

Democracy Corps Transcript

Name: Group 2
Company: --
Group Specs: Men, 30-45, college grads, household income over \$50K, weak partisans, recruited PA CD 7, Delaware County, PA
Date: June 28, 2006
Time: 8:00 PM

MODERATOR - (STARTS WITH INTRODUCTION)

My name is Allan, South [Abbotstown]. I'm a financial analyst for a law firm. I am married with one 2-year-old boy.

I'm Bruce, also live in [Abbotstown], architect, work downtown, two kids a girl and boy, been married for 17 years.

I'm Charlie. I work for Regis HQ, married, no kids.

I'm David, I manage a gym in (inaudible) County, girl friend, no kids.

My name is Ed. I live in Media. I have a wife and two sons in the [military].

I'm Frank, (inaudible) planner. Live in Montgomery County, single, no kids.

I'm Gary. I live in Delaware County. I do software implementation for the cruise line industry. I'm single and had to have my head examined. I just bought a house, so big money pit.

My name is Hank. I live in upper Darby. Contractor, do a lot of home remodeling so if you need some help, we'll talk. That is why I kind of chuckle. You got to love a new house. Somebody else's headaches. Married, two daughters, 10 and 12 and I got a lot to look forward to over the next few years I think.

MODERATOR - THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING OUT TONIGHT. I WANT TO START OUR CONVERSATION REAL BROAD AND THEN WE WILL NARROW IT DOWN BUT THINKING ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT IS GOING ON IN OUR COUNTRY THESE DAYS, DO YOU FEEL THAT THINGS ARE GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION OR THE WRONG DIRECTION IN OUR COUNTRY?

The wrong direction.

Yeah.

MODERATOR - WHAT THINGS ARE GOING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION? WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL THAT WAY?

Healthcare.

Our government in general.

The war.

Economically.

Lot of jobs are going overseas now.

I think if they could outsource our thoughts, I think they would.

Gas.

That whole thing with the (inaudible) and phone calls.

It seems that the crimes are crazier now too.

Corporate crimes. There doesn't seem to be any, they have this new corporate governance law that went into effect. I don't think our government is doing enough when it comes to (inaudible – speaking softly).

MODERATOR - WHAT IS THE OVERALL SENSE OF THE ECONOMY? YOU SEEMED TO THINK IT WAS PRETTY (INTERRUPTED)

Yeah.

MODERATOR - ...WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK?

Housing starts are going down and new, the current home sales are going down and gas is going up, from there it is just a big ripple effect.

MODERATOR - DO YOU AGREE WITH THAT CHARLIE?

Yeah.

MODERATOR - WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK, THE ECONOMY, GOOD, BAD, STUCK?

I think when you look at global, somebody mentioned outsourcing, and you look at what is happening globally, a few years ago everybody was talking about globalization, I think this the early stages of a transition period, so the economy seems to be flattened. I think it is trying to figure out what it wants to do. I think the European community is probably in worse shape trying to figure out what the hell they're doing. We're just on the fringes of that.

MODERATOR - HOW ABOUT HEALTHCARE, YOU MENTIONED THAT?

I think (inaudible)...I still pay about \$600.00 a month for mine and on top of that there are just so many people on the (inaudible).

I thought there was going to be a national plan. There has been a lot of talk about that for years. Congress can't seem to get their act together. Look at other countries, why can't you follow along? It is frustrating.

I want to know where all the money is going? Is it going to the HMO's, the insurance companies, the doctors, the equipment companies? I don't see where it is going.

(Many people talking).

You might have to drive to another state just because that might be more affordable than this one. It was in the paper the other day, like Pennsylvania is losing doctors. Georgia is losing doctors. Like are all the doctors in one state somewhere like in the midwest? I don't what they meant.

I knew somebody years ago, her husband was going to med school and I found out a few years ago they no longer live in this state, they are up in Vermont.

But there are no people in Vermont.

There is enough.

MODERATOR - WHAT ELSE? (NO RESPONSE). GARY, YOU MENTIONED THE WAR.

It just seems like it is an endless cycle. It seems like another Vietnam, where we necessarily didn't have a game plan going in, we definitely don't have an exit strategy. It just seems to me and spending billions of dollars where I think it could be better funneled elsewhere, especially domestically.

If you are going to pick a fight, go in and kick ass and get it over with.

I think there was too much of a political agenda behind that war. I don't think there was a real security issue behind it.

Same rhetoric, same [buzz word] too, the last 4 years. I mean every time (inaudible), and Bush is saying the exact same thing. I joke that he has a tape and he just pushes play.

(Laughter)

MODERATOR - WHAT ELSE? OTHER THOUGHTS ON THE SITUATION IN IRAQ?

I agree with these gentlemen. I think they should worry about our country. We have enough issues in this country with crime and everything. (Inaudible – speaking softly). I just can't figure out why we're even there. I just can't figure it out.

I heard a news report this morning, they were interviewing (inaudible)...and he was saying; they left us to go start a war in Iraq and now we're holding the bag and we've got no government, we got no security. Why are we in Iraq when Afghanistan was identified as where bin Laden was hiding. They got the Taliban out now. The Taliban, I don't know if they are back to where they were strength-wise but here we are letting these people hang (inaudible) back where it use to be. I just don't get it. I mean why are we in Iraq. You know, exit strategy, entering strategy, all that aside, why the hell are we there?

This is what I don't understand, we have to play by all these rules. We have all these sanctions and things like that but there are little kids throwing grenades at our soldiers. I saw on the news like they had their hands out like we surrender and then I guess the soldier went to pat them down and they all got blown away. That is just ridiculous. But we can't do things like that?

Well, we have to listen to our soldiers being beheaded and we can't interrogate the way we need to interrogate.

We have to treat their soldiers like peaceful prisoners and not treat them the way we're treated.

You're right, but what did feel about when the Marines were caught and sentenced, not sentenced but arrested for killing (inaudible). That is the flip side. I mean we start doing this stuff, we're going to make ourselves as bad as they are.

Their main question is; why are these guys in the position they're in to be getting blown up like that, to be under the pressures where they pull somebody out of the house. Whether he is guilty or not, the mindset with the political parties for years with us going in and helping out countries. The United States are the world policemen. We're world cops and we are there to help because there could be a potential explosion in the world somewhere that would affect us. So, that is just the mentality of the political parties today. We are world cops, world policemen. It has been that way for generations. So, this is just a continuation of that mindset.

You can't fight that. I mean that is very difficult.

(Many people talking)... countries and starts messing with their political systems and it comes back 20 years later to bite us in the ass.

Yes.

I think you're dealing with, the way I see it, the U.S. probably wants (inaudible) all the same stuff and you got uneducated people, a lot of them, they have nothing, and if someone has nothing it is dangerous. I mean Americans, people have homes, families, (inaudible)...keep that. You don't have nothing, you come from the streets, (inaudible), you got nothing, that person is dangerous and those people in third world countries they live like dogs. To them they live in their home with nothing and dying is probably a good thing and I just think when you got that mentality against our mentality, you got two different mentalities clicking. The Americans are good, they are basically, you know a great country, they care for people and then you got someone who don't care for

nothing, not saying that whole country is bad, but I just think when you come from that kind of level of nothing, you got nothing to lose, you are a dangerous person in my eyes.

MODERATOR – ANYONE ELSE? (NO RESPONSE). WE'RE GOING TO DO SOMETHING A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT. I WANT TO THROW OUT THE NAMES OF SOME PEOPLE, INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, STUFF LIKE THAT, JUST TELL ME THE FIRST THING THAT COMES TO MIND, LIKE WORD ASSOCIATION. I DON'T CARE IF IT IS RIDICULOUS, VULGAR, JUST YOUR GUT REACTION. WE WILL START WITH SOMEBODY EVERYBODY KNOWS; ED RENDELL.

Fast Eddy.

Shady.

He is a politician's politician.

I think he is more like a (inaudible) politician. (Inaudible).

When I think of Rendell, I think of, I don't know if you guys remember the Eagle's game, him throwing a snowball at the 49ers. To me that is (inaudible) a man of the people. He should represent all Philadelphians but that is just something your average somebody would do, not somebody who thinks he is better than other people.

Right.

Kissing babies and stealing their lollypops.

(Laughter).

He kind of is the epitome of the popular, he is a popular politician or the role model of what a politician may want to grow to be like.

MODERATOR – IF YOU'RE A POLITICIAN, WHEN YOU GROW UP YOU WANT TO BE LIKE HIM?

Yeah.

(Lots of laughter).

He does a good job at what he does.

He does. He is slick.

He comes off as that (interrupted) guy, but he can get things done too.

MODERATOR – HOW ABOUT LYNN SWANN?

Figurehead.

What pro football players do when they can't play football anymore. They go into politics. They are popular people.

Or sell cars.

Or sell cars. They're popular people (interrupted)

Which is the same thing as politics.

