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TELEVISION PROGRAM TO "CBS NEWS' FACE THE NATION. "**

CBS News

FACE THE NATION

Sunday, May 29, 2005

**GUESTS: General RICHARD MYERS
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff**

**Representative TOM DAVIS, (R-VA)
Chairman, Government Reform Committee**

**JOHN FEINSTEIN
Sports Writer and Author**

**COLBERT KING
The Washington Post**

MODERATOR: BOB SCHIEFFER - CBS News

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**FACE THE NATION - CBS NEWS
202-457-4481**

BOB SCHIEFFER, host:

Today on FACE THE NATION, America's top general, Richard Myers, on the war in Iraq and Memorial Day. Iraqi forces have launched the biggest security mission since the fall of Saddam Hussein, but the violence continues. How long will US troops be there and is the country close to civil war? We'll ask the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Richard Myers.

Then we'll turn to the issue of drugs and sports. Should there be an umbrella policy that covers the major sports or can the sports continue to police themselves? We'll talk with Congressman Tom Davis, Republican of Virginia, who has a bill that does just that; sportswriter John Feinstein and Washington Post columnist Colbert King.

I'll have a final word on Guantanamo Bay and American banks, but first, General Richard Myers on Iraq on FACE THE NATION.

Announcer: FACE THE NATION with CBS News chief Washington correspondent Bob Schieffer. And now from CBS News in Washington, Bob Schieffer.

SCHIEFFER: And we begin this morning with General Richard Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

General, thanks again for coming.

General RICHARD MYERS (Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff): Bob.

SCHIEFFER: You're always welcome here.

Gen. MYERS: Good to be with you. Thank you, sir.

SCHIEFFER: Memorial Day is tomorrow. How would you rate the state of the United States' military on this Memorial Day weekend?

Gen. MYERS: I would rate the state of the United States military as very high in terms of morale. You talk to these men and women that are serving in Iraq or Afghanistan. I've met thousands of them. I do it periodically; so do members of Congress, other folks. They know what this is all about in terms of this effort against violent extremism. They're proud of what they're doing. They understand the importance of the mission. And you see that in their cards and letters home, their e-mails home and their phone calls.

I was also privileged yesterday to be the graduation speaker at West Point. And this is a class that came in before 9/11 that same year and then experienced the nation going to war. And 911 of them graduated yesterday coincidentally. And you look in their eyes, shake their hands, talk to them, and they understand what their purpose is and what they must do for this country, and they all yesterday rose their right hands and swore to defend and support the Constitution of this country. And so I think the state of our military is very, very healthy; busy, very busy, but healthy.

SCHIEFFER: Let's talk about Iraq. The violence there, General, just seems to get worse. Do you think that country is on the verge of a civil war?

Gen. MYERS: I don't think we're close to a civil war at this point. The violence, by the way, in terms of the effects it's having on particularly civilians, Iraqi civilians, as--the effect is a little

bit greater, but attacks are down 25 percent if you look at Ramadan last year, if you look at around the election period. And they're isolated in where it happens. You know, in 14 of the 18 provinces, there is very, very little violence. Having said that, this is an enemy that is trying to defeat what we call in the military centers of gravity. They started by thinking they could drive the coalition from Iraq, so they attacked the coalition early on. This is now a year and a half, two years...

SCHIEFFER: Well, are you saying, General, you think it's getting better?

Gen. MYERS: I think a lot of aspects in Iraq are getting better. Let me just go back to the center of gravity one more time, because then they attacked Iraqi security forces, trying to keep people from signing up to defend their country and, of course, recruiting--we have more recruits than we can--actually than Iraqi--can handle. Then they went after civilians. Civilians are voting. They said that 85 percent of the Iraqi civilians, the latest poll, said they're going to vote for the constitution.

So I think it is getting better. Look at the political process. It wasn't too long ago when people say, 'Well, you can't have an interim government.' Well, we stood up--an interim government was stood up.

And now we have a transitional government that has stood up. We've got some good ministers that are working the problem really, really hard, trying to accommodate the Sunnis who did not vote in the election in a way in their constitutional process, so, yes, I think the trend lines are up.

