy claim. It means that Obama suggested that he and Clinton wanted to prevent illness of people especially children. The claim has the data:

"..children who I meet all the time going to emergency rooms for treatable illness like asthma." (BO-T1/P5,L3)

The data is a fact that there were children who Obama met all the time

going to emergency rooms for treatable illness. There is a warrant connecting the claim BO-T1/P5,L1 and the data BO-T1/P5,L3 that is:

“..we've got to do something about ever escalating costs and we don't want children, who I meet all the time, going to emergency rooms for treatable illness like asthma.”

The explicit warrant is motivational warrant because it was the principle of Obama and Clinton to do something about ever escalating costs and they did not want to meet children going to emergency rooms for treatable illness.

The next claim, Obama said:

“It is true we've got a policy difference” (BO-T1/P5,L4)

The factual claim indicates that Obama has different policy with Clinton even a little. He was certain that the difference is true by uttering the data:

“Because my view is that the reason people don't have health care, and I meet them all the time, in South Carolina, a mother whose child has cerebral palsy and could not get insurance for and started crying during a town hall meeting” (BO-T1/P5,L4)

He showed the data about his experience from the sentence “I meet them all the time” and described the bad situation about children with cerebral palsy which could not get insurance. It is included as fact. And, it has the reason indicator “because” and “the reason”. However, Obama did not mention statistically the data. He only mentioned that he met the children with cerebral palsy all the time. He also felt surely that Clinton had the same experience with him by saying a value claim:

“And Hillary, I'm sure, has had the same experiences”. (BO-T1/P5,L7)

However, the fact that Clinton had the same experience with him is none. He only said “sure” that Clinton had the same experience not explicitly.

Obama knew that many people cannot afford the health care like the fact presented:

“What they’re struggling with is they can’t afford the health care”. (BO-T1/P5,L8)

The pronoun “they” refers to people in America. So that, Obama emphasized reducing costs to overcome the problem like the claim:

“So, I emphasize reducing costs”. (BO-T1/P5,L9)

The policy claim has linguistic indicator “So”. He also gave explicit warrant:

“My belief is that if we make it affordable, if we provide subsidies to those who can’t afford it, they will buy it.” (BO-T1/P5,L9)

It is a kind of principle warrant of Obama’s that people could afford health care and bought it if subsidies were provided. The explicit warrant used is motivational warrant in which the idea is based on the credibility of the speaker, Obama.

Furthermore, He considered that Clinton had different approach by uttering factual claim:

“Senator Clinton has a different approach. She believes that we have to force people who don’t have health insurance to buy it.” (BO-T1/P5,L11)

And, there is a rebuttal:

“Otherwise, there will be a lot of people who don’t get it.” (BO-T1/P5,L12)

The claim in BO-T1/P5,L11 shows that Obama wanted to weaken Clinton’s policy by showing rebuttal. It is known from the word “otherwise” that the statement is rebuttal from the claim. If people were not forced to buy health insurance, there would be a lot of people who did not get it. The statement is to refute Clinton’s policy which is considered forcing people who don’t have health insurance to buy it, whereas not all people can afford it. Obama continued proposing claim:

“I think it is important for us to recognize” (BO-T1/P5,L14)

It is the policy claim that is solution of Clinton’s policy. He felt that it was important to recognize purchasing health insurance. But there is a rebuttal:

“..if, in fact, you are going to mandate the purchase of insurance and it’s not affordable, then there’s going to have to be some enforcement mechanism that the government uses.” (BO-T1/P5,L14)

Firstly, the claim BO-T1/P5,L14 is general. It is to recognize purchasing insurance. But, it was occurred if Clinton was going to mandate the purchase of insurance and it was not affordable.

In the middle of the debate, Jeanne Cummings, Politico asked Obama about his plan which was voluntary. She suggested that there would be about 15 million people who would not be covered. Answering this, Obama said:

“Every expert who looks at it says anybody who wants health care will be able to get health care under my plan. There won’t be anybody out there who wants health care who will not be able to get it.” (BO-T1/P7,L8)

It is value claim. Yet, there is no supporting data following this. He, again, gave new claim to convince the claim before. The new claim is:

“So the estimate is -this is where the 15 million figures come in-is that there are 15 million people who don’t want health care. That’s the argument” (BO-T1/P7,L12)

That is factual claim that there were people who did not want health care. It uses linguistic indicator “so”.

However, Obama said that he disputed that there were 15 million people who did not want health care like the statement:

“I dispute that there are 15 million people out there who don’t want it. I believe that there are people who can’t afford it...” (BO-T1/P7,L14)

There are two claims above. The first claim is value claim while the underlined claim is factual claim. He refuted his own claim BO-T1/P7,L12 by

uttering this claim. He also proposed rebuttal:

“If we provide them enough subsidies, they will purchase it.” (BO-T1/P7,L15)

The pronoun “we” refers to Obama and Clinton. It is the rebuttal of the refuting claim BO-T1/P7,L14. The rebuttal is that people who could not afford health care could get it if there were subsidies so that they could purchase it.

The next claim after his claim about his dispute of 15 million people who did not want the health care is that he mandated coverage for all children that is:

“I mandate coverage for all children” (BO-T1/P7,L17) and “I say that young people, who are the most likely to be healthy but think they are invulnerable-and decide I don’t need health care - what I’m saying is that insurance companies and my plan as well will allow people up to 25 years old to be covered under their parents’ plan.” (BO-T1/P7,L18)

It means that Obama mandated coverage of health care for all children and young people up to 25 years old. Those two claims are policy claims but, there is no data supporting the claim. Then, he proposed claim:

“So, as a consequence, I don’t believe that there will be 15 million out there.” (BO-T1/P7,L22)

The linguistic indicator of the value claim is “so” and “as a consequence”. The claim is from the data presented by Obama as preexisting claims those are BO-T1/P7,L17 and BO-T1/P7,L18. Those data are example of Obama’s in the way of covering health care.

Responding Obama’s statements about health care, Clinton said:

“I started trying to expand health care many years ago, first to children, then to rural areas in Arkansas, and obviously tackled it during my husband’s administration.” (HC-T1/P8,L6)

It is a factual claim and has qualifier “obviously”. The claim is followed by the data:

“ And the reason why I have designed a plan that, number one, tells people, if you have health insurance and you are happy with it, nothing changes, is because we want to maximize choice for people.” (HC-T1/P8,L8)

The data is indicated from the phrase or reason indicator “the reason..” and

“because”. It is the data that Clinton and her supporters wanted to maximize choice of health insurance for people. The data is in the form of information.

Then, she proposed the claim:

“So, if you are satisfied, you’re not one of the people who will necessarily, at this time, take advantage of what I’m offering.” (HC-T1/P8,L11)

It is a value claim because Clinton felt that if people were satisfied with Clinton’s policy, they were included into other people who had advantage. It is also indicated from the word “So”, and it has qualifier “necessarily”. And the data supporting this is the data on HC-T1/P8,L6 But, it is followed by rebuttal that is:

“But if you are uninsured or underinsured, we will open the congressional health plan for you” (HC-T1/P8,L12)

The rebuttal is seen from the linguistic indicator “but, if..”. It is a condition if the claim did not run well that is if people were uninsured of Clinton’s policy about health insurance. So, when people were uninsured, Clinton and her staff would open the congressional health plan for them.

Contrary to the description which Obama gave that Clinton’s plan about health care was not affordable for everyone, Clinton said:

“We actually will make it affordable for everyone.” (HC-T1/P8,L16)

It is a claim of policy. Clinton would make it referring to the health care affordable for everyone. There is the word “actually” which is called qualifier for the claim. And, the claim is based on data:

“because my plan lowers costs aggressively, which is important for us all; improves quality for everyone, which is essential. (HC-T1/P8,L17)

The reason indicator “because” indicates that the statement is the data for the claim HC-T1/P8,L16. The data is using information of how the way to make health care affordable for everyone. Afterwards, she also claimed:

“And the way it covers all of those who wish to participate in the congressional plan is that it will provide subsidies, and it will also cap premiums, something that is really important..” (HC-T1/P8,L18)

The word “it” refers to Clinton’s plan. The claim is policy claim. It describes how the way of Clinton’s plan to cover all of those who wished to participate in the congressional plan. This claim based on data:

“because we want to make sure that it is affordable for all” (HC-T1/P8,L21)

The data known from the reason indicator “because” is the fact that Clinton wanted to make sure that her health care plan was affordable for everyone. But, the fact about Clinton’s desire to make health care affordable for all is not observable. She only used the word “sure” which is someone’s feeling. To make people sure, Clinton also proposed new claim that she had been designed her health care plan to be affordable with health care tax credits. The claim is:

“So, when you draw the distinction that, ‘Well, it’s not affordable, therefore people will have to be made to get it’, well, the fact is, it has been designed to be affordable with health care tax credits.” (HC-T1/P8,L22)

It is factual claim. The claim is indicated from the linguistic indicator “So”. Then, she knew that recognizing health care plan was important that is the value claim:

“And it’s also important to recognize.” (HC-T1/P8,L25)

The word “it” refers to the Clinton’s health care plan about health care tax credits which was important to recognize. And the value claim is followed by the data:

“..that right now, there are people who could afford health care, and they are not all young, they’re people who just don’t feel they have to accept that responsibility. There are many states which give families the option of keeping children up until 25 on their policies, but their rates of uninsurance are still very high.” (HC-T1/P8,L25)

The data is the fact that Clinton had faced there were many people who

could afford health care and the rates of uninsurance were still very high. The next, she proposed claim:

“We cannot get to universal health care, which I believe is both a core Democratic value and imperative for our country, if we don’t do one of three things.” (HC-T1/P8,L30)

Clinton used the pronoun “we” which refers to her and Obama. It is value claim. The three things she mentioned are a single payer system, mandating employers, and doing what Clinton was proposing.

From Obama’s plan that he would mandate that parents get health insurance for their children, Clinton firstly gave the information:

“Now, in Barack’s plan, he very clearly says he will mandate that parents get health insurance for their children.” (HC-T1/P9,L1)

And, claim appeared after that is:

“So, it’s not that he is against mandatory provisions, it’s that he doesn’t think it would be politically acceptable to require that for everyone” (HC-T1/P9,L2)

It is a value claim which can be indicated from the linguistic indicator “so”. It is also followed by the second claim:

“I just disagree with that.” (HC-T1/P9,L4)

It seems that Clinton disagreed with Obama’s plan, and the third claim:

“I think we as Democrats have to be willing to fight for universal health care.” (HC-T1/P9,L4)

The second and third claims are the value claims.

In Texas, Clinton discussed again universal health care. She said:

“We know we're going to have to work hard to overcome the opposition of those who do not want the changes to get to universal health care.” (HC-T2/P25,L4)

The pronoun “we” refers to Clinton and the audiences. The claim is factual claim that is Clinton and the audiences in Texas knew that they had to work hard to overcome the opposition of people who did not want universal health care. She

then showed the data:

“You know, when I proposed a universal health care plan, as did Senator Edwards, we took a big risk because we know it's politically controversial to say we're going to cover everyone.” (HC-T2/P25,L7)

The data is that Clinton had taken a big risk when she proposed a universal health care plan. It is narrative of her experience. It supports the claim that to overcome the opposition of those who did not want the changes to get to universal health care is difficult. She mentioned a name of “senator Edwards”. The name is popular because Senator Edwards is a nominee of president from Democratic Party before he had withdrawal.

Then, the claim she proposed is:

“I don't want to leave anybody out.” (HC-T2/P25,L30)

Clinton intended not to leave anybody out from her health care plan. She wanted to show the difference with Obama's plan because she suggested that Obama left out 15 million people from his health care plan. It is also policy claim based on data:

“I see the results of leaving people out. I am tired of health insurance companies deciding who will live or die in America.” (HC-T2/P25,L30)

The data is that Clinton saw the result of leaving people out from health insurance. It is included into observation result.

Responding Clinton's argument, Obama said:

“We both want universal health care. We both -- 95 percent of our plans are similar. We both want to set up a system in which any person is going to be able to get coverage that is as good as we have as members of Congress. And we are going to subsidize those who can't afford it. We're going to make sure that we reduce costs by emphasizing prevention.” (BO-T2/P26,L11)

Those are five claims in which all are policy claims except the underlined claim. The underlined claim is factual claim. Obama mentioned the pronoun “we” which means Obama and Clinton. It is to show that the similarity of their plan of universal health care is clear. The data supporting the claims is:

“And I want to make sure that we're applying technology to improve quality, cut bureaucracy. Now, I also want to make sure that we're reducing costs for those who already have health insurance.” (BO-T2/P26,L16)

It is the fact that Obama and Clinton were applying technology to improve quality, cut bureaucracy, and they were reducing costs for those who already had health insurance. From the data, Obama gave new claim that is:

“So we put in place a catastrophic reinsurance plan that would reduce costs by \$2,500 per family per year.” (BO-T2/P26,L19)

It is policy claim in which the linguistic indicator used in the claim is “so”. From his argumentation about health insurance, it shows that Obama had similarity with Clinton like his saying:

“So we've got a lot of similarities in our plan. We've got a philosophical difference, which we've debated repeatedly.” (BO-T2/P26,L21)

These two claims are value claims. The linguistic indicator of those claims is the word “so”. Obama considered that he and Clinton only had philosophical difference. The data as the fact for those claims are BO-T2/P26,L11, BO-T2/P26,L16, BO-T2/P26,L19. Then Obama presented that Clinton believed that the only way to achieve universal health care was to force everybody to purchase that is:

“..and that is that Senator Clinton believes the only way to achieve universal health care is to force everybody to purchase it.” (BO-T2/P26,L22)

From the statement also, Obama responded the belief of Clinton's by proposing his belief that is:

“And my belief is, the reason that people don't have it is not because they don't want it but because they can't afford it.” (BO-T2/P26,L26)

It is included into authoritative warrant because the warrant is the speaker belief. Furthermore, it connects the claim:

“And so I emphasize reducing costs.” (BO-T2/P26,L27)

This is a claim of policy, and the claim is indicated by the linguistic

indicator “So”. The claim means that Obama wanted to emphasize reducing costs. And the data gave is:

“And as has been noted by many observers, including Bill Clinton's former secretary of labor, my plan does more than anybody to reduce costs, and there is nobody out there who wants health insurance who can't have it.” (BO-T2/P26,L29)

It is a kind of observation result because there is phrase “as has been noted by many observers..”.

At the debate in Cleveland, Ohio, Clinton felt that at the debates before in Ohio, it had been unfortunate that Senator Obama had consistently said that she would have forced people to have health care whether they could afford it or not. Hence, she said:

“You know, health care reform and achieving universal health care is a passion of mine. It is something I believe in with all my heart.” (HC-T3/P2,L3)

The claim is policy claim that Clinton wanted to reform and achieve universal health care. The data of the claim Clinton proposed is:

“And every day that I'm campaigning, and certainly here throughout Ohio, I've met so many families -- happened again this morning in Lorain -- who are just devastated because they don't get the health care they deserve to have.” (HC-T3/P2,L5)

It is the fact that Clinton had experienced. She had met so many families who were devastated because they did not get health care they deserved to have.

From the data also, Clinton claimed:

“my plan will cover everyone and it will be affordable.” (HC-T3/P2,L9)

The claim is policy claim that Clinton would cover everyone and it would be affordable. It is based on data:

“And on many occasions, independent experts have concluded exactly that.” (HC-T3/P2,L10)

That is an information data that independent experts had concluded exactly on her plan. She supposed that Obama's plan did not cover everyone and left out 15 million people. Consequently, she truly had desire of having affordable health

care for everyone. Then, she claimed:

“So we should have a good debate that uses accurate information, not false, misleading, and discredited information, especially on something as important as whether or not we will achieve quality, affordable health care for everyone. That's my goal. That's what I'm fighting for, and I'm going to stand up for that.” (HC-T3/P2,L13)

The claim is policy claim that Clinton would achieve her goal of quality and affordable health care for everyone. Clinton gave the linguistic indicator “So” in her claim. Yet, the underlined statement is the fact of the claim. It is the fact that Clinton was fighting for achieving quality and affordable health care.

Knowing Clinton’s argumentation, Obama was pleased to give responds. He responded that he did want to focus on the issue of health care because Clinton had suggested that the flyer that they put out, the mailing that they put out was inaccurate. He felt that he had consistently said that Clinton got a good health care plan, and so did he. He said:

“I think I have a good health care plan. I think mine is better” (BO-T3/P2,L37)

These are two value claims because he evaluated that his plan was better than Clinton’s. But he, then, stated:

“but I have said that 95 percent of our health care plan is similar.” (BO-T3/P2,L38)

It is value claim. Obama suggested that his plan and Clinton’s was similar except 5 percent which was different.

About Clinton’s negative mailing to Obama that he left out 15 million people to get health care, Obama admitted that it was inaccurate, but not according to Clinton. Clinton suggested that it was accurate. So, Obama refuted:

“I dispute it, and I think it is inaccurate.” (BO-T3/P3,L4)

The claim above is value claim. Obama disputed that he left out 15 million people to get health care. The reason Clinton thought is that there were more people covered under her plan than his is because of a mandate. From this reason,

Obama refuted her claim HC-T3/P2,L9 by proposing the warrant:

“That is not a mandate for the government to provide coverage to everybody; it is a mandate that every individual purchase health care.” (BO-T3/P3,L8)

It is a substantial warrant that Clinton’s plan about covering everyone was not a mandate from government. So, Clinton’s claim is lack because of Obama’s refutation. Then, he gave data:

“And the mailing that we put out accurately indicates that the main difference between Senator Clinton's plan and mine is the fact that she would force in some fashion individuals to purchase health care. If it was not affordable, she would still presumably force them to have it, unless there is a hardship exemption as they've done in Massachusetts, which leaves 20 percent of the uninsured out.” (BO-T3/P3,L11)

The narrative is a kind of data which supports the claim:

“And if that's the case, then, in fact, her claim that she covers everybody is not accurate.” (BO-T3/P3,L16)

Obama examined that if Clinton constantly forced to cover everybody, it would be not accurate. And, the claim is included into value claim. He also added data that Clinton’s plan to coverage everyone was not accurate, that is:

“Now, Senator Clinton has not indicated how she would enforce this mandate. She hasn't indicated what level of subsidy she would provide to assure that it was, in fact, affordable.” (BO-T3/P3,L18)

The data is the fact that Clinton had not indicated how she would enforce the mandate and what level of subsidy she would provide to assure that it was affordable.

4.2 Mortgage Crisis

The next policy Clinton explained is about mortgage crisis. She said:

“I think it’s imperative that we approach this mortgage crisis with the seriousness” (HC-T1/P4,L8)

It is a value claim. She used the words “I think” before proposing the claim. She wanted to approach mortgage crisis seriously then it needed to present like her evidence:

“..that it is presenting.” (HC-T1/P4,L9)

The word “It” refers to the mortgage crisis. She was serious in approaching mortgage crisis with the fact that she was presenting the issue at that time. Then she, again, explained the ways in approaching mortgage crisis with claim:

“I want a moratorium on foreclosure for 90 days so we can try to work out keeping people in their homes instead of having them lose their homes” (HC-T1/P4,L10)

The policy claim is specific because Clinton mentioned “90 days” for the moratorium on foreclosure. Then, she gave additional claim:

“And I want to freeze interest rates for five years” (HC-T1/P4,L12)

The Clinton’s claim of freezing interest rates for five years is a policy claim. She believed with it because she knew the fact:

“There are 95,000 homes in foreclosure in California right now.” (HC-T1/P4,L9)

It is a statistical data to support the claim about her desire of a moratorium on foreclosure for 90 days and freezing interest rates for five years.

Related to the mortgage crisis, Obama said:

“We both believe that this is critical problem. It is a huge problem in California and all across the country.” (BO-T1/P5,L22)

There are two claims on the statements. The statements are value claims about their belief on mortgage crisis solution. The pronoun “we” refers to Obama and Clinton. For the claims, he only showed information by saying:

“I have put forward a \$10 billion home foreclosure prevention fund that would help to bridge the lender and the borrower so that people can stay in their homes.” (BO-T1/P5,L25)

The data is information enclosing nominally “\$10 billion” of home foreclosure prevention fund. It is Obama’s experience that he had put forward a \$10 billion home foreclosure prevention fund.

And the additional data for the policy claim is:

“I have not signed on to the notion of an interest rates freeze” (BO-T1/P5,L27)

The data is information that Obama had not signed on to the notion of an interest freeze. To connect the claim BO-T1/P5,L22 and the data BO-T1/P5,L25, and BO-T1/P5,L 27 there is a warrant:

“And we agree that we have to keep people in their homes.” BO-T1/P5,L23

The warrant is exactly motivational warrant because it is Obama and Clinton’s principle. However, there is no backing which make the warrant valid.

The data BO-T1/P5,L 27 is considered also as a factual claim based on data:

“The reason is not because we need to protect the banks. The problem is, is that if we have such a freeze, mortgage interest rates will go up across the board and you will have a lot of people who are currently trying to get mortgages who will actually have more of a difficult time. So, some of the people that we want to protect could end up being hurt by such a plan. ” (BO-T1/P5,L27)

The data has reason indicator “the reason” and “because”. He uses information in the data.

After that, Obama also claimed:

“Now, keep in mind, the one thing I suspect that Senator Clinton and I agree on. Part of the reason we are in this mortgage mess is because there's been complete lack of oversight on the part of the Bush administration.” (BO-T1/P5,L35)

The claim is factual claim. Obama suggested that the mortgage mess was because of the lack of Bush Administration. It is because Obama asked the audiences to concentrate what he would say. And in order to make them know that the claim is true. The claim has the statistical data:

“The mortgage lending industry spent \$185 billion-- \$185 million lobbying to prevent provision that go against predatory lending, for example, that I introduced.” (BO-T1/P6,L2)

It is the fact showing that Bush administration was lack. From this fact, appears the next claim that is:

“I believe that it is very important for us to reduce the influence of lobbyists and special

interests in Washington.” (BO-T1/P6,L5)

That is a value claim of Obama’s which wanted to reduce the influence of lobbyists and special interests in Washington.

At the Debate in Texas, Clinton also gave claims about mortgage crisis.

The first she proposed is:

“I have been saying for nearly a year we had to crack down on the abusive practices of the lenders. But we also need a moratorium on home foreclosures.” (HC-T2/P11,L25)

The policy claim means that Clinton forced people to crack down on the abusive practices of the lenders of America. And, it was also necessary to have a moratorium on home foreclosures. The data supporting her claim is:

“Everywhere I go, I meet people who either have been or about to lose their home, 85,000 homes in foreclosure in Texas; 90,000 in Ohio. I’ve met the families: the hairdresser, the single mom who’s going to lose her home, the postal worker who got really hoodwinked into an agreement that wasn’t fair to him.” (HC-T2/P11,L28)

It is the fact in which Clinton had experienced. The data is supporting the detailed claim with specifying of putting a moratorium for 90 days like her statement:

“So I would put a moratorium for 90 days, to give us time to work out a way for people to stay in their homes” and “I would freeze interest rates for five years.” (HC-T2/P11,L33)

The policy claims are indicated from the linguistic indicator “So”. There are two claims above those are putting a moratorium and freezing interest rates.

Moreover, there is additional data for the second claim about freezing interest rates for five years is:

“..because, these adjustable-rate mortgages, if they keep going up, millions of Americans are going to be homeless. And vacant homes will be across the neighborhoods of Texas and America.” (HC-T2/P11,L35)

There is linguistic indicator “because” in the data. The data is using information because if interest rates kept going up, millions of Americans were going to be homeless.

4.3 Immigration

On immigration, Cummings questioned both Obama and Clinton about how they proposed to address the high unemployment rates and the declining wages in the African-American community which were related to the flood of immigrant labor. Perceiving that question, Obama, firstly, explained about his experience related to immigration and high unemployment rates, that is:

“I have worked on the streets of Chicago as an organizer with people who have been laid off from steel plants, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, and, you know, all of them are feeling economically insecure right now, and they have been for many years. Before the latest round of immigrants showed up, you had huge unemployment rates among African-American youth.” (BO-T1/P16,L23)

So, that is a fact that unemployment rates among African-American youth had been there before latest round of immigrants showed up. It describes Obama’s experience which had known the condition of unemployment rates among African-American youth. Afterwards, based on the data, he proposed claim:

“And, so I think to suggest somehow that the problem that we’re seeing in inner-city unemployment, for example, is attributable to immigrants, I think, is a case of scapegoating that I do not believe in, I do not subscribe to.” (BO-T1/P16,L29)

The linguistic indicator “so” indicates that it is a claim. The claim is value claim because Obama said that attributable to immigrants was a case of scapegoating he did not believe. Before he proposed the claims, he used the words “I think”. He also said:

“I believe that we can be nation of laws and a nation of immigrants.” (BO-T1/P16,L34)

This is a policy claim Obama said. There is a word “believe” which makes the claim strong. He, then, also gave claim:

“I also believe that we do have to crack down on those employers that are taking advantage of the situation, hiring folks who cannot complain about worker conditions, who aren't getting the minimum wage sometimes, or aren't getting overtime. We have to crack down on them.” (BO-T1/P17,L4) And “I also believe we have to give a pathway to citizenship after they have paid a fine and learned English, to those who are already here.” (BO-T1/P16,L7)

There are two claims above. Those are policy claims. Obama repeated proposing the statement “we have to crack down” makes the claim strong.

However, the policy claim BO-T1/P16,L7 has rebuttal that is:

“because if we don't, they will continue to undermine U.S. wages.” (BO-T1/P17,L9)

The rebuttal is if he and people of USA did not give a pathway to citizenship, the citizenship would continue to undermine U.S wages. It has linguistic indicator “if”. The claims have the data:

“Let's understand more broadly that the economic problems that African-Americans are experiencing, whites are experiences, blacks and Latinos are experiencing in this country are all rooted in the fact that we have had an economy out of balance.” (BO-T1/P17,L11) and “We've had tax cuts that went up instead of down. We have had a lack of investment in basic infrastructure in this country. Our education system is chronically underfunded.” (BO-T1/P17,L14)

The data is the fact that economic problems were out of balance, tax cuts were went up, there was lack of investment in basic infrastructure, and the education system was underfunded. He, then, suggested:

“We should not use immigration as a tactic to divide. Instead, we should pull the country together to get this economy back on track.” (BO-T1/P17,L19)

The policy claim means that it should not use the immigration as a tactic to divide. The claim above has the data:

“I believe that in many parts of our country, because of employers who exploit undocumented workers and drive down wages, there are job losses.” (BO-T1/P17,L31)

The data is the fact that there were job losses in the country. And, Obama believed that it was because employers exploited undocumented workers and drove down wages. Based on the data, appears new claim:

“And I think we should be honest about that.” (BO-T1/P17,L32)

It is a value claim Obama delivered. The claim is that Obama and the audience should be honest about employers who exploited undocumented workers and drove down wages caused many job losses.

At the debate in Texas, Ramos said that Federal raids by immigration

enforcement officials on homes and businesses had generated a great deal of fear and anxiety in the Hispanic community and had divided the family of some of the 3 million U.S.-born children who had at least one undocumented parent. Then he asked the candidates would they consider stopping these raids once they took office until comprehensive immigration reform could be passed. From the question, Clinton answered with a policy claim:

“I would consider that.” (HC-T2/P12,L31)

Clinton answered the question that she would consider stopping those raids once they took office until comprehensive immigration reform could be passed. However, there is rebuttal:

“..except in egregious situations where it would be appropriate to take the actions you're referring to.” (HC-T2/P12,L31)

The rebuttal has a linguistic indicator “except”. It is condition in which Clinton would not consider like Ramos said in egregious situations. Again, she proposed:

“But when we see what's been happening, with literally babies being left with no one to take care of them, children coming home from school, no responsible adult left, that is not the America that I know.” (HC-T2/P13,L1)

It is value claim Clinton claimed that it was not America which leaving babies with no one take care of them and no responsible adult when children came home from school. Hence, there is also the underlined data. It is the fact that she and many people saw what had been happening with literally babies being left with no one to take care of them, children coming home from school, no responsible adult left. That is the fact. The warrant connecting the data and claim:

“That is against American values. And it is a stark admission of failure by the federal government.” (HC-T2/P13,L5)

The warrant is substantive warrant. It means that leaving babies with no one to take care of them and no responsible adult when children came home from

school was against America values and stark admission of failure by the federal government. Then, she claimed:

“We need comprehensive immigration reform.” (HC-T2/P13,L7)

It is a policy claim. It means that Clinton and people of America needed comprehensive immigration reform. The data supporting the claim is:

“I have been for this. I signed onto the first comprehensive bill back in 2004. I’ve been advocating for it: tougher, more secure borders, of course, but let’s do it the right way, cracking down on employers, especially once we get to comprehensive immigration reform, who exploit undocumented workers and drive down wages for everyone else.” (HC-T2/P13,L8)

Those are the data. Those are the information that Clinton had been having comprehensive immigration reform. Furthermore, she proposed claim:

“I’d like to see more federal help for communities like Austin and others like Laredo, where I was this morning, that absorb the health care, education, and law enforcement costs.” (HC-T2/P13,L13)

The policy claim means that she wanted to see more federal help for communities while, the underlined statement is the data. The data is the example of Clinton’s experience of the way to help communities. Then, she also proposed:

“Finally, we need a path to legalization, to bring the immigrants out of the shadows, give them the conditions that we expect them to meet, paying a fine for coming here illegally, trying to pay back taxes, over time, and learning English. “ and “I would introduce that in the first 100 days of my presidency..” (HC-T2/P13,L18)

Clinton gave the policy claim that America needed a path to legalization, and she would introduce that in the first 100 days. Clinton described her claim specifically and also gave specific time that is “100 days” to introduce the policy.

However, the claim has rebuttal:

“If they had a committed a crime in our country or the country they came from, then they should be deported.” (HC-T2/P13,L22)

The rebuttal means that if the immigrants had a committed crime in America or their country, they should be deported. Perceiving Clinton’s policy, Obama said by proposing factual claim:

“There are a couple of things I would add. Comprehensive immigration reform is

something that I have worked on extensively.” (BO-T2/P13,L28)

Obama suggested that Clinton’s policy about comprehensive immigration reform was something that he had worked on extensively. The word “extensively” is a qualifier. He then gave the data:

“Two years ago, we were able to get a bill out of the Senate. I was one of the group of senators that helped to move it through, but it died in the House this year. Because it was used as a political football instead of a way of solving a problem, nothing happened.” (BO-T2/P13,L30)

It is the fact that that Obama and the group of senators were able to get a bill out of senate that helped to move it through, but it had died in the house in 2008 because it was used as political football. So, he perceived Clinton’s claim by saying:

“it is absolutely critical that we tone down the rhetoric when it comes to the immigration debate” (BO-T2/P14,L1)

It is value claim that Obama felt that it was critical that the rhetoric of immigration debate topic should be toned down. There is qualifier “absolutely”.

The data supporting the claim is:

“because there has been an undertone that has been ugly. Oftentimes, it has been directed at the Hispanic community. We have seen hate crimes skyrocket in the wake of the immigration debate as it has been conducted in Washington, and that is unacceptable.” (BO-T2/P14,L2)

The data is the fact that there had been an undertone that had been ugly.

The reason indicator of the data is the word “because”. Then, he proposed claim:

“So we need comprehensive reform and that means stronger border security. It means that we are cracking down on employers that are taking advantage of undocumented workers.” (BO-T2/P14,L8)

The claim is policy claim. Obama wanted to have comprehensive reform and it was necessary. The additional data for the claim is:

“..because they can't complain if they're not paid a minimum wage. They can't complain if they're not getting overtime.” (BO-T2/P14,L12)

It is the fact that undocumented workers cannot complain if they were not getting overtime. The connection between the claim and the data is:

“We are a nation of laws and we are a nation of immigrants, and we can reconcile those two things.” (BO-T2/P14,L7)

It is a substantive warrant. It means that America is a nation of laws and nation of immigrants, so it could reconcile the rhetoric tone down of immigrant debate and having comprehensive reform.

4.4 Economy

John King from CNN asked Obama and Clinton about economy. The question was what should be done about an economy that was the edge or perhaps in the early stages of a recession, would Obama or Clinton raise the minimum wage which maybe about trade deals. He asked Obama firstly then Clinton to tell how they managed the nation's economy.