They have a well known name and a well know face and they go out and (inaudible) and see how far (inaudible – speaking softly)...will go.

MODERATOR – OKAY. HOW ABOUT CURT WELDON?

Piece of trash.

I don't like him.

MODERATOR – ANY SENSE OF HIM ONE WAY OR ANOTHER?

I don't have an opinion on him.

MODERATOR – OKAY. DO YOU KNOW WHO HE IS?

Yes.

MODERATOR – GUYS, ANYTHING, CURT WELDON? WHY ARE YOU (INTERRUPTED)

The way he got into office was similar to the way that the Republicans are being elected these days, the past couple of elections, throwing mud at the opponent with not too much regard whether it is true or not and I just don't. I just think he is more politically motivated to stay in office than he is for actually doing well for the people in his district or the country as a whole.

MODERATOR – HOW ABOUT JOE SESTAK? ANYBODY KNOW THAT NAME?

No.

Don't know.

No.

MODERATOR – BOB CASEY, JR.?

Only that he is running against another piece of trash and I hope he wins.

MODERATOR – ANYTHING ELSE? OTHER THINGS YOU KNOW ABOUT CASEY OR ASSOCIATE WITH HIM, OR?

Who is he running against?

MODERATOR – ANYBODY KNOW?

The other senator from Pennsylvania.

(Talking among themselves – too soft to decipher).

MODERATOR – ANYBODY KNOW ANYTHING BOB CASEY?

His dad was (many people talking).

Actually, he's in (inaudible – throat clearing). I think he has a pretty good position or had a good position in Harrisburg.

MODERATOR – ANYBODY KNOW? (NO RESPONSE). HOW ABOUT SANTORUM? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU THINK OF SANTORUM?

Two face.

(Inaudible), one thing one day and something else the next day.

Flip-flopper.

I don't think he is representing the state (inaudible). I think he is out there for George Bush and the republican hierarchy and he's doing whatever they ask him to do.

He does a lot of community service.

He may do a good thing. He does more, tries to wrap his personal life into his professional life [like] other politicians do.

MODERATOR – IS THAT GOOD OR BAD?

I'd say it is good. It may be to a [fault].

MODERATOR – OTHER FEELINGS ON SANTORUM, POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?

I still remember how he was trying to pay his kids' tuition living in one state and the kids were going to school in I think Virginia or something. It was something that was really underhanded and very politician like.

When you are put in a position of power like that, you are suppose to set the example, not undermine it.

Take advantage of it.

MODERATOR – OKAY, HOW ABOUT CONGRESS? FIRST THING THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF CONGRESS?

[Get rid] of a lot of people in the news.

Convolutud.

They can vote for their own raise. I mean has anybody ever voted against their own raise? I wouldn't think so.

They vote for their raise and then they vote to no increase the minimum wage.

(Many people talking).

Congress is out of control, absolutely out of control. This is probably the worse congress in the recent years as far as. You look at all the corruption that is going on from Abramoff through congress. They just seem to be not out there for the American people. They are out there for their own benefit, their own political agenda that will come back to benefit them.

MODERATOR – OKAY, WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK?

I think it is hypocritical too.

MODERATOR – HOW SO?

They just do what they can to better themselves. Like this gentleman said; when someone is giving themselves a raise and all of America is out there (inaudible).

I am sure there are a lot more people out there making minimum wage then they were making (interrupted)

What does congress (inaudible), 140 or something?

(Many people talking).

Pick up a shovel and get to work.

(Laughter).

They are so far removed from the average like person in America that maybe they (many people talking). I mean if they were making the average, which is probably like one fifth of what they're making, they might have a little bit more of a handle. Raising two kids, you got two kids in Catholic School, making like \$35,000.00 a year or something, you know what I mean, but they're kind of out of the loop on that I think.

MODERATOR – OKAY, OTHER FEELINGS ON CONGRESS?

I read something on the Internet; name one business organization in the United States under 600 people that had "x" number of people and it was like 10 or 20 that had two or more that bankrupted 2 or more businesses, (interrupted)...assault and battery, spousal abuse, check [carding] (interrupted).

MODERATOR – OKAY, I GOT YOU.

They lead you to believe it is the NBA and it's not. It is congress.

(Lots of laughter).

And when you think about that, would you hire a business organization that has that many convicts in it?

MODERATOR – LET ME ASK YOU THIS; WHY YOU SAID THIS WAS THE WORSE IN A LONG TIME. DO YOU THINK THAT CONGRESS IS GETTING WORSE OR DO YOU THINK IT IS THE SAME AS IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN?

I would say the same.

It hasn't changed a whole lot.

Same game, different players.

Yes.

I think we are feeling, as a public, we are feeling more powerless and less in control of the people that we have elected to serve us. I think that is the biggest problem. They are letting us down.

MODERATOR – ANYTHING ELSE? (NO RESPONSE). ALL RIGHT, THE LAST ONE I WANT TO TALK ABOUT IS GEORGE BUSH. I WANT YOU GUYS TO WRITE SOMETHINGS DOWN BEFORE WE TALK ABOUT IT. (INSTRUCTIONS ON PACKETS HANDOUT 1 AND 2)...ALL THE GOOD THINGS THAT COME TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT PRESIDENT BUSH AND HANDOUT 2, THE DOUBTS AND NOT SO GOOD THINGS THAT COME TO MIND AND THEN WHEN YOU'RE DONE WE'LL TALK ABOUT THEM. IF YOU'RE NOT DONE TAKE YOU'RE TIME BUT IF YOU'RE DONE, FLIP BACK TO HANDOUT #1 AND TELL ME WHAT ARE THE GOOD THINGS THAT COME TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF PRESIDENT BUSH? (LONG HESITATION).

Well, he can be personable. It least he appears that way and he's got some devotion to specific causes. He has been able to get some things right when he seems to attack an issue. When he truly does put some time and energy in (inaudible – voice tapers off and background noise).

MODERATOR – OKAY, POSITIVES ABOUT BUSH?

(Inaudible – laughter).

Well, he's focused on the war effort and he is not backing down.

And what his military and economic plans are, he is sticking with it no matter what. He won't let anybody persuade him that he is wrong.

I wrote that when he sent the troops to Iraq, I believe he had America's intentions at heart. I think that when that happened, I think every American wanted to do exactly what he did and now we're saying; ah, we shouldn't had done. If that was their mother, father, daughter in that accident, they would have wanted to do the same thing that that man did. I think he had it, and I also, I think he is married to the same woman and he has a couple of daughters, I think that he is a kind of family man and that is a good thing.

Yeah, he always refers to his daughters and his dad, talks about his wife. He just relates to people, I think so, maybe more-so than other presidents have.

I said he could be [gracious] but sometimes in a phony and also uses emotionally charged language to get his point across. He [refers] to 9/11 every chance he gets and it kind of does rally the troops basically and a lot of his supporters.

There's always pictures of him like hanging with the soldiers and I think it was like Easter he was over there and like Christmas and everything and he was park of like the [mix] or something like that and he has pictures shaking soldiers good like; you did good, keep it up. I mean (inaudible) just for show and I think any other president would have done that but I think (inaudible – coughing) good.

MODERATOR – ANYTHING ELSE? (NO RESPONSE). WHAT ARE THE DOUBTS YOU HAVE ABOUT HIM?

He can't say the word nuclear.

(Laughter).

Well, he is from Texas, you all.

(Both talking at once – inaudible).

MODERATOR – IT IS TRUE MOTIVATION. WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS?

It is something to with oil.

Don't you remember, he's pushing alternative energy (laughter).

It is to say that when you're stealing oil from somewhere.

(Laughter).

Who is the president? Is it [Rowe], Cheney. That is my biggest doubt, who is the president? He stole the election but.

He uses terrorism and 9/11 like my parents used Santa Claus to keep me in line.

(Many people agreeing and laughing).

(Inaudible)...and this is something in general with all politicians. Do they really think we're as dumb as it sounds like they believe when they come out with stuff like that? We don't see through the smoke screen?

We see but what can we do about it?

I think that's what they (inaudible).

(Inaudible –coughing) for 2 years or 4 years or whatever term of office or whatever it is left of that term of office by the time it winds up, so, everything is logged.

MODERATOR – WHAT OTHER DOUBTS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT BUSH?

He is too religious. He governs with a personal agenda.

Ineffective global policies. I also said he was a puppet for Cheney. Surrounds himself with yes people, but all politicians kind of do that, I think and no plan for Iraq.

We are overextended in the war.

I don't think he has the general knowledge of his responsibilities. I question his competence.

I wrote similar to that. I just don't think he is the most intelligent man around. I mean it seems like his speeches and stuff, he messes up the word that someone has written for him.

One time he called the people for Wisconsin, he called them Wisconsinates. (Laughter). They made fun of him for that for like a month.

Sometimes I wonder if he doesn't do that just to keep people looking at that instead of what is going on behind the screen.

Sure.