The violence--these people--the kind of people that kill Sergio De Mello, the UN leader over there several years ago, Margaret Hassan, the CARE worker, and recently put on their Web site or televised a Japanese individual that they shot, I mean, these are savage, mass-murdering people that will stop at nothing to promote their ideology and their view of the world. And the Iraqi people aren't going to let it happen, and we're going to help them not let it happen.

SCHIEFFER: Well, I think we must note that--What?--there have been 70 Americans killed just last month and more than 500 Iraqis killed since those elections.

Gen. MYERS: Right. It's been a violent month, and that's the fact. Also in this month, we have 35 operations ongoing, what we call major operations, 30 of them led by Iraqis and coalition working together, five of them led by the Iraqis themselves. So things are turning in terms of the Iraqi security forces. And in the end, obviously, they have to do this work.

SCHIEFFER: Reports last week that Abu Musab Zarqawi, the al-Qaida leader--first there were reports that he had been wounded, severely wounded. Then there were reports that he hadn't been wounded, that he was back in command. Do you--what's your--what do you know about this? Do you think he's even still in Iraq?

Gen. MYERS: Bob, we don't know that. What we tend to believe is what's on their Web site where they say 'He has been wounded, please pray for him,' and so forth. So we think he's probably wounded. But I think people need to understand that we're going after Zarqawi, his lieutenants, his organization on a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week basis, that we're getting much, much better at this work, that we've detained over 400, that we've killed about 250, some of them his closest lieutenants. So--and, by the way, getting him probably won't stop this jihad movement. The al-Qaida will put somebody else into the breach. Whether they'll be as effective as Zarqawi, we don't know. We'll have to wait and see.

SCHIEFFER: General, you've been there for the whole thing. You're getting ready to retire in September. How do you now, as you look back at it, think we got it so wrong as to what we were going to find when we got to Iraq? I don't think anybody back then thought we'd still be there in the numbers we're there now, or that we would be greeted in the way that we were.

Gen. MYERS: I think what we underestimated was the devastation of the human spirit of the Iraqi people. For decades, they suffered under Saddam Hussein and his regime. And if you were somebody that had--was innovative or entrepreneurial and stuck your hand up, it was likely they were going to either chop the hand off or deal with your family in some way that would cause you to go back to ground. And that was true for their infrastructure as well. But I don't think we understood that people had been suppressed, and their spirit had been suppressed, to the point where it wasn't just going to naturally blossom once they had the opportunity. But they've pulled themselves up by their bootstraps.

You mentioned civil war. I mean, all the indications are that the religious leaders, particularly the Shia religious leaders, the majority in the country, are very moderate in this regard, are encouraging the government to bring more Sunnis into the constitutional drafting process. And it's up to the international community and up to us...

SCHIEFFER: Well, do you...

Gen. MYERS: ...to help nurture this spirit.

SCHIEFFER: Do you think, in retrospect, we probably should have gone in there with a larger force and made a greater attempt at the very beginning to establish law and order? And would that have prevented some of what we're seeing today?

Gen. MYERS: Personally, I don't think so. I think, you know, this is always a balance and if you talk to General Abizaid or General Casey, who are running this war up close and personal, it's always a balance between are you creating more targets and more animosity or are you helping? People need to remember, this insurgency didn't start right away. It started over a period of time. In fact for about the first year it was relatively peaceful. So over time it gained strength, and I think what we'd hoped had happened in that time frame and the strategy was to get the Iraqi government up and running and functioning and it just took us longer for the reasons that I talked about in terms of the spirit that had been devastated.

SCHIEFFER: Let me ask you a little bit about Guantanamo Bay, and again we're getting reports about torture and all of these things, just criticism. Tom Friedman of The New York Times in his column this week said, 'I am convinced that more Americans are dying and will die if we keep the Gitmo prison open open than if we shut it down,' because he said it's just causing this hatred throughout the Arab world every time one of these reports comes out. What should be done about this?