Answering this, Obama said:

“Now, what I've said is that we have to restore a sense of fairness and balance to our economy, and that means a couple of things. Number one, with our tax code: We've got to stop giving tax breaks to companies that are shipping jobs overseas and invest those tax breaks in companies that are investing here in the United States of America.” (BO-T2/P9,L9) And “We have to end the Bush tax cuts to the wealthy and to provide tax breaks to middle-class Americans and working Americans who need them.” (BO-T2/P9,L15)

Those are the claims of Obama which includes into policy claims. Those claims are that Obama and his staff had to restore a sense of fairness and balance to the economy. Those claims are based on the data:

“Everywhere you go, you meet people who are working harder for less, wages and incomes have flatlined, people are seeing escalating costs of everything from health care to gas at the pump. And so people have been struggling for a long time. In some communities, they have been struggling for decades now.” (BO-T2/P9,L3)

The data is the fact that that there were many people who are working harder, yet they had little wages. Then, Obama proposed the claim which strengthens the first claim above that is:

“So I've said that if you are making \$75,000 a year or less, I want to give an offset to your payroll tax that will mean \$1,000 extra in the pockets of ordinary Americans. Senior citizens making less than \$50,000, you shouldn't have to pay income tax on your Social Security. We pay for these by closing tax loopholes and tax havens that are being manipulated.” (BO-T2/P9,L19)

The policy claim is indicated from the linguistic indicator “So”. That is

the description of the first claim Obama made. So, the claim becomes rationale.

On US trade deals, Obama thought that it was absolutely critical to engage in trade like the claim:

“I think it is absolutely critical that we engaged in trade” (BO-T2/P9,L26)

The value claim has a qualifier “absolutely” which shows certainty of Obama’s. Obama used the words “I think” before proposing the claim. But, the claim has rebuttal that is:

“but it has to be viewed not just through the lens of Wall Street, but also Main Street, which means we've got strong labor standards and strong environmental standards and safety standards, so we don't have toys being shipped in the United States with lead paint on them.” (BO-T2/P9,L27)

The rebuttal can weaken the claim if the trade engaging was not viewed through the lens of Wall Street and Main Street, people would have toys being shipped in the United States. He used metaphor in the claim from the words “wall street, main street, and toys being shipped”. Obama, then delivered additional claim that is:

“I think there are also opportunities in our economy around creating a green economy.” (BO-T2/P9,L32)

The factual claim means that there were opportunities in their economy to create good economy situation. He used the words “I think” before proposing the claim. He also used connotation from seen from the term “green economy” which means healthy or clear economy. The data supporting this claim is:

“We send \$1 billion to foreign countries every day because of our addiction to foreign oil. And for us to move rapidly to cap greenhouse gases, generate billions of dollars that we can reinvest in solar and wind and biodiesel -- that can put people back to work.” (BO-T2/P9,L33)

The data is the example of the application of the claim. In the debate, Obama said that he thought that there was a real, solid agenda for moving change forward in the next presidency. And it was his strong belief that the changes were only going to come about if people were able to form a working coalition like the

statement:

“And it is my strong belief that the changes are only going to come about if we're able to form a working coalition for change.” (BO-T2/P10,L16)

That statement is value claim because Obama evaluated that it was useful to be able to form a working coalition for change. He used the pronoun “we” which means Obama and his staff. This claim has data:

“..because people who were benefiting from the current tax code are going to resist. The special interests and lobbyists are going to resist.” (BO-T2/P10,L17)

The data is information that people who had been benefiting from the current tax code, the special interests, and lobbyists were going to resist. From this data also, he again proposed additional claim:

“And I think it has to be a priority for whoever the next president is to be able to overcome the dominance of the special interests in Washington, to bring about the kinds of economic changes that I'm talking about.” (BO-T2/P10,L20)

He used the words “I think” before proposing the claim. The policy claim means that whoever the next president of USA was to be able to overcome the dominance of the special interests in Washington.

After Obama had given explanation about his economic policy, he invited Clinton to respond. Before Clinton gave explanation about her economic policy, John King from CNN also questioned again that is Clinton had said that she was readier in facing economic issue than Obama, so he asked Clinton about what would she do differently than Obama to manage the nation's economy.

Hence, Clinton said that he would agree with a lot that Senator Obama had said she said:

“ I would agree with a lot that senator Obama said” (HC-T2/P11,L1)

The claim is a value claim because she stated that she would have agreed a lot of Obama had said. Then, she gave the data:

“because it is the Democratic agenda.” (HC-T2/P11,L2)

The reason indicator “because” indicates that it is information that what Obama had said is the Democratic agenda, so she agreed with him in his managing economic policy. Then, she uttered claim:

“We are going to rid the tax code of these loopholes and giveaways. We're going to stop giving a penny of your money to anybody who ships a job out of Texas, Ohio or anywhere else to another country. (HC-T2/P11,L5)

“We're certainly going to begin to get the tax code to reflect what the needs of middle class families are so we can rebuild a strong and prosperous middle class.” (HC-T2/P11,L7)

“We will also have a different approach toward trade.” (HC-T2/P11,L14)

“We're going to start having trade agreements that not only have strong environmental and labor standards, but I want to have a trade time-out.” (HC-T2/P11,L15)

“We're going to look and see what's working and what's not working, and I'd like to have a trade prosecutor to actually enforce the trade agreements that we have before we enter into any others.” (HC-T2/P11,L17)

“We're also going to put much tougher standards in place so that people cannot import toys with lead paint, contaminated pet food, contaminated drugs into our market. (HC-T2/P11,L20)

“We're going to have much more vigorous enforcement of safety standards.” (HC-T2/P11,L22)

Those are claims of policy which Clinton delivered. Clinton used the pronoun “we” which indicates people in Democratic Party. Those claims are also correct what Obama had said. So, those strengthen Obama’s claims. The qualifier in the (HC-T2/P11,L7) is “certainly” which strengthens the claim. In addition, Clinton said that there were three ways people of Democratic Party needed to jump start the economy.

“Clean green jobs. I wanted it to be part of the stimulus package” (HC-T2/P12,L2)

It is her first policy claim in economic issue. The words “clean green jobs” are connotation. It is also connotation which means pure jobs. It is based on data:

“I've been promoting this.” (HC-T2/P12,L4)

The information that Clinton had been promoting “clean green jobs” supported the claim. It shows that the claim Clinton proposed is strong. Besides, she gave warrant to connect the claim HC-T2/P12,L2 and the data HC-T2/P12,L4

that is:

“I thought a \$5 billion investment in clean green jobs would put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work helping to create our future.” (HC-T2/P12,L5)

It is authoritative warrant because it is Clinton’s own thought. The warrant eases audience to connect the claim and the data, so that it makes the claim of Clintons’s have plus. She went on proposing claim that is:

“We also need to invest in our infrastructure.” (HC-T2/P12,L8)

The policy claim is that Clinton and the people of Democratic Party needed to invest infrastructure. It is based on data:

“We don’t have enough roads to take care of the congestion, we have crumbling bridges and tunnels.” (HC-T2/P12,L8)

It is the data for the claim. It is the fact that America did not have enough roads to take care of congestion and it had crumbling bridges and tunnels. From this data also, Clinton gave policy claim:

“We need to rebuild America, and that will also put people to work.” (HC-T2/P12,L9)

And, the additional claim is:

“And, finally, we need to end George Bush’s war on science, which has been waged against scientists and researchers...” (HC-T2/P12,L11)

It is policy claim which means that it was necessary to end George Bush’s war of science. The data for the claim is the part of the claims that is the underlined statement. The underlined statement is the fact that Bush had been waged against scientists and researchers. The warrant connecting the claim and the data is:

“This is about how we fund the future. We’ve got to get back to being the innovation nation. Think of everything that goes on at this great university to create the new economy...” (HC-T2/P12,L15)

It is motivational warrant. Clinton felt that she and people in America had to get back to being the innovation nation.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presents conclusions drawn from the analysis and proposes some recommendations related to the application of the findings for linguistics lecturers, scholars of linguistics, Indonesian politicians, Islamic scholars, and future researchers.

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings in chapter four, it can be concluded that both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton had delivered convincing arguments in the debates due to the fact that they had fulfilled criteria of forming an argument as stated by Toulmin. The domestic policies which were mostly debated are Health care issue, Mortgage crisis, Immigration, and Economy.

From the topics in three debates, there are many ways of Obama and Clinton in formulating their argumentative statements. Obama has eighteen ways in delivering his arguments. First, he proposed policy claim followed by fact. Second, he proposed policy claim followed by data and motivational warrant. Third, he proposed policy claim followed by rebuttal. Fourth, he proposed policy claim and no data supporting the claim. Fifth, he proposed policy claim followed by fact and substantive warrant. Sixth, he proposed factual claim followed by rebuttal. Seventh, he proposed factual claim followed by fact. Eighth, he proposed factual claim followed by statistical data. Ninth, he proposed factual claim but no data supporting the claim. Tenth, he proposed factual claim with qualifier followed by fact. Eleventh, he proposed value claim with data inside the claim. Twelfth, he proposed value claim but no data supporting the claim. Thirteenth, he

proposed value claim followed by information and motivational warrant. Fourteenth, he proposed value claim followed by information. Fifteenth, he proposed value claim followed by rebuttal. Sixteenth, he provided fact followed by policy claim and motivational warrant. Seventeenth, he provided authoritative warrant followed by policy claim and data. Eighteenth, he provided fact followed by value claim.

Meanwhile, Clinton had twenty one ways in delivering her arguments. First, she proposed policy claim followed by information. Second, she proposed policy claim followed by fact. Third, she proposed policy claim with qualifier followed by information. Fourth, she proposed policy claim followed by observation result. Fifth, she proposed policy claim with fact inside the claim. Sixth, she proposed policy claim with qualifier followed by information and authoritative warrant. Seventh, she proposed policy claim followed by statistical data. Eighth, she proposed policy claim followed by rebuttal. Ninth, she proposed policy with example inside the claim. Tenth, she proposed policy claim with fact inside followed by motivational warrant. Eleventh, she proposed policy claim but no data supporting the claim. Twelfth, she proposed policy claim followed by information and authoritative warrant. Thirteenth, she proposed factual claim with qualifier followed by information. Fourteenth, she proposed factual claim followed by narrative. Fifteenth, she proposed factual claim but no data supporting the claim. Sixteenth, she proposed value claim with qualifier followed by rebuttal. Seventeenth, she proposed value claim followed by information. Eighteenth, he proposed value claim followed by substantive warrant and narrative. Nineteenth, she proposed value claim followed by fact. Twentieth, she

proposed value claim but no data supporting the claim. Twenty first, she proposed value claim with fact inside followed by substantive warrant.

Generally, Obama and Clinton propose their claims in the form of complete declarative sentence. The most common words Obama and Clinton used are the words “I think” and “I believe” before they proposed their claims. Moreover, they used the linguistic indicator “so” and “consequently” in proposing claims. And, oftentimes, they used reason indicator “because”, “the reason is..” in their data. In those three debates Obama used qualifier “extensively” and “absolutely” in his claim, while Clinton used qualifier “absolutely”, “necessarily”, “obviously”, “passionately”, and “certainly” in her claims. In proposing rebuttal, Obama used linguistic indicator “but”, “if..”, and “otherwise”, while Clinton used linguistic indicator “if..”, “but,if..” and “except”.

5.2 Suggestion

Based on the result of the study, the researcher proposes some suggestions first is to people who are interested in learning the argumentative discourse, or involving in a debate to understand and apply Toulmin’s model of argumentation in order to form a logical and convincing argument. Second, she also suggests that every debater equips his or her claims with fact, statistics, and the other elements to make his or her claim strong. Third, linguistic lecturers especially those who teach discourse analysis should give more lectures about argumentation and give the students more encouragement to study argumentation further in order that they can produce qualified arguments. Fourth, linguistic students should use the data of the study as material to learn argumentative discourse so that they can understand the language structures which are employed in political debates, consequently

they can propose reliable arguments within the debate.

For Indonesian politicians, the researcher suggests that they will imitate the way western political figures formulate their arguments in the debate so that a campaign can be delivered in a polite and an intelligent manner. Besides, future researchers can study all aspect of argument in other object, and research implicit positions on the argumentative discourse so they will have comprehensive results. Also, Islamic scholars can understand broadly the argumentative elements stated by Toulmin, so they can success in Islamization process. And the last, general readers will enrich their knowledge by reading this study.



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2008 Presidential Debates of USA during Primary
Elections Season.

No	Materi Konsultasi	Tanggal	Tanda Tangan
1	Proposal Skripsi	31 Maret 2008	
2	Seminar Proposal	12 April 2008	
3	Revisi Proposal	21 April 2008	
4	Revisi Bab I, II, III	12 Mei 2008	
5	Acc Bab I, II, III	26 Mei 2008	
6	Konsultasi Bab IV dan V	13 Juni 2008	
7	Acc Bab I, II, III, IV, dan V	24 Juni 2008	

Malang, 21 Juni 2008

Mengetahui,

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CHECKLIST TABLE OF DATA REDUCTION

A. Health care issue

No	Claim	Warrant	Data	Backing	Qualifier	Rebuttal
1	"I believe absolutely passionately that we must have universal health care". (HC-T1/P4,L3)	"It is a moral responsibility and a right for our country." (HC-T1/P4,L4)	"I have put forth a plan similar to what senator Edwards had before he left the race that would move us to universal health care." (HC-T1/P4,L6)		"absolutely" and "passionately"	
2	"We both set up a government plan that would allow people who otherwise don't have health insurance". (BO-T1/P4,L32)		"..because of preexisting condition, like my mother had, or at least what the insurance said was a preexisting condition". (BO-T1/P4,L34)			
3	"We both want to emphasize prevention " (BO-T1/P5,L1)	"..we've got to do something about ever escalating costs and we don't want children, who I meet all the time, going to emergency rooms for treatable illness like asthma."	"..children who I meet all the time going to emergency rooms for treatable illness like asthma." (BO-T1/P5,L3)			
4	"It is true we've got a policy difference" (BO-T1/P5,L4)		"Because my view is that the reason people don't have health care, and I meet them all the time, in South Carolina, a mother whose child has cerebral palsy and could not get insurance for and started crying during a town hall meeting" (BO-			

5	<p>“And Hillary, I’m sure, has had the same experiences”. (BO-T1/P5,L7)</p> <p>“So, I emphasize reducing costs”. (BO-T1/P5,L9)</p>	<p>“My belief is that if we make it affordable, if we provide subsidies to those who can’t afford it, they will buy it.” (BO-T1/P5,L9)</p>		T1/P5,L4)					
6				<p>“What they’re struggling with is they can’t afford the health care”. (BO-T1/P5,L8)</p>					
7	<p>“Senator Clinton has a different approach. She believes that we have to force people who don’t have health insurance to buy it.” (BO-T1/P5,L11)</p>						<p>“Otherwise, there will be a lot of people who don’t get it.” (BO-T1/P5,L12)</p>		
8	<p>“I think it is important for us to recognize” (BO-T1/P5,L14)</p>						<p>“..if, in fact, you are going to mandate the purchase of insurance and it’s not affordable, then there’s going to have to be some enforcement mechanism that the government uses.” (BO-T1/P5,L14)</p>		
9	<p>“Every expert who looks at it says anybody who wants health care will be able to get health care under</p>								

	my plan. There won't be anybody out there who wants health care who will not be able to get it." (BO-T1/P7,L8)				
10	"So the estimate is –this is where the 15 million figures come in—is that there are 15 million people who don't want health care. That's the argument" (BO-T1/P7,L12)				
11	"I dispute that there are 15 million people out there who don't want it. I believe that there are people who can't afford it..." (BO-T1/P7,L14)				"If we provide them enough subsidies, they will purchase it." (BO-T1/P7,L15)
12	"I mandate coverage for all children" (BO-T1/P7,L17) and "I say that young people, who are the most likely to be healthy but think they are invulnerable—and decide I don't need health care – what I'm saying is that insurance companies and my plan as well will allow people up to 25 years old to be covered under their parents' plan." (BO-T1/P7,L18)				
13	"So, as a consequence, I don't believe that there will be 15 million out there." (BO-T1/P7,L22)		BO-T1/P7,L17 and BO-T1/P7,L18		
14	"I started trying to expand health care many years ago, first to children, then to rural areas in Arkansas, and obviously tackled it during my husband's administration." (HC-T1/P8,L6)		" And the reason why I have designed a plan that, number one, tells people, if you have health insurance and you are happy with it, nothing changes, is because we want to maximize choice for people."		"Obviously"

			(HC-T1/P8,L8)			
15	“So, if you are satisfied, you’re not one of the people who will necessarily, at this time, take advantage of what I’m offering.” (HC-T1/P8,L11)		(HC-T1/P8,L6)		“Necessarily	“But if you are uninsured or underinsured, we will open the congressional health plan for you” (HC-T1/P8,L12)
16	“We actually will make it affordable for everyone.” (HC-T1/P8,L16)		“because my plan lowers costs aggressively, which is important for us all; improves quality for everyone, which is essential. (HC-T1/P8,L17)			
17	“And the way it covers all of those who wish to participate in the congressional plan is that it will provide subsidies, and it will also cap premiums, something that is really important..” (HC-T1/P8,L18)		“because we want to make sure that it is affordable for all” (HC-T1/P8,L21)			
18	“So, when you draw the distinction that, ‘Well, it’s not affordable, therefore people will have to be made to get it’, well, the fact is, it has been designed to be affordable with health care tax credits.” (HC-T1/P8,L22)					
19	“And it’s also important to recognize.” (HC-T1/P8,L25)		“..that right now, there are people who could afford health care, and they are not all young, they’re people who just don’t feel they have to accept that responsibility. There are many states which give families the option of keeping children up until 25 on their policies, but their rates of			

			uninsurance are still very high.” (HC-T1/P8,L25)			
20	“We cannot get to universal health care, which I believe is both a core Democratic value and imperative for our country, if we don’t do one of three things.” (HC-T1/P8,L30)					
21	“So, it’s not that he is against mandatory provisions, it’s that he doesn’t think it would be politically acceptable to require that for everyone” (HC-T1/P9,L2)		“Now, in Barack’s plan, he very clearly says he will mandate that parents get health insurance for their children.” (HC-T1/P9,L1)			
22	“I just disagree with that.” (HC-T1/P9,L4) “I think we as Democrats have to be willing to fight for universal health care.” (HC-T1/P9,L4)					
23	“We know we’re going to have to work hard to overcome the opposition of those who do not want the changes to get to universal health care.” (HC-T2/P25,L4)		“You know, when I proposed a universal health care plan, as did Senator Edwards, we took a big risk because we know it’s politically controversial to say we’re going to cover everyone.” (HC-T2/P25,L7)			
24	“I don’t want to leave anybody out.” (HC-T2/P25,L30)		“I see the results of leaving people out. I am tired of health insurance companies deciding who will live or die in America.” (HC-T2/P25,L30)			
25	“We both want universal health care. We both -- 95 percent of our plans are similar. We both want to set up a system in which any person is going to be able to get coverage that is as good as we have		“And I want to make sure that we’re applying technology to improve quality, cut bureaucracy. Now, I also want to make sure that we’re reducing costs for those who already have health insurance.” (BO-			

	as members of Congress. And we are going to subsidize those who can't afford it. We're going to make sure that we reduce costs by emphasizing prevention." (BO-T2/P26,L11)		T2/P26,L16)			
26	"So we put in place a catastrophic reinsurance plan that would reduce costs by \$2,500 per family per year." (BO-T2/P26,L19)					
27	"So we've got a lot of similarities in our plan. We've got a philosophical difference, which we've debated repeatedly." (BO-T2/P26,L21)		BO-T2/P26,L11, BO-T2/P26,L16, and BO-T2/P26,L19			
28	"And so I emphasize reducing costs." (HC-T2/P26,L27)	"And my belief is, the reason that people don't have it is not because they don't want it but because they can't afford it." (HC-T2/P26,L26)	"And as has been noted by many observers, including Bill Clinton's former secretary of labor, my plan does more than anybody to reduce costs, and there is nobody out there who wants health insurance who can't have it." (HC-T2/P26,L29)			
29	"You know, health care reform and achieving universal health care is a passion of mine. It is something I believe in with all my heart." (HC-T3/P2,L3)		"And every day that I'm campaigning, and certainly here throughout Ohio, I've met so many families -- happened again this morning in Lorain -- who are just devastated because they don't get the health care they deserve to have." (HC-T3/P2,L5)			
30	"my plan will cover everyone and it will be affordable." (HC-T3/P2,L9)		"And on many occasions, independent experts have concluded exactly that." (HC-T3/P2,L10)			

31	<p>“So we should have a good debate that uses accurate information, not false, misleading, and discredited information, especially on something as important as whether or not we will achieve quality, affordable health care for everyone. That’s my goal. and I’m going to stand up for that.” (HC-T3/P2,L13)</p>		<p>That’s what I’m fighting for (HC-T3/P2,L14)</p>			
32	<p>“I think I have a good health care plan. I think mine is better” (BO-T3/P2,L37)</p> <p>“but I have said that 95 percent of our health care plan is similar.” (BO-T3/P2,L38)</p>					
33	<p>“I dispute it, and I think it is inaccurate.” (BO-T3/P3,L4)</p>	<p>“That is not a mandate for the government to provide coverage to everybody; it is a mandate that every individual purchase health care.” (BO-T3/P3,L8)</p>	<p>“And the mailing that we put out accurately indicates that the main difference between Senator Clinton’s plan and mine is the fact that she would force in some fashion individuals to purchase health care. If it was not affordable, she would still presumably force them to have it, unless there is a hardship exemption as they’ve done in Massachusetts, which leaves 20 percent of the uninsured out.” (BO-T3/P3,L11)</p>			
34	<p>“And if that’s the case, then, in fact, her claim that she covers everybody is not accurate.” (BO-T3/P3,L16)</p>		<p>“Now, Senator Clinton has not indicated how she would enforce this mandate. She hasn’t indicated what level of subsidy she would provide to assure that it was, in fact, affordable.” (BO-T3/P3,L18)</p>			

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B. Mortgage Crisis

1	“I think it’s imperative that we approach this mortgage crisis with the seriousness” (HC-T1/P4,L8)		“..that it is presenting.” (HC-T1/P4,L9)		
2	“I want a moratorium on foreclosure for 90 days so we can try to work out keeping people in their homes instead of having them lose their homes” (HC-T1/P4,L10) “And I want to freeze interest rates for five years” (HC-T1/P4,L12)		“There are 95,000 homes in foreclosure in California right now.” (HC-T1/P4,L9)		
3	“We both believe that this is critical problem. It is a huge problem in California and all across the country.” (BO-T1/P5,L22)	“And we agree that we have to keep people in their homes.” BO-T1/P5,L23	“I have put forward a \$10 billion home foreclosure prevention fund that would help to bridge the lender and the borrower so that people can stay in their homes.” (BO-T1/P5,L25) “I have not signed on to the notion of an interest rates freeze” (BO-T1/P5,L27)		
4	“I have not signed on to the notion of an interest rates freeze” (BO-T1/P5,L27)		“The reason is not because we need to protect the banks. The problem is, is that if we have such a freeze, mortgage interest rates will go up across the board and you will have a lot of people		

			who are currently trying to get mortgages who will actually have more of a difficult time. So, some of the people that we want to protect could end up being hurt by such a plan.” (BO-T1/P5,L27)			
5	“Now, keep in mind, the one thing I suspect that Senator Clinton and I agree on. Part of the reason we are in this mortgage mess is because there’s been complete lack of oversight on the part of the Bush administration.” (BO-T1/P5,L35)		“The mortgage lending industry spent \$185 billion-- \$185 million lobbying to prevent provision that go against predatory lending, for example, that I introduced.” (BO-T1/P6,L2)			
6	“I believe that it is very important for us to reduce the influence of lobbyists and special interests in Washington.” (BO-T1/P6,L5)					
7	“I have been saying for nearly a year we had to crack down on the abusive practices of the lenders. But we also need a moratorium on home foreclosures.” (HC-T2/P11,L25) “So I would put a moratorium for 90 days, to give us time to work out a way for people to stay in their homes” and “I would freeze interest rates for five years.” (HC-T2/P11,L33)		“Everywhere I go, I meet people who either have been or about to lose their home, 85,000 homes in foreclosure in Texas; 90,000 in Ohio. I’ve met the families: the hairdresser, the single mom who’s going to lose her home, the postal worker who got really hoodwinked into an agreement that wasn’t fair to him.” (HC-T2/P11,L28)			
8	“I would freeze interest rates for five years.” (HC-T2/P11,L33)		“..because, these adjustable-rate mortgages, if they keep going up, millions of Americans are going to be			

			homeless. And vacant homes will be across the neighborhoods of Texas and America.” (HC-T2/P11,L35)			
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C. Immigration

1	“And, so I think to suggest somehow that the problem that we’re seeing in inner-city unemployment, for example, is attributable to immigrants, I think, is a case of scapegoating that I do not believe in, I do not subscribe to.” (BO-T1/P16,L29)		“I have worked on the streets of Chicago as an organizer with people who have been laid off from steel plants, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, and, you know, all of them are feeling economically insecure right now, and they have been for many years. Before the latest round of immigrants showed up, you had huge unemployment rates among African-American youth.” (BO-T1/P16,L23)			
2	“I believe that we can be nation of laws and a nation of immigrants.” (BO-T1/P16,L34)		“Let’s understand more broadly that the economic problems that African-Americans are experiencing, whites are experiences, blacks and Latinos are experiencing in this country are all rooted in the fact that we have had an economy out of balance.” (BO-T1/P17,L11) and “We’ve had tax cuts that went up instead of down. We have had a lack of investment in basic infrastructure in this country. Our education system is chronically underfunded.” (BO-T1/P17,L14)			
3	“I also believe that we do have to crack down on those employers that are taking advantage of the situation, hiring folks who cannot complain about worker conditions, who aren't getting the minimum wage sometimes, or aren't getting overtime. We have to crack down on them.” (BO-T1/P17,L4)					
4	“I also believe we have to give a pathway to citizenship after they have paid a fine and learned					“because if we don’t, they will continue to

	English, to those who are already here.” (BO-T1/P16,L7)					undermine U.S. wages.” (BO-T1/P17,L9)
5	“We should not use immigration as a tactic to divide. Instead, we should pull the country together to get this economy back on track.” (BO-T1/P17,L19)		“I believe that in many parts of our country, because of employers who exploit undocumented workers and drive down wages, there are job losses.” (BO-T1/P17,L31)			
6	“And I think we should be honest about that.” (BO-T1/P17,L32)					
7	“I would consider that,” (HC-T2/P12,L31)					“..except in egregious situations where it would be appropriate to take the actions you're referring to.” (HC-T2/P12,L31)
8	“That is not the America that I know.” (HC-T2/P13,L3)	“That is against American values. And it is a stark admission of failure by the federal government.” (HC-T2/P13,L5)	“we see what's been happening, with literally babies being left with no one to take care of them, children coming home from school, no responsible adult left.” HC-T2/P13,L1)			
9	“We need comprehensive immigration reform.” (HC-T2/P13,L7)		“I have been for this. I signed onto the first comprehensive bill back in 2004. I've been advocating for it: tougher, more secure borders, of course, but let's do it the right way, cracking down on employers, especially once we get to comprehensive immigration reform, who exploit undocumented workers and drive down wages for everyone			

			else.” (HC-T2/P13,L8)			
10	“I’d like to see more federal help for communities like Austin and others like Laredo, where I was this morning, that absorb the health care, education, and law enforcement costs.” (HC-T2/P13,L13)		“..like Laredo, where I was this morning, that absorb the health care, education, and law enforcement costs.” (HC-T2/P13,L15)			
11	“Finally, we need a path to legalization, to bring the immigrants out of the shadows, give them the conditions that we expect them to meet, paying a fine for coming here illegally, trying to pay back taxes, over time, and learning English. “ and “I would introduce that in the first 100 days of my presidency..” (HC-T2/P13,L18)					“If they had a committed a crime in our country or the country they came from, then they should be deported.” (HC-T2/P13,L22)
12	“There are a couple of things I would add. Comprehensive immigration reform is something that I have worked on extensively.” (BO-T2/P13,L28)		“Two years ago, we were able to get a bill out of the Senate. I was one of the group of senators that helped to move it through, but it died in the House this year. Because it was used as a political football instead of a way of solving a problem, nothing happened.” (BO-T2/P13,L30)		“Extensively	
13	“it is absolutely critical that we tone down the rhetoric when it comes to the immigration debate” (BO-T2/P14,L1)		“because there has been an undertone that has been ugly. Oftentimes, it has been directed at the Hispanic community. We have seen hate crimes skyrocket in the wake of the immigration debate as it has been conducted in Washington, and that is unacceptable.” (BO-T2/P14,L2)			
14	“So we need comprehensive	“We are a nation of laws	“..because they can't complain if they're			

	reform and that means stronger border security. It means that we are cracking down on employers that are taking advantage of undocumented workers.” (BO-T2/P14,L8)	and we are a nation of immigrants, and we can reconcile those two things.” (BO-T2/P14,L7)	not paid a minimum wage. They can't complain if they're not getting overtime.” (BO-T2/P14,L12)			
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D. Economy

1	<p>“Now, what I've said is that we have to restore a sense of fairness and balance to our economy, and that means a couple of things. Number one, with our tax code: We've got to stop giving tax breaks to companies that are shipping jobs overseas and invest those tax breaks in companies that are investing here in the United States of America.” (BO-T2/P9,L9) And “We have to end the Bush tax cuts to the wealthy and to provide tax breaks to middle-class Americans and working Americans who need them.” (BO-T2/P9,L15)</p>		<p>“Everywhere you go, you meet people who are working harder for less, wages and incomes have flatlined, people are seeing escalating costs of everything from health care to gas at the pump. And so people have been struggling for a long time. In some communities, they have been struggling for decades now.” (BO-T2/P9,L3)</p>			
2	<p>“So I've said that if you are making \$75,000 a year or less, I want to give an offset to your payroll tax that will mean \$1,000 extra in the pockets of ordinary</p>					

	Americans. Senior citizens making less than \$50,000, you shouldn't have to pay income tax on your Social Security. We pay for these by closing tax loopholes and tax havens that are being manipulated." (BO-T2/P9,L19)				
3	"I think it is absolutely critical that we engaged in trade" (BO-T2/P9,L26)			"absolutely"	"but it has to be viewed not just through the lens of Wall Street, but also Main Street, which means we've got strong labor standards and strong environmental standards and safety standards, so we don't have toys being shipped in the United States with lead paint on them." (BO-T2/P9,L27)
4	"I think there are also opportunities in our economy around creating a green economy." (BO-T2/P9,L32)		"We send \$1 billion to foreign countries every day because of our addiction to foreign oil. And for us to move rapidly to cap greenhouse gases, generate billions of dollars that we can reinvest in solar and wind and biodiesel -- that can put people back to work."		

			(BO-T2/P9,L33)			
5	<p>“And it is my strong belief that the changes are only going to come about if we're able to form a working coalition for change.” (BO-T2/P10,L16)</p> <p>“And I think it has to be a priority for whoever the next president is to be able to overcome the dominance of the special interests in Washington, to bring about the kinds of economic changes that I'm talking about.” (BO-T2/P10,L20)</p>		<p>“..because people who were benefiting from the current tax code are going to resist. The special interests and lobbyists are going to resist.” (BO-T2/P10,L17)</p>			
6	<p>“I would agree with a lot that senator Obama said” (HC-T2/P11,L1)</p>		<p>“because it is the Democratic agenda.” (HC-T2/P11,L2)</p>			
7	<p>“We are going to rid the tax code of these loopholes and giveaways. We're going to stop giving a penny of your money to anybody who ships a job out of Texas, Ohio or anywhere else to another country. (HC-T2/P11,L5)</p> <p>“We're certainly going to begin to get the tax code to reflect what the needs of middle class families are so we can rebuild a strong and prosperous middle class.” (HC-T2/P11,L7)</p>					

	<p>“We will also have a different approach toward trade.” (HC-T2/P11,L14)</p> <p>“We're going to start having trade agreements that not only have strong environmental and labor standards, but I want to have a trade time-out.” (HC-T2/P11,L15)</p> <p>“We're going to look and see what's working and what's not working, and I'd like to have a trade prosecutor to actually enforce the trade agreements that we have before we enter into any others.” (HC-T2/P11,L17)</p> <p>“We're also going to put much tougher standards in place so that people cannot import toys with lead paint, contaminated pet food, contaminated drugs into our market. (HC-T2/P11,L20)</p> <p>“We're going to have much more vigorous enforcement of safety standards.” (HC-T2/P11,L22)</p>					
8	<p>“Clean green jobs. I wanted it to be part of the stimulus package” (HC-T2/P12,L2)</p>	<p>“I thought a \$5 billion investment in clean green jobs would put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work</p>	<p>“I've been promoting this.” (HC-T2/P12,L4)</p>			

		helping to create our future.” (HC-T2/P12,L5)				
9	<p>“We also need to invest in our infrastructure.” (HC-T2/P12,L8)</p> <p>“We need to rebuild America, and that will also put people to work.” (HC-T2/P12,L9)</p>		<p>“We don't have enough roads to take care of the congestion, we have crumbling bridges and tunnels.” (HC-T2/P12,L8)</p>			
10	<p>“And, finally, we need to end George Bush's war on science,” (HC-T2/P12,L11)</p>	<p>“This is about how we fund the future. We've got to get back to being the innovation nation. Think of everything that goes on at this great university to create the new economy... (HC-T2/P12,L15)</p>	<p>“..which has been waged against scientists and researchers...” (HC-T2/P12,L12)</p>			

APPENDIX 2
Transcript 1

Transcript of Thursday's Democratic presidential debate

This is the transcript from Thursday night's Democratic presidential debate between Sens. Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama sponsored by CNN, The Los Angeles Times and Politico.