It is a front that his marketers have set up. You need to project this image.

That is a lot of what happens during elections. They pull out, when he is doing bad in the polls, they will pull out the marriage amendment or they will pull out, I think this whole border security and not that something doesn't have to be done about it but I think the timing is questionable because they are talking about all this now. I think it is another distraction from the war, the economy, gas prices.

Yeah, it is like where did this come from, where did this issue come from.

You know what they are going to do with that wall they are going to build you don't you, they are going to make Mexicans build it for them, pay them \$10.00 an hour, cash.

MODERATOR – ANYTHING ELSE ON BUSH THAT WE HAVEN'T COVERED?

Incapable of admitting mistakes. We all make mistakes. We learn that when we grow up.

MODERATOR – I WANT TO TALK NOW, IN A LITTLE MORE THAN 4 MONTHS, YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE THE ELECTIONS COMING UP FOR CONGRESS, FOR GOVERNOR, FOR SENATE IN PENNSYLVANIA. IN THE BEGINNING WHEN WE TALKED ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY IT WAS GOING IN, YOU GUYS PRETTY MUCH DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING POSITIVE TO SAY. EVERYBODY SAID IT WAS GOING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION FOR A LOT OF DIFFERENT

REASONS. HOW DOES THAT IMPACT WHETHER OR NOT YOU ARE LIKELIHOOD OF GETTING UP AND GOING AND VOTING. DOES THE FACT THAT YOU'RE SO NEGATIVE ABOUT THE DIRECTION, YOU KNOW, INFLUENCE YOU ONE WAY OR THE OTHER?

I'm sure it does for me. I think apathy is growing too a little bit and in general I don't think the people are as enthusiastic. I don't know what the numbers are but I can't see them increasing, so.

See, I would think the opposite. I vote in every election. I make it a point and I would think that even if I wasn't inclined to vote in every election, right now, I think that would drive me to actually get to the poles and do a little more research.

MODERATOR – SO YOU WOULD GET PISSED OFF?

Yeah! I'm pissed off now. I wish the election was tomorrow.

MODERATOR – BUT YOU SAID APATHY AND THAT PEOPLE ARE JUST KIND OF THROWING UP THEIR HANDS?

Yeah. Statistically what is happening. He is off the presidential (interrupted)

I can't disagree with you either. I think that happens with a lot of people's (inaudible).

(Inaudible) schedule. You see that who he is running against or maybe it is no different. It might be the same crap there. That might make you, well what is the point? Why am I wasting my time?

I mean these elections are so shady (inaudible), cause I almost question the (inaudible – coughing) the voting process. Like I don't even know, is he getting through. (Inaudible – interrupted)

(Inaudible – interrupted).

Yeah, right.

That is pretty sad in Democracy when you actually have to question it.

Yeah.

Especially in this democracy.

MODERATOR – OTHER THINGS INFLUENCING WHETHER OR NOT PEOPLE VOTE?

I'm enough of a cockeyed optimistic to want to go to the polls and vote each time and think maybe my vote would have a difference but like you said; the last two elections, they really haven't and it kind of does, it wouldn't make me stay home and not vote but it would make me think; does this vote really count, and now they want to try this Internet voting and I'm thinking there is so much fraud on the Internet to begin with now, I mean how can we trust the Internet (interrupted)

How lazy can we be?

Right.

That you can't go down the street.

Like do a phone call; For Bush press 1.

And most voting stations are within a 4 block walk.

Yeah.

(Many people talking)...the presidential election or American Idle.

Oh, American Idle.

(Many people talking).

MODERATOR – OKAY. OBVIOUSLY THERE IS A STRONG DESIRE FOR CHANGE BUT DO YOU FEEL LIKE VOTING CAN PRODUCE THAT CHANGE OR IT IS LIKE YOU SAID; SAME PRESIDENT, SAME KIND OF (INAUDIBLE – COUGHING)...IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER WHICH WAY YOU VOTE?

If we don't change by vote, eventually it will change by [bullet].

Right.

True.

One of the things that Bush has always said since he was elected is that he doesn't govern by polls, which is absolute bullshit because he does. Whenever I hear him talk, it is another [sideshow]. When I hear him talk, whenever he is pointing in this direction, I just turn around and look in that direction, there's reality, but I think focus groups like this and all the polls, Quinnipiac and everybody else is running, I think there is more change that comes out of that when the politicians see the way people are thinking than there is during elections. As you're saying; the last two major elections have been questionable.

MODERATOR – FOR YOU PERSONALLY, WHAT IS THIS ELECTION ABOUT? WHAT IS GOING TO MOTIVATE YOU? WHAT IS GOING TO HELP YOU MAKE YOUR DECISION ABOUT HOW YOU VOTE?

I like to see what the current state of the economy will be at the time. I would like to see if my paycheck goes a little further. I would like to see what gas prices are and I would like to see just if that, if we do have some improvements in the next few months. I think for the short term (inaudible).

MODERATOR – I'M SORRY, ARE YOU TALKING SPECIFICALLY ABOUT CONGRESS?

Yeah.

MODERATOR – CONGRESS, NOT NECESSARILY FOR GOVERNOR, THAT IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT SET OF ISSUES?

Yes.

MODERATOR – BUT FOR CONGRESS WHAT IS GOING TO DRIVE YOUR GUYS' VOTES?

My motivation is going to be get as many republicans out as possible.

I think like anything, at least for me, it is tough to vote say on different parties because I get to a point where the BS, (inaudible – softly speaking). I just want a man that looks in my eye. There are just so much lies in (inaudible – coughing)...it sickens it. It sickens the moral for voting sometimes. I mean just give me someone who is a little more upfront and they don't say one thing and do another. I think everybody does what is best for their family, (inaudible) whatever it might be, I vote basically as independent. I vote for the better man. I care less about the parties.

MODERATOR – OKAY. OTHER THOUGHTS ON WHAT IS GOING TO DRIVE YOUR VOTE, WHAT IS GOING TO HELP YOU MAKE YOUR DECISION?

I'm with Allan here. I don't like targeting specific parties but I think we need to send a signal. We have a republican congress and a republican president and think we need to not just to throw them out but I think we need to throw a very strong signal so when the Democrats get in there, they will learn from not just; hey, we finally got in, but oh my God, we better hold the straight and narrow before we are only in here for 2 years or 4 years.

I was never registered by party until the last two elections. I figured it was so important to vote in the primaries democratically, democratic primaries, that I needed to register for something and, so I'm not really not favor for one party or the other but just.

MODERATOR – WHEN YOU SAY YOU WANT TO GET AS MANY REPUBLICANS OUT AS POSSIBLE IS IT BECAUSE DEMOCRATS WILL DO GOOD OR IS IT THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS?

It is the lesser of two evils for me.

Yeah. Yeah, I just want the economy to keep going, get that going again and insurance. It is way too high, like he said. Healthcare.

Your self employed.

Yeah, it is tough.

MODERATOR – WHAT ELSE, OTHER THINGS THAT THIS ELECTION WOULD BE ABOUT?

The war.

MODERATOR – WILL IT INFLUENCE YOUR VOTE? THAT IS A LEGITIMATE QUESTION BECAUSE A LOT OF PEOPLE WILL SAY IT IS HORRIBLE BUT IT DOESN'T REALLY SEEM TO FACTOR INTO THEIR VOTE AS MUCH AS THINGS THAT ARE A LITTLE CLOSER TO HOME, WILL THE WAR FACTOR INTO YOUR VOTES?

It will mine, yeah.

MODERATOR – HOW SO?

In the sense that I think we need a better system of checks and balances between having a total republican, it seems like this country has moved to the republican side totally both in the house and the senate and we need a better system of balance I think and more rational thought and discussion before moving into something.

Yeah, but if there was a democratic president or congress, whatever when those guys went through those buildings, democratic, I think, would do the same thing. I don't think people (inaudible) democratic, I'm not going to go, I think everybody's gut was a piece of garbage, (inaudible) American. So, I don't really think that you can blame it all on the republicans. Wouldn't you want the democrats going after them people too?

But go after them in Afghanistan though. Why (interrupted).

I know but what I'm saying is; I would want the same.

Oh absolutely. The key word that you said Gary was checks and balances and I don't think it's, maybe this is where you're going with that but I don't think it is necessarily that just because we have a republican congress and a republican president, that the checks and balances, just because they're the same party. I think congress gave up their part of the (interrupted – inaudible)...of the government and the whole thing with the judges being, what do you call them, (interrupted)

Judicial branch?

No; legislating from the bench. I think that is what they are suppose to do. They're the ones that say yes or no, this is constitutional or its not, for them to say they are legislating from the bench, I think they're missing the whole point why that branch of government exist.

MODERATOR – HAVE YOU GUYS HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT THE RACE FOR CONGRESS FROM YOUR CANDIDATES HERE IN PENNSYLVANIA? HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING SANTORUM OR CASEY OR WELDON, (INAUDIBLE) RUN AGAINST ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

Not much yet.