Gen. MYERS: This is a complex question. On the one hand we've had the International Committee of the Red Cross at Guantanamo from the day we opened the gates. I mean, essentially they've been there the whole time, essentially. And we get good marks for the way we take care of people. We spend over \$2 1/2 million a year just to make sure they have the proper food for the detainees, that it's appropriate to their religion. We passed out 1,300 Korans and--1,600 Korans in 13 different languages. We have gone to extraordinary lengths to treat people humanely and in accordance with the Geneva Convention. Yet people--and I'm not--this is not about Tom Friedman. This is about other people that are criticizing operations down

there, in what I view in many cases is an irresponsible way and relishing the fact they can put a spotlight on what should be the debate. The debate should be about what do you do with very violent people who believe and are willing to commit suicide for their cause? And we saw what happened on September 11th, four airplanes drove into three buildings.

SCHIEFFER: Sure.

Gen. MYERS: And so the debate ought to be, these are not nation-states. These are individuals. This is perhaps a worldwide movement, if you will, the al-Qaida movement. How do you deal with these people in a legal regime that was set up a long time ago for a much different time? And that's what the debate ought to be about. And we've tried to work our way through that, and the Department of Justice has tried to do that and so forth. But that's what the debate ought to be about. I'm...

SCHIEFFER: Tom Friedman points out that a hundred detainees have died in US custody. Why did that happen?

Gen. MYERS: Well, let me--I'll take you through all the numbers. We've had about 68,000 detainees. We've had 325 investigations into allegations of mistreatment of detainees. A hundred of those have come back substantiated. There's still some pending, but a hundred have come back substantiated and action has been taken in a hundred cases where people have either been court-martialed, if it's been very serious like a death, or if it's minor it may be a less punishment. So if you look at those numbers again, a hundred people punished, 68,000 detainees. This is not systemic. It is not the policy of this government, obviously. None of us would sign up with that. We want to treat people humanely.

There--some people have died from natural causes. Some have died because of maltreatment. And I will tell you that every case that comes up is one that the Department of Defense or our soldiers, sailors and Marines or Coast Guard have brought to light. And we investigate each one of those. And I'll just mention one other thing.

SCHIEFFER: I'm sorry, General.

Gen. MYERS: OK.

SCHIEFFER: We have simply--the clock has run out on us here.

Gen. MYERS: Clock has run--OK.

SCHIEFFER: I have to thank you, though, for being with us, and best wishes on your retirement and...

Gen. MYERS: Thank you, Bob. Thank you very much. Thanks for the opportunity.

SCHIEFFER: OK. See you soon.

We'll be back in a moment to talk about new efforts to toughen steroid testing rules in professional sports.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: We're back now with Congressman Tom Davis of Virginia, who has just introduced the new steroids testing bill. Also with us, John Feinstein, sportswriter and author of the books "Caddy For Life," and "Last Shot," and Colbert King columnist of The Washington Post. And we're going to talk about this whole issue of steroids in sports.

Just to get us started here, Congressman Davis, let's just put up a graphic of exactly what your bill would do. You call it the Clean Sports Act. And the first offense, it would call for a two-year suspension; second offense, a lifetime ban. That's some tough stuff there. First of all, do you think this bill--do you have the backing to pass this bill in Congress do you think?

Representative TOM DAVIS (Democrat, Virginia; Chairman, Government Reform Committee): Absolutely. It flew out of our committee--by the way, that's the Olympic standard.

SCHIEFFER: Yes.

Rep. DAVIS: This is what's used for amateur athletes around the world in the Olympics. So we simply got tired of waiting for all the other sports to talk about correcting themselves and arbitration going back and forth. But the votes are clearly there. In the Senate, Senator McCain and Senator Stevens, who has jurisdiction of the committee there, are solidly behind it, too.

SCHIEFFER: So this would--baseball would come under this, football would come under this, basketball would come under this...

Rep. DAVIS: Basketball and hockey.

SCHIEFFER: ...hockey would come under this.

Rep. DAVIS: Right.

SCHIEFFER: And I guess, because of the--this is the Olympic standard, track and field already comes under this.

Rep. DAVIS: Some amateur athletics would come under that. Right.

SCHIEFFER: Why do you think it's necessary?