Sens. Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama were more polite Thursday after their bitter South Carolina debate.

LOS ANGELES, California (CNN) -- WOLF BLITZER, CNN: Let's begin with Senator Obama.

SEN. BARACK OBAMA, D-ILLINOIS: Wolf, thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

Thank you. Thank you.

First of all, first of all, I want to acknowledge a candidate who left the race this week, John Edwards, who did such an outstanding job...

(APPLAUSE)

... elevating the issues of poverty and the plight of working families all across the country. And we wish him and Elizabeth well. He's going to be a voice for this party and for this country for many years to come.

I also want to note something that you noted at the beginning, which is that, when we started off, we had eight candidates on this stage. We now are down to two after 17 debates.

And, you know, it is a testimony to the Democratic Party and it is a testimony to this country that we have the opportunity to make history, because I think one of us two will end up being the next president of the United States of America.

(APPLAUSE)

And I also want to note that I was friends with Hillary Clinton before we started this campaign; I will be friends with Hillary Clinton after this campaign is over.

(APPLAUSE)

She has done -- she's run a -- we're running a competitive race, but it's because we both love this country, and we believe deeply in the issues that are at stake.

I believe we're at a defining moment in our history. Our nation is at war; our planet is in peril. Families all across the country are struggling with everything from back-breaking health care costs to trying to stay in their homes.

And at this moment, the question is: How do we take the country in a new direction? How do we get past the divisions that have prevented us from solving these problems year after year after year?

I don't think the choice is between black and white or it's about gender or religion. I don't think it's about young or old. I think what is at stake right now is whether we are looking backwards or we are looking forwards. I think it is the past versus the future.

BLITZER: Thank you, Senator.

OBAMA: And just to finish up, Wolf. And I think that, as we move forward in this debate, understand we are both Democrats and we understand the issues at stake. We want change from George Bush.

But we also have to have change that brings the country together, pushes back against the special interests in Washington, and levels with the American people about the difficult changes that we make. If we do that, I am confident that we can solve any problem and we can fulfill the destiny that America wants to see, not just next year, but in many years to come.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Senator Clinton?

SEN. HILLARY CLINTON, D-NEW YORK: Well, on January 20, 2009, the next president of the United States will be sworn in on the steps of the Capitol. I, as a Democrat, fervently hope you are looking at that next president. Either Barack or I will raise our hand and swear to uphold the Constitution of the United States.

CLINTON: And then, when the celebrations are over, the next president will walk into the Oval Office, and waiting there will be a stack of problems, problems inherited from a failed administration: a war to end in Iraq and a war to resolve in Afghanistan; an economy that is not working for the vast majority of Americans, but well for the wealthy and the well-connected; tens of millions of people either without health insurance at all or with insurance that doesn't amount to much, because it won't pay what your doctor or your hospital need...

(APPLAUSE)

... an energy crisis that we fail to act on at our peril; global warming, which the United States must lead in trying to contend with and reverse; and then all of the problems that we know about and the ones we can't yet predict.

It is imperative that we have a president, starting on day one, who can begin to solve our problems, tackle these challenges, and seize the opportunities that I think await.

I'm very grateful for the extraordinary service of John and Elizabeth Edwards.

CLINTON: And among the many contributions that they have made, both by their personal example of courage and leadership, is their reminder that in this land of such plenty and blessings, there are still 37 million Americans who are living below the poverty line and many others barely hanging on above.

So what we have to do tonight is to have a discussion about what each of us believes are the priorities and the goals for America. I think it's imperative we have a problem-solver, that we roll up our sleeves.

I'm offering that kind of approach, because I think that Americans are ready once again to know that there isn't anything we can't do if we put our minds to it.

So let's have that conversation.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Thank you. Thank you, Senator.

The first question will go to Doyle.

DOYLE MCMANUS, L.A. TIMES: Senator Clinton, your two campaigns have been going on for more than a year now and it's clear that the two of you have had different experiences in your lives. You have different styles.

But when most voters look at the two of you, they don't see a lot of daylight between you on policy.

So what I'd like to ask is: what do you consider the most important policy distinction between the two of you?

CLINTON: Well, I want to start by saying that whatever differences there are among us, between us now, it's hard to forget between -- we keep talking about all those who aren't here.

But the differences between Barack and I pale in comparison to the differences that we have with Republicans, and I want to say that first and foremost, because it's really...

(APPLAUSE)

... a stark difference. But we do have differences and let me mention a couple. First, on health care. I believe absolutely passionately that we must have universal health care. It is a moral responsibility and a right for our country, and...

(APPLAUSE)

... and I have put forth a plan similar to what Senator Edwards had before he left the race that would move us to universal health care.

Secondly, I think it's imperative that we approach this mortgage crisis with the seriousness that it is presenting. There are 95,000 homes in foreclosure in California right now. I want a moratorium on foreclosures for 90 days so we can try to work out keeping people in their homes instead of having them lose their homes, and I want to freeze interest rates for five years.

I think when it comes to how we approach foreign affairs, in particular, I believe that we've got to be realistic and optimistic, but we start with realism in the sense that we do have serious threats, we do have those who are, unfortunately and tragically, plotting against us, posing dangers to us and our friends and our allies.

And I think that we've got to have a full diplomatic effort, but I don't think the president should put the prestige of the presidency on the line in the first year to have meetings with out preconditions with five of the worst dictators in the world.

So we have differences both at home and around the world, but, again, I would emphasize that what really is important here, because the Republicans were in California debating yesterday, they are more of the same.

Neither of us, just by looking at us, you can tell, we are not more of the same. We will change our country.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: We heard Senator Clinton, Senator Obama, define some of the differences on policy issues she sees between the two of you.

What do you see as the most significant policy differences between the two of you?

OBAMA: Well, I actually think that a couple of the ones that Hillary mentioned are genuine policy differences that are worthy of debate.

Let's take health care. About 95 percent of our plans are similar. We both set up a government plan that would allow people who otherwise don't have health insurance because of a preexisting condition, like my mother had, or at least what the insurance said was a preexisting condition, let them get health insurance.

We both want to emphasize prevention, because we've got to do something about ever escalating costs and we don't want children, who I meet all the time, going to emergency rooms for treatable illnesses like asthma.

It is true we've got a policy difference, because my view is that the reason people don't have health care, and I meet them all the time, in South Carolina, a mother whose child has cerebral palsy and could not get insurance for and started crying during a town hall meeting, and Hillary, I'm sure, has had the same experiences.

What they're struggling with is they can't afford the health care. And so I emphasize reducing costs. My belief is that if we make it affordable, if we provide subsidies to those who can't afford it, they will buy it.

Senator Clinton has a different approach. She believes that we have to force people who don't have health insurance to buy it. Otherwise, there will be a lot of people who don't get it.

OBAMA: I don't see those folks. And I think that it is important for us to recognize that if, in fact, you are going to mandate the purchase of insurance and it's not affordable, then there's going to have to be some enforcement mechanism that the government uses. And they may charge people who already don't have health care fines, or have to take it out of their paychecks. And that, I don't think, is helping those without health insurance. That is a genuine difference.

On the mortgage crisis...

(APPLAUSE)

On the mortgage crisis, again, we both believe that this is a critical problem. It's a huge problem in California and all across the country. And we agree that we have to keep people in their homes.

I have put forward a \$10 billion home foreclosure prevention fund that would help to bridge the lender and the borrower so that people can stay in their homes.

I have not signed on to the notion of an interest rates freeze, and the reason is not because we need to protect the banks. The problem is, is that if we have such a freeze, mortgage interest rates will go up across the board and you will have a lot of people who are currently trying to get mortgages who will actually have more of a difficult time.

So, some of the people that we want to protect could end up being hurt by such a plan.

Now, keep in mind, the one thing I suspect that Senator Clinton and I agree on. Part of the reason we are in this mortgage mess is because there's been complete lack of oversight on the part of the Bush administration.

(APPLAUSE)

The mortgage lending industry spent \$185 billion -- \$185 million lobbying to prevent provisions that go against predatory lending, for example, that I introduced.

Which brings me to another difference. I believe that it is very important for us to reduce the influence of lobbyists and special interests in Washington.

(APPLAUSE)

I think that a lot of issues that both Senator Clinton and I care about will not move forward unless we have increased the kinds of ethics proposal that I passed just last year -- some of the toughest since Watergate -- and that's something that John Edwards and I both talked about repeatedly in this campaign. That's why I don't take federal PAC and federal lobbyist money. That is a difference.

And the last point I'll make is on Iraq. Senator Clinton brought this up.

I was opposed to Iraq from the start.

(APPLAUSE)

And that -- and I say that not just to look backwards, but also to look forwards, because I think what the next president has to show is the kind of judgment that will ensure that we are using our military power wisely.

It is true that I want to elevate diplomacy so that it is part of our arsenal to serve the American people's interests and to keep us safe.

And I have disagreed with Senator Clinton on, for example, meeting with Iran. I think, and the national intelligence estimate, the last report suggested that if we are meeting with them, talking to them, and offering them both carrots and sticks, they are more likely to change their behavior. And we can do so in a way that does not ultimately cost billions of dollars, thousands of lives, and hurt our reputation around the world.

BLITZER: Those are three important issues...

(APPLAUSE)

... that you both have defined where there are some differences -- health care, the housing crisis, national security, Iraq, Iran. We're going to go through all of those issues over the course of this debate.

But let's start with health care, because this is a critical issue affecting millions and millions of Americans. And, Jeanne, you have a question on that.

JEANNE CUMMINGS, POLITICO: You both mentioned that health care is a priority for your party, but the truth is that most Democrats really do want full coverage, everybody covered.

Now, Senator Obama, this is a question for you. Under your plan, which is voluntary, it creates incentives for people to buy, but still is voluntary. There would be around -- about 15 million people who would still not be covered.

Now, why is your plan superior to hers?

OBAMA: Well, understand who we're talking about here. Every expert who looks at it says anybody who wants health care will be able to get health care under my plan. There won't be anybody out there who wants health care who will not be able to get it. That's point number one.

So the estimate is -- this is where the 15 million figure comes in -- is that there are 15 million people who don't want health care. That's the argument.

Now, first of all, I dispute that there are 15 million people out there who don't want it. I believe that there are people who can't afford it, and if we provide them enough subsidies, they will purchase it. Number one.

Number two, I mandate coverage for all children.

Number three, I say that young people, who are the most likely to be healthy but think they are invulnerable -- and decide I don't need health care -- what I'm saying is that insurance companies and my plan as well will allow people up to 25 years old to be covered under their parents' plan.

So, as a consequence, I don't believe that there will be 15 million out there.

OBAMA: Now, under any mandate, you are going to have problems with people who don't end up having health coverage. Massachusetts right now embarked on an experiment where they mandated coverage.

And, by the way, I want to congratulate Governor Schwarzenegger and the speaker and others who have been trying to do this in California, but I know that those who have looked at it understand, you can mandate it, but there's still going to be people who can't afford it. And if they cannot afford it, then the question is, what are you going to do about it?

Are you going to fine them? Are you going to garnish their wages?

You know, those are questions that Senator Clinton has not answered with respect to her plan, but I think we can anticipate that there would also be people potentially who are not covered and are actually hurt if they have a mandate imposed on them.

BLITZER: All right.

Senator Clinton, this is a substantive difference on health care between the two of you. Go ahead and respond.

CLINTON: Well, let me start by saying that this is the passionate cause of my public service.

I started trying to expand health care many years ago, first to children, then to rural areas in Arkansas, and obviously tackled it during my husband's administration. And the reason why I have designed a plan that, number one, tells people, if you have health insurance and you are happy with it, nothing changes, is because we want to maximize choice for people.

So, if you are satisfied, you're not one of the people who will necessarily, at this time, take advantage of what I'm offering. But if you are uninsured or underinsured, we will open the congressional health plan to you.

And contrary to...

(APPLAUSE)

Contrary to the description that Barack just gave, we actually will make it affordable for everyone, because my plan lowers costs aggressively, which is important for us all; improves quality for everyone, which is essential. And the way it covers all of those who wish to participate in the congressional plan is that it will provide subsidies, and it will also cap premiums, something that is really important, because we want to make sure that it is affordable for all.

So, when you draw the distinction that, "Well, it's not affordable, therefore people will have to be made to get it," well, the fact is, it has been designed to be affordable with health care tax credits.

And it's also important to recognize that right now, there are people who could afford health care, and they are not all young, they're people who just don't feel they have to accept that responsibility. There are many states which give families the option of keeping children up until 25 on their policies, but their rates of uninsurance are still very high.

We cannot get to universal health care, which I believe is both a core Democratic value and imperative for our country, if we don't do one of three things. Either you can have a single payer system, or -- which, I know, a lot of people favor, but for many reasons, is difficult to achieve. Or, you can mandate employers. Well, that's also very controversial. Or, you can do what I am proposing, which is to have shared responsibility.

Now, in Barack's plan, he very clearly says he will mandate that parents get health insurance for their children. So it's not that he is against mandatory provisions, it's that he doesn't think it would be politically acceptable to require that for everyone.

I just disagree with that. I think we as Democrats have to be willing to fight for universal health care.

(APPLAUSE)

And what I've concluded, when I was looking at this -- because I got the same kind of advice, which was, it's controversial, you'll run into all of this buzz saw, and I said, been there, done that. But if you don't start by saying, you're going to achieve universal health care, you will be nibbled to death.

And I think it's imperative that, as we move forward in this debate and into the campaign, that we recognize what both John Edwards and I did, that you have to bite this bullet. You have to say, yes, we are going to try to get universal health care. What I have designed makes it affordable, provides premium caps so it's never

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Senator Obama, let me just fine-tune the question, because I know you want to respond.

On this issue of mandates, those who don't, whether it's 10 million or 15 million, those who could afford it but don't wind up buying health insurance for one reason or another, they wind up getting sick, they go to an emergency room, all of us wind up paying for their health care. That's the biggest criticism that's been leveled at your plan.

OBAMA: If people are gaming the system, there are ways we can address that. By, for example, making them pay some of the back premiums for not having gotten it in the first place.

But understand that, number one, Hillary says that she's got enough subsidies. Well, we priced out both our plan and Senator Clinton's plan, and some of the subsidies are not going to be sufficient. Point number one.

OBAMA: Point number two is that I am actually not interested in just capping premiums. I want to lower premiums by about an average of \$2,500 per family per year, because people right now cannot afford it.

I can't tell you how many folks I meet who have premiums that are so high that essentially they don't have health insurance, they have house insurance. What they do is...

(APPLAUSE)

... they have a \$10,000 deductible, or what have you, to try to reduce costs. They never go to a doctor. And that ends up something that we pay for, so I'm trying to reduce premiums for all families.

But the last point I want to make has to do with how we're going to actually get this plan done. You know, Ted Kennedy said that he is confident that we will get universal health care with me as president, and he's been working on it longer than I think about than anybody.

But he's gone through 12 of these plans, and each time they have failed. And part of the reason, I think, that they have failed is we have not been able to bring Democrats, Republicans together to get it done.

(APPLAUSE)

That's what I did in Illinois, to provide insurance for people who did not have it. That's what I will do in bringing all parties together, not negotiating behind closed doors, but bringing all parties together, and broadcasting those negotiations on C-SPAN so that the American people can see what the choices are.

(APPLAUSE)

Because part of what we have to do is enlist the American people in this process. And overcoming the special interests and the lobbyists who -- Senator Clinton is right. They will resist anything that we try to do. My plan, her plan, they will try to resist.

And the antidote to that is making sure that the American people understand what is at stake. I am absolutely committed to making sure that anybody in America who needs health care is going to get it.

BLITZER: I just want to be precise, and I'll let Senator Clinton respond. But you say broadcast on C-SPAN these deliberations. Is that a swipe at Senator Clinton because...

OBAMA: No, it's not a swipe. This is something that I've been talking about consistently. What I want to do is increase transparency and accountability to offset the power of the special interests and the lobbyists.

(APPLAUSE)

If a drug company -- if the drug companies or a member of Congress who's carrying water for the drug companies wants to argue that we should not negotiate for the cheapest available price on drugs, then I want them to make that argument in front of the American people.

And I will have experts who explain that, in fact, it is legitimate for drug companies to make profits, but they are making outsized profits on the backs of senior citizens who need those prescription drugs. And that is an argument that the American people have to be involved with, otherwise we're not going to get any plan through.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Senator Clinton, we remember in '93, when you were formulating your health care plan, it was done in secret.

CLINTON: Well, it was an effort to try to begin this conversation, which we're now continuing. It has been a difficult conversation. There have been a lot of efforts.

And I'm proud that one of the efforts I was involved in 10 years ago resulted in the Children's Health Insurance Program. We now have a million children in California...

(APPLAUSE)

... who every month get health insurance because of that bipartisan effort. We obviously are running into the presidential veto and not being able to expand it.

But this issue is so important, and I just want to underscore three really critical points.

First of all, I have said in my plan that we have to regulate the health insurance industry differently. We have to say to them that they can no longer deny coverage to anyone and they have to cover everyone, including every pre-existing condition.

(APPLAUSE)

And they have to compete on cost and quality, instead of the way they compete now, which is to try to cherry-pick people, and only insure the healthy, and make it so costly for people with diabetes or cancer or some other chronic condition.

Secondly, we've got to make it clear to the drug companies that they do deserve to be part of the solution, because we all benefit from the life-saving remedies they come up with, but we pay for it many times over.

It is American taxpayers who pay for the research. It is American taxpayers who pay for a lot of the clinical studies. That's why, while we're looking at getting to universal health care, we also have to give Medicare the right to negotiate with drug companies to get the price down, to begin to rein in those costs across the board.

(APPLAUSE)

And, finally, it is so important that, as Democrats, we carry the banner of universal health care. The health insurance industry is very clever and extremely well-funded.

I know this. I had \$300 million of incoming advertising and attacks during our efforts back in '93 and '94. And one of the reasons why I've designed the plan that I have put forward now is because I learned a lot about what people want, what people are willing to accept, and how we get the political process to work.

CLINTON: And, certainly, it is important that the president come up with the plan, but we'll have to persuade Congress to put all of those deliberations on C-SPAN. Now, I think we might be able to do that, but that's a little heavier lift than what the president is going to propose, because what happens is we have to have a coalition.

And I think the plan that I have proposed is if you take business, which pays the costs and wants to get those costs down, take labor that has to negotiate over health care instead of wages, take doctors, nurses, hospitals who want to get back into the business of taking care of people instead of working for insurance companies, I think we will have a coalition that can withstand the health insurance...

BLITZER: Thank you.

CLINTON: ... and the drug companies.

BLITZER: Thank you, Senator.

CLINTON: And that's what I intend to do.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: All right. The next question, a related question, from Doyle.

MCMANUS: Senator Obama, one other thing both of your health insurance proposals have in common is they would cost billions of dollars in new spending and both of you have proposed raising taxes on a lot on Americans to pay for that and for other proposals.

Well, now, you know what's going to happen this fall in the general election campaign. The Republicans are going to call you "tax-and-spend" liberal Democrats, and that's a charge that's been effective in the past.

How are you going to counter that charge?

OBAMA: Well, first of all, I don't think the Republicans are going to be in a real strong position to argue fiscal responsibility, when they have added \$4 trillion or \$5 trillion...

(APPLAUSE)

... worth of national debt. I am happy to have that argument.

If John McCain, for example, is the nominee, I respect that John McCain, in the first two rounds of Bush tax cuts, said it is irresponsible that we have never before cut taxes at the same time as we're going into war.

And somewhere along the line, the straight talk express lost some wheels and now he is in favor of extending Bush tax cuts that went to some of the wealthiest Americans who don't need them and we're not even asking for them.

So I've already said a sizeable portion of my health care plan will be paid for because we emphasize savings. We invest in prevention.

So that as I said before, the chronically ill that account for 20 percent -- or the 20 percent of chronically ill patients that account for 80 percent of the costs, that they're getting better treatment. We are actually paying for a dietitian for people to lose weight as opposed to paying for the \$30,000 foot amputation. That will save us money.

We can conservatively save...

(APPLAUSE)

... \$100 billion to \$150 billion a year under my plan. That pays for part of it.

Part of it is paid for by rolling back the Bush tax cuts on the top one percent.

Now...

(APPLAUSE)

So my plan is paid for. But one thing that I think we're going to have to do as Democrats when we go after the Republicans is -- the question is not tax cuts, tax hikes. The question is who are the tax cuts for, who are the tax hikes imposed upon.

What we have had right now is a situation where we've cut taxes for people who don't need them. Warren Buffett has said, "You know, I made \$46 million last year. It was a bad year for me. But I can still afford to pay more than my secretary, who has a higher tax rate than I do."

That is not fair and I want to change that.

We've got \$1 trillion worth of corporate tax loopholes and tax havens and I've said I will close those and I will give tax cuts to people making \$75,000 or less by offsetting their payroll tax. Senior citizens making less than \$50,000 a year, we want to eliminate taxes for them.

So the question is can we restore a sense of balance to our economy and make sure that those of us who are blessed and fortunate and have thrived in this economy, in this global economy, that we can afford to pay a little bit more so that that child in east Los Angeles who is in a crumbling school, with teachers that are having to dig into their own pockets for school supplies, that they are having a chance at the American dream, as well.

(APPLAUSE)

I'm happy to have that argument.

BLITZER: Senator Clinton, your health care plan, it is estimated, will cost \$110 billion annually. You want to tax the rich to pay for that, is that what you're saying?

CLINTON: Well, let me say that the way I would pay for this is to take the Bush tax cuts that are set to expire on people making more than \$250,000 a year. That would raise about \$55 billion and I would put that into the subsidies for the health care tax credit, so that people would be able to afford the health care that we are offering.

The other \$55 billion would come from the modernization and the efficiencies that I believe we can obtain. We spend more money than anybody in the world on health care and there is no end in sight.

CLINTON: Yet, we don't get the best results. We don't have the longest life span. We don't have the best infant mortality rates.

We could do so much better. And here are some of the ideas that I have put on the table.

Number one, the Bush administration has given enormous tax giveaways to HMOs and drug companies under the Medicare prescription Part D program, under the HMO program in Medicare. I would rein those in. They are not being earned. They do not produce the results that are supposedly being touted by the Bush administration.

I would also move for electronic medical records, something that I have worked on for nearly five years on a bipartisan basis. Started with Newt Gingrich and Bill Frist. We passed my legislation through the Senate a year ago. Didn't get it through the Republican House. Now we're going to try again in the Democratic Congress.

If we had electronic medical records, according to RAND Corporation -- hardly a bastion of liberal thinking...

(LAUGHTER)

... they have said we would save \$77 billion a year. That money can be put into prevention. It could be put into chronic care management. It can be put into making sure that our health care system has enough access so that if you are in a rural community somewhere in California or somewhere in Tennessee or somewhere in Georgia, you'll have access to health care. If you are in an inner-city area and you see your hospital, like the Drew Medical Center, closed on you, then you are going to have a place once again where you can get health care in the immediate area.

So we can begin to be more effective and more sensible about how we cover everybody, and use the money from the top-end tax cuts and from modernizing the system.

BLITZER: Jeanne has a question on a different subject...

(APPLAUSE)

... but I just want to be precise. When you let -- if you become president, either one of you -- let the Bush tax cuts lapse, there will be effectively tax increases on millions of Americans.

OBAMA: On wealthy Americans.

CLINTON: That's right.

OBAMA: And look...

BLITZER: And you are willing to go into...

(CROSSTALK)

OBAMA: I'm not bashful about it.

CLINTON: Absolutely. Absolutely.

OBAMA: I suspect a lot of this crowd -- it looks like a pretty well-dressed crowd -- potentially will pay a little bit more. I will pay a little bit more.

But as I said, you know, we have, I believe, a moral obligation to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to get health care in this country.

And one last point I want to make. We will have to make some upfront costs. That's why in either of our plans, you know, if we want to invest in electronic medical records, then we have got to go to rural hospitals who might not be able to afford it and say, we're going to help you buy the computer software and the machinery to make sure that this works.

But that investment will pay huge dividends over the long term, and the place where it will pay the biggest dividends is in Medicare and Medicaid. Because if we can get a healthier population, that is the only way over the long term that we can actually control that spending that is going to break the federal budget.

CLINTON: But Wolf, it's just really important to underscore here that we will go back to the tax rates we had before George Bush became president. And my memory is, people did really well during that time period.

(APPLAUSE)

And they will keep doing really well.

BLITZER: All right, Jeanne?

CUMMINGS: On immigration. The Republicans have had a pretty fierce debate over immigration. And it's now pretty clear that that's going to be an issue for you all, as well, not just in the general, but it's bubbled up in some of the primaries. And it's a divisive issue for you all, as it is for the Republicans. And that was pretty evident when we got a question through Politico.

This is from Kim Millman (ph) from Burnsville, Minnesota. And she says, "there's been no acknowledgement by any of the presidential candidates of the negative economic impact of immigration on the African-American community. How do you propose to address the high unemployment rates and the declining wages in the African-American community that are related to the flood of immigrant labor?"

Senator Obama, you want to go first on that? And it's for both of you.

OBAMA: Well, let me first of all say that I have worked on the streets of Chicago as an organizer with people who have been laid off from steel plants, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, and, you know, all of them are feeling economically insecure right now, and they have been for many years. Before the latest round of immigrants showed up, you had huge unemployment rates among African-American youth.

And, so, I think to suggest somehow that the problem that we're seeing in inner-city unemployment, for example, is attributable to immigrants, I think, is a case of scapegoating that I do not believe in, I do not subscribe to.

(APPLAUSE)

And this is where we do have a very real difference with the other party.

OBAMA: I believe that we can be a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants.

Now, there is no doubt that we have to get control of our borders. We can't have hundreds of thousands of people coming over to the United States without us having any idea who they are.

I also believe that we do have to crack down on those employers that are taking advantage of the situation, hiring folks who cannot complain about worker conditions, who aren't getting the minimum wage sometimes, or aren't getting overtime. We have to crack down on them. I also believe we have to give a pathway to citizenship after they have paid a fine and learned English, to those who are already here, because if we don't, they will continue to undermine U.S. wages.

But let's understand more broadly that the economic problems that African-Americans are experiencing, whites are experiences, blacks and Latinos are experiencing in this country are all rooted in the fact that we have had an economy out of balance. We've had tax cuts that went up instead of down. We have had a lack of investment in basic infrastructure in this country. Our education system is chronically underfunded.

(APPLAUSE)

And so, there are a whole host of reasons why we have not been generating the kinds of jobs that we are generating. We should not use immigration as a tactic to divide. Instead, we should pull the country together to get this economy back on track.

That's what I intend to do as president of the United States of America.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: All right.

Senator Clinton, we're going to stay on this subject, but Doyle has a follow-up.

MCMANUS: Senator Clinton, Senator Obama has said that he favors allowing illegal immigrants to obtain drivers' licenses, and you oppose that idea.

Why?

CLINTON: Well, let me start with the original question from Kim, because I think it deserves an answer.

I believe that in many parts of our country, because of employers who exploit undocumented workers and drive down wages, there are job losses. And I think we should be honest about that.

(APPLAUSE)

There are people who have been pushed out of jobs and factories and meat processing plants, and all kinds of settings. And I meet them.

You know, I was in Atlanta last night, and an African-American man said to me, "I used to have a lot of construction jobs, and now it just seems like the only people who get them anymore are people who are here without documentation." So, I know that what we have to do is to bring our country together to have a comprehensive immigration reform solution.

(APPLAUSE)

That is the answer. And it is important that we make clear to Kim and people who are worried about this that that is actually in the best interests of those who are concerned about losing their jobs or already have.

Because if we can tighten our borders, if we can crack down on employer who exploit workers, both those who are undocumented and those who are here as citizens, or legal, if we can do more to help local communities cope with the cost that they often have to contend with, if we do more to help our friends to the south create more jobs for their own people, and if we take what we know to be the realities that we confront -- 12 to 14 million people here, what will we do with them?

Well, I hear the voices from the other side of the aisle. I hear voices on TV and radio. And they are living in some other universe, talking about deporting people, rounding them up.

I don't agree with that, and I don't think it's practical. And therefore, what we've got to do is to say, come out of the shadows. We will register everyone. We will check, because if you have committed a crime in this country or the country you came from, then you will not be able to stay, you will have to be deported.

But for the vast majority of people who are here, we will give you a path to legalization if you meet the following condition: pay a fine because you entered illegally, be willing to pay back taxes over time, try to learn English -- and we have to help you do that, because we've cut back on so many of those services -- and then you wait in line.

That not only is, I think, the best way to approach the problem of our 12 million to 14 million who are here, but that also says to Kim, Kim, this is the best answer, as well, because once we have those conditions met, and people agree, then, they will not be in a labor market that undercuts anybody else's wages.

BLITZER: Senator...

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: And therefore, it's imperative we approach it this way, only after people have agreed to these conditions, Doyle, and that they have been willing to say, yes, they will meet those conditions, do I think we ought to talk about privileges like drivers' licenses? Because otherwise, I think you will further undermine the labor market for people like the ones Kim is referring to.

CLINTON: We need to solve this problem, not exacerbate it. And that's what intend to do as president.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: All right. All right, we have a follow-up.

Senator Obama, in an interview with CNN this week, you said this. You said, quote, "I stood up for a humane and intelligent immigration policy in a way that, frankly, none of my other opponents did." What did you mean by that?

OBAMA: Well, what I meant was that, when this issue came up -- not driver's licenses, but comprehensive immigration reform generally -- I worked with Ted Kennedy. I worked with Dick Durbin. I worked with John McCain, although he may not admit it now...

(LAUGHTER)

... to move this issue forward aggressively. And it's a hard political issue. Let's be honest. This is not an issue that polls well. But I think it is the right thing to do.

(APPLAUSE)

And I think we have to show leadership on the issue. And it is important for us, I believe, to recognize that the problems that workers are experiencing generally are not primarily caused by immigration. There is...

BLITZER: Are you suggesting that Senator Clinton's policy was not, in your words, "humane"?

OBAMA: That is -- what I said was that we have to stand up for these issues when it's tough, and that's what I've done.

I did it when I was in the state legislature, sponsoring the Illinois version of the DREAM Act, so that children who were brought here through no fault of their own are able to go to college, because we actually want well-educated kids in our country...

(APPLAUSE)

... who are able to -- who are able to succeed and become part of this economy and part of the American dream.

BLITZER: Was she lacking on that front?

OBAMA: Wolf, you keep on trying to push on this issue.

BLITZER: I'm just trying to find out what you mean.

OBAMA: There are those who were opposed to this issue, and there have been those who have flipped on the issue and have run away from the issue. This wasn't directed particularly at Senator Clinton. But the fact of the matter is I have stood up consistently on this issue.

On the driver's license issue, I don't actually want -- I don't believe that we're going to have to deal with this if we have comprehensive immigration reform,

because, as I said before, people don't come here to drive. They come here to work.

(APPLAUSE)

And if we have signed up them -- if we have registered them, if they have paid a fine, if they are learning English, if they are going to the back of the line, if we fix our legal immigration system, then I believe we will not have this problem of undocumented workers in this country, because people will be able to actually go on a pathway to citizenship.