(Many people talking in the negative).

MODERATOR – SO YOU HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING?

Only on the governor side.

That is where you hear most of the news.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – OKAY. SO, THE NATIONAL LEVEL, MAYBE WHAT YOU'RE HEARING OUT OF DC OR ON THE NEWS OR WHATEVER, WHAT ARE REPUBLICANS TALKING ABOUT? WHY ARE THEY SAYING YOU SHOULD VOTE REPUBLICAN THIS YEAR? WHAT ARE THE ISSUES THAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT?

Family values are very big.

Terrorists.

Security.

They are motivating by fear.

Yes.

Always.

MODERATOR – ARE THOSE COMPELLING REASONS TO VOTE REPUBLICAN?

No.

I don't think so.

Even the gay marriage, (inaudible).

(Laughter – many people talking).

MODERATOR – OTHER REASONS WHY THEY SAY WE SHOULD VOTE REPUBLICAN THIS YEAR? (NO RESPONSE). SO, IT IS MAINLY ABOUT TERRORISM, SECURITY, FAMILY VALUES?

I remember hearing something about inheritance tax that Bush put in, which of course worked out great for him that he doesn't get taxed on the \$300 million that he is suppose to get so, of course every vote counted for him for that, you know, but I think I heard somebody say; well, we need to keep that. Maybe that person was in line for a lot of money but how [bad] would that be if that was reversed and say George Bush's passed away, and then he is going to get taxed like everybody else does, right.

(Inaudible).

MODERATOR – IS IT BELIEVABLE THAT REPUBLICANS ARE GOING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THESE ISSUES THAT THEY ARE HIGHLIGHTING?

(Laughter).

MODERATOR – I MEAN DO YOU FEEL LIKE WE'RE SAFER WITH REPUBLICANS IN CONTROL OF CONGRESS OR THERE IS A BETTER CHANCE THAT FAMILY FAMILIES HAVE REDEFINED THAT, WILL BE PROTECTED IF REPUBLICANS ARE IN CONGRESS?

I don't think so.

These are all distractions away from the real issues. They're not going to, they haven't done anything with it anyway. I mean what has he done besides No Child Left Behind. That is the only real legislation that he has pushed through and that turns out to be a failure. All these other things, he does it pre-election and nothing happens afterwards. He gets in there and does whatever the hell he wants to do.

You're saying family values with republicans, that is a bunch of garbage. You [treat] your mom and dad and wife and you raise your kids the best you can. These guys ain't telling you nothing that you don't know as a man. (Interrupted)

Yeah, what do politicians (inaudible), that is a good point.

Democrat too. You (inaudible) your mom and dad and hopefully you grow up right, that's it. That's not an issue. To me that is not a positive at all. That should be imbedded in every dam American.

And this whole thing about this attack on marriage is, you know, marriage is marriage. It is always going to be around. (Interrupted)

(Inaudible – both talking)...the fear.

MODERATOR – OKAY. HOW ABOUT ON THE FLIP SIDE; WHAT ARE THE DEMOCRATS TALKING ABOUT? WHY ARE THEY SAYING YOU SHOULD VOTE DEMOCRAT FOR CONGRESS?

They say; let the gays be married. They are the exact opposite. They crack me up.

MODERATOR – WHAT ARE THE DEMOCRATS TALKING?

Healthcare reform.

Getting out of Iraq. Coming up with timetable. Maybe not pulling everybody out now but at least doing something about it instead of just (inaudible). There is a lot of talk about the democrats not doing anything, mostly from the republican side but sometimes I think you really don't hear too many things. A lot of them [got roped] into voting for the war in Iraq because of all the patriotism behind it at the time and I think they don't want to stick their heads up now because there are just going to get (inaudible) anyway; you voted for it, how can be against it now; and then I also think that what they are doing as a whole, the democratic party is waiting for republicans to truly (inaudible – speaking softly) and for everybody to say (inaudible), so then they can go; okay, fine, because anytime they stick their head up, Carl [Rowe's] got a (inaudible), he is a freaking genius when it comes to politics.

MODERATOR – ALL RIGHT. WHAT ELSE ARE YOU GUYS HEARING FROM DEMOCRATS WHEN IT COMES TO POLITICS, OTHER ISSUES? (NO RESPONSE). A TIMETABLE FOR GETTING OUT OF IRAQ, HEALTHCARE REFORM, ANYTHING ELSE?

There has been some talk about alternative fuels and looking (inaudible – coughing), but you know I don't really hear the democrats speaking really loudly yet and I don't know if that is something that is part of their game plan or they don't necessarily have (interrupted)

They don't have the momentum built up.

...Right, right. I hear more about Hillary Clinton than any other democrats.

MODERATOR – SO AGAIN, THE SAME QUESTION, THE THINGS THAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT, ARE THEY BELIEVABLE? DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THINGS ARE GOING TO CHANGE IN TERMS OF GETTING OUR OF IRAQ OR IN TERMS OF HEALTHCARE IF THE DEMOCRATS HAVE CONTROL?

No, no.

It is rhetoric because the democrats have been trying to fix healthcare reform since Clinton was in office. (Interrupted).

It's true.

...We're just going back to that. They are just using, it is just typical. The party that is not in power, they are just talking about ways to fix the problem that the party in power (interrupted)... I think it is rhetoric.

They always take shots at each other.

That is why I really don't think that parties matter in this country. Look at the way these politicians switch. I really question what the values are of each of these two parties.

I work with a guy who is from England. He came over to this country, married and became an American citizen years ago and he said; in England they have, they have (inaudible – lots of coughing). He said there is only one party in this country. There are two (inaudible – laughter)...but there is only one party.

MODERATOR – IF DEMOCRATS TAKE BACK CONTROL OF CONGRESS, THE HOUSE, THE SENATE OR BOTH, HOW WILL THINGS BE DIFFERENT? WILL THEY BE DIFFERENT AT ALL?

(Many people talking).

When it is one party, how can there be any difference?

I think naturally they care for, they care for the poor more than the republicans. I think the republican party, you got out and earn it, you are going to get it where democrat; we think (inaudible)...poor people in this country. It is a double edge sword. You feel bad

for them, saying go out and work, you know what I mean. That is why sometimes your lines, your lines travel. I like them because they are for unions and I'm in the union. Democrats are good for that. They are strong in the unions. They don't want, you know in 20 years, you pay the dues kind of thing, where republicans, they would just hire scabs to come in and big business and stuff, so I think the democrats definitely feed back into the welfare system and all that stuff, (inaudible).

MODERATOR – ANYTHING ELSE YOU THINK WOULD CHANGE IF DEMOCRATS WERE IN CONTROL OF THE HOUSE OR SENATE?

I think the hole that we've dug for ourselves over the last 4, well 6 years now, it is so deep, it is going to take another 3 years even if the democrats and the house change and the senate change, it is going to take that much longer to just dig out and rectify some of the things, to work on rectifying some of the things that have actually come into play.

Are democrats more for gun control? I thought I read something like that.

It is who the NRA is paying.

(Laughter –inaudible)...working on times, like this was the platform and they put (inaudible)...in Philly than there was in all of Japan. That's crazy. So, I think they are trying to come up with, like adopt some kind of thing that they have, some policy like they have in England. You can't even have a water pistol or something or even a gun that looks like, the water pistol even looks like a gun and they are showing how crazy things have gotten over here and how things are just better in other places because of like their policy on gun control are a lot better, so I would actually lean towards that, whoever, that might sway my vote because this is just getting ridiculous now. (Interrupted) County is starting to look more and more like the city now, so I think that kind of affects us more now than it ever did.

MODERATOR – OKAY, CHARLIE YOU WERE SAYING?

No, just as far as that gun control issue, it is, the crimes that are being, guns aren't, people aren't following any types of laws or regulations anyway, you know, (interrupted)

So they are going to get the hands on guns anyway.

...so, if you take away the guns then way, you know. (Inaudible – both talking)...the Patriot Act, the change the 200 pages the night before, congress doesn't read it. The NSA spies on 10 million peoples' phone calls. Now you want to take away guns? Or they will write a book about that.

Right. We are actually taking guns away from the good people who are trying to protect themselves. The criminals are going to find a way to get them.

MODERATOR – ALL RIGHT, SO WE SAID, THERE SEEMS LIKE A LOT OF RATIONAL, DEMOCRATS REALLY HAVEN'T LAID OUT MUCH ON HOW THINGS WILL CHANGE, THEY HAVEN'T CONVINCED YOU GUYS THAT ANYTHING WILL REALLY CHANGE. THEIR MAIN RATIONAL IS; WE'RE NOT THE REPUBLICANS.

Right.

MODERATOR – SO, IF THAT IS THE RATIONAL, HOW, WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES IF THE REPUBLICANS REMAIN IN POWER? THEY'VE HAD THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE CONGRESS FROM MOST OF THE LAST 6 YEARS. WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE NEXT 2 YEARS IF THEY REMAIN IN POWER?

