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Interview of Michele Bachmann by Matt Lauer

Matt Lauer: presidential candidate Michele Bachmann joins us now. congresswoman Bachmann, nice to see you, thanks for joining us.

Michele Bachmann: good morning. good to see you too.

Matt Lauer: so we have to figure out what we know here. we know Herman Cain is vehemently denying these accusations. it's also been reported that at least three women accused him of sexual harassment back in the 1990s when he was the head of the national restaurant association. you're a candidate first, but you are also a woman. as the only woman in this race, i just would like your perspective on all this.

Michele Bachmann: well, I don't have any comment on this particular issue. I don't have any inside information, there's nothing I know. the one thing I can tell you is that you won't find any surprises with me on my record. I have a very consistent, conservative background and record on policy, and there won't be any surprises.

Matt Lauer: yeah, but you've been listening, I know, to what's been going on and you've heard the comments Mr. Cain has made over the last several days. do you think you are hearing the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth from Herman Cain?

Michele Bachmann: well, this is garnering a lot of attention and people are going to continue to take a look at it, but again I don't have any comment because I don't have any inside information.

Matt Lauer: is a subject like sexual harassment, and if there -- especially if there is more than one instance of it, even back in the '90s, is it a game-ender if it's proven to be true?

Michele Bachmann: that's something that you all will have to focus on. that's not for me. I'm focusing on Iowa, and I'm focusing on turning the economy around and creating millions of high-paying jobs.

Matt Lauer: I won't ask you on the specifics anymore, though, but I will ask you about the comments that Herman Cain has made that he's being singled out because he is a conservative African-American. do you think there is a race element to these accusations?

Michele Bachmann: you know, again, I don't have any comment on this. I think that, again, what people ask me about all the time is, Michele, when in the world are we going to see the economy turn around. it's really desperate out here in Iowa, i want you to know that, it's really desperate, and people want to focus on what is very important, which is the economy.

Matt Lauer: let's talk about your plan for taxes then. I can get a hint and I'll take it. unlike a lot of your opponents, you want all Americans to pay taxes, even the poor. we know about Herman Cain's 9-9-9 proposal, we know about Rick Perry and his flat tax and newt Gingrich and his flat tax. what do you want the rate to be set at, congresswoman?

Michele Bachmann: taxes are only one piece of the puzzle. I want them flatter, fairer, simpler. there are so many other aspects of the tax code rather than just rates. I'm a former federal tax lawyer. i

have a doctorate and post- doctorate degree. taxes are extremely complicated. they can't be reduced just to a sound bite. the principles are what's important. people today, only 47% of the American -- 53% of the American people pay any federal income tax. 47% of the American people pay 0 federal income tax. that's not fair. everyone benefits from this magnificent country. everyone needs to pay something, even if it's only \$10. everyone needs to be invested. that's what the problem is. that's unique about my plan. I believe we have to broaden the base to include every American. it's about time, and it's only fair.

Matt Lauer: some of the other things you want to do, in addition to reforming the tax code, you want to get rid of a lot of regulations, you want to repeal health care reform and wall street reform. can you give me a number of how many jobs you think under your policies you could create in the first couple of years of a Bachmann presidency?

Michele Bachmann: I have no doubt that we would create millions of jobs. remember speaker Nancy Pelosi said if we passed Obama care we would be creating four million jobs. 400,000 almost immediately. that's despite the fact that even the government said that Obama care had resulted in 800,000 jobs lost. I can tell you that's the truth here in Iowa. I talk to the job creators all the time in Iowa. they aren't hiring because of Obama care because of all of the tax increases that are involved. it's at minimum \$2,000 per employee and then there's other hidden taxes beyond. plus I just talked to a doctor who said to me Michele, I sat on the phone waiting 2 hours 15 minutes to get a hold of someone at the IRS to get a number to fill out a Medicare certificate for one of my patients. that's because of Obama care, because Obama care is now enforced by the IRS with 15,500 new agents.

Matt Lauer: you keep talking about Iowa. let me ask you about Iowa and the polls there which have you very low in the pack and nationally the same thing. in New Hampshire many members of your staff resigned en masse. your campaign is surviving on \$1.5 million. this at the same time when other candidates are hauling in huge donors. how long can you stay in this race and carve out a path to the nomination?

Michele Bachmann: well, you know, we are working very hard and we're very strong. we're hiring people on our campaign every single day. in fact we're announcing more new people that we're hiring. not one person has ever asked me about who we're hiring or who our staff is. what they say to me is, Michele, I really like your plan. it's real jobs right now at Michele bachmann.com because I intend to create millions of jobs just by legalizing American energy production, you create 1.4 million jobs. if you have everyone pay something on the tax code, you get fairness. if you repeal Obama care, you also create millions of jobs as well. so mine is a pro-growth, pro-job plan. that's what people want. that's what they're excited about here in Iowa.

Matt Lauer: congresswoman Michele Bachmann, thanks for joining us this morning. it was nice to see you.

Michele Bachmann: hey, good to see you. where are you going to go next week?

Matt Lauer: I'm not telling even you. not even you I'm telling.

Michele Bachmann: give us a tip. everybody wants to know. oh, come on.

Matt Lauer: we'll see you very soon.