That, I think, is the right approach for African-Americans; I think it's the right approach for Latinos; I think it's a right approach for white workers here in the United States.

BLITZER: I want to let Senator Clinton respond. But were you missing in action when Senator Obama and Senator McCain and Senator Kennedy started formulating comprehensive immigration reform?

CLINTON: Well, actually, I co-sponsored comprehensive immigration reform in 2004 before Barack came to the Senate.

(APPLAUSE)

So I've been on record on behalf of this for quite some time.

And representing New York, the homeland with the Statue of Liberty, bringing all of our immigrants to our shores, has been not only an extraordinary privilege, but given me the opportunity to speak out on these issues.

When the House of Representatives passed the most mean-spirited provision that said, if you were to give any help whatsoever to someone here illegally, you would commit a crime, I stood up and said that would have criminalized the Good Samaritan and Jesus Christ himself.

I have been on record on this against this kind of demagoguery, this mean-spiritedness.

And, you know, it is something that I take very personally, because I have not only worked on behalf of immigrants; I have been working to make conditions better for many years.

(APPLAUSE)

I was so honored to get the farm workers endorsement last week, because for so many years I have stood with farm workers who do some of the hardest work there is anywhere in our country.

So we may be looking at the immigration reform issue as a political issue, and it certainly has been turned into one by those who I think are undermining the values of America.

It is a serious question. We have to fix this broken system. But let's do it in a practical, realistic approach. Let's bring people together. And I think, as president, I can.

You know, I've been going to town halls all over America, and I see the people out there, thousands of them who come to hear me, and they're nervous about immigration, and for the reasons that the economy isn't working for people.

The average American family has lost \$1,000 in income. They're looking for some explanation as to why this is happening. And they edge or a real amount of anxiety in their voice.

And then I ask them, well, what would you do?

CLINTON: If you want to round up into four people, how many tens of thousands of federal law enforcement officials would that take?"

BLITZER: All right.

CLINTON: And how much authority would they have to be given to knock on every door of every business and every home? I don't think Americans would stand for that.

BLITZER: Senator, Senator...

CLINTON: So we have to get realistic and practical about this.

BLITZER: Very quickly, Senator, why not, then, if you're that passionate about it, let them get driver's licenses?

CLINTON: Well, we disagree on this. I do not think that it is either appropriate to give a driver's license to someone who is here undocumented, putting them, frankly, at risk, because that is clear evidence that they are not here legally, and I believe it is a diversion from what should be the focus at creating a political coalition with the courage to stand up and change the immigration system.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: The only point I would make is Senator Clinton gave a number of different answers over the course of six weeks on this issue, and that did appear political.

Now, at this point, she's got a clearer position, but it took a whole and...

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: Well...

OBAMA: I'm just being -- just in fairness. Initially, in a debate, you said you were for it. Then you said you were against it. And the only reason I bring that up is to underscore the fact that this is a difficult political issue.

From my perspective, I agree with Bill Richardson that there is a public safety concern here and that we're better off, because I don't want a bunch of hit-and-run drivers, because they're worried about being deported and so they don't report an accident. That is a judgment all.

(APPLAUSE)

But I do think it is important to recognize that this can be tough and the question is who is going to tackle this problem and solve it.

Many of the solutions that Senator Clinton just talked about are solutions that I agree with, that I've been working on for many years, and my suspicion is whatever our differences, we're going to have big differences with the Republicans, but I think a practical, common sense solution to the problem is what the American people are looking for.

CLINTON: Well, I just have to correct the record for one second, because, obviously, we do agree about the need to have comprehensive immigration reform.

And if I recall, about a week after I said that I would try to support my governor, although I didn't agree with it personally, you

So this is a difficult issue and both of us have to recognize...

(APPLAUSE)

... that it is not something that we easily come to, because we share a lot of the same values.

OBAMA: I agree.

CLINTON: We want to -- we want to be fair to people. We want to respect the dignity of every human being, every person who is here. But we are trying to work our way through to get to where we need to be and that is to have a united Democratic Party, with fair-minded Republicans who will join us to fix this broken immigration system.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: All right. We're going to talk a lot more about this. We're going to take a quick break. We have a lot more to talk about. You can follow all of the action,

by the way, on cnnpolitics.com and there's a lively dialogue going on there right now, cnnpolitics.com.

We'll take a quick break. We'll pick up with two issues, experience and character, and then move on to a lot more right after.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

OBAMA: ... Americans disagree.

(APPLAUSE)

And think that we need to move forward with new leadership. So that's why we are having this contest.

You know, I have spent my entire adult life trying to bring about change in this country. I started off as a community organizer, working on the streets of Chicago, providing job training and after-school programs and economic development for neighborhoods that have been devastated by steel plants that had closed.

I worked as a civil rights attorney, turning down lucrative corporate jobs to provide justice for those who had been denied on the job on at the ballot box.

(APPLAUSE)

I worked as a state legislator for years, providing health care to people who did not have it, reforming a death penalty system that was broken, providing tax relief to those who needed it.

And in the United States Senate, I worked on everything from nuclear proliferation to issues of alternative energy.

And in each instance, what I found is that the leadership that's needed is the ability to bring people together, who otherwise don't see anything in common. The ability to overcome the special interests. And I passed both in Washington in Illinois comprehensive ethics reform that opened up government so that the American people could be involved. And talking straight to the American people about how we're going to solve these problems, and putting in the hard work of negotiations to get stuff done.

So I respect Senator Clinton's record. I think it's a terrific record. But I also believe that the skills that I have are the ones that are needed right now to move the country forward.

CLINTON: And I really spent a great deal of my early adulthood, you know, bringing people together to help solve the problems of those who were without a voice and were certainly powerless.

I was honored to be appointed by President Carter to the Legal Services Corporation, which I chaired, and we grew that corporation from 100 million to 300 million. It is the primary vehicle by which people are given access to our courts when they have civil problems that need to be taken care of.

You know, I've run projects that provided aid for prisoners in prisons. I helped to reform the education system in Arkansas and expand rural health care. And I've had a lot of varied experiences, both in the private sector, as well as the public, and the not-for-profit sector.

And certainly during the eight years that I was privileged to be in the White House, I had a great deal of responsibility that was given to me to not only work on domestic issues, like health care -- and when we weren't successful on universal health care, I just turned around and said, well, we're going to get the Children's Health Insurance Program. And I'm so proud we do, because now six million children around the country every month get health care. And I took on the drug companies to make sure that they would test drugs to see if they were safe and effective for our kids.

And began to change the adoption and foster care system. Here in California, because of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, we have three times more children being adopted out of foster care.

(APPLAUSE)

And certainly the work that I was able to do around the world, going to more than 82 countries, negotiating with governments like Macedonia to open their border again, to let Kosovar refugees in. Speaking on behalf of women's rights as human rights in Beijing, to send a message across the world that this is critical of who we are as Americans.

(APPLAUSE)

And to go to the Senate and to begin to work across the party lines with people who honestly never thought they would work with me. But I believe public service is a trust. And I get up every day trying to make change in people's lives.

And today we have 20,000 National Guard and Reserve members in California who have access to health care because I teamed up with Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina to get that done. Really positive change in people's lives, in real ways, that I am very proud of.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Jeanne Cummings of Politico, go ahead.

CUMMINGS: Well, we've got a question on this that's come in on politico.com, and it echoes, I think, a message that you all might be fighting up against if Mitt

Romney turns out to be your opponent come the fall. We've talked about McCain, now we have Romney's strengths to address.

Now, Howard Meyerson (ph) of Pasadena, California, says he views the country as a very large business, and neither one of you have ever run a business. So, why should either of you be elected to be CEO of the country?

CLINTON: Well, I would, with all due respect, say that the United States government is much more than a business. It is a trust.

(APPLAUSE)

It is the most complicated organization. But it is not out to make a profit. It is out to help the American people. It is about to stand up for our values and to do what we should at home and around the world to keep faith with who we are as a country.

And with all due respect, we have a president who basically ran as the CEO, MBA president, and look what we got. I am not too happy about the results.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: Let me -- let me just also point out that, you know, Mitt Romney hasn't gotten a very good return on his investment during this presidential campaign.

(APPLAUSE)

And so, I'm happy to take a look at my management style during the course of this last year and his. I think they compare fairly well.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Go ahead, Doyle.

MCMANUS: I want to switch to a different theme.

Senator Clinton, this week, as you know, Senator Obama was endorsed by Senator Ted Kennedy and Caroline Kennedy. And they both argued that the country is ready for a new generation of leaders, and they said Barack Obama, like John F. Kennedy in 1960, is that kind of leader.

How do you respond to that?

CLINTON: Well, I have the greatest respect for Senator Kennedy and the Kennedy family. And I'm proud to have three of Senator Robert Kennedy's children, Bobby and Kathleen and Kerry, supporting me. But what I this is...

(APPLAUSE)

What I think is exciting is that the way we are looking at the Democratic field, now down to the two of us is, is we're going to get big change. We're going to have change. I think having the first woman president would be a huge change for America and the world.

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: But, of course, despite the enthusiasm of our supporters or our endorsers -- and we're both proud of everyone who has come to be part of our campaign -- this is about the two of us.

You have to, as voters, determine who you think can be the best president, to tackle all those problems on day one, waiting in the Oval Office, who can be the best nominee for the Democratic Party to be able to withstand whatever they decide to do on the other side of the aisle, and come out victorious.

But, ultimately, this is really about the American people. It's about your lives. It's about your jobs, your health care, whether you can afford to send your children to college, whether you'll be able to withstand the pressure of the rising interest rates on a home foreclosure that might come your way, and whether we're going to once again be proud of our country, and our leadership, and our moral authority in the world.

And so I think that, as we look at these upcoming contests -- 22 of them now on Tuesday -- really, every voter should be looking and examining what they want out of the next president.

What are the criteria that you have for determining who you will vote for, what you think our country needs, what you and your family are really looking for? And then you evaluate the two of us, because no one else will be on the ballot.

This is a very exciting and humbling experience, I think I can say for both of us.

BLITZER: All right. Senator...

CLINTON: Neither one of us would have either predicted -- you know, not very long ago -- we would be sitting here. And it is a great tribute to the Democratic Party and to America.

(APPLAUSE)

But now we have to decide who would be the best president.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Senator Obama, I want you to respond, but also in the context of this. A lot of Democrats remember the eight years of the Clinton administration, a period of relative peace and prosperity, and they remember it fondly.

Are they right? Should they be remembering those eight years with pleasure?

OBAMA: Well, I think there's no doubt that there were good things that happened during those eight years of the Clinton administration. I think that's undeniable.

Look, we're all Democrats. And, particularly, when looked through the lens of the last eight years with George Bush, they look even better.

(LAUGHTER)

So I don't want to diminish some of the accomplishments that occurred during those eight years. And I absolutely agree with Senator Clinton, that ultimately each of us have to be judged on our own merits.

All of us have endorsers, and ultimately you've got to take a look and see: Who do you want in that White House?

I do think that there was something that happened, and we've been seeing it all across the country. We saw it at the event with Senator Kennedy. We are bringing in a whole generation of new voters...

(APPLAUSE)

... which I think is exciting. And part of the task, I believe, of leadership is the hard nuts-and-bolts of getting legislation passed and managing the bureaucracy, but part of it is also being able to call on the American people to reach higher, to say we shouldn't settle for an economy that does very well for some, but leaves millions of people behind.

We should not accept a school in South Carolina that was built in the 1800s, where kids are having to learn in trailers, and every time the railroad goes by the tracks, the building shakes and the teacher has to stop teaching.

We should not accept a foreign policy that has seen our respect diminish around the world and has not made us more safe.

(APPLAUSE)

So the question is -- part of the question is: Who can work the levers of power more effectively? Part of the question is also: Who can inspire the American people to get re-engaged in their government again, push back the special interests, reduce the influence of lobbyists?

And that is something that I have worked on all my life and we are seeing in this campaign. And one of the things I'm thrilled with -- and this is good news for Democrats...

BLITZER: All right.

OBAMA: ... every single election that we've had so far in this contest you've seen the number of people participating in the Democratic primary double.

(APPLAUSE)

Now, that's not all due to me. Senator Clinton is attracting enthusiasm and support, as well. But I can say, for example, in Iowa, about 60 percent of those new voters voted for me.

And that, I think, changes the electoral map in such a way where we're going to have more people ready to move forward on the agendas that we all agree with. That's part of the leadership I want to provide as president.

BLITZER: We have a follow-up question from Jeanne.

Go ahead, Jeanne.

CUMMINGS: Well, Senator Obama mentioned the generational issue. And when we look at returns and exit polls, there is something going on there. And we've got a question along those lines from Karen Roper (ph) from Pickens, South Carolina.

CUMMINGS: She asks to you: "Senator Clinton, that you have claimed that your presidency would bring change to America. I'm 38 years old and I have never had an opportunity to vote in a presidential election in which a Bush or a Clinton wasn't on the ticket.

"How can you be an agent of change when we have had the same two families in the White House for the last 30 years?"

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: Well, as I have often said, I regret deeply that there is a Bush in the White House at the time.

But I think that what's great about our political system is that we are all judged on our own merits. We come forward to the American public and it's the most grueling political process one can imagine.

We start from the same place. Nobody has an advantage no matter who you are or where you came from. You have to raise the money. You have to make the case for yourself.

And I want to be judged on my own merits. I don't want to be advantaged or disadvantaged. I'm very proud of my husband's administration. I think that there were a lot of good things that happened and those good things really changed people's lives.

The trajectory of change during those eight years went from deficits and debt to a balanced budget and a surplus, all those 22 million new jobs and the...

(APPLAUSE)

... and the hopefulness that people brought with them. And, you know, it did take a Clinton to clean after the first Bush and I think it might take another one to clean up after the second Bush.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: All right, Senators, stand by. We're going to take another quick break. We have a lot more to go through. Remember, you can go to cnnpolitics.com and you can monitor what's going on. There's a lively discussion going on at cnnpolitics.com right now.

We'll take a short break. Much more of this Democratic presidential debate right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: We're at the Kodak Theatre here in Los Angeles. Thousands of people are outside, Hillary Clinton supporters, Barack Obama supporters. We're continuing this presidential debate right now.

The next question goes to Doyle McManus.

MCMANUS: A question about the issue of Iraq.

Senator Clinton, you've both called for a gradual withdrawal of combat troops from Iraq, but Senator Obama says he wants all combat troops out within 16 months of his inauguration and you haven't offered a specific end date.

Why shouldn't voters worry that your position could turn into an open-ended commitment?

CLINTON: Well, because, Doyle, I've been very clear in saying that I will begin to withdraw troops in 60 days. I believe that it will take me one to two brigades a month, depending on how many troops we have there, and that nearly all of them should be out within a year.

It is imperative, though, that we actually plan and execute this right. And you may remember last spring, I got into quite a back-and-forth with the Pentagon, because I was concerned they were not planning for withdrawal, because that was contrary to their strategy, or their stated position.

And I began to press them to let us know, and they were very resistant, and gave only cursory information to us.

So I've said that I will ask the Joint Chiefs and the secretary of defense and my security advisers the very first day I'm president, to begin to draw up such a plan so that we can withdraw.

But I just want to be very clear with people, that it's not only bringing our young men and women and our equipment out, which is dangerous. They have got to go down those same roads where they have been subjected to bombing and so much loss of life and injury. We have to think about what we're going to do with the more than 100,000 Americans civilians who are there, working for the embassy, working for businesses, working for charities.

And I also believe we've got to figure out what to do with the Iraqis who sided with us. You know, a lot of the drivers and translators saved so many of your young men and women's lives, and I don't think we can walk out on them without having some plan as to how to take care of those who are targeted.

At the same time, we have got to tell the Iraqi government there is no -- there is no more time. They are out of time. They have got to make the tough decisions they have avoided making. They have got to take responsibility for their own country.

(APPLAUSE)

And, you know, I think both Barack and I have tried in these debates -- and sometimes been pushed by some of our opponents -- to be as responsible as we can be, because we know that this president, based on what he said in the State of the Union, intends to leave at least 130,000, if not more, troops in Iraq as he exits. It's the most irresponsible abdication of what should be a presidential commitment to end what he started.

So, we will inherit it. And therefore, I will do everything I can to get as many of our troops out as quickly as possible, taking into account all of these contingencies that we're going to have to contend with once we are in charge and once we can get into the Pentagon to figure out what's really there and what's going on.

BLITZER: But you can't make a commitment, though, that 16 months after your inauguration will be enough time?

CLINTON: I certainly hope it will be. And I've said I hope to have nearly all of them out within a year.

BLITZER: Go ahead.

OBAMA: Well, you know, I think it is important for us to be as careful getting out as we were careless getting in.

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

So I have said very clearly: I will end this war. We will not have a permanent occupation and we will not have permanent bases in Iraq.

(APPLAUSE)

When John McCain suggests that we might be there 100 years, that, I think, indicates a profound lack of understanding that we've got a whole host of global threats out there, including Iraq, but we've got a big problem right now in Afghanistan. Pakistan is of great concern. We are neglecting potentially our foreign policy with respect to Latin America. China is strengthening.

OBAMA: And if we neglect our economy by spending \$200 billion every year in this war that has not made us more safe, that is undermining our long-term security.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: All right.

OBAMA: But the -- but I do think it is important for us to set a date. And the reason I think it is important is because if we are going to send a signal to the Iraqis that we are serious, and prompt the Shia, the Sunni and the Kurds to actually come together and negotiate, they have to have clarity about how serious we are.

It can't be muddy, it can't be fuzzy. They've got to know that we are serious about this process. And I also think we've got to be very clear about what our mission is. And there may be a difference here between Senator Clinton and myself in terms of the four structures that we would leave behind.

Both of us have said that we would make sure that our embassies and our civilians are protected. Both of us have said that we've got to care for Iraqi civilians, including the four million who have been displaced already. We already have a humanitarian crisis, and we have not taken those responsibilities seriously.

We both have said that we need to have a strike force that can take out potential terrorist bases that get set up in Iraq. But the one thing that I think is very important is that we not get mission creep, and we not start suggesting that we should have troops in Iraq to blunt Iranian influence.

If we were concerned about Iranian influence, we should not have had this government installed in the first place.

(APPLAUSE)

We shouldn't have invaded in the first place. It was part of the reason that I think it was such a profound strategic error for us to go into this war in the first place.

(APPLAUSE)

And that's one of the reasons why I think I will be -- just to finish up this point, I think I will be the Democrat who will be most effective in going up against a John

McCain, or any other Republican -- because they all want basically a continuation of George Bush's policies -- because I will offer a clear contrast as somebody who never supported this war, thought it was a bad idea. I don't want to just end the war, but I want to end the mindset that got us into war in the first place.

That's the kind of leadership I'm going to provide as president of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: And of course...

BLITZER: Senator Clinton, that's a clear swipe at you.

CLINTON: Really?

(LAUGHTER)

CLINTON: We're having -- we're having such a good time.

OBAMA: I wouldn't call it a swipe.

CLINTON: We're having such a good time. We are. We are. We're having a wonderful time.

OBAMA: Yes, absolutely.

CLINTON: And I am so -- I am so proud to have the support of leaders like Congresswoman Maxine Waters, who is here with us tonight, who was one of the -- who was one of the original conveners of the Out of Iraq Caucus. Because it is imperative that as we move forward, with what will be a very difficult process -- there are no good options here.

We have to untangle ourselves and navigate through some very treacherous terrain. And as we do so, it is absolutely clear to me that we have to send several messages at once.

Yes, we are withdrawing, and I personally believe that is the best message to send to the Iraqis. That they need to know that they have to get serious, because so far they have been under the illusion that the Bush administration and the Republicans who have more of the same will be there indefinitely.

And I also think it's important to send that message to the region, because I think that Iran, Syria, the other countries in the neighborhood, are going to find themselves in a very difficult position as we withdraw. You know, be careful what you wish for.

They will be dragged into what is sectarian divisiveness with many different factions among the three main groups. Therefore, we need to start diplomatic

efforts immediately, getting the Iranians, the Syrians, and others to the table. It's in their interest, it's in our interest, and it certainly is in the Iraqis' interest. few debates ago -- we've had so many of them -- to join with me on legislation which he has agreed to do that's very important to prevent President Bush from committing our country to an ongoing presence in Iraq. That is something he is trying to push.

(APPLAUSE)

And we are pushing legislation to prevent him from doing that.

He has taken the view that I find absolutely indefensible, that he doesn't have to bring any such agreement about permanent bases, about ongoing occupation. And if Senator McCain is the nominee, 100 years as stretching forward, he doesn't have to bring that to the United States Congress. He only has to get the approval of the Iraqi parliament.

CLINTON: Well, we are saying absolutely no. And we're going to do everything we can to prevent him from binding any of us, going into the future, in a way that will undermine America's interests. So that's a critical issue.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: We have a follow-up question on this subject from Jeanne Cummings.

Go ahead, Jeanne.

CUMMINGS: Senator Clinton, this one is for you. Judgment has been an issue that's been raised as part of this debate about Iraq. It's been raised by Senator Obama on a number of occasions.

And as this debate has gone on, more than half of the Politico readers have voted for this question, and it is, in effect, a judgment question. It comes from Howard Schumann (ph) from Phippsburg, Maine.

And he asks, "Before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, you could have voted for the Levin amendment which required President Bush to report to Congress about the U.N. inspection before taking military action. Why did you vote against that amendment?"

CLINTON: Well, Howard, that's an important question. And the reason is because, although I believe strongly that we needed to put inspectors in, that was the underlying reason why I at least voted to give President Bush the authority, put those inspectors in, let them do their work, figure out what is there and what isn't there.

And I have the greatest respect for my friend and colleague, Senator Levin. He's my chairman on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The way that amendment was drafted suggested that the United States would subordinate whatever our judgment might be going forward to the United Nations Security Council. I don't think that was a good precedent. Therefore, I voted against it.

I did vote with Senator Byrd to limit the authority that was being given to President Bush to one year, and that also was not approved.

You know, I've said many times if I had known then what I know now, I never would have given President Bush the authority. It was a sincere vote based on my assessment at the time and what I believed he would do with the authority he was given.

He abused that authority; he misused that authority. I warned at the time it was not authority for a preemptive war. Nevertheless, he went ahead and waged one, which has led to the position we find ourselves in today.

But I think now we have to look at how we go forward. There will be a great debate between us and the Republicans, because the Republicans are still committed to George Bush's policy, and some are more committed than others, with Senator McCain's recent comments.

He's now accusing me of surrendering because I believe we should withdraw starting within 60 days of my becoming president. Well, that is a debate I welcome, because I think the Democrats have a much better grasp of the reality of the situation that we are confronting. And we have to continue to press that case.

It will be important, however, that our nominee be able to present both a reasoned argument against continuing our presence in Iraq and the necessary credentials and gravitas for commander-in- chief. That has to cross that threshold in the mind of every American voter.

The Republicans will try to put either one of us into the same box that, if we oppose this president's Iraq policy, somehow we cannot fully represent the interests of the United States, be commander-in- chief. I reject that out of hand, and I actually welcome that debate with whomever they nominate.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Senator? Look, I want you to respond, Senator, but also in the context of what we've heard from General David Petraeus, that there has been some progress made lately.

The number of U.S. casualties has gone down. There has been some stability in parts of Iraq where there was turmoil before and that any quick, overly quick withdrawal could undermine all of that and all of that progress would be for naught.

What do you say when you'll hear that argument?

OBAMA: I welcome the progress. This notion that Democrats don't want to see progress in Iraq is ridiculous.

I have to hug mothers in rope lines during town hall meetings as they weep over their fallen sons and daughters. I want to get our troops home safely, and I want us as a country to have this mission completed honorably.

But the notion that somehow we have succeeded as a consequence of the recent reductions in violence means that we have set the bar so low it's buried in the sand at this point.

(APPLAUSE)

And I've said this before. We went from intolerable levels of violence and a dysfunctional government to spikes and horrific levels of violence and a dysfunctional government. And now, two years later, we're back to intolerable levels of violence and a dysfunctional government.

And in the meantime, we have spent billions of dollars, lost thousands of lives.

OBAMA: Thousands more have been maimed and injured as a consequence and are going to have difficulty putting their lives back together again.

So understand that this has undermined our security. In the meantime, Afghanistan has slid into more chaos than existed before we went into Iraq.

I am happy to have that argument. I also think it is going to be important, though, for the Democrat -- you know, Senator Clinton mentioned the issue of gravitas and judgment. I think it is much easier for us to have the argument, when we have a nominee who says, I always thought this was a bad idea, this was a bad strategy.

(APPLAUSE)

It was not just a problem of execution. It was not just a problem of execution.

I mean, they screwed up the execution of it in all sorts of ways. And I think even Senator McCain has acknowledged that.

The question is: Can we make an argument that this was a conceptually flawed mission, from the start?

And we need better judgment when we decide to send our young men and women into war, that we are making absolutely certain that it is because there is an imminent threat, that American interests are going to be protected, that we have a plan to succeed and to exit, that we are going to train our troops properly and equip them properly and put them on proper rotations and treat them properly when they come home.

And that is an argument that I think we are going to have an easier time making if they can't turn around and say: But hold on a second; you supported this.

And that's part of the reason why I think that I would be the strongest nominee on this argument of national security.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: I'm going to let Senator Clinton respond. Senator Clinton, you always say, if you knew then what you know now, you wouldn't have voted like that. But why can't you just say right now that that vote was a mistake?

CLINTON: Well, Wolf, I think that if you look at what was going on at the time -- and certainly, I did an enormous amount of investigation and due diligence to try to determine what if any threat could flow from the history of Saddam Hussein being both an owner of and a seeker of weapons of mass destruction.

The idea of putting inspectors back in -- that was a credible idea. I believe in coercive diplomacy. I think that you try to figure out how to move bad actors in a direction that you prefer in order to avoid more dire consequences.

And if you took it on the face of it and if you took it on the basis of what we hoped would happen with the inspectors going in, that in and of itself was a policy that we've used before. We have used the threat of force to try to make somebody change their behavior.

I think what no one could have fully appreciated is how obsessed this president was with this particular mission. And unfortunately, I and others who warned at the time, who said, let the inspectors finish their work, you know, do not wage a preemptive war, use diplomacy, were just talking to a brick wall.

But you know, it's clear that if I had been president, we would have never diverted our attention from Afghanistan. When I went to Afghanistan the first time and was met by a young soldier from New York, in the 10th Mountain Division who told me that I was being welcomed to the forgotten frontlines in the war against terror, that just, you know, just struck me so forcefully.

We have so many problems that we are going to have to untangle. And it will take everyone -- it will take a tremendous amount of effort.

But the one thing I'm convinced of is that, if we go into our campaign against the Republicans with the idea that we are as strong as they are and we are better than they are on national security, that we can put together an effective strategy to go after the terrorists -- because that is real, that is something that we cannot ignore at our peril -- then we will be able to join the issues of the future.

And I think that's what Americans are focused on. What are we going to do going forward? Because day after day, what I spend my time working on is trying to help pick up the pieces for families and for injured soldiers, you know, trying to

make sure that they get the help that they need, trying to give the resources that are required.

We had to fight to get body armor. You know, George Bush sent people to war without body armor.

BLITZER: So what I -- what I...

CLINTON: We need a president who will be sensitive to the implications of the use of force and understand that force should be a last resort, not a first resort.

BLITZER: So, what I hear you saying -- and correct me if I'm wrong -- is that you were naive in trusting President Bush?

CLINTON: No, that's not what you heard me say.

(AUDIENCE BOOING)

Good try, Wolf. Good try. You know...

BLITZER: Was she naive, Senator Obama? deserve to answer.

BLITZER: I thought you weren't going to answer.

CLINTON: You know, I think that, you know, that is a good try, Wolf.

(LAUGHTER)

You know, the point is that I certainly respect Senator Obama making his speech in 2002 against the war. And then when it came to the Senate, we've had the same policy because we were both confronting the same reality of trying to deal with the consequences of George Bush's action.

I believe that it is abundantly clear that the case that was outlined on behalf of going to the resolution -- not going to war, but going to the resolution -- was a credible case. I was told personally by the White House that they would use the resolution to put the inspectors in. I worked with Senator Levin to make sure we gave them all the intelligence so we would know what's there.

Some people now think that this was a very clear open and shut case. We bombed them for days in 1998 because Saddam Hussein threw out inspectors. We had evidence that they had a lot of bad stuff for a very long time which we discovered after the first Gulf War.

Knowing that he was a megalomaniac, knowing he would not want to compete for attention with Osama bin Laden, there were legitimate concerns about what he might do. So, I think I made a reasoned judgment. Unfortunately, the person who actually got to execute the policy did not.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Senator?

OBAMA: I don't want to -- I don't want to belabor this, because I know we're running out of time and I'm sure you guys want to move on to some other stuff, but I do just have to say this -- the legislation, the authorization had the title, an authorization to use U.S. military force, U.S. military force, in Iraq. I think everybody, the day after that vote was taken, understood this was a vote potentially to go to war.

(APPLAUSE)

I think were very clear about that. That's the -- if you look at the headlines.

The reason that this is important, again, is that Senator Clinton, I think, fairly, has claimed that she's got the experience on day one. And part of the argument that I'm making in this campaign is that, it is important to be right on day one.

(APPLAUSE)

And that the judgment that I've presented on this issue, and some other issues is relevant to how we're going to make decisions in the future. You know, it's not a function just of looking backwards, it's a function of looking forwards and how are we going to be making a series of decisions in a very dangerous world.

I mean, the terrorist threat is real. And precisely because it's real -- and we've got finite resources. We don't have the capacity to just send our troops in anywhere we decide, without good intelligence, without a clear rationale.

That's the kind of leadership that I think we need from the next president of the United States. That's what I intend to provide.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: All right.

We're going to take a quick break and we're going to continue this. We have one more break to go through.

A lot more coming up, including questions involving character.

And remember, you can go to cnnpolitics.com and watch this online discussion that's being waged right now.

We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

OBAMA: ... and, as a parent, yes, I am concerned about what's coming over the airwaves. Now, right now, my daughters mostly are on Nickelodeon, but they know how to work that remote.

(LAUGHTER)

And, you know, the primary responsibility is for parents. And I reject the notion of censorship as an approach to dealing with this problem.

(APPLAUSE)

I do think that it is important for us to make sure that we are giving parents the tools that they need in order to monitor what their children are watching. And, obviously, the problem we have now is not just what's coming over the airwaves, but what's coming over the Internet.

And so for us to develop technologies and tools and invest in those technologies and tools, to make sure that we are, in fact, giving parents power -- empowering parents I think is important.

The one other thing I will say is -- I don't mean to be insulting here -- but I do think that it is important for those in the industry to show some thought about who they are marketing some of these programs that are being produced to.

(APPLAUSE)

And I'm concerned about sex, but I'm also concerned, you know, some of the violent, slasher, horror films that come out, you see a trailer, and I'm thinking, "I don't want my 6-year-old or 9-year-old seeing that trailer while she's watching 'American Idol.'"

And sometimes you see that kind of stuff coming up. I think it is appropriate, in a cooperative way, to work with the industry to try to deal with that problem. And I intend to work in that fashion when I'm president of the United States of America.

BLITZER: Thank you, Senator.

(APPLAUSE)

All right, we've got another question from Jeanne.

Go ahead, Jeanne.

CUMMINGS: Well, since we've dealt with the kids, let's deal with the spouses for a second.

Senator Clinton...

CLINTON: He has a spouse, too.

(LAUGHTER)

OBAMA: Thankfully Michelle is not on stage. I'm sure she could tell some stories, as well.

CUMMINGS: Senator Clinton, your husband has set off several firestorms in the last few weeks in early primary states with the way that he has criticized Senator Obama.

CUMMINGS: Greg Craig, who was one of your husband's top lawyers campaign can't control the former president now, what will it be like when you're in the White House?

(LAUGHTER)

CLINTON: Well, one thing I think is fair to say, both Barack and I have very passionate spouses...

OBAMA: We do, no doubt.

CLINTON: ... who promote and defend us at every turn.

You know, but the fact is that I'm running for president, and this is my campaign.

(APPLAUSE)

And I have made it very clear that I want the campaign to stay focused on the issues that I'm concerned about, the kind of future that I want for our country, the work that I have done for all of these years. And that is what the campaign is about.

And of course, I'm thrilled to have my husband and my daughter, who is here tonight, you know, representing me and traveling around the country...

(APPLAUSE)

... speaking with people, but at the end of the day, it's my name that is on the ballot, and it will be my responsibility as president and commander in chief, after consulting broadly with a lot of people who have something to contribute to difficult decisions, I will have to make the call. And I am fully prepared to do that.