As Gary said; instead of being 30 years in a hole, we are going to be 50 years in a hole and God knows what is going to happen. You've got the federal budget deficit that just keeps climbing every year. The one thing about what I see, I see that continuing if the Republicans stay in control but socially, it depends on the way it swings. Right now it is the far right. We just need it to settle and have these little swings right in the center. If the democrats go in there and push it, we are going to be in the same position that we're in right now, that they are doing the same dam thing. We need to slow that down. As far as fiscally with the budget with the democrats, the budge deficit disappeared and the country's deficit started declining when the democrats were in there for 8 years. I think we would get closer to that instead of it growing.

MODERATOR – SO AGAIN, THE QUESTION IS THE CONSEQUENCES IF REPUBLICANS STAY IN POWER? YOU SAID THE DEFICIT WOULD GET BIGGER. OTHER?

Special interest I think continue to be a priority.

MODERATOR – AND WOULD THAT CHANGE IF DEMOCRATS WERE (INTERRUPTED)?

Right.

Different special interest would be a priority.

MODERATOR – OKAY, CERTAIN SPECIAL INTEREST WOULD GO DOWN AND OTHER ONE WOULD COME UP.

Right.

MODERATOR – OKAY, OTHER CONSEQUENCES IF REPUBLICANS REMAIN IN POWER?

We will be in Iran plus Iraq.

And North Korea.

I think we will have to worry about gas prices, social security. These are things, we're generally all about the same age, we got to worry about them. (Inaudible). I would be ticked if I worked that long and didn't see social security. I think the social security system (inaudible).

MODERATOR – THAT IS AN IMPORTANT ONE. AFTER PRESIDENT BUSH WAS ELECTED HE SAID HE WANTED TO CHANGE THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM TO

PRIVATE ACCOUNTS, REDUCE GUARANTEED BENEFITS, ALLOW YOU TO INVEST. IT DIDN'T WORK WHEN HE TRIED TO DO IT LAST YEAR. A LOT OF DEMOCRATS WERE SAYING; KEEP REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS, GUARANTEE THAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT YEAR WHEN BUSH DOESN'T HAVE TO WORRY ANYTHING, HE IS NOT RUNNING AGAIN, THEY'RE GOING TO PUSH THAT THROUGH. DO YOU THINK THAT IS A LEGITIMATE ARGUMENT?

You're saying democrats push it through in a positive way?

MODERATOR – THE DEMOCRATS ARE SAYING THAT THE REPUBLICANS ARE GOING TO PUSH THAT PLAN THROUGH, THAT THEY ARE GOING TO CHANGE SOCIAL SECURITY IF YOU RE-ELECT THEM.

(Many people talking).

Personally, I don't think it is going to happen. It is something that they shouldn't touch. I think most senators and representatives believe, they may say one thing but they're going to vote the right way. They're not going to touch that. The one thing they should be doing is buffering it.

I always resented that, that someone would take my social security and they decided that I'm a (inaudible) when I turn 65. Just give me my money, I'll take care of my family and don't worry about anybody else. That has always bothered me. The social security is messed up. If the democrats said to me; I'll get the gas to \$1.25 and social security is in effect. You can have your money and do what you want with it, invest anyway you want, he's got my vote.

MODERATOR – LET'S TALK A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT IRAQ. WE TALKED ABOUT THE SITUATION OVER THERE A LITTLE BIT BUT THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF DEBATE RECENTLY IN CONGRESS AND A LOT ON THE NEWS ABOUT THE DEBATE GOING ON IN CONGRESS. WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT IT? WHAT ARE THEY DEBATING? WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT?

About getting out.

(Inaudible – both talking)...expand. Iran will be next.

(Inaudible).

Yeah, that is where we started.

MODERATOR – WHAT IS THE DEBATE ABOUT IRAQ? WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

(Many people talking).

The exit strategies (many people talking).

Stop our role of world cop and kind of put closure to that. I think that is really the crust of the matter.

There is no end in site, so I think their plan is; let's develop it.

What is the ultimate goal over there? That is what I want to know. Are we trying to set up schools so where they can come off like the 21st century? (Inaudible). Haven't we been doing that for a while?

We're trying to take a stone-age people and bring them into the 21st century and teach them a political system that we think is the best.

But aren't we training their people? They've had to learn a little bit by now in the last couple of years. We can only do so much.

It is not so much that they are stone-age, it is (interrupted)

They are one generation, two generations out of the stone-age.

...True, but it is more of a social system that they have lived with for thousands of years (interrupted)

And religious one.

...and religious one and we are trying to put democracy on top of that. It's just not going to work so the exit strategy; how do we get out of there without (inaudible) and actually (inaudible – coughing)...terrorist to come at us. We got to get out of there, almost leave it the way that, sometimes I wonder if we couldn't just put Hussein back in control and say; we're watching you.

(Laughter).

These new leaders that they have, that we're training, are they competent? They might be just as bad, right!

That's this whole insurgency thing.

I was going to say, call me stupid but, can't we just pat them on the ass and say good luck to you. Things didn't work out. (Many people agreeing)... You know, whatever you want to be you can be. We found that ain't no nuclear and that was our main thing, we didn't want to get hurt, none of our Americans didn't want to get hurt. We don't have any, you don't any, we see that, good luck to you. I don't care what you are. I don't care if you're (inaudible). I don't give two craps, see-ya. Thanks.

(Inaudible)...you're fighting the system (inaudible).

I'm saying break the system.

(Many people talking).

MODERATOR – LET ME ASK YOU ABOUT THE DEBATE AS IT IS PLAYING OUT NOW AS MOST OF THESE DEBATES IN WASHINGTON DO, THEY BREAKDOWN ALONG PARTISAN LINES, REPUBLICANS VOTE ONE WAY, DEMOCRATS VOTE

ANOTHER WAY. WHAT IS THE REPUBLICAN POSITION ON IRAQ. WHAT DO THEY SAY YOU SHOULD DO?

Stay the course.

They think that they are eventually going to get this country kind of like ours. (Inaudible)...thanks a lot big chief. Now and good. I want to do it just like you did it.

It is stay the course, keep the oil flowing.

Stay the course until Bush is out of office and then it is somebody else's problem.

And that is actually positive if you voted democrat because you can see this is going nowhere. People's tax money is going over there. It's just not.

MODERATOR - SO THEIR POSITION IS STAY THE COURSE. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Try to establish a better Iraq.

But even if you do get them up and running, they're still like crazy religious people. You know what I mean. They're still Muslims, they still hate, not all of them but like, what is there 2 billion right there in all those countries. Are they going to (inaudible) then what we do.

MODERATOR - OKAY, SO YOU'RE WORRIED THAT IF THEY GET UP AND RUNNING, IT IS NOT REALLY GOING TO MAKE US (INTERRUPTED).

Actually, they are going to be more influenced, not by us getting them going, I mean there all like brothers on this earth, aren't they? I mean I don't know that much about the religion in the Middle East but it seems like [they're] saying that.

MODERATOR - ARE THERE MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRESIDENT BUSH AND REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS ON THIS OR DO YOU THINK THEY'RE ALL IN THE SAME PLACE ON THIS?

Recently, within the last maybe 6 months, heard a lot of republicans in congress who have actually stood up to him and said; listen, like [Mertha].

Well besides [Mertha]. [Mertha] was actually last year but you know why you're hearing that now?

Why?

November.

I'm sure.

They weren't saying it a year ago. They were saying; what do you want us to do George? How do you want us to vote George? Now that their elections are coming up and their ass is on the line, now they're starting to (inaudible – coughing).

It would seem to me that that is more of a republican kind of response in my estimation. I mean more democratic. Did I say Republican? More democratic response, so they are almost becoming (inaudible) democrats.

MODERATOR - ANYONE ELSE ON WHAT YOU ARE HEARING FROM REPUBLICANS ON WHERE WE GO FROM HERE?

I think I said; they want to stay the course and worked out peachy. You're dealing with a whole different animal there.

MODERATOR - WHAT IS THE DEMOCRATIC MESSAGE ON IRAQ? WHAT IS THEIR POSITION?

To set a timeline. When are we going to get out? What is the plan? It has been that way since the beginning.

MODERATOR - WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF YOU? WHAT IS THE DEMOCRATIC POSITION ON IRAQ?

(Many people talking).

MODERATOR - (INAUDIBLE) OUT.

Or at least start a reduction.

I think it is perhaps not to introduce an American style (inaudible – coughing) in there. It is to introduce a style of democracy that would work for them.

Of course most Americans forget that it took us 12 years before our constitution was ratified. (Interrupted)

Right.

Excellent point.

Very good.

...And they want this done in 2 years or less.

