

**CNN/WMUR/Union Leader to host first presidential debates**

**The Situation Room**

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**CNN's Wolf Blitzer interviews Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean on the April 2007 presidential primary debates**

BLITZER: You ran for president four years ago. You spent a lot of time in New Hampshire in the process. A neighbor or yours. We're going to be co-hosting this first Democratic presidential debate and the first Republican presidential debate April 4th and 5th in New Hampshire.

I'll ask you a question I asked our Strategy Session earlier.

How important is it for presidential hopefuls to show up at these early debates?

DEAN: I think it's important. I think you'll see people doing it, too. We went through about 27 of them four years ago and the reason is if four or five people say yes, then you really have to not miss the opportunity to go and speak your peace or people are going to wonder why.

I'm glad you chose New Hampshire. I think New Hampshire has been feeling a little bruised since we added two additional early states to the early times. But this -- I think this shows that New Hampshire remains just as important as it always was. And I'm -- I welcome that and I hope to be able to be there in the audience.

BLITZER: We'll see you there, Governor.

Thanks very much for coming in.

DEAN: Thanks, Wolf.

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