And I know that as we go forward in this campaign, it's a choice between the two of us. And we are proud of our spouses, we're proud of our families, we're proud of everybody supporting us. But at the end of the day, it's a lonely job in the White House, and it is the president of the United States who has to make the decisions. And that is what I'm asking to be entrusted to do.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: This will be the last question. It will go to both of you, to Senator Obama first.

The more I speak to Democrats out there -- not only the Democrats here at the Kodak Theatre, but all over the country -- they take a look at the two of you and they see potentially a dream ticket. A dream ticket for the White House.

(APPLAUSE)

There may have been some nasty words exchanged or angry words or whatever, but the question is this: Would you consider an Obama/Clinton or Clinton/Obama ticket going down the road?

OBAMA: Well, obviously there's a big difference between those two.

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

But, look, let me say this. And I said this at the top. I respect Senator Clinton. I think her service to this country has been extraordinary. And I'm glad that we've been walking on this road together and that we are still on that road.

We've got a lot more road to travel. And so I think it's premature for either of us to start speculating about vice presidents, et cetera. I think it would be premature and presumptuous.

I can say this about -- about who I want not just as vice president but as a cabinet member. Part of what I would like to do is restore a sense of what is possible in government.

(APPLAUSE)

And that means having people of the greatest excellence and competence. It means people with integrity. It means people with independence, who are willing to say no to me so, so that, you know, no more yes-men or women in the White House.

(APPLAUSE)

Because I'm not going to be right on every single issue.

But you know, it is really important, I think, for us also to give the American people this sense, as they are struggling with their mortgages and struggling with their health care and trying to figure out how to get their kids in a school that will teach them and prepare them and equip them for this century, that they get a sense that government's on their side, that government is listening to them, that it's carrying their voices into the White House.

And that's not what's happened over the last seven years. And whether it's my cabinet or it is the lowest federal civil servant out there, I want them to understand they are working for the American people, to help the American people achieve their dreams.

That's the reason I'm running for president of the United States of America.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: So, is the answer yes -- it sounds like a yes, that she would be on your short list.

OBAMA: I -- you know, I'm sure Hillary would be on anybody's short list. So.

BLITZER: All right. What about, Senator Clinton, what do you think about a Clinton/Obama, Obama/Clinton ticket?

CLINTON: Well, I have to agree with everything Barack just said.

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: That means it's a yes, right?

CLINTON: This has been an extraordinary campaign, and I think both of us have been overwhelmed by the response that we have engendered, the kind of enthusiasm and intensity that people feel about each of us. And so, clearly, we are both dedicated to doing the best we can to win the nomination, but there is no doubt we will have a unified Democratic Party.

(APPLAUSE)

We will go into the November election prepared to win. And -- and I want to just add that, you know, on Monday night, I'm going to have a national town hall, an interactive town hall. It will be carried on the Hallmark Channel and on my Web site, HillaryClinton.com, because I know you had tens of thousands of questions.

OBAMA: What about my Web site?

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: Yes. I want your folks to participate, too.

OBAMA: I'm just kidding.

CLINTON: And it's going to be across the country.

Monday night at 9:00 Eastern, 6:00 here on the West Coast.

BLITZER: All right. answered, please, log on, turn on, and continue to be part of this really, really exciting election for both of us.

BLITZER: Here is the bottom line -- we do the plugs here. You guys can do the plugs out on the campaign trail.

That has to end our conversation this evening.

I want to thank both of you for coming very much.

OBAMA: Thank you.

CLINTON: Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

BLITZER: Senator Barack Obama, Senator Hillary Clinton.
Transcript 2

The CNN Democratic presidential debate in Texas

This is the transcript of the debate between Democratic presidential candidates Sens. Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama on February 21, 2008 at the University of Texas in Austin.

Sens. Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton face off in a high-stakes debate, Thursday night.

CNN's CAMPBELL BROWN: And the candidates have taken their seats. We are ready to get started. On behalf of CNN, Univision and the candidates, we want to thank our hosts, the University of Texas and the LBJ School and Library.

And now I want to give you an idea of what to expect over the next 90 minutes or so. We want to have a real conversation between these two candidates on the issues important to Texas and the entire nation, so we won't have any hard and fast rules for them to follow. We simply ask the candidates to keep their answers to a reasonable length and to stay on point.

And we have given the candidates the opportunity to make opening statements. The order was determined by a draw. Senator Obama won the draw and elected to go second.

So please go ahead, Senator Clinton.

SEN. HILLARY CLINTON: Well, thank you.

And I am just delighted to be back here in Austin. You know, nearly 36 years ago I came to Austin for my very first political job, and that was registering voters in south Texas. And I had the great privilege of living for a while in Austin and in San Antonio, and meeting people and making friends that have stayed with me for a lifetime.

And I found that we had a lot in common, a lot of shared values, a belief that hard work is important, that self-reliance and individual responsibility count for a lot.

CLINTON: And among the people whom I got to know, who became not only friends, but heroes, were Barbara Jordan, who taught me a lot about courage, and today...

(APPLAUSE)

...would actually be her birthday. I remember all the time about how she got up every single morning, facing almost insurmountable odds, to do what she did.

And another was my great friend Ann Richards, who taught me so much...

(APPLAUSE)

... about determination. Ann was a great champion for the people of Texas. She also reminded us that every so often it is good to have a laugh about what it is we're engaged in.

And as I think back on those years and the work that I've done ever since, you know, for me politics is about making real differences in people's lives. I am very, very proud that over these years I have been able to make a difference in the lives of people in Texas, Ohio and elsewhere.

CLINTON: You know, 350,000 children in Texas get health care every month because I helped to start the Children's Health Insurance Program.

(APPLAUSE)

And 21,000 National Guard and Reserve members get access to health care because I went across the party line and joined up with a Republican senator to make that happen.

So there's a lot that we've already done. But there's so much more to do.

I want to take on the tough issues that face us now. I want to stop the health insurance companies from discriminating against people because they're sick. You know, it's unconstitutional to discriminate on the basis of race or gender or ethnic origin or religion, but it's OK to discriminate against sick people.

And we're going to end that, because it's time we said no more.

(APPLAUSE)

And I want to continue the work that I've done in the Senate to take care of our veterans.

CLINTON: It was shocking and shameful, what happened, that we discovered about a year ago at Walter Reed. We can do so much better, to take care of the people who've taken care of us.

And there is a lot of work ahead. I offer a lifetime of experience and proven results. And I know that, if we work together, we can take on the special interests, transfer \$55 billion of all those giveaways and subsidies that President Bush has given them, back to the middle class, to create jobs and provide health care and make college affordable.

(APPLAUSE)

And I ask you -- I ask you to join in my campaign. It's now up to the people of Texas, Ohio, and the other states ahead.

So, if you'll be part of this campaign, which is your really your campaign, about your futures, your families, your jobs and your health care, we'll continue to make a difference for America.

Thank you all very much.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Clinton, thank you.

BROWN: Senator Obama?

(APPLAUSE)

SEN. BARACK OBAMA: First of all, thank you so much to the University of Texas for hosting us, and it's a great honor to share the stage once again with Senator Clinton. I've said before that we've been friends before this campaign started; we'll be friends afterwards, unified to bring about changes in this country.

You know, we are at a defining moment in our history. Our nation is at war, and our economy is increasingly in shambles. And the families of Texas and all across America are feeling the brunt of that failing economy.

This week, I met a couple in San Antonio, who -- as a consequence of entering into a predatory loan -- are on the brink of foreclosure and are actually seeing them having to cut back on their medical expenses, because their mortgage doubled in two weeks.

OBAMA: I've met a young woman who gets three hours of sleep a night because she has to work the night shift even as she's going to school full time, and still can't afford to provide the health care for her sister who's ill.

In Youngstown, Ohio, talked to workers who have seen their plants shipped overseas as a consequence of bad trade deals like NAFTA, literally seeing equipment unbolted from the floors of factories and shipped to China, resulting in devastating job losses and communities completely falling apart.

And all across America I'm meeting not just veterans, but also the parents of those who have fallen.

One mother in Green Bay gave me this bracelet in memory of a 20-year-old son who had been killed in a roadside bomb, as a consequence of a war that I believe should have never been authorized and should have never been waged and has cost us billions of dollars that could have been invested here in the United States in roads and bridges and infrastructure and making sure that young people can go to college and that those who need health care actually get it.

OBAMA: Now, Senator Clinton...

(APPLAUSE)

... Senator Clinton and I have been talking about these issues for the last 13 months. We both offer detailed proposals to try to deal with them. Some of them are the same. Some we have differences of opinion.

But I think we both recognize that these problems have to be dealt with and that we have seen an administration over the last seven years that has failed to address them and -- in many ways -- has made them worse.

But understand that what is lacking right now is not good ideas.

OBAMA: The problem we have is that Washington has become a place where good ideas go to die. They go to die because the lobbyists...

(APPLAUSE)

They go to die because lobbyists and special interests have a strangle-hold on the agenda in Washington. They go to die in Washington because too many politicians are interested in scoring political points rather than bridging differences in order to get things done.

And so the central premise of this campaign is that we can bring this country together, that we can push against the special interests that have come to dominate the agenda in Washington, that we can be straight with the American people about how we're going to solve these problems and enlist them in taking back their government.

You know, Senator Clinton mentioned Barbara Jordan, somebody who was an inspiration to me and so many people throughout the country. And she said that what the American people want is very simple: They want an America that is as good as its promise.

OBAMA: I'm running for president because I want to help America be as good as its promise.

Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right, Senator Obama, thank you, and let's begin with questions.

Jorge Ramos?

UNIVISION's JORGE RAMOS: Thank you very much (SPEAKING IN SPANISH).

Thank you so much for being with us, and let me start with a little news. After nearly half a century in office, Fidel Castro resigned as the head of the Cuban government. Ninety miles off the coast of the United States, we might have a new opportunity.

The question for you, Senator Clinton: Would you be willing to sit down with Raul Castro, or whoever leads the Cuban dictatorship when you take office at least just once, to get a measure of the man?

CLINTON: Well, Jorge, I hope we have an opportunity. The people of Cuba deserve to have a democracy. And this gives the Cuban government, under Raul Castro, a chance to change direction from the one that was set for 50 years by his brother.

I'm going to be looking for some of those changes: releasing political prisoner, ending some of the oppressive practices on the press, opening up the economy.

Of course the United States stands ready. And, as president, I would be ready to reach out and work with a new Cuban government, once it demonstrated that it truly was going to change that direction.

I want to bring the region together, our European allies who have influence with Cuba, to try to push for some of those changes, and to make it very clear that, if Cuba moves toward democracy and freedom for its people, the United States will welcome that.

CLINTON: And as president, I would look for opportunities to try to make that happen and to create the momentum that might eventually lead to a presidential visit.

But there has to be evidence that indeed the changes are real; that they are taking place; and that the Cuban people will finally be given an opportunity to have their future determined by themselves.

RAMOS: Very simply, would you meet with him or not, with Raul Castro?

CLINTON: I would not meet with him until there was evidence that change was happening, because I think it's important that they demonstrate clearly that they are committed to change the direction. Then I think, you know, something like diplomatic encounters and negotiations over specifics could take place.

But we've had this conversation before, Senator Obama and myself, and I believe that we should have full diplomatic engagement where appropriate. But a presidential visit should not be offered and given without some evidence that it will demonstrate the kind of progress that is in our interest, and in this case, in the interests of the Cuban people.

BROWN: Senator Obama, just to follow up, you had said in a previous CNN debate that you would meet with the leaders of Cuban, Iran, North Korea, among others, so presumably you would be willing to meet with the new leader of Cuba.

OBAMA: That's correct. Now, keep in mind that the starting point for our policy in Cuba should be the liberty of the Cuban people. And I think we recognize that that liberty has not existed throughout the Castro regime. And we now have an opportunity to potentially change the relationship between the United States and Cuba after over half a century.

I would meet without preconditions, although Senator Clinton is right that there has to be preparation. It is very important for us to make sure that there was an agenda, and on that agenda was human rights, releasing of political prisoners, opening up the press. And that preparation might take some time.

But I do think that it's important for the United States not just to talk to its friends, but also to talk to its enemies. In fact, that's where diplomacy makes the biggest difference.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: One other thing that I've said, as a show of good faith that we're interested in pursuing potentially a new relationship, what I've called for is a loosening of the restrictions on remittances from family members to the people of Cuba, as well as travel restrictions for family members who want to visit their family members in Cuba.

And I think that initiating that change in policy as a start and then suggesting that an agenda get set up is something that could be useful, but I would not normalize relations until we started seeing some of the progress that Senator Clinton was talking about.

BROWN: But that's different from your position back in 2003. You called U.S. policy toward Cuba a miserable failure, and you supported normalizing relations.

BROWN: So you've backtracked now...

OBAMA: I support the eventual normalization. And it's absolutely true that I think our policy has been a failure. I mean, the fact is, is that during my entire lifetime, and Senator Clinton's entire lifetime, you essentially have seen a Cuba that has been isolated, but has not made progress when it comes to the issues of political rights and personal freedoms that are so important to the people of Cuba.

So I think that we have to shift policy. I think our goal has to be ultimately normalization. But that's going to happen in steps. And the first step, as I said, is changing our rules with respect to remittances and with respect to travel.

And then I think it is important for us to have the direct contact, not just in Cuba, but I think this principle applies generally. I recall what John F. Kennedy once said, that we should never negotiate out of fear, but we should never fear to negotiate. And this moment, this opportunity when Fidel Castro has finally stepped down, I think, is one that we should try to take advantage of.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Clinton, do you want a quick response?

CLINTON: Well, I agree, absolutely, that we should be willing to have diplomatic negotiations and processes with anyone. I've been a strong advocate of opening up such a diplomatic process with Iran, for a number of years.

Because I think we should look for ways that we can possibly move countries that are adversarial to us, you know, toward the world community. It's in our interests. It's in the interests of the people in countries that, frankly, are oppressed, like Cuba, like Iran.

But there has been this difference between us over when and whether the president should offer a meeting, without preconditions, with those with whom we do not have diplomatic relations. And it should be part of a process, but I don't think it should be offered in the beginning. Because I think that undermines the capacity for us to actually take the measure of somebody like Raul Castro or Ahmadinejad and others.

CLINTON: And, as President Kennedy said, he wouldn't be afraid to negotiate, but he would expect there to be a lot of preparatory work done, to find out exactly what we would get out of it.

And therefore, I do think we should be eliminating the policy of the Bush administration, which has been very narrowly defined, and frankly against our interests, because we have failed to reach out to countries, we have alienated our friends, and we have emboldened our enemies.

So I would get back to very vigorous diplomacy, and I would use bipartisan diplomacy. I would ask emissaries from both political parties to represent me and our country, because I want to send a very clear message to the rest of the world that the era of unilateralism, preemption and arrogance of the Bush administration is over and we're going to...

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Very briefly and then we're going to move on.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: I think, as I said before, preparation is actually absolutely critical in any meeting. And I think it is absolutely true that either of us would step back from some of the Bush unilateralism that's caused so much damage.

But I do think it is important precisely because the Bush administration has done so much damage to American foreign relations that the president take a more active role in diplomacy than might have been true 20 or 30 years ago.

Because the problem is, if we think that meeting with the president is a privilege that has to be earned, I think that reinforces the sense that we stand above the rest of the world at this point in time. And I think that it's important for us in undoing the damage that has been done over the last seven years, for the president to be willing to take that extra step.

OBAMA: That is the kind of step that I would like to take as president of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: A question now on the economy.

John King?

CNN's JOHN KING: Campbell, Senators, good evening, first.

I want to bring the conversation back home. You know from your travels -- you don't need to look at the polls or anything else -- that the economy is by far now the dominant issue that voters want to hear about from the candidates.

For some, that is a question about: What should we do about an economy that is at the edge or perhaps in the early stages of a recession? For some, it is more focused. Maybe it is: Will you raise the minimum wage? Maybe it's about trade deals that they think leave them on the raw end, as you mentioned in your opening statement, Senator Obama.

But when we ask Democrats, "How are these two candidates different?," they even think they don't know.

Senator Obama, beginning with you, tell us as specifically as you can, how would a President Obama be different than a President Clinton in managing the nation's economy?

OBAMA: Well, first of all, let me emphasize the point that you just made, which is: You don't need an economist or the Federal Reserve to tell the American people that the economy's in trouble, because they've been experiencing it for years now.

Everywhere you go, you meet people who are working harder for less, wages and incomes have flatlined, people are seeing escalating costs of everything from health care to gas at the pump.

And so people have been struggling for a long time. In some communities, they have been struggling for decades now. So this has to be a priority of the next president.

Now, what I've said is that we have to restore a sense of fairness and balance to our economy, and that means a couple of things.

Number one, with our tax code: We've got to stop giving tax breaks to companies that are shipping jobs overseas and invest those tax breaks in companies that are investing here in the United States of America.

(APPLAUSE)

We have to end the Bush tax cuts to the wealthy...

(APPLAUSE)

... and to provide tax breaks to middle-class Americans and working Americans who need them.

OBAMA: So I've said that if you are making \$75,000 a year or less, I want to give an offset to your payroll tax that will mean \$1,000 extra in the pockets of ordinary Americans. Senior citizens making less than \$50,000, you shouldn't have to pay income tax on your Social Security.

We pay for these by closing tax loopholes and tax havens that are being manipulated.

(APPLAUSE)

On our trade deals, I think it is absolutely critical that we engaged in trade, but it has to be viewed not just through the lens of Wall Street, but also Main Street, which means we've got strong labor standards and strong environmental standards and safety standards, so we don't have toys being shipped in the United States with lead paint on them.

(APPLAUSE)

So these are all issues that I've talked about repeatedly, and I think there are also opportunities in our economy around creating a green economy. We send \$1 billion to foreign countries every day because of our addiction to foreign oil.

OBAMA: And for us to move rapidly to cap greenhouse gases, generate billions of dollars that we can reinvest in solar and wind and biodiesel -- that can put people back to work. So...

(APPLAUSE)

Now, I don't want to take too much time. And I'm sure we'll be spend more time discussing this.

Senator Clinton and I, I think, both agree on many of these issues. And I think it's a credit to the Democratic Party as a whole that the other candidates who were involved earlier on agreed with us on many of these issues.

I think that there is a real, solid agenda for moving change forward in the next presidency.

The question people are going to have to ask is: How do we get it done?

And it is my strong belief that the changes are only going to come about if we're able to form a working coalition for change. Because people who were benefiting from the current tax code are going to resist. The special interests and lobbyists are going to resist.

And I think it has to be a priority for whoever the next president is to be able to overcome the dominance of the special interests in Washington, to bring about the kinds of economic changes that I'm talking about.

OBAMA: And that's an area where Senator Clinton and I may have a slight difference. But I'm happy to let her speak first and then can pick up on anything that's been left out.

KING: Let's give Senator Clinton that opportunity then.

(APPLAUSE)

As you have campaigned, Senator, on this issue and others, but specifically on this issue, you have said, "I am ready on day one to take charge of the economy."

The clear implication, since you have one opponent at the moment, is that you're ready; he's not.

What would you do differently on day one than a President Obama would when it comes to managing the nation's economy?

CLINTON: Well, I would agree with a lot that Senator Obama just said, because it is the Democratic agenda.

CLINTON: We are going to rid the tax code of these loopholes and giveaways.

We're going to stop giving a penny of your money to anybody who ships a job out of Texas, Ohio or anywhere else to another country.

We're certainly going to begin to get the tax code to reflect what the needs of middle class families are so we can rebuild a strong and prosperous middle class.

You know, the wealthy and the well-connected have had a president the last seven years, and I think it's time that the rest of America had a president to work for you every single day.

(APPLAUSE)

We will also have a different approach toward trade.

We're going to start having trade agreements that not only have strong environmental and labor standards, but I want to have a trade time-out. We're going to look and see what's working and what's not working, and I'd like to have a trade prosecutor to actually enforce the trade agreements that we have before we enter into any others.

We're also going to put much tougher standards in place so that people cannot import toys with lead paint, contaminated pet food, contaminated drugs into our market. We're going to have much more vigorous enforcement of safety standards.

CLINTON: Now, in addition, there are steps I would take immediately. One is on this foreclosure crisis. I have been saying for nearly a year we had to crack down on the abusive practices of the lenders. But we also need a moratorium on home foreclosures.

Everywhere I go, I meet people who either have been or about to lose their home. 85,000 homes in foreclosure in Texas; 90,000 in Ohio. I've met the families: the hairdresser, the single mom who's going to lose her home, the postal worker who got really hoodwinked into an agreement that wasn't fair to him.

So I would put a moratorium for 90 days, to give us time to work out a way for people to stay in their homes, and I would freeze interest rates for five years. Because these adjustable-rate mortgages, if they keep going up, millions of Americans are going to be homeless. And vacant homes will be across the neighborhoods of Texas and America.

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: Now, in addition, there are three ways we need to jump start the economy.

Clean green jobs; I've been promoting this. I wanted it to be part of the stimulus package. I thought a \$5 billion investment in clean green jobs would put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work helping to create our future.

We also need to invest in our infrastructure. We don't have enough roads to take care of the congestion, we have crumbling bridges and tunnels. We need to rebuild America, and that will also put people to work.

And, finally, we need to end George Bush's war on science, which has been waged against scientists and researchers...

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Thank you, Senator. And we've got a lot of ground to cover...

CLINTON: This is about how we fund the future. We've got to get back to being the innovation nation. Think of everything that goes on at this great university to create the new economy...

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right. Senator Clinton, thank you very much.

BROWN: And, as I was saying, we've got a lot to get through. So I do want to shift gears and go on to another topic especially important here in Texas, which is immigration.

And, Jorge, you have a question.

RAMOS: (SPEAKING IN SPANISH) Federal raids by immigration enforcement officials on homes and businesses have generated a great deal of fear and anxiety in the Hispanic community and have divided the family of some of the 3 million U.S.-born children who have at least one undocumented parent.

Would you consider stopping these raids once you take office until comprehensive immigration reform can be passed?

CLINTON: I would consider that, except in egregious situations where it would be appropriate to take the actions you're referring to.

But when we see what's been happening, with literally babies being left with no one to take care of them, children coming home from school, no responsible adult left, that is not the America that I know.

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: That is against American values. And it is...

(APPLAUSE)

And it is a stark admission of failure by the federal government. We need comprehensive immigration reform. I have been for this. I signed onto the first comprehensive bill back in 2004. I've been advocating for it: tougher, more secure borders, of course, but let's do it the right way, cracking down on employers, especially once we get to comprehensive immigration reform, who exploit undocumented workers and drive down wages for everyone else.

I'd like to see more federal help for communities like Austin and others like Laredo, where I was this morning, that absorb the health care, education, and law enforcement costs.

And I personally, as president, would work with our neighbors to the south, to help them create more jobs for their own people.

Finally, we need a path to legalization, to bring the immigrants out of the shadows, give them the conditions that we expect them to meet, paying a fine for coming here illegally, trying to pay back taxes, over time, and learning English.

If they had committed a crime in our country or the country they came from, then they should be deported. But for everyone else, there must be a path to legalization. I would introduce that in the first 100 days of my presidency.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Obama, is your position the same as Hillary Clinton's?

OBAMA: There are a couple of things I would add. Comprehensive immigration reform is something that I have worked on extensively.

Two years ago, we were able to get a bill out of the Senate. I was one of the group of senators that helped to move it through, but it died in the House this year. Because it was used as a political football instead of a way of solving a problem, nothing happened.

And so there are a couple of things that I would just add to what Senator Clinton said.

Number one, it is absolutely critical that we tone down the rhetoric when it comes to the immigration debate, because there has been an undertone that has been ugly.

Oftentimes, it has been directed at the Hispanic community. We have seen hate crimes skyrocket in the wake of the immigration debate as it has been conducted in Washington, and that is unacceptable.

We are a nation of laws and we are a nation of immigrants, and we can reconcile those two things. So we need comprehensive reform...

(APPLAUSE)

... we need comprehensive reform, and that means stronger border security. It means that we are cracking down on employers that are taking advantage of undocumented workers because they can't complain if they're not paid a minimum wage.

OBAMA: They can't complain if they're not getting overtime. Worker safety laws are not being observed.

We have to crack down on those employers, although we also have to make sure that we do it in a way that doesn't lead to people with Spanish surnames being discriminated against, so there's got to be a safeguard there.

We have to require that undocumented workers, who are provided a pathway to citizenship, not only learn English, pay back taxes and pay a significant fine, but also that they're going to the back of the line, so that they are not getting citizenship before those who have applied legally, which raises two last points.

Number one, it is important that we fix the legal immigration system, because right now we've got a backlog that means years for people to apply legally.

(APPLAUSE)

And what's worse is, we keep on increasing the fees, so that if you've got a hard working immigrant family, they've got to hire a lawyer; they've got to pay thousands of dollars in fees. They just can't afford it. And it's discriminatory against people who have good character, we should want in this country, but don't have the money. So we've got to fix that.

OBAMA: So we've got to fix that.

The second thing is, we have to improve our relationship with Mexico and work with the Mexican government so that their economy is producing jobs on that side of the border.

And the problem that we have...

(APPLAUSE)

The problem that we have is that we have had an administration that came in promising all sorts of leadership on creating a U.S.- Mexican relationship. And, frankly, President Bush dropped the ball. He has been so obsessed with Iraq that we have not seen the kinds of outreach and cooperative work that would ensure that the Mexican economy is working not just for the very wealthy in Mexico, but

for all people. And that's as policy that I'm going to change when I'm president of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right, Senator Obama.

We're going to stay with this topic. I want to have John King ask another question.

Go ahead, John.

KING: I want to stay on the issue, but move to a controversial item that was not held up when the immigration debate collapsed in Washington, and that is the border fence.

KING: To many Americans, it is a simple question of sovereignty and security. America should be able to keep people out that it doesn't want in.

But, as you know in this state, especially if you go to the south of here, along the border, and in other border states, to many people it's a much more personal question. It could be a question of their livelihood. It could be a question of cross-border trade. It might be an issue to a rancher of property rights. It might be a simple question of whether someone can take a walk or a short drive to see their family members.

Senator, back in 2006, you voted for the construction of that fence. As you know, progress has been slow.

As president of the United States, would you commit tonight that you would finish the fence and speed up the construction, or do you think it's time for a president of the United States to raise his or her hand and say, "You know what? Wait a minute. Let's think about this again. Do we really want to do this?"

CLINTON: Well, I think both Senator Obama and I voted for that as part of the immigration debate.

CLINTON: And having been along the border for the last week or so -- in fact, last night I was at the University of Texas at Brownsville -- and this is how absurd this has become under the Bush administration. Because, you know, there is a smart way to protect our borders, and there is a dumb way to protect our borders.

(APPLAUSE)

And what I learned last night when I was there with Congressman Ortiz is that the University of Texas at Brownsville would have part of its campus cut off.

This is the kind of absurdity that we're getting from this administration. I know it because I've been fighting with them about the northern border. Their imposition

of passports and other kinds of burdens are separating people from families, interfering with business and commerce, the movement of goods and people.

So what I've said is that I would say, wait a minute, we need to review this. There may be places where a physical barrier is appropriate.

I think when both of us voted for this, we were voting for the possibility that where it was appropriate and made sense, it would be considered. But as with so much, the Bush administration has gone off the deep end, and they are unfortunately coming up with a plan that I think is counterproductive.

CLINTON: So I would have a review. I would listen to the people who live along the border, who understand...

(APPLAUSE)

... what it is we need to be doing to protect our country.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Let me go on, again -- John?

KING: Does that mean that you think your vote was wrong, or the implementation of it was wrong?

Because, as you know, when they first built the fence in the San Diego area, it only went so far. And what it did was it sopped the people coming straight up the path of where that was built, and they simply moved. And California's problem became Arizona's problem.

(LAUGHTER)

CLINTON: But, you know, John, there is -- there's a lot we've learned about technology and smart fencing. You know, there is technology that can be used instead of a physical barrier.

CLINTON: It requires us having enough personnel along the border so that people can be supervising a certain limited amount of space and will be able to be responsive in the event of people attempting to cross illegally.

I think that the way that the Bush administration is going about this, filing eminent domain actions against landowners and municipalities, makes no sense.

So what I have said is, yes, there are places when after a careful review, again listening to the people who live along the border, there may be limited places where it would work. But let's deploy more technology and personnel, instead of the physical barrier.

I frankly think that will work better and it will give us an opportunity to secure our borders without interfering with family relations, business relations, recreation and so much else that makes living along the border, you know, wonderful.

BROWN: All right.

CLINTON: And the people who live there need to have a president who understands it, will listen to them and be responsive.

BROWN: All right, Senator Clinton.

(APPLAUSE)

Senator Obama, go ahead please.

OBAMA: Well, this is an area where Senator Clinton and I almost entirely agree. I think that the key is to consult with local communities, whether it's on the commercial interests or the environmental stakes of creating any kind of barrier.

And the Bush administration is not real good at listening. That's not what they do well.

(LAUGHTER)

And so I will reverse that policy. As Senator Clinton indicated, there may be areas where it makes sense to have some fencing. But for the most part, having border patrolled, surveillance, deploying effective technology, that's going to be the better approach.

The one thing I do have to say, though, about this issue is, it is very important for us, I think, to deal with this problem in terms of thousands of -- hundreds of thousands of people coming over the borders on a regular basis if we want to also provide opportunity for the 12 million undocumented workers who are here.

OBAMA: Senator Clinton and I have both campaigned in places like Iowa and Ohio and my home state of Illinois, and I think that the American people want fairness, want justice. I think they recognize that the idea that you're going to deport 12 million people is ridiculous, that we're not going to be devoting all our law enforcement resources...

(APPLAUSE)

... to sending people back.

But what they do also want is some order to the process. And so, we're not going to be able to do these things in isolation. We're not going to be able to deal with the 12 million people who are living in the shadows and give them a way of getting out of the shadows if we don't also deal with the problem of this constant influx of undocumented workers.

And that's why I think comprehensive reform is so important. That's the kind of leadership that I've shown in the past; that's the kind of leadership that I'll show in the future.

One last point I want to make on the immigration issue because we may be moving to different topics: Something that we can do immediately that I think is very important is to pass the Dream Act, which allows children who through no fault of their own are here but have essentially grown up as Americans, allow them the opportunity for higher education.

OBAMA: I do not want two classes of citizens in this country.

(APPLAUSE)

I want everybody to prosper. That's going to be a top priority.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: OK, we've got one last question on immigration.

Jorge, go ahead.

RAMOS: (SPEAKING SPANISH) Right now, there are more than 30 million people in this country who speak Spanish.

(APPLAUSE)

Many of them are right here. By the year 2050, there will be 120 million Hispanics in the United States. Now, is there any downside, Senator Clinton, to the United States becoming (SPEAKING SPANISH) becoming a bilingual nation? Is there a limit?

CLINTON: Well, I think it's important for as many Americans as possible to do what I have never been able to do, and that is learn another language and try to be bilingual because that connects us to the rest of the world.

I think it is important, though, that English remain our common unifying language because that brings our country together in a way that we have seen generations of immigrants coming to our shores be able to be part of the American experience and pursue the American dream.

You know, I have been adamantly against the efforts by some to make English the official language. That I do not believe is appropriate, and I have voted against it and spoken against it.

CLINTON: I represent New York. We have 170 languages in New York City alone. And I do not think that we should be, in any way, discriminating against people who do not speak English, who use facilities like hospitals or have to go to court to enforce their rights.

But I do think that English does remain an important part of the American experience. So I encourage people to become bilingual. But I also want to see English remain the common, unifying language of our country.

(APPLAUSE)

RAMOS: Senator Obama, is there any down side to the United States becoming a bilingual nation?

OBAMA: Well, I think it is important that everyone learns English and that we have that process of binding ourselves together as a country. I think that's very important.

I also think that every student should be learning a second language, because...

(APPLAUSE)

... you know, so, when you start getting into a debate about bilingual education, for example, now, I want to make sure that children who are coming out of Spanish-speaking households had the opportunity to learn and are not falling behind.

OBAMA: If bilingual education helps them do that, I want to give them the opportunity.

But I also want to make sure that English-speaking children are getting foreign languages because this world is becoming more interdependent and part of the process of America's continued leadership in the world is going to be our capacity to communicate across boundaries, across borders, and that's something frankly where we've fallen behind.