MODERATOR - SO THERE IS A DIFFERENCE HERE BETWEEN GETTING THE TROOPS OUT AND START DRAWING THEM DOWN. ARE DEMOCRATS IN BOTH PLACES OR DO YOU SEE MORE OF THEM IN ONE DIRECTION OR ANOTHER?

Well, get the troops out, this doesn't necessarily mean start a withdrawal now. It is what's the game plan, that is what I hear from the democrats. They might be saying it differently. They might be pressuring congressmen, or the other congressmen they work with and the president in different ways, but essentially it is; what's the game plan?

MODERATOR - WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK?

[I kind of agree with it.]

MODERATOR - ARE DEMOCRATS UNITED ON THIS ISSUE?

No, they're (inaudible) right.

MODERATOR - HOW SO?

Is anybody united?

(Laughter).

We have the same thing but just three different ways, but it is just in three different parts. Let's get out, let's get a timetable, and let's start pulling them out. You know eventually, that is what you want to do. You want to get everybody out. You want to leave there. So, that is not going to happen, so you need to start making some positive results, so let's start working on getting the troops out and then let's put a time limit or time table onto that.

Everybody is trying to pressure Bush from three different directions but they are all saying the same thing. Eventually, let's get out but let's start (interrupted)

But you're right, what you hear are the different sound bites. It is those three general groups.

Yes.

I don't think the democrats came up with a leader yet to say; take charge and look ahead. Yeah, to 08, which they probably should be doing but maybe it is their game plan to look back.

That is what they're doing.

They need somebody to step up and take charge. Maybe it is too late. I don't think it is too late but something is going on there. There is no democratic leadership.

MODERATOR - LET'S FLIP TO HANDOUT 3 IN THOSE PACKETS THAT YOU GOT THERE. WHAT YOU GOT HERE IS A FEW DIFFERENT POSITIONS THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN, WONDERING WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE. THIS FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION ABOUT WHERE THE COUNTRY GOES THROUGH HERE. READ THROUGH ALL FOUR OF THEM AND THEN PICK THE ONE THAT YOU AGREE WITH MORE, THE ONE THAT BEST REFLECTS YOUR OPINION OF WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO COMPLETELY AGREE WITH IT BUT WHICHEVER ONE COMES CLOSEST FOR YOU. EVERYBODY MARK THE ONE THAT YOU AGREE WITH MOST? LET ME GET A SHOW OF HANDS. HOW MANY AGREE WITH THE TOP ONE? 1. THE 2ND ONE? IS THAT A ONE FOR YOU ON THAT ONE BRUCE?

You know they are all bullshit.

(Laughter).

Seriously. I'm not saying that to be a smart ass but they are all, you got to understand, everyone of them is just talking (inaudible – coughing) sound bites. It is saying what needs to be said to (interrupted).

MODERATOR - LIKE I SAID, (INAUDIBLE – INTERRUPTED).

Oh, I know. I've heard all of them on the radio and the TV.

MODERATOR - OKAY, HOW ABOUT THE 3RD ONE? SIX. THAT IS EVERYBODY. OKAY, SO SIX OF THE EIGHT OF YOU PICKED THE 3RD ONE. TELL ME WHY.

What is this (inaudible – coughing). Does it mean like no end insight, like there is no goal towards the end, right?

Yeah.

That is what we have right now.

I'm caught between 2 and 3 because (interrupted)

I understand.

...because I believe **(Side A Ends/B Begins)**

They said it is like a billion dollars like everyday or like every, I don't remember what it was, but some craziness. A billion dollars, who knows how many people that could feed or whatever. To help people who sound like they are such a mess, they should be helping themselves or their Muslim friends, I mean there are a billion of them over there. Let them step in a little bit.

MODERATOR - OKAY, WHO ELSE ON THIS ONE?

It is pretty forceful because it says why were there and why we have a problem. It says that it makes a commitment (inaudible – coughing)...time period and it also says that we'll do it in the right way.

I like the fact that it is saying; hey, it is costing our people money. (Inaudible)...fend for yourself.

It is like they're holding our hand. You can only do that so long, right.

What are they babies, change your diaper, come on.

We would still be on training wheels if our parents did that.

(Inaudible – both talking)...you're going to be self sufficient now. We've done everything we can. We don't have bombs, we're going to take care of it. You're Iraqi people, take pride in yourself.

Their now an Iraqi people.

Whatever, I'm just (interrupted).

Seriously, think about it. We have 50 states in the United States. If each one of these was identified as a different race, religion, however, political or economic group then, and if all decided that we wanted to fight each other because somebody wanted territory in New York, somebody wanted territory West Virginia, Virginia, that's what they are. They are like 50 different states over there. They are like 50 different individual community, peoples, who can't agree on how they want their lives to be.

My philosophy for that is you got to be self sufficient.

MODERATOR - ALLAN, WHY DID YOU PICK THAT ONE?

I just think it signifies that it has to come to an end. (Inaudible). It just got to end.

What happens when it ends?

Civil war.

Civil war.

As long as it doesn't affect us.

But it will.

I switch my vote to 3.

There fighting there, where are they going to fight next?

MODERATOR - CHARLIE, YOU PICKED THAT ONE RIGHT?

Yeah, it was mostly because it talks about how it is costing too much money, too much time, too many people. It is too much nonsense.

(Interrupted)...but it is saying; we won't allow things to get as bad as they were before but then we make the move towards the end.

MODERATOR - IS IT IMPORTANT FOR YOU GUYS TO HAVE THAT, THAT KIND OF REASSURANCE, YOU KNOW, WE'RE NOT GOING TO WITHDRAW PRECIPITOUSLY, WE'RE NOT GOING TO DO IT TOO FAST, WE'RE NOT GOING TO LET THE TERRORISTS TAKE OVER BUT WE ARE GOING TO DO IT.

Well, things just go back to the way things were before and we just wasted the last 5 years and what was it like 3,000 people or something. So that was all for nothing.

Not really. All the oil people made money.

MODERATOR - SO YOU NEED TO HAVE THAT KIND OR REASSURANCE. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO, LIKE YOU SAID; LET EVERYTHING (INAUDIBLE)...BUT AT THE

SAME TIME YOU GOT TO DO SOMETHING. THAT IS WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU GUYS ARE SAYING. IT IS COSTING TOO MUCH.

There has to be an adjustment. A football adjust at halftime. Surely somebody can see, well, we went in thinking this was going to be this way. Obviously, it is not. These people aren't just going to lay down and surrender and the longer we are in there, the longer we're attacking them, more and more people are getting pissed off now that weren't originally mad because their brother got killed, because their friend got killed. I mean nobody, if somebody kept screwing with you over, over and over again. It is only human nature to resist it.

Can they lie about the number of casualties?

That's been proven.

All those numbers are real.

Because they have been using a lot of statistics to back things up. I don't think it was the president. I think it was one of his people. He was like; we lot 2,800 people or something like that in this war since it started and that was like 4 years ago or whatever. In Vietnam we lost 60,000, so we are way ahead of the game. I mean don't (inaudible) to the mother, (inaudible) got her kid.

MODERATOR - WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO THE TOP ONE, THE OTHER ONE THAT YOU GUYS SUPPORT; DRAWING FROM IRAQ....

I think that is Bush speaking out.

Yeah.

(Many people talking).

It doesn't show me anything substance.

Our commitment, it is his commitment. I mean our commitment, of course everybody wants an ideal, peachy world and everything work out for the good. Our commitment in [50] years.

MODERATOR - HANK, DEFEND IT?

You're right, that commitment can go on for 50 years.

MODERATOR - WE'RE STILL IN GERMANY, WE'RE STILL IN JAPAN?

Right.

World cops.

Those are countries that we not only conquered, we rebuilt. They had provided us with technology, industry, economy and that is what we should expect from this country and it took us 10-15 years to rebuild those economies.

Do you think that is the agenda to be over there under other pretext and other pretenses and that is what they want to turn it into, ground bas (inaudible – coughing)?

I think eventually we're going to take over the Middle East. For the last 50 years they have been trying to get into the Middle East without starting World War III.

MODERATOR - LET'S PUT THIS INTO A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. FLIP TO HANDOUT 4 AND THIS IS THE PERSPECTIVE THAT IS GOING TO PLAY OUT IN OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, WHICH IS THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE ELECTION. YOU KNOW YOU GOT CANDIDATES ON EITHER SIDE TAKING THEIR STANCE AND I WANT TO SEE HOW YOU REACT TO THESE. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHICH WAY YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO VOTE BUT BASED ON THESE TWO STATEMENTS, TELL ME WHICH ONE YOU FIND YOURSELF AGREEING WITH MORE. I'LL READ THEM OUT LOUD.

DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE SAYS: ARE MILITARY HAS DONE WHAT IT CAN IN IRAQ. WE NEED TO BEGIN BRINGING OUT TROOPS HOME. THE TOP U.S. GENERAL IN IRAQ HAS PROPOSED A PHASE TIME WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN TROOPS. THE ELECTED IRAQI GOVERNMENT IS ALSO CALLING FOR A PHASE TIME WITHDRAWAL. OUR COALITION ALLIES CONTINUE TO WITHDRAW THEIR TROOPS BUT THE REPUBLICANS CALL THIS CUT AND RUN. THEY SAY WE SHOULD CONTINUE OUR CURRENT COURSE IN IRAQ WITH NO ACCOUNTABILITY AND NO END INSIGHT. ONLY PRESIDENT BUSH AND THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS BELIEVE THE STATUS QUO IS ACCEPTABLE.

THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE SAYS: WE'RE MAKING SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN IRAQ. AFTER HOLDING THREE SUCCESSFUL ELECTIONS, THERE IS NOW AN IRAQI GOVERNMENT WITH A NEW CONSTITUTION AND A QUARTER OF A MILLION IRAQI TROOPS ARE TRAINED AND EQUIPPED BUT THERE IS STILL MORE TO DO. THE UNITED STATES CAN'T AFFORD TO BAILOUT ON IRAQ BEFORE WE COMPLETE OUR MISSION. IF WE FOLLOW THE DEMOCRATS ADVICE TO CUT AND RUN, AL QUEDA WILL HAVE A NEW TERRORIST HAVEN IN IRAQ AND THE WHOLE WORLD WILL SEE THAT AMERICA DOESN'T HAVE THE STOMACH TO FIGHT WAR ON TERRORISM.

MARK THE ONE THAT YOU FIND YOURSELF AGREEING WITH MORE THERE. HOW MANY GO WITH THE TOP ONE? ALL RIGHT. THE BOTTOM ONE? 7 AND 1. 7 OF YOU, TELL ME WHY YOU WENT WITH THE TOP ONE.

I guess like the first line says; I think we've done as much as we can but it also depends how true both these are. Things do get slanted in the media, right! What's going on over there? Do we even know (inaudible), you know we are actually getting the right information.

I like the fact that the Iraqi guys, he kind of wants us to get out too. I think he probably wants to run things under his own ground, kind of like, thanks Americans for all you help but now we are going to try to settle down the country. I don't think it is going to happen but I like his attitude so I (inaudible) elected Iraqi government.

But he is kind of at a stalemate so what is the point? I mean if things aren't really changing it is not worth American lives.

Both of them are, as I said before if we're talking (inaudible), I think the first one is much closer to reality. The second one is just political rhetoric.

I think the first one is much closer to the way the public opinion has shifted over the last several years.

MODERATOR - AGAIN, ANYTHING IN THAT TOP ONE THAT REALLY STANDS OUT TO YOU? ED SAID; THE ELECTED IRAQI GOVERNMENT PART REALLY STOOD OUT TO HIM, HOW ABOUT THE REST OF YOU?

The coalition continues to withdraw, that's important.

Absolutely.

MODERATOR - WE DON'T WANT TO BE THE ONE LEFT HOLDING ALL THE BAG, OKAY. OTHER ASPECTS OF THAT ONE THAT APPEAL TO YOU?

That appeal?

MODERATOR - OR THAT RESONATE.

The cut and run is part of the rhetoric and this is how they take something that you are trying to say something positive, get something done and they throw in these descriptions of cut and run and unpatriotic and terrorists and it helps their cause of getting themselves elected.

MODERATOR - WHAT ABOUT THE BOTTOM ONE, HANK?

Well, first off, everybody is right. The cut and run, it is a lot of rhetoric, but then what do you do? How long do you stay and what do you try to accomplish while you are there? Like you said; we had a marshal plan for Europe. We don't have a marshal plan for Iraq and that is really what we need and the other thing that we need is to, whoever is fighting us over there just needs to quit so we can rebuild the infrastructure so that once the power plants are up and stays up, once the water plants are up and stay up, once the schools are built and they stay built.

But you can't do that with 120 troops.

No.

MODERATOR - DO YOU THINK THAT THE FEARS OR THE CONCERNS THAT THE REPUBLICANS RAISE HERE ARE LEGITIMATE? WHEN THE (INAUDIBLE) PULL OUT, THE IRAQIS AREN'T PREPARED TO DEFEND THEIR COUNTRY, THEY DON'T HAVE THE TROOPS, THEY DON'T HAVE THE TRAINING, THEY DON'T HAVE THE BACKGROUND, SO THEY ARE GOING TO END UP BEING OVERRUN, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A TERRORIST COUNTRY WHERE WE DIDN'T HAVE ONE BEFORE AND WE'RE GOING TO BE LESS SAFE THAN WE WERE BEFORE.

I think they're going to spend the next 25 years in political civil war.

MODERATOR - WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK OF THAT ARGUMENT, BASICALLY THAT WE ARE GOING TO CREATE A TERRORIST HAVEN AND WE ARE GOING TO BE LESS SAFE AS A RESULT OF PULLING OUT OF THERE.

If they were pulling all the troops by the end of the year, absolutely. Whether or not it would be a terrorist haven, God knows. It would a civil war. Somebody would come out victorious in the next 5-10 years after that. It would probably take at least 5 years (inaudible – coughing). As far as it being accurate to that, no. This is just political rhetoric to make you believe that that is what the democrats are saying. They are saying we should be out of their now. No. That is not what they are saying. They are saying make a plan, whether it is a marshal plan or a phased out, which this is talking about, you need a plan. That is what the democrats are saying and the republicans are coming back and just saying; they want us to cut and run.

You know what? I'm more concerned about the homegrown terrorists that we've now seen over the last few weeks. Both Canada and the U.S. have had homegrown terrorists cells.

Yeah, everybody forgets about Timothy McVeigh. (Interrupted)

Exactly.

He was not tied to Al Qaeda of Islam.

Right.

Yeah, it is like terrorism is going to happen no matter how much you try to control it. I mean 9/11 happened because of a high concept, low technology plan. I mean you can't stop that. I think we just get out.

This is just a prediction of what will happen in the future. We're not going to pull out all our troops. Just like you said; we still got troops all over Europe. There is peacekeeping missions going on all over the world. We're still have a presence if we follow this (inaudible) time withdrawal. It is not complete (inaudible – coughing), so these republican candidates are predicting that terrorism is going to raise its ugly head again. Well, maybe we will reinforce our troops. If that is the case, we'll adjust but at least let's make a move.

MODERATOR - OKAY, KEEPING OUR FOCUS ON THE ELECTION AND KIND OF WHAT IS AT STAKE AND WHAT IS THE CHOICE YOU HAVE TO MAKE HERE, WHAT IS GOING TO DRIVE YOUR DECISIONS; OBVIOUSLY THE DEMOCRATS HAVE CERTAIN WAYS THAT THEY WANT TO DEFINE WHAT THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT AND THE REPUBLICANS HAVE WAYS THAT THEY WANT TO DEFINE WHAT THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT. I WANT TO SEE IF ANY OF THE RESONATE, KIND OF MATCH WHAT YOU THINK THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT SO FLIP TO HANDOUT 5. WE'LL DO STATEMENTS FROM EACH SIDE, TWO DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES. AGAIN, I'LL READ THEM OUT LOUD. LET ME KNOW WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT.

DEMOCRATS SAY: THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT MOVING OUR COUNTRY IN A NEW DIRECTION, FROM HEALTHCARE AND ENERGY TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND LOBBYISTS' INFLUENCE, REPUBLICANS DEFEND THE STATUS QUO BECAUSE IT BENEFITS THEM AND THEIR SPECIAL INTEREST ALLIES AT THE EXPENSE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. DEMOCRATS WILL IMMEDIATELY START TO DELIVER CHANGE THAT VOTES CAN SEE. NO CONGRESSIONAL PAY RAISES WITHOUT AN INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE. INVEST IN THE EXPANDING STEM CELL RESEARCH. REPEAL TAX CUTS THAT SHIP COMPANIES OVERSEAS. MAKE COLLEGE TUITION TAX DEDUCTIBLE AND RESTORE RULES REQUIRING THAT ANY SPENDING OR TAX CUTS BE OFFSET BY COMPANIES (INAUDIBLE).

It is a nice plan. It is a lot of rhetoric but it is not realistic. They'll try. Maybe they'll get a few of these things done.

(Interrupted).

It sounds great, yeah.

...but it does sound convincing but it is unrealistic.

MODERATOR - OBVIOUSLY, THAT'S (INAUDIBLE – COUGHING). NO POLITICIAN HAS EVER STOOD UP AND SAID I AM GOING TO VOTE MYSELF A PAY RAISE. I'M GOING TO SCREW YOU OVER. (INAUDIBLE). SO THEY ARE ALL GOING TO MAKE PROMISES. IS IT BELIEVABLE? DO THEY HAVE THE CREDIBILITY WHEN THEY SAY THIS?

I think the democrats will increase the minimum wage but the republicans could do that too just the same.

MODERATOR - WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK?

I don't think it is immediate. The word immediate is in here and that's too strong.