Rep. DAVIS: It's necessary for two reasons. Number one, this goes back to the old quiz show analogy, where records have been done by people cheating. And I think people who go out and view professional sports have a right to know what the standards are going to be. Secondly, these drugs are illegal. And you have 500,000 kids, young kids sometimes, taking these drugs to try to performance enhance themselves to get into the right college, to get drafted into the pros. It's become somewhat of a health epidemic.

SCHIEFFER: That's why I asked you, Colby, to come be with us today because you write a lot about the inner city, you write a lot about role models, you write a lot about young people. Do you think this really is a serious problem, serious enough for the federal government to get in the middle of our sports?

Mr. COLBERT KING (The Washington Post): Unfortunately, it is. I think it has to happen. So much has changed from the time that I was, for example, playing high school sports or even

my three kids were playing high school sports. You talk about performance enhancers. At that time when they were in school, the performance enhancer was the old man sitting in the stands and the other fans and the coaches. But now you're talking about performance enhancers being these drugs that Tom is rightfully trying to get off the market.

SCHIEFFER: John, what do you think about it as somebody who really follows sports very closely?

Mr. JOHN FEINSTEIN (Sportswriter): Well, obviously I missed the memo on when the Republican Party became the party of more government as opposed to less government, but that's a separate issue. I think you're missing the forest for the trees here. There is no question steroids are an epidemic in this country. But if the professional sports leagues want to mismanage themselves, and if they want to go ahead and say, 'We're going to allow our fans to know that there's cheating going on.' You look at baseball, their attendance is up this year, even though the BALCO case came up, even though the hearings have been held. So they need to fix themselves.

But Colby is right that the problem is with the kids. That's where the epidemic is. And the hearings that should be held, should bring in doctors who work with high school kids and middle school kids and college kids and let them testify to what's going on in, not just the inner city, but kids everywhere--white kids, black kids--who want to just look better are using steroids nowadays. We do have an epidemic. I'm more concerned about the kids than about professional athletes.

SCHIEFFER: Well, what about that, Congressman? Are you now the party of big government? Is that a part of that?

Rep. DAVIS: Well, we--no. Not only did he miss the memo, he missed our hearings where we had coaches on there, we had the players of two...

Mr. FEINSTEIN: Parents.

Rep. DAVIS: ...the parents of two players...

SCHIEFFER: Yeah.

Rep. DAVIS: ...who committed suicide while on these drugs. If you want to solve this problem with the kids, you just can't send police officers and coaches into the classroom and talk about it. They emulate what they see these professional athletes doing. And you lose sight of the fact these are illegal drugs. And the toleration level, I think, when you have half a million kids taking them, it's one that demands federal action. We've tried the other routes. We've seen what the unions want to do, and that's nothing.

SCHIEFFER: We...

Mr. FEINSTEIN: What other routes have you tried? Excuse me. What other routes have you tried?

Rep. DAVIS: We have...

Mr. FEINSTEIN: I haven't seen any other routes.

Rep. DAVIS: We have made them illegal.

Mr. FEINSTEIN: Yeah. OK. They're illegal.

Rep. DAVIS: ...(Unintelligible).

Mr. FEINSTEIN: But a lot of things are illegal that are used in this country.

Rep. DAVIS: You know...

Mr. FEINSTEIN: If you want to create a...

Rep. DAVIS: The president mentioned it in his State of the Union address. We've come out with a number of hearings on this before.

Mr. FEINSTEIN: That's cosmetic.

Rep. DAVIS: Well, that's...

Mr. KING: But I wouldn't be so quick to let the professional sports off the hook, John. And the fact of the matter is that they are driving this whole craze for steroids among the young kids. And when you--any time you have basketball now, taking a look for recruiting purposes at 10-year-old kids and the whole purpose is not for fame but for fortune, that's where the problem starts then. So I think the Congress is absolutely right in this case to intervene because the professional sports, particularly baseball, has done a lousy job of addressing a very serious problem.

Mr. FEINSTEIN: A hundred percent right on baseball. Football, however, has done a good job, and if you want a drug test, go start drug testing in the high schools. Go start drug testing when kids first get involved in sports.