One of the failures of No Child Left Behind, a law that I think a lot of local and state officials have been troubled by, is that it is so narrowly focused on standardized tests that it has pushed out a lot of important learning that needs to take place.

(APPLAUSE)

And foreign languages is one of those areas that I think has been neglected. I want to put more resources into it.

BROWN: All right.

We're going to take a quick break. We've got to go to a commercial. We'll be back with a lot more. There is also a debate we should mention raging online right now. Go to our Web site, CNNpolitics.com, and join in. The debate here at the University of Texas in Austin continues right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BROWN: And we are back. We're here in Austin, Texas, the capital city. Welcome back to the Texas Democratic debate at the University of Texas, Austin.

The first question now goes to John King.

KING: Senator, as I'm sitting here, we're about 45 minutes into the discussion tonight, and I'm having what I like to call one of those parallel universe moments.

I've been watching each of you give speeches in arenas not unlike this one individually. And the tone is often quite different than the very polite, substantive discourse we've had tonight.

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

And so, I want to ask you about that. There are times when each of you seems to call into question the other one's credibility or truthfulness.

And, Senator Clinton, I want to talk specifically about some words you've spoken here in the state of Texas over the past couple of days.

You've said, quote, "My opponent gives speeches; I offer solutions."

You said the choice for Democrats in this campaign is, quote, "talk versus action."

Now, in a campaign that some of us are old enough to remember, maybe not many of the students here, this would be called the "Where's the beef?" question.

But, since we're in Texas, I'd like to borrow a phrase that they often use here and you've used yourself in the context of President Bush. Are you saying that your opponent is all hat and no cattle, and can you say that after the last 45 minutes?

CLINTON: Well, I have said that about President Bush, and I think our next president needs to be a lot less hat and a lot more cattle.

(APPLAUSE)

You know, I think you can tell from the first 45 minutes, you know, Senator Obama and I have a lot in common. We both care passionately about our country. We are devoted to public service. We care deeply about the future, and we have run a very vigorous and contested primary campaign, which has been by most standards, I think, very positive and extremely civil.

CLINTON: But there are differences between us. And I think, in our efforts to draw those contrasts and comparisons, we obviously try to let voters know how we see the world differently.

And I do offer solutions. That's what I believe in and what I have done. And it's what I offer to voters because it's part of my life, over the last 35 years, working to get kids health care, working to expand legal services for the poor, working to register voters, working to make a difference. Because I think that this country has given me so much.

And there are differences between our records and our accomplishments. I have to confess, I was somewhat amused, the other night, when, on one of the TV shows, one of Senator Obama's supporters couldn't.

So I know that there are comparisons and contrasts to be drawn between us. And it's important that voters get that information. So, yes, I do think that words are important and words matter, but actions speak louder than words. And I offer...

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Obama, go ahead.

BROWN: Senator Obama, do you want to respond?

OBAMA: Well, I think actions do speak louder than words, which is why over the 20 years of my public service I have acted a lot to provide health care to people who didn't have it, to provide tax breaks to families that needed it, to reform a criminal justice system that had resulted in wrongful convictions, to open up our government and to pass the toughest ethics reform legislation since Watergate, to make sure that we create transparency...

(APPLAUSE)

... to make sure that we create transparency in our government so that we know where federal spending is going and it's not going to a bunch of boondoggles and earmarks that are wasting taxpayer money that could be spent on things like early childhood education.

You know, I think if you talk to those wounded warriors at Walter Reed who, prior to me getting to the Senate, were having to pay for their meals and have to pay for their phone calls to their family while they're recovering from amputations, I think they've said that I've engaged not just in talk, but in action.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: Now, I think that Senator Clinton has a fine record and I don't want to denigrate that record. I do think there is a fundamental difference between us in terms of how change comes about. Senator Clinton of late has said: Let's get real. The implication is that the people who've been voting for me or involved in my campaign are somehow delusional.

(LAUGHTER)

And that, you know, the 20 million people who've been paying attention to 19 debates and the editorial boards all across the country at newspapers who have given me endorsements, including every major newspaper here in the state of Texas.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: You know, the thinking is that somehow, they're being duped, and eventually they're going to see the reality of things.

Well, I think they perceive reality of what's going on in Washington very clearly. What they see is that if we don't bring the country together, stop the endless bickering, actually focus on solutions and reduce the special interests that have dominated Washington, then we will not get anything done. And the reason that this campaign has done so well...

(APPLAUSE)

The reason that this campaign has done so well is because people understand that it is not just a matter of putting forward policy positions.

OBAMA: Senator Clinton and I share a lot of policy positions. But if we can't inspire the American people to get involved in their government and if we can't inspire them to go beyond the racial divisions and the religious divisions and the regional divisions that have plagued our politics for so long, then we will continue to see the kind of gridlock and nonperformance in Washington that is resulting in families suffering in very real ways.

I'm running for president to start doing something about that suffering, and so are the people who are behind my campaign.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: I think one of the points -- I think one of the points that John King was alluding to in talking about some of Senator Clinton's comments is there has been a lot of attention lately on some of your speeches, that they are very similar to some of the speeches by your friend and supporter Deval Patrick, the governor of Massachusetts, and Senator Clinton's campaign has made a big issue of this. To be blunt, they've accused you of plagiarism.

OBAMA: Right.

BROWN: How do you respond?

OBAMA: Well, look, the -- first of all, it's not a lot of speeches. There are two lines in speeches that I've been giving over the last couple of weeks.

I've been campaigning now for the last two years. Deval is a national co-chairman of my campaign, and suggested an argument that I share, that words are

important. Words matter. And the implication that they don't I think diminishes how important it is to speak to the American people directly about making America as good as its promise. Barbara Jordan understood this as well as anybody.

OBAMA: And the notion that I had plagiarized from somebody who was one of my national co-chairs...

(APPLAUSE)

... who gave me the line and suggested that I use it, I think, is silly, and...

(APPLAUSE)

... you know, this is where we start getting into silly season, in politics, and I think people start getting discouraged about it...

(LAUGHTER)

... and they don't want...

(APPLAUSE)

What they want is, how are we going to create good jobs and good wages?

How are we going to provide health care to the American people?

How are we going to make sure that college is affordable?

So what I've been talking about, in this speeches -- and I've got to admit, some of them are pretty good.

(APPLAUSE)

What I've been talking about is not just hope and not just inspiration. It's a \$4,000 tuition credit for every student, every year, in exchange for national service...

(APPLAUSE)

... so that college becomes more affordable.

OBAMA: I've been talking about making sure that we change our tax code so that working families actually get relief. I have been talking about making sure that we bring an end to this war in Iraq so that we can start bringing our troops home and invest money here in the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

So just to finish up, these are very specific, concrete, detailed proposals, many of them which I have been working on for years now. Senator Clinton has a fine record. So do I. I'm happy to have a debate on the issues, but what we shouldn't be spending time doing is tearing each other down. We should be spending time lifting the country up.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Clinton, is it the silly season?

CLINTON: Well, I think that if your candidacy is going to be about words, then they should be your own words. That's, I think, a very simple proposition.

(APPLAUSE)

And, you know, lifting whole passages from someone else's speeches is not change you can believe in, it's change you can Xerox. And I just don't think...

OBAMA: Come on.

(CROSSTALK)

CLINTON: No, but, you know, but, Barack, it is.

Because, you know, if you look -- if you look -- if you look at the YouTube of these videos, it does raise questions.

Now, there is no doubt that you are a passionate, eloquent speaker, and I applaud you for that. But when you look at what we face in this country, we do need to unite the country, but we have to unite it for a purpose around very specific goals.

CLINTON: It is not enough to say, "Let's come together." We know we're going to have to work hard to overcome the opposition of those who do not want the changes to get to universal health care.

You know, when I proposed a universal health care plan, as did Senator Edwards, we took a big risk, because we know it's politically controversial to say we're going to cover everyone.

And you chose not to do that. You chose to put forth a health care plan that will leave out at least 15 million people. That's a big difference.

When I said we should put a moratorium on home foreclosures, basically your response was, well, that wouldn't work.

And, you know, in the last week, even President Bush has said we have to do something like that.

I just believe that we've got to look hard at the difficult challenges we face, especially after George Bush leaves the White House.

CLINTON: The world will breathe a sigh of relief once he is gone. We all know that.

(APPLAUSE)

But then we've got to do the hard work of not just bringing the country together, but overcoming a lot of the entrenched opposition to the very ideas that both of us believe in, and for some of us have been fighting for, for a very long time. You know, when I took on...

(APPLAUSE)

When I took on universal health care back in '93 and '94, it was against a firestorm of special interest opposition. I was more than happy to do that, because I believe passionately in getting quality affordable health care to every American.

I don't want to leave anybody out. I see the results of leaving people out. I am tired of health insurance companies deciding who will live or die in America.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right, Senator Clinton, thank you.

Senator Obama, please respond.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: Well, I think that Senator Clinton mentioned two specific issue areas where we've got some differences. I'm happy to debate those, which is what I think should be the focus of this campaign. We both want universal health care.

When I released my plan a few months later, we were in a debate and Senator Clinton said we all want universal health care. Of course, I was down 20 points in the polls at the time, and so my plan was pretty good. It's not as good now, but my plan hasn't changed. The politics have changed a little bit.

We both -- 95 percent of our plans are similar. We both want to set up a system in which any person is going to be able to get coverage that is as good as we have as members of Congress. And we are going to subsidize those who can't afford it.

OBAMA: We're going to make sure that we reduce costs by emphasizing prevention. And I want to make sure that we're applying technology to improve quality, cut bureaucracy.

Now, I also want to make sure that we're reducing costs for those who already have health insurance. So we put in place a catastrophic reinsurance plan that would reduce costs by \$2,500 per family per year.

So we've got a lot of similarities in our plan. We've got a philosophical difference, which we've debated repeatedly, and that is that Senator Clinton believes the only way to achieve universal health care is to force everybody to purchase it.

And my belief is, the reason that people don't have it is not because they don't want it but because they can't afford it.

And so I emphasize reducing costs.

(APPLAUSE)

And as has been noted by many observers, including Bill Clinton's former secretary of labor, my plan does more than anybody to reduce costs, and there is nobody out there who wants health insurance who can't have it.

OBAMA: Now, there are legitimate arguments for why Senator Clinton and others have called for a mandate, and I'm happy to have that debate.

But the notion that I am leaving 15 million people out somehow implies that we are different in our goals of providing coverage to all Americans, and that is simply not true. We think that there's going to be a different way of getting there.

One last point I want to make on the health care front. I admire the fact that Senator Clinton tried to bring about health care reform back in 1993. She deserves credit for that.

(APPLAUSE)

But I said before, I think she did it in the wrong way, because it wasn't just the fact that the insurance companies, the drug companies were battling here, and no doubt they were. It was also that Senator Clinton and the administration went behind closed doors, excluded the participation even of Democratic members of Congress who had slightly different ideas than the ones that Senator Clinton had put forward.

And, as a consequence, it was much more difficult to get Congress to cooperate.

OBAMA: And I've said that I'm going to do things differently. I think we have to open up the process. Everybody has to have a seat at the table. And most importantly, the American people have to be involved and educated about how this change is going to be brought about.

The point is this, you know, we can have great plans, but if we don't change how the politics is working in Washington, then neither of our plans are going to

happen, and we're going to be four years from now debating once again how we're going to bring universal health care to this country.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right, we've got some time constraints here, so we've got to take another real quick break. Stay with us. We've got a lot more ahead.

You can compare the candidates on the issues any time; just go to our Web site, Cnnpolitics.com. A lot more ahead here at the University of Texas. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: An enthusiastic crowd here at the University of Texas.

Welcome back to the Texas Democratic debate. Let's get right to it. Jorge Ramos with the next question.

RAMOS: Senator Clinton, yesterday you said, and I'm quoting, "One of us is ready to be commander in chief."

Are you saying that Senator Obama is not ready and not qualified to be commander in chief?

CLINTON: Well, I believe that I am ready and I am prepared. And I will leave that to the voters to decide.

But I want to get back to health care, because I didn't get a chance to respond after Senator Obama finished. No, let me finish, Jorge...

RAMOS: But I would like to come back...

CLINTON: This is a significant difference. You know, Senator Obama has said it's a philosophical difference. I think it's a substantive difference.

He has a mandate for parents to be sure to ensure their children. I agree with that. I just know that if we don't go and require everyone to have health insurance, the health insurance industry will still game the system. Everyone of us with insurance will pay the hidden tax of approximately \$900 a year to make up for the lack of insurance.

(APPLAUSE)

And you know, in one of our earlier debates, John Edwards made a great point. It would be as though Social Security were voluntary. Medicare, one of the great accomplishments of President Johnson, was voluntary.

(APPLAUSE)

I do not believe that is going to work. So it's not just a philosophical difference.

CLINTON: You look at what will work and what will not work. If you do not have a plan that starts out attempting to achieve universal health care, you will be nibbled to death, and we will be back here with more and more people uninsured and rising costs.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right. We appreciate that you want to make a point, Senator Obama. We have limited time, so I would like Jorge to move on to another subject or we're going to be out of time.

(CROSSTALK)

OBAMA: Well, I understand. But I think that Senator Clinton made a...

(LAUGHTER)

You know, she's making a point, and I think I should have the opportunity to respond very briefly. And I'll try to make...

BROWN: Very briefly, absolutely.

OBAMA: Number one, understand that when Senator Clinton says a mandate, it's not a mandate on government to provide health insurance, it's a mandate on individuals to purchase it. And Senator Clinton is right; we have to find out what works.

OBAMA: Now, Massachusetts has a mandate right now. They have exempted 20 percent of the uninsured because they have concluded that that 20 percent can't afford it.

In some cases, there are people who are paying fines and still can't afford it, so now they're worse off than they were. They don't have health insurance and they're paying a fine.

(APPLAUSE)

In order for you to force people to get health insurance, you've got to have a very harsh penalty, and Senator Clinton has said that we won't go after their wages. Now, this is a substantive difference. But understand that both of us seek to get universal health care. I have a substantive difference with Senator Clinton on how to get there.

BROWN: All right, Senator Clinton?

CLINTON: Wait a minute, no, this is too important. This is the number one issue that people talk to me about. You know, when a mother grabs my arm and says, "I can't get the operation my son needs because I don't have health insurance," it is personal for me.

CLINTON: And I just fundamentally disagree.

You know, Senator Obama's plan has a mandate on parents and a fine if parents do not...

OBAMA: That's right.

CLINTON: ... insure their children.

OBAMA: That's right.

CLINTON: Because he recognizes that unless we have some kind of restriction, we will not get there.

OBAMA: There's a reason.

CLINTON: He's also said that if people show up at a hospital sick, without health insurance, well, maybe at that point you can fine them.

We would not have a social compact with Social Security and Medicare if everyone did not have to participate. I want a universal health care plan.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: Now, that's -- that mother -- that mother who is desperate to get health care for her child, will be able to get that health care under my plan. Point number one.

Point number two, the reason a mandate for children can be effective is we've got an ability to make affordable health care available to that child, right now.

OBAMA: There are no excuses. If a parent is not providing health care for that child, it's because the parent's not being responsible, under my plan. And those children don't have a choice. But I think that adults are going to be able to see that they can afford it, under my plan; they will get it, under my plan.

And it is true that, if it turns out that some are gaming the system, then we can impose, potentially, some penalties on them for gaming the system.

But the notion that, somehow, I am interested in leaving out 15 million people, without health insurance, is simply not true.

BROWN: All right. Jorge...

CLINTON: We disagree on that.

BROWN: OK. Jorge -- let's let Jorge re-ask his question, because I don't think anyone remembers that one.

(LAUGHTER)

RAMOS: Let me try again, and not in Spanish, OK?

(LAUGHTER)

Here we go again. Because we also believe the war in Iraq is very important.

And here's the question. Are you suggesting that Senator Obama is not ready; he doesn't have the experience to be commander in chief? That's a question of: What did you mean by that phrase?

CLINTON: What I mean is that, you know, for more than 15 years, I've been honored to represent our country in more than 80 countries to negotiate on matters such as opening borders for refugees during the war in Kosovo, to stand up for women's rights as human rights around the world. I've served on the Senate...

(APPLAUSE)

I've served on the Senate Armed Services Committee, and I have worked as one of the leaders in the Congress on behalf of Homeland Security in the very difficult challenges we face.

You know, just this week, it's a good example. We had elections in Pakistan, we had change in government in Cuba -- or at least the leadership. We've had the elections that, you know, should have happened that haven't happened and just changed the leader the way they do in Cuba. We've had Kosovo declaring independence, and we have had our embassy set on fire in Serbia.

So we have serious problems that pose a real question about presidential leadership, and also some great opportunities. You know, we now have opportunities perhaps with Cuba, I hope with President Musharraf, for him to do the right thing.

CLINTON: I supported the independence of Kosovo because I think it is imperative that in the heart of Europe we continue to promote independence and democracy. And I would be moving very aggressively to hold the Serbian government responsible with their security forces to protect our embassy. Under international law, they should be doing that.

So when you think about everything that is going to happen, what we can predict and what we cannot predict, I believe that I am prepared and ready on day one to be commander in chief, to be the president, to turn our economy around, and to

begin making a lot of these very difficult decisions that we will inherit from George Bush. And that is what I am putting forth to the voters.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Obama?

OBAMA: I wouldn't be running if I didn't think I was prepared to be commander-in-chief.

(APPLAUSE)

My number one job as president will be to keep the American people safe. I will do whatever is required to accomplish that. I will not hesitate to act against those that would do America harm.

Now, that involves maintaining the strongest military on earth, which means that we are training our troops properly and equipping them properly, and putting them on proper rotations. And there are an awful lot of families here in Texas who have been burdened under two and three and four tours because of the poor planning of the current commander-in-chief, and that will end when I am president.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: But it also means using our military wisely. And on what I believe was the single most important foreign policy decision of this generation, whether or not to go to war in Iraq, I believe I showed the judgment of a commander in chief. And I think that Senator Clinton was wrong in her judgments on that.

(APPLAUSE)

Now, that has consequences -- that has significant consequences, because it has diverted attention from Afghanistan where al Qaeda, that killed 3,000 Americans, are stronger now than at any time since 2001.

You know, I've heard from an Army captain who was the head of a rifle platoon -- supposed to have 39 men in a rifle platoon. Ended up being sent to Afghanistan with 24 because 15 of those soldiers had been sent to Iraq.

OBAMA: And as a consequence, they didn't have enough ammunition, they didn't have enough humvees. They were actually capturing Taliban weapons, because it was easier to get Taliban weapons than it was for them to get properly equipped by our current commander in chief.

Now, that's a consequence of bad judgment. And you know, the question is, on the critical issues that we face right now, who's going to show the judgment to lead? And I think that on every critical issue that we've seen in foreign policy over the last several years -- going into Iraq originally, I didn't just oppose it for the sake of opposing it.

I said this is going to distract us from Afghanistan; this is going to fan the flames of anti-American sentiment; it's going to cost us billions of dollars and thousands of lives and overstretch our military. And I was right.

On the question of Pakistan, which Senator Clinton just raised -- we just had an election there. But I've said very clearly that we have put all our eggs in the Musharraf basket. That was a mistake. We should be going after al Qaeda and making sure that Pakistan is serious about hunting down terrorists, as well as expanding democracy. And I was right about that.

On the issues that have come up that a commander in chief is going to have to make decisions on, I have shown the judgment to lead. That is the leadership that I want to show when I'm president of the United States.

OBAMA: On the issues that have come up, that a commander in chief is going to have to make decisions on, I have shown the judgment to lead. That is the leadership that I want to show when I'm president of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right. We're going to stay with this and stay on Iraq.

John King?

KING: I want to continue in this vein, and hone in on the very point you just made. Because one of you, unless this remarkable campaign here takes another wacky, unpredictable turn, is going to be running against a decorated war hero, who is going to say that you don't have the experience to be commander in chief.

And you have both said, it's not about that type of experience; it's about judgment.

You both had to make a judgment, a short time ago, in your job in the United States Senate, about whether to support the surge. And as that was going on, Senator Clinton, you had the commanding general in Iraq before you. And you said, "I think that the reports provide to us really require the willing suspension of disbelief" -- your words to General Petraeus.

KING: I want you to look at Iraq now and listen to those who say the security situation is better. Ideal, no, but better -- some say significantly, in recent days, even some steps toward a political reconciliation.

Is Iraq today better off than it was six months or a year ago because of the surge?

CLINTON: Well, John, I think you forget a very important premise of the surge. The rationale of the surge was to create the space and time for the Iraqi government to make the decisions that only it can make.

Now, there is no doubt, given the skill and the commitment of our young men and women in uniform that putting more of them in will give us a tactical advantage and will provide security in some places, and that has occurred.

CLINTON: But the fact is that the purpose of it has not been fulfilled. The Iraqi government has slowly inched toward making a few of the decisions in a less than complete way, but it hasn't taken advantage of the sacrifice and the losses of life and billions of dollars that have occurred since the surge began.

That is why I have said, upon taking office I would ask the secretary of defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and my security advisers to give me a plan so that I could begin withdrawing our troops within 60 days.

And I would begin that with...

(APPLAUSE)

... with a very clear message to the Iraqis that they no longer had a blank check, as they had been given by President Bush, that as we withdraw our troops, probably one to two brigades a month, they would have to step up and make these decisions.

CLINTON: I believe that is in the best interest of our military, which has been stretched thin.

Last night in Brownsville, you know, a woman grabbed my hand and said, "Please, my husband's there for the third time. Bring him home."

And I told her privately what I have said publicly many times -- I will bring him home because I do not think it is in the interest of America or of the Iraqis that we continue to be there. It is up to the Iraqis to decide the kind of future they will have.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Obama, in the same vein, you were also opposed to the surge from the beginning. Were you wrong?

OBAMA: Well, I think it is indisputable that we've seen violence reduced in Iraq. And that's a credit to our brave men and women in uniform.

In fact, you know, the 1st Cavalry, out of Fort Hood, played an enormous role in pushing back al Qaeda out of Baghdad.

(APPLAUSE)

OBAMA: And, you know, we honor their service.

But this is a tactical victory imposed upon a huge strategic blunder.

(LAUGHTER)

And I think that, when we're having a debate with John McCain, it is going to be much easier for the candidate who was opposed to the concept of invading Iraq in the first place to have a debate about the wisdom of that decision...

(APPLAUSE)

... than having to argue about the tactics subsequent to the decision.

(LAUGHTER)

Because, ultimately, that's what's at stake. Understand, not only have we been diverted from Afghanistan. We've been diverted from focusing on Latin America.

We contribute -- our entire foreign aid to Latin America is \$2.7 billion, approximately what we spend in Iraq in a week.

OBAMA: And it is any surprise, then, that you've seen people like Hugo Chavez and countries like China move into the void, because we've been neglectful of that.

Iran is the single biggest strategic beneficiary of us having invaded Iraq, and that is something that I think John McCain has to come to terms with.

So that is a debate that I'm happy to have.

One last point I want to make on this, and that is, the incredible burden that has been placed on the American people, starting with military families, and the fact that we still are not doing right by our veterans, that we still don't honor their service, that there are still homeless veterans, that we still don't screen properly for post-traumatic stress disorder and make sure that they're getting mental services that they need, that we are still...

(APPLAUSE)

... having veterans in south Texas have to drive 250 miles to access a veterans hospital.

OBAMA: That's unacceptable. But we talked about the economy earlier, the fact that we're spending \$12 billion every month in Iraq means that we can't engage in the kind of infrastructure improvements that are going to make us more competitive. It means that we can't deliver on the kinds of health care reforms that both Senator Clinton and I are looking for.

And that is also an argument that we have to have with John McCain because he has said that he is willing to have these troops over there for 100 years. The notion that we would sustain that kind of effort and neglect not only making us more secure here at home, more competitive here at home, allow our economy to sink.

As John McCain says, he doesn't really understand the economy that well. It is clear from his embrace of George Bush's policies that he doesn't, and that's what I intend to change when I am president of the United States of America.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right. We've got to take another quick break. We've got a lot more ahead. Stay with us. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BROWN: Welcome back to the Texas Democratic debate.

Stay with us after the debate. Anderson Cooper and the best political team on television will have lots of analysis.

But back to the debate.

John King?

KING: Thank you.

Both of you have been harshly critical of the Bush administration for its secrecy, what you consider overuse of secrecy and executive power.

Tonight, Senator Obama, you've talked about more transparency. You also at one point criticized earmarks.

And yet, a recent report came out that identified you -- lower on the list in terms how much money senators seek and sneak into the budget for these pork barrel spending projects, but it still said you were responsible for \$91 million in earmarks.

And you have refused to say where the money went, what it's for. Why?

OBAMA: No, that's not true. We've actually disclosed, John, all our earmarks. And so, you know, we'll be happy to provide you with that information, because I believe very strongly in transparency.

OBAMA: As I indicated earlier, one of the things that I did last year was to pass a bill with Tom Coburn, very conservative Republican but a sincere fiscal conservative. And we got together and created what we call Google for Government. It's a searchable database, where every single dollar of federal spending is posted on the Internet, so that ordinary voters can take a look. And if they see a bridge to nowhere being built, they know where it's going and who sponsored it. And if they see a no-bid contract going to Halliburton, they can check that out, too.

And you know, the idea is that we open up the process so that the American people can make judgments about whether or not government is doing what it's supposed to be doing with its taxpayer money. And I've been consistently in favor of more disclosure around earmarks.

OBAMA: Now, keep in mind, a lot of these are worthy projects in our states. I have actively pursued projects that I think are important. But I want to make sure that they're not done in the dark of night, that they're not done in committee, that everybody stands up and says, "this is the kind of spending that I think is important."

I have consistently supported those efforts. I will push for those as president of the United States of America.

KING: Senator Clinton, as you know, I think your number was about \$342 million. You say they're worthy projects, as Senator Obama did, for your state and that's part of your job, to get money for worthy projects back in your state.

Senator McCain, as you know, is proud of going around the country earmark.

On the specific issue of pork barrel spending, fiscal accountability by the government at a time when many Americans frankly think, whether it is the House or the Senate, that you all waste money on things that aren't important to them, don't affect their daily lives, does he have a better case to make to the American people that, "I have done this my entire career; I will do it as president," on the issue of on the issue of wasteful pork barrel spending?

CLINTON: Well, no, not at all. Because he supported the wasteful tax cuts of the Bush administration and the Iraq war, with the billions of dollars...

(APPLAUSE)

... that have been spent, and wants it to continue.

You know, when President Bush came into office, he inherited a balanced budget and a surplus. And it is gone. And we now are looking at a projected deficit of \$400 billion, under the new Bush budget, and a \$9 trillion debt.

We borrow money from the Chinese to buy oil from the Saudis. That is not a winning strategy for America.

(APPLAUSE)

I will get us back to fiscal responsibility. And I will make it clear that the Bush tax cuts on the upper income, those making more than \$250,000 a year, will be allowed to expire.

CLINTON: Middle-class tax cuts and support for the middle class, to make college affordable, retirement security possible, health insurance affordable: Those will be my priorities.

And I think it's important that we look at where the money has gone under President Bush -- no-bid contracts, cronyism, outsourcing the government in ways that haven't saved us money and have reduced accountability.

So the larger question is, who really is going to move us toward fiscal responsibility, and I believe that we can get back on the path we were on. It was working well. It was one of the reasons why the economy was booming.

I've got that, you know, clearly in my economic blueprint, which is something that I've published the last few days, because it's part of what we have to do again. And I think that I will be very comfortable and effective in taking on Senator McCain over the fiscal irresponsibility of the Republican Party that he's been a part of.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right.

An issue relating to the current election.

Jorge?

RAMOS: As we can see, this has been an extremely close nomination battle that will come down to superdelegates. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the highest ranking Democrat in government, said recently, and I'm quoting, "It would be a problem" -- and this is a question for you, Senator Clinton -- "it would be a problem for the party if the verdict would be something different than the public has decided."

Do you agree?

CLINTON: Well, you know, these are the rules that are followed, and you know, I think that it will sort itself out. I'm not worried about that. We will have a nominee, and we will have a unified Democratic Party, and we will go on to victory in November.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Obama, go ahead. Do you have a response to Senator Clinton?

OBAMA: Well, I think it is important, given how hard Senator Clinton and I have been working, that these primaries and caucuses count for something. And so my belief is that...

(APPLAUSE)

... the will of the voters, expressed in this long election process, is what ultimately will determine who our next nominee is going to be.

OBAMA: But understand what I think is most important to the voters, and that is that we have a government that is listening to them again. They feel as if they've been shut out.

You know, when I meet mothers who are trying to figure out how to get health care for their kids, it's not just the desperation of that single mom. It's also that when they try to find some help, oftentimes they're hitting a brick wall.

And they don't get a sense that the debates that are happening in Washington right now relate to them at all. And what they believe is that people are trying to get on TV and they're trying to score points and they're trying to win elections, and that they're not interested in knocking down the barriers that stand between the American people and their dreams.

And I have no doubt that the Democratic Party at its best can summon a sense of common purpose again and higher purpose for the American people.

OBAMA: And I think that the next nominee going into the November election is going to have a lot to talk about because the American people are tired of politics that is dominated by the powerful, by the connected. They want their government back, and that's what I intend to provide them when I'm nominated for president of the United States.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: We have time for just one final question, and we thought we would sort of end on a more philosophical question. You've both spent a lot of time talking about leadership, about who's ready and who has the right judgment to lead if elected president.

A leader's judgment is most tested at times of crisis. I'm wondering if both of you will describe what was the moment that tested you the most, that moment of crisis.

BROWN: Senator Obama?

OBAMA: Well, you know, I wouldn't point to a single moment. But what I look at is the trajectory of my life because, you know, I was raised by a single mom. My father left when I was two, and I was raised by my mother and my grandparents.

And, you know, there were rocky periods during my youth, when I made mistakes and was off course. And what was most important, in my life, was learning to take responsibility for my own actions, learning to take responsibility for not only my own actions but how I can bring people together to actually have an impact on the world.

And so, working as a community organizer on the streets of Chicago, with ordinary people, bringing them together and organizing them to provide jobs and health care, economic security to people who didn't have it, then working as a civil rights attorney and rejecting the jobs on Wall Street to fight for those who were being discriminated against on the job -- that cumulative experience, I think, is the judgment that I now bring.

OBAMA: It's the reason that I have the capacity to bring people together, and it's the reason why I am determined to make sure that the American people get a government that is worthy of their decency and their generosity.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: Senator Clinton?

CLINTON: Well, I think everybody here knows I've lived through some crises and some challenging moments in my life. And...

(APPLAUSE)

And I am grateful for the support and the prayers of countless Americans.

But people often ask me, "How do you do it?" You know, "How do you keep going?" And I just have to shake my head in wonderment, because with all of the challenges that I've had, they are nothing compared to what I see happening in the lives of Americans every single day. Along with Senator McCain, as the only two elected officials, to speak at the opening at the Intrepid Center at Brooke Medical Center in San Antonio, a center designed to take care of and provide rehabilitation for our brave young men and women who have been injured in war.

And I remember sitting up there and watching them come in. Those who could walk were walking. Those who had lost limbs were trying with great courage to get themselves in without the help of others. Some were in wheelchairs and some were on gurneys. And the speaker representing these wounded warriors had had most of his face disfigured by the results of fire from a roadside bomb.

CLINTON: You know, the hits I've taken in life are nothing compared to what goes on every single day in the lives of people across our country.

And I resolved at a very young age that I'd been blessed and that I was called by my faith and by my upbringing to do what I could to give others the same opportunities and blessings that I took for granted.

That's what gets me up in the morning. That's what motivates me in this campaign.

(APPLAUSE)

And, you know, no matter what happens in this contest -- and I am honored, I am honored to be here with Barack Obama. I am absolutely honored.

(APPLAUSE)

CLINTON: Whatever happens, we're going to be fine. You know, we have strong support from our families and our friends. I just hope that we'll be able to say the same thing about the American people, and that's what this election should be about.

(APPLAUSE)

BROWN: All right, a standing ovation here in Austin, Texas. Our thanks to Senator Barack Obama and Senator Hillary Clinton. We appreciate your time tonight.

(APPLAUSE)

And to John and Jorge as well.

We also want to thank our debate partners, the University of Texas at Austin and the Texas Democratic Party, the LBJ Library as well, and the city of Austin.

Transcript 3

The Democratic Debate in Cleveland

Published: February 26, 2008

The following is a transcript of the Democratic presidential debate on MSNBC in Cleveland, Ohio, as provided by the Federal News Service and CQ Transcriptions via The Associated Press.

PARTICIPANTS:

SENATOR HILLARY CLINTON (D-NY)

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA (D-IL)

MODERATORS:

BRIAN WILLIAMS, NBC NEWS ANCHOR

TIM RUSSERT, NBC NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

MR. WILLIAMS: A lot has been said since we last gathered in this forum, certainly since -- in the few days since you two last debated. Senator Clinton, in your comments especially, the difference has been striking. And let's begin by taking a look.

SEN. CLINTON: (From videotape.) You know, no matter what happens in this contest -- and I am honored, I am honored to be here with Barack Obama. I am absolutely honored. (Cheers, applause.)

(From videotape.) So shame on you, Barack Obama. It is time you ran a campaign consistent with your messages in public. That's what I expect from you. Meet me in Ohio. Let's have a debate about your tactics and your -- (cheers, applause).

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator Clinton, we're here in Ohio. Senator Obama is here. This is the debate. You would agree the difference in tone over just those 48 hours was striking.

SEN. CLINTON: Well, this is a contested campaign. And as I have said many times, I have a great deal of respect for Senator Obama, but we have differences. And in the last several days, some of those differences in tactics and the choices that Senator Obama's campaign has made regarding flyers and mailers and other information that has been put out about my health care plan and my position on NAFTA have been very disturbing to me.

And therefore, I think it's important that you stand up for yourself and you point out these differences so that voters can have the information they need to make a decision.

You know, for example, it's been unfortunate that Senator Obama has consistently said that I would force people to have health care whether they could afford it or not. You know, health care reform and achieving universal health care is a passion of mine. It is something I believe in with all my heart. And every day that I'm campaigning, and certainly here throughout Ohio, I've met so many families -- happened again this morning in Lorain -- who are just devastated because they don't get the health care they deserve to have. And unfortunately it's a debate we should have that is accurate and is based in facts about my plan and Senator Obama's plan, because my plan will cover everyone and it will be affordable. And on many occasions, independent experts have concluded exactly that.

And Senator Obama's plan does not cover everyone. It would leave, give or take, 15 million people out. So we should have a good debate that uses accurate information, not false, misleading, and discredited information, especially on something as important as whether or not we will achieve quality, affordable health care for everyone. That's my goal. That's what I'm fighting for, and I'm going to stand up for that.

MR. WILLIAMS: On the topic of accurate information, and to that end, one of the things that has happened over the past 36 hours -- a photo went out the website The Drudge Report, showing Senator Obama in the native garb of a nation he was visiting, as you have done in a host country on a trip overseas.

Matt Drudge on his website said it came from a source inside the Clinton campaign. Can you say unequivocally here tonight it did not?

SEN. CLINTON: Well, so far as I know, it did not. And I certainly know nothing about it and have made clear that that's not the kind of behavior that I condone or expect from the people working in my campaign. But we have no evidence where it came from.

So I think that it's clear what I would do if it were someone in my campaign, as I have in the past: asking people to leave my campaign if they do things that I disagree with.

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator Obama, your response.

SEN. OBAMA: Well, first of all, I take Senator Clinton at her word that she knew nothing about the photo. So I think that's something that we can set aside.

I do want to focus on the issue of health care because Senator Clinton has suggested that the flyer that we put out, the mailing that we put out, was inaccurate. Now, keep in mind that I have consistently said that Senator Clinton's got a good health care plan. I think I have a good health care plan. I think mine is better, but I have said that 95 percent of our health care plan is similar.

I have endured over the course of this campaign repeatedly negative mailing from Senator Clinton in Iowa, in Nevada and other places suggesting that I want to leave 15 million people out.

According to Senator Clinton, that is accurate. I dispute it, and I think it is inaccurate. On the other hand, I don't fault Senator Clinton for wanting to point out what she thinks is an advantage to her plan.

The reason she thinks that there are more people covered under her plan than mine is because of a mandate. That is not a mandate for the government to provide coverage to everybody; it is a mandate that every individual purchase health care.

And the mailing that we put out accurately indicates that the main difference between Senator Clinton's plan and mine is the fact that she would force in some fashion individuals to purchase health care.

If it was not affordable, she would still presumably force them to have it, unless there is a hardship exemption as they've done in Massachusetts, which leaves 20 percent of the uninsured out. And if that's the case, then, in fact, her claim that she covers everybody is not accurate.

Now, Senator Clinton has not indicated how she would enforce this mandate. She hasn't indicated what level of subsidy she would provide to assure that it was, in fact, affordable. And so it is entirely legitimate for us to point out these differences.

But I think it's very important to understand the context of this, and that is that Senator Clinton has -- her campaign, at least -- has constantly sent out negative attacks on us, e-mail, robocalls, flyers, television ads, radio calls.

And, you know, we haven't whined about it because I understand that's the nature of these campaigns, but to suggest somehow that our mailing is somehow different from the kinds of approaches that Senator Clinton has taken throughout this campaign I think is simply not accurate.

MR. WILLIAMS: And Senator Clinton, on this subject --

SEN. CLINTON: But I have to -- I have to respond to that because this is not just any issue, and certainly we've had a vigorous back and forth on both sides of our campaign. But this is an issue that goes to the heart of whether or not this country will finally do what is right, and that is to provide quality affordable health care to every single person.

Senator Obama has a mandate in his plan. It's a mandate on parents to provide health insurance for their children. That's about 150 million people who would be required to do that. The difference between Senator Obama and myself is that I know, from the work I've done on health care for many years, that if everyone's not in the system we will continue to let the insurance companies do what's called cherry picking -- pick those who get insurance and leave others out.

We will continue to have a hidden tax, so that when someone goes to the emergency room without insurance -- 15 million or however many -- that amount of money that will be used to take care of that person will be then spread among all the rest of us.

And most importantly, you know, the kind of attack on my health care plan, which the University of Pennsylvania and others have said is misleading -- that attack goes right to the heart of whether or not we will be able to achieve universal health care. That's a core Democratic Party value. It's something that ever since Harry Truman we have stood for.

And what I find regrettable is that in Senator Obama's mailing that he has sent out across Ohio, it is almost as though the health insurance companies and the Republicans wrote it, because in my plan there is enough money, according to the independent experts who've evaluated it, to provide the kind of subsidies so that everyone would be able to afford it. It is not the same as a single state trying to do this, because the federal government has many more resources at its disposal.

SEN. OBAMA (?): (Inaudible.)

SEN. CLINTON: So I think it's imperative that we stand as Democrats for universal health care. I've staked out a claim for that. Senator Edwards did. Others have. But Senator Obama has not.

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator Obama, a quick response.

SEN. OBAMA: Well, look, I believe in universal health care, as does Senator Clinton. And this is -- this is, I think, the point of the debate, is that Senator

Clinton repeatedly claims that I don't stand for universal health care. And, you know, for Senator Clinton to say that, I think, is simply not accurate.

Every expert has said that anybody who wants health care under my plan will be able to obtain it. President Clinton's own secretary of Labor has said that my plan does more to reduce costs and as a consequence makes sure that the people who need health care right now all across Ohio, all across Texas, Rhode Island, Vermont, all across America, will be able to obtain it. And we do more to reduce costs than any other plan that's been out there.

Now, I have no objection to Senator Clinton thinking that her approach is superior, but the fact of the matter is, is that if, as we've heard tonight, we still don't know how Senator Clinton intends to enforce a mandate, and if we don't know the level of subsidies that she's going to provide, then you can have a situation, which we are seeing right now in the state of Massachusetts, where people are being fined for not having purchased health care but choose to accept the fine because they still can't afford it, even with the subsidies.

And they are then worse off. They then have no health care and are paying a fine above and beyond that.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

SEN. OBAMA: That is a genuine difference between myself and Senator Clinton.

And the last point I would make is, the insurance companies actually are happy to have a mandate. The insurance companies don't mind making sure that everybody has to purchase their product. That's not something they're objecting to. The question is, are we going to make sure that it is affordable for everybody? And that's my goal when I'm president of the United States.

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator, as you two --

SEN. CLINTON: You know, Brian -- Brian, wait a minute. I've got -- this is too important.

You know, Senator Obama has a mandate. He would enforce the mandate by requiring parents to buy insurance for their children.

SEN. OBAMA: This is true.

SEN. CLINTON: That is the case.

If you have a mandate, it has to be enforceable. So there's no difference here.

SEN. OBAMA: No, there is a difference.

SEN. CLINTON: It's just that I know that parents who get sick have terrible consequences for their children. So you can insure the children, and then you've

got the bread-winner who can't afford health insurance or doesn't have it for him or herself.

And in fact, it would be as though Franklin Roosevelt said let's make Social Security voluntary -- that's -- you know, that's -- let's let everybody get in it if they can afford it -- or if President Johnson said let's make Medicare voluntary.

SEN. OBAMA: Well, let me --

SEN. CLINTON: What we have said is that at the point of employment, at the point of contact with various government agencies, we would have people signed up. It's like when you get a 401(k), it's your employer. The employer automatically enrolls you. You would be enrolled.

And under my plan, it is affordable because, number one, we have enough money in our plan. A comparison of the plans like the ones we're proposing found that actually I would cover nearly everybody at a much lower cost than Senator Obama's plan because we would not only provide these health care tax credits, but I would limit the amount of money that anyone ever has to pay for a premium to a low percentage of your income. So it will be affordable.

Now, if you want to say that we shouldn't try to get everyone into health insurance, that's a big difference, because I believe if we don't have universal health care, we will never provide prevention.

I have the most aggressive measures to reduce costs and improve quality. And time and time again, people who have compared our two approaches have concluded that.

SEN. OBAMA: Brian, I'm sorry.

SEN. CLINTON: So let's -- let's have a debate about the facts.

SEN. OBAMA: I'm going to get filibattered -- I'm getting filibustered a little bit here.

MR. WILLIAMS: The last answer on this topic.

SEN. OBAMA: I mean, it is just not accurate to say that Senator Clinton does more to control costs than mine. That is not the case. There are many experts who have concluded that she does not.

I do provide a mandate for children, because, number one, we have created a number of programs in which we can have greater assurance that those children will be covered at an affordable price. On the -- on the point of many adults, we don't want to put in a situation in which, on the front end, we are mandating them, we are forcing them to purchase insurance, and if the subsidies are inadequate, the burden is on them, and they will be penalized. And that is what Senator Clinton's plan does.

Now, I am -- I am happy to have a discussion with Senator Clinton about how we can both achieve the goal of universal health care. What I do not accept -- and which is what Senator Clinton has consistently done and in fact the same experts she cites basically say there's no real difference between our plans, that are -- that they are not substantial.

But it has to do with how we are going to achieve universal health care. That is an area where I believe that if we make it affordable, people will purchase it. In fact, Medicare Part B is not mandated, it is voluntary. And yet people over 65 choose to purchase it, Hillary, and the reason they choose to purchase it is because it's a good deal. And if people in Cleveland or anywhere in Ohio end up seeing a plan that is affordable for them, I promise you they are snatching it up because they are desperate to get health care. And that's what I intend to provide as president of the United States.

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator, I'm going to change the subject.

SEN. CLINTON: About 20 percent of -- about 20 percent of the people who are uninsured have the means to buy insurance. They're often young people --

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator --

SEN. CLINTON: -- who think they're immortal --

SEN. OBAMA: Which is why I cover them.

SEN. CLINTON: -- except when the illness or the accident strikes. And what Senator Obama has said, that then, once you get to the hospital, you'll be forced to buy insurance, I don't think that's a good idea. We ought to plan for it --

SEN. OBAMA: With respect --

SEN. CLINTON: -- and we ought to make sure we cover everyone.

That is the only way to get to universal health care coverage.

SEN. OBAMA: With respect --

SEN. CLINTON: That is what I've worked for for 15 years --

SEN. OBAMA: With respect --

SEN. CLINTON: -- and I believe that we can achieve it. But if we don't even have a plan to get there, and we start out by leaving people, you'll never ever control costs, improve quality, and cover everyone.

SEN. OBAMA: With respect to the young people, my plan specifically says that up until the age of 25 you will be able to be covered under your parents' insurance plan, so that cohort that

Senator Clinton is talking about will, in fact, have coverage.

MR. WILLIAMS: Well, a 16-minute discussion on health care is certainly a start. (Laughter.) I'd like to change up --

SEN. CLINTON: Well, there's hardly anything be more important? I think it would be good to talk about health care and how we're we going get to universal health care.

MR. WILLIAMS: I -- well, here's another important topic, and that's NAFTA, especially where we're sitting here tonight. And this is a tough one depending on who you ask. The Houston Chronicle has called it a big win for Texas, but Ohio Democratic Senator Brown, your colleague in the Senate, has called it a job-killing trade agreement. Senator Clinton, you've campaigned in south Texas. You've campaigned here in Ohio. Who's right?

SEN. CLINTON: Well, can I just point out that in the last several debates, I seem to get the first question all the time. And I don't mind. I -- you know, I'll be happy to field them, but I do find it curious, and if anybody saw "Saturday Night Live," you know, maybe we should ask Barack if he's comfortable and needs another pillow. (Laughter, boos.) I just find it kind of curious that I keep getting the first question on all of these issues. But I'm happy to answer it.

You know, I have been a critic of NAFTA from the very beginning. I didn't have a public position on it, because I was part of the administration, but when I started running for the Senate, I have been a critic. I've said it was flawed. I said that it worked in some parts of our country, and I've seen the results in Texas. I was in Laredo in the last couple of days. It's the largest inland port in America now. So clearly, some parts of our country have been benefited.

But what I have seen, where I represent up-state New York, I've seen the factories closed and moved. I've talked to so many people whose children have left because they don't have a good shot. I've had to negotiate to try to keep factories open, sometimes successfully, sometimes not, because the companies got tax benefits to actually move to another country.

So what I have said is that we need to have a plan to fix NAFTA. I would immediately have a trade timeout, and I would take that time to try to fix NAFTA by making it clear that we'll have core labor and environmental standards in the agreement.

We will do everything we can to make it enforceable, which it is not now. We will stop the kind of constant sniping at our protections for our workers that can come from foreign companies because they have the authority to try to sue to overturn what we do to keep our workers safe.

This is rightly a big issue in Ohio. And I have laid out my criticism, but in addition my plan, for actually fixing NAFTA. Again, I have received a lot of incoming criticism from Senator Obama. And the Cleveland Plain Dealer

examined Senator Obama's attacks on me regarding NAFTA and said they were erroneous. So I would hope that, again, we can get to a debate about what the real issues are and where we stand because we do need to fix NAFTA. It is not working. It was, unfortunately, heavily disadvantaging many of our industries, particularly manufacturing. I have a record of standing up for that, of chairing the Manufacturing Caucus in the Senate, and I will take a tough position on these trade agreements.

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator, thank you.

Before we turn the questioning over to Tim Russert, Senator Obama.

SEN. OBAMA: Well, I think that it is inaccurate for Senator Clinton to say that she's always opposed NAFTA. In her campaign for Senate, she said that NAFTA, on balance, had been good for New York and good for America. I disagree with that. I think that it did not have the labor standards and environmental standards that were required in order to not just be good for Wall Street but also be good for Main Street. And if you travel through Youngstown and you travel through communities in my home state of Illinois, you will see entire cities that have been devastated as a consequence of trade agreements that were not adequately structured to make sure that U.S. workers had a fair deal.

Now, I think that Senator Clinton has shifted positions on this and believes that we should have strong environmental standards and labor standards, and I think that's a good thing. But you know, when I first moved to Chicago in the early '80s and I saw steelworkers who had been laid off of their plants -- black, white, and Hispanic -- and I worked on the streets of Chicago to try to help them find jobs, I saw then that the net costs of many of these trade agreements, if they're not properly structured, can be devastating.

And as president of the United States, I intend to make certain that every agreement that we sign has the labor standards, the environmental standards and the safety standards that are going to protect not just workers, but also consumers. We can't have toys with lead paint in them that our children are playing with. We can't have medicines that are actually making people more sick instead of better because they're produced overseas. We have to stop providing tax breaks for companies that are shipping jobs overseas and give those tax breaks to companies that are investing here in the United States of America.

And if we do those things, then I believe that we can actually get Ohio back on the path of growth and jobs and prosperity. If we don't, then we're going to continue to see the kind of deterioration that we've seen economically here in this state.

MR. RUSSERT: I want to ask you both about NAFTA because the record, I think, is clear. And I want to -- Senator Clinton. Senator Obama said that you did say in 2004 that on balance NAFTA has been good for New York and America. You did say that. When President Clinton signed this bill -- and this was after he negotiated two new side agreements, for labor and environment -- President Clinton said it would be a force for economic growth and social progress. You

said in '96 it was proving its worth as free and fair trade. You said that -- in 2000 -
- it was a good idea that took political courage. So your record is pretty clear.

Based on that, and which you're now expressing your discomfort with it, in the
debate that Al Gore had with Ross Perot, Al Gore said the following: "If you don't
like NAFTA and what it's done, we can get out of it in six months.

The president can say to Canada and Mexico, we are out. This has not been a
good agreement." Will U.S. president say we are out of NAFTA in six months?

SEN. CLINTON: I have said that I will renegotiate NAFTA, so obviously, you'd
have to say to Canada and Mexico that that's exactly what we're going to do. But
you know, in fairness --

MR. RUSSERT: Just because -- maybe Clinton --

SEN. CLINTON: Yes, I am serious.

MR. RUSSERT: You will get out. You will notify Mexico and Canada, NAFTA
is gone in six months.

SEN. CLINTON: No, I will say we will opt out of NAFTA unless we renegotiate
it, and we renegotiate on terms that are favorable to all of America.

But let's be fair here, Tim. There are lots of parts of New York that have
benefitted, just like there are lots of parts of Texas that have benefitted. The
problem is in places like upstate New York, places like Youngstown, Toledo, and
others throughout Ohio that have not benefitted. And if you look at what I have
been saying, it has been consistent.

You know, Senator Obama told the farmers of Illinois a couple of years ago that
he wanted more trade agreements. I -- right now --

MR. RUSSERT: We're going to get -- we're going to get to Senator Obama, but I
want to stay on your terms --

SEN. CLINTON: Well, but that -- but that is important --

MR. RUSSERT: -- because this was something that you wrote about as a real
success for your husband. You said it was good on balance for New York and
America in 2004, and now you're in Ohio and your words are much different,
Senator. The record is very clear.

SEN. CLINTON: Well, I -- I -- you don't have all the record because you can go
back and look at what I've said consistently. And I haven't just said things; I have
actually voted to toughen trade agreements, to try to put more teeth into our
enforcement mechanisms. And I will continue to do so.

But you know, Tim, when you look at what the Cleveland Plain Dealer said when they examined the kind of criticism that Senator Obama was making of me -- it's not me saying it -- they said it was erroneous. And it was erroneous because it didn't look at the entire picture, both at what I've said and what I've done.

But let's talk about what we're going to do. It is not enough just to criticize NAFTA, which I have, and for some years now. I have put forward a very specific plan about what I would do, and it does include telling Canada and Mexico that we will opt out unless we renegotiate the core labor and environmental standards - - not side agreements, but core agreements; that we will enhance the enforcement mechanism; and that we will have a very clear view of how we're going to review NAFTA going forward to make sure it works, and we're going to take out the ability of foreign companies to sue us because of what we do to protect our workers.

I would also say that you can go back and look at from the very beginning -- I think David Gergen was on TV today remembering that I was very skeptical about it.

It has worked in some parts of America. It has not worked in Ohio. It has not worked in upstate New York. And since I've been in the Senate -- neither of us voted on this. That wasn't something either of us got to cast an independent vote on. Since I have been in the Senate, I have worked to try to ameliorate the impact of these trade agreements.

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

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

MR. RUSSERT: Senator Obama, you did in 2004 talk to farmers and suggest that NAFTA had been helpful. The Associated Press today ran a story about NAFTA, saying that you have been consistently ambivalent towards the issue. Simple question: Will you, as president, say to Canada and Mexico, "This has not worked for us; we are out"?

SEN. OBAMA: I will make sure that we renegotiate, in the same way that Senator Clinton talked about. And I think actually Senator Clinton's answer on this one is right. I think we should use the hammer of a potential opt-out as leverage to ensure that we actually get labor and environmental standards that are enforced. And that is not what has been happening so far.

That is something that I have been consistent about. I have to say, Tim, with respect to my position on this, when I ran for the United States Senate, the Chicago Tribune, which was adamantly pro-NAFTA, noted that, in their endorsement of me, they were endorsing me despite my strong opposition to NAFTA.

And that conversation that I had with the Farm Bureau, I was not ambivalent at all. What I said was that NAFTA and other trade deals can be beneficial to the United States because I believe every U.S. worker is as productive as any worker around the world, and we can compete with anybody. And we can't shy away from globalization. We can't draw a moat around us. But what I did say, in that same quote, if you look at it, was that the problem is we've been negotiating just looking at corporate profits and what's good for multinationals, and we haven't been looking at what's good for communities here in Ohio, in my home state of Illinois, and across the country.

And as president, what I want to be is an advocate on behalf of workers. Look, you know, when I go to these plants, I meet people who are proud of their jobs. They are proud of the products that they've created. They have built brands and profits for their companies. And when they see jobs shipped overseas and suddenly they are left not just without a job, but without health care, without a pension, and are having to look for seven-buck-an-hour jobs at the local fast-food joint, that is devastating on them, but it's also devastating on the community. That's not the way that we're going to prosper as we move forward.

MR. RUSSERT: Senator, two journalists here in Ohio wrote a piece called "Business as Usual," which is very well known, suggesting it wasn't trade or manufacturing jobs that were being lost because of it, but rather business as usual: lack of patents, lack of innovation, lack of investment, 70 percent of the Ph.D.s in biology, chemistry, engineering leaving the state.

The fact is, exports now have the highest share of our national income ever. Ohio ranks fourth in terms of exports to Canada and Mexico. Are you sure this has not been better for Ohio than you're suggesting?

SEN. OBAMA: I'm positive it hasn't been better for Ohio. But you are making a very legitimate point, which is, is that this trade (can/can't ?) be the only part of our economic agenda. But we've seen seven years in which we have a president who has been looking out for the well-heeled and people who are doing very well in the global economy, in the financial industries, in the telecommunications industries, and has not been looking out for ordinary workers.

What do we have to do? We're going to have to invest in infrastructure to make sure that we're competitive. And I've got a plan to do that. We're going to have to invest in science and technology. We've got to vastly improve our education system. We have to look at energy and the potential for creating green jobs that can not just save on our energy costs but, more importantly, can create jobs in building windmills that will produce manufacturing jobs here in Ohio, can put rural communities back on their feet by working on alternative fuels, making buildings more energy efficient.

We can hire young people who are out of work and put them to work in the trade. So there are all sorts of things that we're going to have to do to make the United States economy much more competitive, and those are plans that I have put

forward in this campaign and I expect to pursue as president of the United States of America.

MR. RUSSERT: Senator Clinton, on the issue of jobs, I watched you the other day with your economic blueprint in Wisconsin saying, this is my plan; hold me accountable. And I've had a chance to read it very carefully. It does say that you pledge to create 5 million new jobs over 10 years.

And I was reminded of your campaign in 2000 in Buffalo, my hometown, just three hours down Route 90, where you pledged 200,000 new jobs for upstate New York. There's been a net loss of 30,000 jobs. And when you were asked about your pledge, your commitment, you told The Buffalo News, "I might have been a little exuberant." Tonight will you say that the pledge of 5 million jobs might be a little exuberant?

SEN. CLINTON: No, Tim, because what happened in 2000 is that I thought Al Gore was going to be president. And when I made the pledge I was counting on having a Democratic White House, a Democratic president who shared my values about what we needed to do to make the economy work for everyone and to create shared prosperity.

And as you know, despite the difficulties of the Bush administration and a Republican Congress for six years of my first term I have worked very hard to create jobs but obviously as president I will have a lot more tools at my disposal. And the reason why we can create at least 5 million new jobs -- I mean, this is not a big leap. Twenty-two point seven million new jobs were created during the eight years of the Clinton administration under my husband. We can create at least 5 million new jobs.

I'm not just talking about it. I helped to pass legislation to begin a training program for green collar jobs. I want to see people throughout Ohio being trained to do the work that will put solar panels on roofs, install wind turbines, do geothermal, take advantage of biofuels, and I know that if we had put \$5 billion into the stimulus package to really invest in the training and the tax incentives that would have created those jobs as the Democrats wanted, as I originally proposed, we would be on the way to creating those.

You know, take a country like Germany. They made a big bet on solar power. They have a smaller economy and population than ours.

They've created several hundred thousand new jobs, and these are jobs that can't be outsourced. These are jobs that have to be done in Youngstown, in Dayton, in Cincinnati. These are jobs that we can create here with the right combination of tax incentives, training, and a commitment to following through. So I do think that at least 5 million jobs are fully capable of being produced within the next 10 years.

MR. RUSSERT: Brian?

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator Obama, yesterday Senator Clinton gave a speech on foreign policy and I'm going to read you a quote from it. Quote, "We've seen the tragic result of having a president who had neither the experience nor the wisdom to manage our foreign policy and safeguard our national security. We cannot let that happen again. America has already taken that chance one time too many." Some of the comments in the speech were more pointed. The senator has compared your foreign policy expertise to that of George W. Bush at the same period. Provided you could be going into a general election against a Republican with vast foreign policy expertise and credibility on national security, how were her comments about you unfair?

SEN. OBAMA: Well, Senator Clinton I think equates experience with longevity in Washington. I don't think the American people do and I don't think that if you look at the judgments that we've made over the last several years that that's the accurate measure. On the most important foreign policy decision that we face in a generation -- whether or not to go into Iraq -- I was very clear as to why we should not -- that it would fan the flames of anti-American sentiment -- that it would distract us from Afghanistan -- that it would cost us billions of dollars, thousands of lives, and would not make us more safe, and I do not believe it has made us more safe.

Al Qaeda is stronger than anytime since 2001 according to our own intelligence estimates, and we are bogged down in a war that John McCain now suggests might go on for another 100 years, spending \$12 billion a month that could be invested in the kinds of programs that both Senator Clinton and I are talking about. So on Pakistan, during the summer I suggested that not only do we have to take a new approach towards Musharraf but we have to get much more serious about hunting down terrorists that are currently in northwestern Pakistan.

And many people said at the time well, you can't target those terrorists because Musharraf is our ally and we don't want to offend him. In fact, what we had was neither stability in Pakistan nor democracy in Pakistan, and had we pursued a policy that was looking at democratic reforms in Pakistan we would be much further along now than we are. So on the critical issues that actually matter I believe that my judgment has been sound and it has been judgment that I think has been superior to Senator Clinton's as well as Senator McCain's.

MR. WILLIAMS: Well, Senator Clinton, in the last debate you seemed to take a pass on the question of whether or not Senator Obama was qualified to be commander in chief. Is your contention in this latest speech that America would somehow be taking a chance on Senator Obama as commander in chief?

SEN. CLINTON: Well, I have put forth my extensive experience in foreign policy, you know, helping to support the peace process in Northern Ireland, negotiating to open borders so that refugees fleeing ethnic cleansing would be safe, going to Beijing and standing up for women's rights as human rights and so much else. And every time the question about qualifications and credentials for commander in chief are raised, Senator Obama rightly points to the speech he gave in 2002. He's to be commended for having given the speech. Many people

gave speeches against the war then, and the fair comparison is he didn't have responsibility, he didn't have to vote; by 2004 he was saying that he basically agreed with the way George Bush was conducting the war. And when he came to the Senate, he and I have voted exactly the same. We have voted for the money to fund the war until relatively recently. So the fair comparison was when we both had responsibility, when it wasn't just a speech but it was actually action, where is the difference? Where is the comparison that would in some way give a real credibility to the speech that he gave against the war?

And on a number of other issues, I just believe that, you know, as Senator Obama said, yes, last summer he basically threatened to bomb Pakistan, which I don't think was a particularly wise position to take. I have long advocated a much tougher approach to Musharraf and to Pakistan, and have pushed the White House to do that.

And I disagree with his continuing to say that he would meet with some of the worst dictators in the world without preconditions and without the real, you know, understanding of what we would get from it.

So I think you've got to look at, you know, what I have done over a number of years, traveling on behalf of our country to more than 80 countries, meeting and working out a lot of different issues that are important to our national security and our foreign policy and our values, serving on the Senate Armed Services Committee for now five years. And I think that, you know, standing on that stage with Senator McCain, if he is, as appears to be, the nominee, I will have a much better case to make on a range of the issues that really America must confront going forward, and will be able to hold my own and make the case for a change in policy that will be better for our country.

MR. WILLIAMS: Senator Obama, a quick response.

SEN. OBAMA: Let me just follow up. My objections to the war in Iraq were simply -- not simply a speech. I was in the midst of a U.S. Senate campaign. It was a high-stakes campaign. I was one of the most vocal opponents of the war, and I was very specific as to why.

And so when I bring this up, it is not simply to say "I told you so," but it is to give you an insight in terms of how I would make decisions.

And the fact was, this was a big strategic blunder. It was not a matter of, well, here is the initial decision, but since then we've voted the same way. Once we had driven the bus into the ditch, there were only so many ways we could get out. The question is, who's making the decision initially to drive the bus into the ditch? And the fact is that Senator Clinton often says that she is ready on day one, but in fact she was ready to give in to George Bush on day one on this critical issue. So the same person that she criticizes for having terrible judgment, and we can't afford to have another one of those, in fact she facilitated and enabled this individual to make a decision that has been strategically damaging to the United States of America.

With respect to Pakistan, I never said I would bomb Pakistan. What I said was that if we have actionable intelligence against bin Laden or other key al Qaeda officials, and we -- and Pakistan is unwilling or unable to strike against them, we should. And just several days ago, in fact, this administration did exactly that and took out the third-ranking al Qaeda official.

That is the position that we should have taken in the first place. And President Musharraf is now indicating that he would generally be more cooperative in some of these efforts, we don't know how the new legislature in Pakistan will respond, but the fact is it was the right strategy.

And so my claim is not simply based on a speech. It is based on the judgments that I've displayed during the course of my service on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, while I've been in the United States Senate, and as somebody who, during the course of this campaign, I think has put forward a plan that will provide a clean break against Bush and Cheney. And that is how we're going to be able to debate John McCain. Having a debate with John McCain where your positions were essentially similar until you started running for president, I think, does not put you in a strong position.

Tim Russert.

SEN. CLINTON: Well, I guess that --

MR. RUSSERT: Let me talk about the future -- let me talk the future about Iraq, because this is important, I think, to Democratic voters particularly. You both have pledged the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. You both have said you'd keep a residual force there to protect our embassy, to seek out al Qaeda, to neutralize Iran. If the Iraqi government said, President Clinton or President Obama, you're pulling out your troops this quickly?

You're going to be gone in a year, but you're going to leave a residual force behind? No. Get out. Get out now. If you don't want to stay and protect us, we're a sovereign nation. Go home now." Will you leave?

SEN. OBAMA: Well, if the Iraqi government says that we should not be there, then we cannot be there. This is a sovereign government, as George Bush continually reminds us.

Now, I think that we can be in a partnership with Iraq to ensure the stability and the safety of the region, to ensure the safety of Iraqis and to meet our national security interests.

But in order to do that, we have to send a clear signal to the Iraqi government that we are not going to be there permanently, which is why I have said that as soon as I take office, I will call in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, we will initiate a phased withdrawal, we will be as careful getting out as we were careless getting in. We will give ample time for them to stand up, to negotiate the kinds of agreements that will arrive at the political accommodations that are needed. We will provide

them continued support. But it is important for us not to be held hostage by the Iraqi government in a policy that has not made us more safe, that's distracting us from Afghanistan, and is costing us dearly, not only and most importantly in the lost lives of our troops, but also the amount of money that we are spending that is unsustainable and will prevent us from engaging in the kinds of investments in America that will make us more competitive and more safe.

MR. RUSSERT: Senator Clinton, if the Iraqis said I'm sorry, we're not happy with this arrangement; if you're not going to stay in total and defend us, get out completely; they are a sovereign nation, you would listen?

SEN. CLINTON: Absolutely. And I believe that there is no military solution that the Americans who have been valiant in doing everything they were asked to do can really achieve in the absence of full cooperation from the Iraqi government. And --

MR. RUSSERT: Let me ask -- let me ask you this, Senator. I want to ask you --

SEN. CLINTON: And they need to take responsibility for themselves. And --

MR. RUSSERT: I want to ask both of you this question, then. If we -- if this scenario plays out and the Americans get out in total and al Qaeda resurges and Iraq goes to hell, do you hold the right, in your mind as American president, to re-invade, to go back into Iraq to stabilize it?