SCHIEFFER: Let me just ask you one thing. Is this something that's part of a larger thing that's going on in this country? And that is, number one, our whole attitude toward cheating. We had a story on the "CBS Evening News" this week about kids cheating in college. Kids have always cheated, a certain percentage of them have--about people who were putting themselves up for hire to write term papers. But here's the part that stunned me. It's not the kids that are paying. It's the kids' parents that are paying people to write papers for students in high school so they can turn in a good essay on getting into college.

Mr. KING: Absolutely. I think corners are being cut all around, and something has happened to our culture, and we may as well face up to it. You see it; Tom identified it in the sports world, but we're seeing it in other aspects as well. And this problem, Bob, is universal. I mean, it's global. Last--this week alone--last week alone, a cricket player in London was banned for the season because of use of drugs. And last week, a horse was tested in England and found to have cocaine in him. Just to--I mean, that's a new high for racing...

Mr. FEINSTEIN: Literally.

Mr. KING: ...or a new low for racing.

Rep. DAVIS: Well, we have a lot of resistance to photo road laws and other traffic enforcements, because the tendency of most of us is to get away with whatever you can get away on the road. You have to draw the lines and you have to enforce the law.

SCHIEFFER: If baseball came up voluntarily with a stronger program--in fact, the commissioner has come up with something fairly strong right now, not nearly as strong as what you're proposing--would that be OK? Would you then stand back or...

Rep. DAVIS: I think if the--if major-league baseball, if the union were to adopt what the commissioner has asked for in this case, that that would slow the momentum for Hill action at this point, but there's just no evidence that they're going to do that.

SCHIEFFER: Would the players go along with what the commissioner is proposing, John?

Mr. FEINSTEIN: Well, they're--I think they're almost going to have to, because the publicity that started with the BALCO revelations has really damaged baseball in PR terms--not in attendance terms apparently but in PR terms, and you do definitely have a taint on people like Barry Bonds and Mark McGuire and Sammy Sosa and others who are suspected of using steroids. So I think they have to respond to that and allow for more serious testing.

SCHIEFFER: Are these guys going to wind up not in the Hall of Fame? Many of them who were headed that--were headed for the Hall of Fame, John.

Mr. FEINSTEIN: Well, I'm a Hall of Fame voter myself, and I think that if someone comes before me, if I know that he cheated--and by cheating, to me, he's damaged the game--I would seriously have to think twice before I voted him in. And I think there are others who feel that way.

SCHIEFFER: Gentlemen, we have to stop the discussion right here. Thanks for--to all three of you, very interesting points of view here today.

Rep. DAVIS: Thank you, Bob.

SCHIEFFER: Back with a final word in just a minute.

(Announcements)

SCHIEFFER: Finally today, the other night I went to a screening of "Faith of Our Fathers," the new movie about John McCain's five-year ordeal in a North Vietnamese prison that airs on A&E tomorrow night. It flashes back to McCain's high school days, when the principal reported bad grades to McCain's father, whose only question was not about grades but whether his son had violated the school honor code. Had he lied or cheated? When told that he had not, his father said, 'Well, call me if he does that.'

McCain says that code of honor drilled into him by his father and the Naval Academy is why he was able to survive the torture and the inhumanity of his prison captors. He couldn't let his father down. That code of honor was the center of his life and it gave him strength--what separated him from his captors.

I thought about that as yet another tale of torture and abuse came out about the POW camp we are running at Guantanamo Bay. Columnist Tom Friedman said the prison ought to be shut down because the stories about it are so inflaming the Arab world they're making the war

on terrorism more dangerous for our American soldiers to fight. But as I watched the McCain movie, I wondered if the greater danger is the impact Guantanamo is having on us. Do we want our children to believe this is how we are? Is this the code of honor we are passing on to the next generation?

As we reflect on the meaning of Memorial Day, let us remember first what it is that separates us from those who would take away our freedom--what John McCain's dad taught his kid, what we should be teaching ours.

That's it for us. We'll see you next week, right here on FACE THE NATION.