SEN. CLINTON: You know, Tim, you ask a lot of hypotheticals. And I believe that what's --

MR. RUSSERT: But this is reality.

SEN. CLINTON: No -- well, it isn't reality. You're -- you're -- you're making lots of different hypothetical assessments.

I believe that it is in America's interests and in the interests of the Iraqis for us to have an orderly withdrawal. I've been saying for many months that the administration has to do more to plan, and I've been pushing them to actually do it. I've also said that I would begin to withdraw within 60 days based on a plan that I asked begun to be put together as soon as I became president.

And I think we can take out one to two brigades a month. I've also been a leader in trying to prevent President Bush from getting us committed to staying in Iraq regardless for as long as Senator McCain and others have said it might be, 50 to a hundred years.

So, when you talk about what we need to do in Iraq, we have to make judgments about what is in the best interest of America. And I believe this is in the best interest.

But I also have heard Senator Obama refer continually to Afghanistan, and he references being on the Foreign Relations Committee. He chairs the Subcommittee on Europe. It has jurisdiction over NATO. NATO is critical to our mission in Afghanistan. He's held not one substantive hearing to do oversight, to figure out what we can do to actually have a stronger presence with NATO in Afghanistan.

You have to look at the entire situation to try to figure out how we can stabilize Afghanistan and begin to put more in there to try to get some kind of success out of it, and you have to work with the Iraqi government so that they take responsibility for their own future.

MR. RUSSERT: Senator Obama, I want you to respond to not holding oversight for your subcommittee. But also, do you reserve a right as American president to go back into Iraq, once you have withdrawn, with sizable troops in order to quell any kind of insurrection or civil war?

SEN. OBAMA: Well, first of all, I became chairman of this committee at the beginning of this campaign, at the beginning of 2007. So it is true that we haven't had oversight hearings on Afghanistan.

I have been very clear in talking to the American people about what I would do with respect to Afghanistan.

I think we have to have more troops there to bolster the NATO effort. I think we have to show that we are not maintaining permanent bases in Iraq because Secretary Gates, our current Defense secretary, indicated that we are getting resistance from our allies to put more troops into Afghanistan because they continue to believe that we made a blunder in Iraq and I think even this administration acknowledges now that they are hampered now in doing what we need to do in Afghanistan in part because of what's happened in Iraq.

Now, I always reserve the right for the president -- as commander in chief, I will always reserve the right to make sure that we are looking out for American interests. And if al Qaeda is forming a base in Iraq, then we will have to act in a way that secures the American homeland and our interests abroad. So that is true, I think, not just in Iraq, but that's true in other places. That's part of my argument with respect to Pakistan.

I think we should always cooperate with our allies and sovereign nations in making sure that we are rooting out terrorist organizations, but if they are planning attacks on Americans, like what happened in 9/11, it is my job -- it will be my job as president to make sure that we are hunting them down.

MR. WILLIAMS: And Senator, I need to reserve --

SEN. CLINTON: Well, but I have -- I just have to add --

MR. WILLIAMS: I'm sorry, Senator, I've got to --

SEN. CLINTON: Now wait a minute, I have to add --

MR. WILLIAMS: I've got to get us to a break because television doesn't stop.

SEN. CLINTON: -- because the question -- the question was about invading -- invading -- Iraq.

MR. WILLIAMS: Can you hold that thought until we come back from a break? We have limited commercial interruptions tonight, and we have to get to one of them now. Despite the snowstorm swirling outside here in Cleveland, we're having a warm night in the arena. We'll return to it right after this. (Laughter, applause.)

(Announcements.)

(Cheers, applause.)

MR. WILLIAMS: We are back, and because our first segment went long and we are in a large arena -- (cheers, applause) --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Off mike) -- for Hillary!

MR. WILLIAMS: -- we are just now welcoming back both of our candidates to the stage and asking our cooperation of the audience.

We're back live tonight in Cleveland, Ohio.

Senator Obama, we started tonight talking about what could be construed as a little hyperbole. Happens from time to time on the campaign trail. You have recently been called out on some yourself. I urge you to look at your monitor and we'll take a look.

SEN. CLINTON: (From videotape.) Now I could stand up here and say: Let's just get everybody together. Let's get unified. The sky will open -- (laughter) -- the light will come down -- (laughter) -- celestial choirs will be singing -- (laughter) -- and everyone will know we should do the right thing, and the world will be perfect!

SEN. OBAMA: Sounds good! (Laughter.)

MR. WILLIAMS: Of all the charges -- (laughter, applause) -- of all the charges and countercharges made tonight, we can confirm that is not you, Senator Obama.

SEN. OBAMA: (Chuckles.)

MR. WILLIAMS: That was Senator Clinton. But since we played that tape, albeit in error, for this segment, how did you take that?

SEN. CLINTON: (Laughs.)

(Laughter.)

MR. WILLIAMS: How did you take those remarks when you heard them?

SEN. OBAMA: Well, I thought Senator Clinton showed some good humor there. I would give her points for delivery.

SEN. CLINTON: (Laughs.)

(Laughter.)

SEN. OBAMA: Look, I understand the broader point that Senator Clinton's been trying to make over the last several weeks. You know, she characterizes it typically as speeches, not solutions, or talk versus action. And as I said in the last debate, I've spent 20 years devoted to working on behalf of families who are having a tough time and they're seeking out the American dream. That's how I started my career in public service, that's how I brought Democrats and Republicans together to provide health care to people who needed it, that's how I helped to reform a welfare system that wasn't working in Illinois, that's how I've provided tax breaks to people who really needed them as opposed to just the wealthy, and so I'm very proud of that track record.

And if Senator Clinton thinks that it's all talk, you know, you got to tell that to the wounded warriors at Walter Reed who had to pay for their food and pay for their phone calls before I got to the Senate. And I changed that law. Or talk to those folks who I think have recognized that special interests are dominating Washington and pushing aside the agenda of ordinary families here in Ohio.

And so when I pass an ethics reform bill that makes sure that lobbyists can't get gifts or meals or provide corporate jets to members of Congress and they have to disclose who they're getting money from and who they're bundling it for, that moves us in the direction of making sure that we have a government that is more responsive to families.

Just one point I'll make, I was in Cincinnati, met with four women at a table like this one. And these were middle-aged women who, as one woman put it, had done everything right and never expected to find themselves in the situation where they don't have health care. One of them doesn't have a job. One of them is looking after an aging parent. Two of them were looking after disabled children. One of them was dipping into their retirement accounts because she had been put on disability on the job. And you hear these stories and what you realize is nobody has been listening to them. That is not who George Bush or Dick Cheney has been advocating for over the last seven years.

And so I am not interested in talk. I am not interested in speeches. I would not be running if I wasn't absolutely convinced that I can put an economic agenda forward that is going to provide them with health care, is going to make college more affordable, and is going to get them the kinds of help that they need not to solve all their problems, but at least to be able to achieve the American dream.

MR. WILLIAMS: Well, let me ask you, Senator Clinton: What did you mean by that piece of videotape we saw from the campaign?

SEN. CLINTON: Well, I was having a little fun. You know, it's hard to find time to have fun on the campaign trail, but occasionally you can sneak that in.

But the larger point is that I know trying to get health insurance for every American that's affordable will not be easy. It's not going to come about just because we hope it will or we tell everybody it's the right thing to do. You know, 15 years ago I tangled with the health insurance industry and the drug companies, and I know it takes a fighter. It takes somebody who will go toe-to-toe with the special interests.

You know, I have put forth very specific ideas about how we can get back \$55 billion from the special interests -- the giveaways to the oil companies, the credit card companies, the student loan companies, the health insurance companies. These have all been basically pushed on to these special interests not just because of what the White House did, but because members of Congress went along. And I want to get that money back and invest it in the American middle class -- health care, college affordability, the kinds of needs that people talk to me about throughout Ohio, because what I hear as I go from Toledo to Parma to Cleveland to, you know, Dayton is the same litany that people are working harder than ever, but they're not getting ahead. They feel like they're invisible to their government. So when it came time to vote on Dick Cheney's energy bill, I voted no, and Senator Obama voted yes. When it came time to try to cap interest rates for credit cards at 30 percent -- which I think is way too high, but it was the best we could present -- I voted yes and Senator Obama voted no.

MR. WILLIAMS: And Senator -- Senator --

SEN. CLINTON: So part of what we have to do here is recognize that the special interests are not going to give up without a fight. And I believe that I am a fighter, and I will fight for the people of Ohio and the people of America.

MR. WILLIAMS: What I was attempting to do here is to show something Senator Obama said about you, and I'm told it's ready.

MR. RUSSERT: Let's try it.

MR. WILLIAMS: Let's try it. Hang on. Watch your monitor.

Let's try it. We're going to come back to you.

SEN. OBAMA: But I'm going to have an opportunity to respond to this.

SEN. OBAMA: (From videotape.) -- herself as co-president during the Clinton years. Every good thing that happened she says she was a part of. And so the notion that you can selectively pick what you take credit for and then run away from what isn't politically convenient, that doesn't make sense.

MR. WILLIAMS: Now, Senator Obama, you can react to it and whatever you wanted to react to from earlier, but I've been wanting to ask you about this assertion that Senator Clinton has somehow cast herself as co-president.

SEN. OBAMA: Well, I think what is absolutely true is, is that when Senator Clinton continually talks about her experience, she is including the eight years that she served as first lady, and you know, often says, you know, "Here's what I did."

"Here's what we did." "Here's what we accomplished" -- which is fine.

And I have not -- I have not in any way said that that experience is not relevant, and I don't begrudge her claiming that as experience. What I've said, and what I would continue to maintain, is you can't take credit for all the good things that happened but then, when it comes to issues like NAFTA, you say, well, I -- behind the scenes, I was disagreeing. That doesn't work. So you have to, I think, take both responsibility as well as credit.

Now there are several points that I think Senator Clinton made that I -- we need to discuss here. First of all, she talked about me objecting to caps on credit cards. Keep in mind, I objected to the entire bill -- a bill that Senator Clinton, in its previous version, in 2001 had voted for. And in one of the debates with you guys said, well, I voted for it, but I hoped it wouldn't pass -- which, as a general rule, doesn't work. If you don't want it to pass, you vote against it. (Laughter.)

You know, she mentioned that she is a fighter on health care. And look -- I do not in any way doubt that Senator Clinton genuinely wants to provide health care to all Americans.

What I have said is that the way she approached it back in '93, I think, was wrong in part because she had the view that what's required is simply to fight. And Senator Clinton ended up fighting not just the insurance companies and the drug companies, but also members of her own party. And as a consequence, there were a number of people, like Jim Cooper of Tennessee and Bill Bradley and Pat Moynihan, who were not included in the negotiations. And we had the potential of bringing people together to actually get something done.

I am absolutely clear that hope is not enough. And it is not going to be easy to pass health care. If it was, it would have already gotten done. It's not going to be easy to have a sensible energy policy in this country. ExxonMobil made \$11 billion last quarter. They are not going to give up those profits easily.

But what I also believe is that the only way we are going to actually get this stuff done is, number one, we're going to have to mobilize and inspire the American people so that they're paying attention to what their government is doing. And that's what I've been doing in this campaign, and that's what I will do as president.

And there's nothing romantic or silly about that. If the American people are activated, that's how change is going to happen.

The second thing we've going to have to do is we're actually going to have to go after the special interests.

Senator Clinton in one of these speeches -- it may have been the same speech where you showed the clip -- said you can't just wave a magic wand and expect special interests to go away. That is absolutely true, but it doesn't help if you're taking millions of dollars in contributions from those special interests. They are less likely to go away.

So it is important for us to crack down on how these special interests are able to influence Congress. And yes, it is important for us to inspire and mobilize and motivate the American people to get involved and pay attention.

MR. RUSSERT: Senator Obama, let me ask you about motivating, inspiring, keeping your word. Nothing more important. Last year you said if you were the nominee you would opt for public financing in the general election of the campaign; try to get some of the money out. You checked "Yes" on a questionnaire. And now Senator McCain has said, calling your bluff, let's do it. You seem to be waffling, saying, well, if we can work on an arrangement here.

Why won't you keep your word in writing that you made to abide by public financing of the fall election?

SEN. OBAMA: Tim, I am not yet the nominee. Now, what I've said is, is that when I am the nominee, if I am the nominee -- because we've still got a bunch of contests left and Senator Clinton's a pretty tough opponent. If I am the nominee, then I will sit down with John McCain and make sure that we have a system that is fair for both sides, because Tim, as you know, there are all sorts of ways of getting around these loopholes.

Senator McCain is trying to explain some of the things that he has done so far where he accepted public financing money, but people aren't exactly clear whether all the T's were crossed and the I's were dotted.

Now what I want to point out, though, more broadly is how we have approached this campaign. I said very early on I would not take PAC money. I would not take money from federal-registered lobbyists. That -- that was a multimillion-dollar decision but it was the right thing to do and the reason we were able to do that was because I had confidence that the American people, if they were motivated, would in fact finance the campaign.

We have now raised 90 percent of our donations from small donors, \$25, \$50. We average -- our average donation is \$109 so we have built the kind of organization that is funded by the American people that is exactly the goal and the aim of everybody who's interested in good government and politics supports.

MR. RUSSERT: So you may opt out of public financing. You may break your word.

SEN. OBAMA: What I -- what I have said is, at the point where I'm the nominee, at the point where it's appropriate, I will sit down with John McCain and make sure that we have a system that works for everybody.

MR. RUSSERT: Senator Clinton, an issue of accountability and credibility. You have loaned your campaign \$5 million. You and your husband file a joint return. You refuse to release that joint return, even though former President Clinton has had significant overseas business dealings.

Your chief supporter here in Ohio, Governor Strickland, made releasing his opponent's tax return one of the primary issues of the campaign, saying repeatedly, "Accountability, transparency." If he's not releasing, his campaign said, his tax return, what is he hiding? We should question what's going on.

Why won't you release your tax return, so the voters of Ohio, Texas, Vermont, Rhode Island know exactly where you and your husband got your money, who might be in part bankrolling your campaign?

SEN. CLINTON: Well, the American people who support me are bankrolling my campaign. That's -- that's obvious. You can look and see the hundreds of thousands of contributions that I've gotten. And ever since I lent my campaign money, people have responded just so generously. I'm thrilled at so many people getting involved. And we're raising, on average, about a million dollars a day on the Internet. And if anybody's out there, wants to contribute, to be part of this campaign, just go to HillaryClinton.com, because that's who's funding my campaign.

And I will release my tax returns. I have consistently said that. And I will --

MR. RUSSERT: Why not now?

SEN. CLINTON: Well, I will do it as others have done it: upon becoming the nominee, or even earlier, Tim, because I have been as open as I can be.

You have -- the public has 20 years of records for me, and I have very extensive filings with the Senate where --

MR. RUSSERT: So, before next Tuesday's primary?

SEN. CLINTON: Well, I can't get it together by then, but I will certainly work to get it together. I'm a little busy right now; I hardly have time to sleep. But I will certainly work toward releasing, and we will get that done and in the public domain.

MR. RUSSERT: One other issue. You talked about releasing documents. On January 30th, the National Archives released 10,000 pages of your public schedule as first lady. It's now in the custody of former President Clinton. Will you release that -- again, during this primary season that you claim that eight years

of experience, let the public know what you did, who you met with those eight years?

SEN. CLINTON: Absolutely. I've urged that the process be as quick as possible. It's a cumbersome process, set up by law. It doesn't just apply to us, it applies to everyone in our position. And I have urged that our end of it move as expeditiously as we can. Now, also, President Bush claims the right to look at anything that is released, and I would urge the Bush White House to move as quickly as possible.

MR. RUSSERT: But you've had it for more than a month. Will you get to him -- will you get it to the White House immediately?

SEN. CLINTON: As soon as we can, Tim. I've urged that, and I hope it will happen.

MR. RUSSERT: Senator Obama, one of the things in a campaign is that you have to react to unexpected developments.

On Sunday, the headline in your hometown paper, Chicago Tribune: "Louis Farrakhan Backs Obama for President at Nation of Islam Convention in Chicago." Do you accept the support of Louis Farrakhan?

SEN. OBAMA: You know, I have been very clear in my denunciation of Minister Farrakhan's anti-Semitic comments. I think that they are unacceptable and reprehensible. I did not solicit this support. He expressed pride in an African-American who seems to be bringing the country together. I obviously can't censor him, but it is not support that I sought. And we're not doing anything, I assure you, formally or informally with Minister Farrakhan.

MR. RUSSERT: Do you reject his support?

SEN. OBAMA: Well, Tim, you know, I can't say to somebody that he can't say that he thinks I'm a good guy. (Laughter.) You know, I -- you know, I -- I have been very clear in my denunciations of him and his past statements, and I think that indicates to the American people what my stance is on those comments.

MR. RUSSERT: The problem some voters may have is, as you know, Reverend Farrakhan called Judaism "gutter religion."

OBAMA: Tim, I think -- I am very familiar with his record, as are the American people. That's why I have consistently denounced it.

This is not something new. This is something that -- I live in Chicago. He lives in Chicago. I've been very clear, in terms of me believing that what he has said is reprehensible and inappropriate. And I have consistently distanced myself from him.

RUSSERT: The title of one of your books, "Audacity of Hope," you acknowledge you got from a sermon from Reverend Jeremiah Wright, the head of the Trinity United Church. He said that Louis Farrakhan "epitomizes greatness."

He said that he went to Libya in 1984 with Louis Farrakhan to visit with Moammar Gadhafi and that, when your political opponents found out about that, quote, "your Jewish support would dry up quicker than a snowball in Hell."

RUSSERT: What do you do to assure Jewish-Americans that, whether it's Farrakhan's support or the activities of Reverend Jeremiah Wright, your pastor, you are consistent with issues regarding Israel and not in any way suggesting that Farrakhan epitomizes greatness?

OBAMA: Tim, I have some of the strongest support from the Jewish community in my hometown of Chicago and in this presidential campaign. And the reason is because I have been a stalwart friend of Israel's. I think they are one of our most important allies in the region, and I think that their security is sacrosanct, and that the United States is in a special relationship with them, as is true with my relationship with the Jewish community.

And the reason that I have such strong support is because they know that not only would I not tolerate anti-Semitism in any form, but also because of the fact that what I want to do is rebuild what I consider to be a historic relationship between the African-American community and the Jewish community.

You know, I would not be sitting here were it not for a whole host of Jewish Americans, who supported the civil rights movement and helped to ensure that justice was served in the South. And that coalition has frayed over time around a whole host of issues, and part of my task in this process is making sure that those lines of communication and understanding are reopened.

But, you know, the reason that I have such strong support in the Jewish community and have historically -- it was true in my U.S. Senate campaign and it's true in this presidency -- is because the people who know me best know that I consistently have not only befriended the Jewish community, not only have I been strong on Israel, but, more importantly, I've been willing to speak out even when it is not comfortable.

When I was -- just last point I would make -- when I was giving -- had the honor of giving a sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church in conjunction with Martin Luther King's birthday in front of a large African-American audience, I specifically spoke out against anti-Semitism within the African-American community. And that's what gives people confidence that I will continue to do that when I'm president of the United States.

WILLIAMS: Senator...

CLINTON: I just want to add something here, because I faced a similar situation when I ran for the Senate in 2000 in New York. And in New York, there are more

than the two parties, Democratic and Republican. And one of the parties at that time, the Independence Party, was under the control of people who were anti-Semitic, anti- Israel. And I made it very clear that I did not want their support. I rejected it. I said that it would not be anything I would be comfortable with. And it looked as though I might pay a price for that. But I would not be associated with people who said such inflammatory and untrue charges against either Israel or Jewish people in our country.

And, you know, I was willing to take that stand, and, you know, fortunately the people of New York supported me and I won. But at the time, I thought it was more important to stand on principle and to reject the kind of conditions that went with support like that.

RUSSET: Are you suggesting Senator Obama is not standing on principle?

CLINTON: No. I'm just saying that you asked specifically if he would reject it. And there's a difference between denouncing and rejecting. And I think when it comes to this sort of, you know, inflammatory -- I have no doubt that everything that Barack just said is absolutely sincere. But I just think, we've got to be even stronger. We cannot let anyone in any way say these things because of the implications that they have, which can be so far reaching.

OBAMA: Tim, I have to say I don't see a difference between denouncing and rejecting. There's no formal offer of help from Minister Farrakhan that would involve me rejecting it. But if the word "reject" Senator Clinton feels is stronger than the word "denounce," then I'm happy to concede the point, and I would reject and denounce.

CLINTON: Good. Good. Excellent.

(APPLAUSE)

WILLIAMS: Rare audience outburst on the agreement over rejecting and renouncing.

We're going to take advantage of this opportunity to take the second of our limited breaks. We'll be back live from Cleveland right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WILLIAMS: We are back from Cleveland State University. We continue with our debate.

The question beginning this segment is for you, Senator Obama.

The National Journal rates your voting record as more liberal than that of Ted Kennedy.

In a general election, going up against a Republican Party, looking for converts, Republicans, independents, how can you run with a more liberal voting record than Ted Kennedy?

OBAMA: Well, first of all, let's take a look at what the National Journal rated us on.

It turned out that Senator Clinton and I had differences on two votes. The first was on an immigration issue, where the question was whether guest workers could come here, work for two years, go back for a year, and then come back and work for another two years, which meant essentially that you were going to have illegal immigrants for a year, because they wouldn't go back, and I thought it was bad policy.

The second -- and this, I think, is telling in terms of how silly these ratings are -- I supported an office of public integrity, an independent office that would be able to monitor ethics investigations in the Senate, because I thought it was important for the public to know that if there were any ethical violations in the Senate, that they weren't being investigated by the Senators themselves, but there was somebody independent who would do it.

This is something that I've tried to push as part of my ethics package.

OBAMA: It was rejected. And according to the National Journal, that position is a liberal position.

Now, I don't think that's a liberal position. I think there are a lot of Republicans and a lot of Independents who would like to make sure that ethic investigations are not conducted by the people who are potentially being investigated. So the categories don't make sense.

And part of the reason I think a lot of people have been puzzled, why is it that Senator Obama's campaign, the supposed liberal, is attracting more Independent votes than any other candidate in the Democratic primary, and Republican votes as well, and then people are scratching their head? It's because people don't want to go back to those old categories of what's liberal and what's conservative.

They want to see who is making sense, who's fighting for them, who's going to go after the special interests, who is going to champion the issues of health care and making college affordable, and making sure that we have a foreign policy that makes sense? That's what I've been doing, and that's why, you know, the proof is in the pudding. We've been attracting more Independent and Republican support than anybody else, and that's why every poll shows that right now I beat John McCain in a match-up in the general election.

WILLIAMS: Let's go from domestic to foreign affairs and Tim Russert.

RUSSERT: Before the primary on Tuesday, on Sunday, March 2, there's an election in Russia for the successor to President Putin. What can you tell me about the man who's going to be Mr. Putin's successor?

CLINTON: Well, I can tell you that he's a hand-picked successor, that he is someone who is obviously being installed by Putin, who Putin can control, who has very little independence, the best we know. You know, there's a lot of information still to be acquired. That the so-called opposition was basically run out of the political opportunity to wage a campaign against Putin's hand-picked successor, and the so-called leading opposition figure spends most of his time praising Putin. So this is a clever but transparent way for Putin to hold on to power, and it raises serious issues about how we're going to deal with Russia going forward.

I have been very critical of the Bush administration for what I believe to have been an incoherent policy toward Russia. And with the reassertion of Russia's role in Europe, with some of the mischief that they seem to be causing in supporting Iran's nuclear ambitions, for example, it's imperative that we begin to have a more realistic and effective strategy toward Russia. But I have no doubt, as president, even though technically the meetings may be with the man who is labeled as president, the decisions will be made by Putin.

RUSSERT: Who will it be? Do you know his name?

CLINTON: Medvedev -- whatever.

RUSSERT: Yes.

CLINTON: Yes.

RUSSERT: Senator Obama, do you know anything about him?

OBAMA: Well, I think Senator Clinton speaks accurately about him. He is somebody who was hand-picked by Putin. Putin has been very clear that he will continue to have the strongest hand in Russia in terms of running the government. And, you know, it looks -- just think back to the beginning of President Bush's administration when he said -- you know, he met with Putin, looked into his eyes and saw his soul, and figured he could do business with him.

He then proceeded to neglect our relationship with Russia at a time when Putin was strangling any opposition in the country when he was consolidating power, rattling sabers against his European neighbors, as well as satellites of the former Soviet Union. And so we did not send a signal to Mr. Putin that, in fact, we were going to be serious about issues like human rights, issues like international cooperation that were critical to us. That is something that we have to change.

RUSSERT: He's 42 years old, he's a former law professor. He is Mr. Putin's campaign manager. He is going to be the new president of Russia. And if he says

to the Russian troops, you know what, why don't you go help Serbia retake Kosovo, what does President Obama do?

OBAMA: Well, I think that we work with the international community that has also recognized Kosovo, and state that that's unacceptable. But, fortunately, we have a strong international structure anchored in NATO to deal with this issue.

We don't have to work in isolation. And this is an area where I think that the Clinton administration deserves a lot of credit, is, you know, the way in which they put together a coalition that has functioned.

OBAMA: It has not been perfect, but it saved lives. And we created a situation in which not only Kosovo, but other parts of the former Yugoslavia at least have the potential to over time build democracies and enter into the broader European community.

But, you know, be very clear: We have recognized the country of Kosovo as an independent, sovereign nation, as has Great Britain and many other countries in the region. And I think that that carries with it, then, certain obligations to ensure that they are not invaded.

RUSSELL: Before you go, each of you have talked about your careers in public service. Looking back through them, is there any words or vote that you'd like to take back?

Senator Clinton?

CLINTON: Well, obviously, I've said many times that, although my vote on the 2002 authorization regarding Iraq was a sincere vote, I would not have voted that way again.

I would certainly, as president, never have taken us to war in Iraq. And I regret deeply that President Bush waged a preemptive war, which I warned against and said I disagreed with.

But I think that this election has to be about the future. It has to be about what we will do now, how we will deal with what we're going to inherit.

You know, we've just been talking about Russia. We could have gone around the world. We could have gone to Latin America and talked about, you know, the retreat from democracy. We could have talked about Africa and the failure to end the genocide in Darfur.

We could have gone on to talk about the challenge that China faces and the Middle East, which is deteriorating under the pressures of Hamas, Hezbollah, and the interference that is putting Israel's security at stake.

We could have done an entire program, Tim, on what we will inherit from George Bush.

And what I believe is that my experience and my unique qualifications on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue equip me to handle with the problems of today and tomorrow and to be prepared to make those tough decisions in dealing with Putin and others, because we have so much work to do, and we don't have much time to try to make up for our losses.

RUSSERT: But to be clear, you'd like to have your vote back?

CLINTON: Absolutely. I've said that many times.

RUSSERT: Senator Obama, any statements or vote you'd like to take back?

OBAMA: Well, you know, when I first arrived in the Senate that first year, we had a situation surrounding Terri Schiavo. And I remember how we adjourned with a unanimous agreement that eventually allowed Congress to interject itself into that decisionmaking process of the families.

It wasn't something I was comfortable with, but it was not something that I stood on the floor and stopped. And I think that was a mistake, and I think the American people understood that that was a mistake. And as a constitutional law professor, I knew better.

And so that's an example I think of where inaction...

RUSSERT: This is the young woman with the feeding tube...

OBAMA: That's exactly right.

RUSSERT: ... and the family disagreed as to whether it should be removed or not.

OBAMA: And I think that's an example of inaction, and sometimes that can be as costly as action.

But let me say this, since we're wrapping up this debate. We have gone through 20 debates now. And, you know, there is still a lot of fight going on in this contest, and we've got four coming up, and maybe more after that.

But the one thing I'm absolutely clear about is Senator Clinton has campaigned magnificently. She is an outstanding public servant. And I'm very proud to have been campaigning with her.

And part of what I think both of us are interested in, regardless of who wins the nomination, is actually delivering for the American people.

You know, there is a vanity aspect and ambition aspect to politics. But when you spend as much time as Senator Clinton and I have spent around the country, and you hear heartbreaking story after heartbreaking story, and you realize that people's expectations are so modest.

You know, they're not looking for government to solve all of their problems. They just want a little bit of a hand-up to keep them in their homes if they're about to be foreclosed upon, or to make sure their kids can go to college to live out the American dream.

You know, it is absolutely critical that we change how business is done in Washington and we remind ourselves of what government is supposed to be about.

And, you know, I have a lot of confidence that whoever ends up being the nominee that the Democratic standard-bearer will try to restore that sense of public service to our government. That's why I think we're both running, and I'm very pleased that I've had this opportunity to run with Senator Clinton.

RUSSERT: But the voters can only choose one, Brian.

RUSSERT: And I think you have a question.

WILLIAMS: Well, we don't have such thing in our format as a closing statement, but I am going to ask a closing and fundamental question of you both. And I'll ask it of you first, Senator Obama.

What is the fundamental question you believe Senator Clinton must answer along the way to the voters here in Ohio and in Texas, and for that matter across the country, in order to prove her worthiness as the nominee? And then we will ask the same question of Senator Clinton.

OBAMA: I have to say, Brian, I think she is -- she would be worthy as a nominee. Now, I think I'd be better. Otherwise, I wouldn't be running. But there's no doubt that Senator Clinton is qualified and capable and would be a much better president than John McCain, who I respect and I honor his service to this country, but essentially has tethered himself to the failed policies of George Bush over the last seven years.

On economics, he wants to continue tax cuts to the wealthy that we can't afford, and on foreign policy he wants to continue a war that not only can we not afford in terms of money, but we can't afford in terms of lives and is not making us more safe. We can't afford it in terms of strategy.

So I don't think that Senator Clinton has to answer a question as to whether she's capable of being president or our standard bearer.

I will say this, that the reason I think I'm better as the nominee is that I can bring this country together I think in a unique way, across divisions of race, religion, region. And that is what's going to be required in order for us to actually deliver on the issues that both Senator Clinton and I care so much about.

And I also think I have a track record, starting from the days I moved to Chicago as a community organizer, when I was in my 20s, on through my work in state

government, on through my work as a United States senator, I think I bring a unique bias in favor of opening up government, pushing back special interests, making government more accountable so that the American people can have confidence that their voice is being heard.

Those are things -- those are qualities that I bring to this race, and I hope that the people of Ohio, Texas, Rhode Island and Vermont decide that those are qualities that they need in the next president of the United States.

WILLIAMS: Senator Clinton, same question, and that is again -- is there a fundamental question Senator Obama must answer to the voters in this state and others as to his worthiness?

CLINTON: Well, Brian, there isn't any doubt that, you know, both of us feel strongly about our country, that we bring enormous energy and commitment to this race and would bring that to the general election and to the White House.

As I said last week, you know, it's been an honor to campaign. I still intend to do everything I can to win, but it has been an honor, because it has been a campaign that is history making.

You know, obviously I am thrilled to be running, to be the first woman president, which I think would be a sea change in our country and around the world, and would give enormous...

(APPLAUSE)

... you know, enormous hope and, you know, a real challenge to the way things have been done, and who gets to do them, and what the rules are.

So I feel that either one of us will make history.

The question that I have been posing is, who can actually change the country? And I do believe that my experience over 35 years in the private sector as well as the public and the not-for-profit sector, gives me an understanding and an insight into how best to make the changes that we all know we have to see.

You know, when I wasn't successful about getting universal health care, I didn't give up. I just got to work and helped to create the Children's Health Insurance Program. And, you know, today in Ohio 140,000 kids have health insurance. And yet this morning in Lorain, a mother said that she spent with the insurance and everything over \$3 million taking care of her daughter, who had a serious accident. And she just looked at me, as so many mothers and fathers have over so many years, and said, "will you help us?"

That's what my public life has been about. I want to help the people of this country get the chances they deserve to have. And I will do whatever I can here in Ohio, in Texas, Rhode Island, in the states to come making that case. Because I think we do need a fighter back in the White House.

You know, the wealthy and the well-connected have had a president. It's time we had a president for the middle class and working people, the people who get up every day and do the very best they can. And they deserve somebody who gets up in that White House and goes to bat for them.

And that's what I will do.

WILLIAMS: Senator, thank you.