I think there is so much pessimism in the country that just the idea of hope would get my vote.

I think we will probably see college tuition become tax deductible. That would be nice.

MODERATOR - WHAT DO YOU GUYS DOWN THERE THINK? IS THIS BELIEVABLE? DO THEY HAVE CREDIBILITY WHEN THEY SAY THIS?

Ah, I care less about congressional pay raises. I mean if (inaudible) got an extra \$10,000.00, how many congressmen, to me that is not an issue. Tell me my taxes are going down \$1,000.00 a year. Like I said; to me like, the democrats said; no I don't believe this. I think it is bull crap.

MODERATOR - OKAY, CHARLIE, HOW ABOUT YOU?

Again, it would be nice to see some of this stuff but the reality is people get in on this and, yeah, what can I do, whatever, as long as I am still getting my paycheck, the boat isn't rocking, why should I care? And it is human nature. I mean, I'm sure there are

things we all start with, the greatest of intensions, you know, it is just not happening that way. I mean, who wouldn't like to see some of the stuff, you know repealing the tax cuts for the companies that ship jobs overseas, but you know in reality, these companies pay the people who are making the laws so you're not going to (interrupted)

See, none of these things would affect, looking at this, I don't know how these gentlemen are, none of these things really affect me in the least. I guess if I were sick or one of my children were sick that is the only thing, even that, that is almost like SciFi. I mean I (interrupted)

(Inaudible).

...College, I don't have anything to do with that. These issues that these guys have really don't help Ed Owens one iota. It is sad that you got to think of it that way but I think everybody thinks about themselves and their family first.

MODERATOR - OTHER REACTIONS TO THIS?

It sounds like it got good talking points for whoever is going to running for the democratic president. (Inaudible – coughing). If they don't follow through with it, it is just rhetoric. It sounds like a great idea. If they can latch on to a couple of these actually and make it happen that would be terrific.

MODERATOR - IT SOUNDS LIKE THEY ARE NOT PROMISING WORLD PEACE?

Right.

MODERATOR - THEY'RE NOT SAYING THEY ARE GOING TO FIX THE SCHOOLS OR FIX THE ECONOMY. WHAT THEY ARE SAYING HERE IS; THESE ARE CHANGES THAT YOU CAN SEE. THESE ARE KIND OF BITE SIZE CHANGES. WE WILL PROMISE THESE BECAUSE WE CAN ACTUALLY (INTERRUPTED).

They are just minor points.

MODERATOR - RIGHT, BUT DOES THAT, YOU KNOW ALLAN SAID; IT GIVES ME SOME HOPE. IT GIVES ME SOMETHING TO GRAB ONTO, YOU KNOW.

Right.

MODERATOR - WHERE IF THEY WERE PROMISING ME WORLD PEACE I WOULD KNOW THEY WERE FULL OF IT. (INAUDIBLE – COUGHING)... WHAT DO YOU THINK, ARE THEY BETTER OFF ON MAKING THESE PROMISES ON THINGS THAT THEY THINK THEY CAN DELIVER OR IS IT WHAT LIKE ED SAYS: THIS DOESN'T IMPACT YOU OR ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SOMETHING THAT MATTERS MORE?

Well, I would like the democrats say, you go back to about the deployment and getting the troops out of there and saving the American people tax money and let them kind of fend for themselves. If they put that in there, then all of a sudden I'm affected by that. That is a good thing. We're all saying about the positives of the democrats. If they put that in there, to me that is like telling me, hey, we're going to do everything we can. We see it has been how many years and nobody is going anywhere. It looks like it is going

to go on, like this gentleman said for 20-30 years. I don't think the American people want that. I hate to put it that way but I don't think the American people, most of them don't want it.

It seems to be the domestic policy, (inaudible) in a nutshell. So, they probably have additional global policies as well, but as Allan said; even to give me a glimmer of hope. (Inaudible – coughing) optimist here. I want to know, hey, maybe the next 4 years are going to be different. Maybe the next 8 years will be even different if we can change the chunk of 4 years and even if I go two of these things it would make a difference in my life.

Yeah, but this isn't exactly a wish list. These are all achievable. (Many agreeing). They are all achievable within the first two years and a couple of them within the first 100 days. No congressional pay raises, repeal tax cuts for companies that ship jobs overseas. I mean we are a global economy and we have to accept that but tax cuts, doing it, that is ridiculous.

MODERATOR - FLIP TO HANDOUT 6. OTHER POINT OF VIEW.

REPUBLICANS SAY: THIS ELECTION IS A CHOICE BETWEEN TWO PARTIES WITH FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT VIEWS OF OUR NATIONAL SECURITY. DEMOCRATS MAINTAIN A PRE 9/11 MENTALITY AS THEY CONTINUE TO UNDERMINE THE PATRIOT ACT AND OTHER SECURITY EFFORTS, DENY OUR TROOPS THE RESOURCES THEY NEED TO ADVANCE A CUT/RUN STRATEGY IN IRAQ. REPUBLICANS UNDERSTAND THAT IF WE GIVE UP NOW, WE WOULD HAND IRAQ OVER TO ENEMIES THAT PLEDGE TO ATTACK US AGAIN AND AGAIN AS THEY DID ON 9/11. REPUBLICANS HAVE THE STRENGTH AND THE RESOLVE TO WIN THE WAR ON TERRORISM AND TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO DEFEND OUR COUNTRY.

I think they are a one trick pony. They just keep banging at (many people talking – interrupted).

Very good.

Good point.

Good analogy.

...bagging the security. It is just a one trick pony. (Inaudible – coughing). Come to the table with more than just (inaudible). It is ridiculous. The whole thing is about 9/11. We all feel terrible about it, every American alive but they think it, see I think it is just as safe with the democrats as it is with these guys. These guys sound like they are going to (inaudible) and protect us. No one can, when you're dead, you're dead.

It is. It is too (inaudible). It is banging on the same issues. It is a simplistic view that I don't think affects people in their everyday lives like the democrats are addressing domestic policies.

I don't think it is accurate. It is disingenuous to say that, to throw national security, the democrats are not interested in our national security. It is like; who believes that other

than Rush Limbaugh, the right-wing talk show host, who actually, (inaudible), they just want to stir up their audiences. The cut and run strategy, again, there it is. Same thing, over and over again. It's fear. And the thing about the democrats pre 9/11 mentality and they continue to undermine the Patriot Act. They should be undermining the Patriot Act. That is the system of checks and balances.

I don't think they maintain a, I bet you if I had five democrats from the hierarchy in Washington and had a pre 9/11, I guarantee that they were affected by a 9/11, a pre 9/11.

MODERATOR - ANY OTHER REACTION ON THIS ONE? (NO RESPONSE). OKAY, FLIP TO HANDOUT 7. BACK TO THE DEMOCRATS.

THE DEMOCRATS SAY: THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT FINDING NEW SOLUTIONS TO THE GROWING CHALLENGES FACING OUR COUNTRY. GAS PRICES, THE BROKEN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, AMERICAN JOBS GOING OVERSEAS, RECORD DEFICITS. REPUBLICANS HAVE DONE NOTHING AND THESE PROBLEMS ARE GROWING DEEPER. DEMOCRATS WILL OFFER REAL LEADERSHIP, MAKING THE SECURITY OF OUR PORTS AND BORDERS TOP PRIORITY, EXPANDING OUR CURRENT SYSTEM TO PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE TO ALL AMERICANS INVESTING IN RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE OUR COUNTRY ENERGY INDEPENDENT WHILE CREATING MILLIONS OR NEW AMERICAN JOBS.

That has been what the democrats have been saying for years, and years, and years. It is just the fundamental nature of their strategy. We're here to protect the common man and fix everything domestically. It is a nice thought again but (many people talking).

No, I think the last time gas prices, they said the same thing, we'll go into research and technology (many people talking).

But it is the same thing the republicans are doing, saying the same thing over and over again. I'll put my eggs in that basket as far as voting but they need to, the second half of this is just, come on guys, we've heard this over and over.

Pie in the sky.

MODERATOR - SO, IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU AGREE WITH THE PRIORITIES THAT THEY ARE LAYING OUT YOU JUST DON'T BUY IT.

Right.

(Many people talking).

And the simple repackaging isn't going to cut it (many people agreeing)...and the last thing, energy independent by 2020. We're all intelligent.

If there was ever pie and the sky bullshit ever written that is it right there. There is no way we are going to be energy independent.

I don't think it helps to (inaudible).

MODERATOR - OTHER REACTIONS TO THIS ONE?

I buy it to a point. At least they are saying: we're trying guys. We're giving it 2020. We're not giving it tomorrow or next week. (Inaudible – coughing)...real leadership, what is real leadership, I mean like the other guy is angry over there? Who gives a shit? We have the real (inaudible), they have nothing. I think they are all (inaudible) to a point, (inaudible) to what they like.

MODERATOR - OKAY, HANDOUT 8.

REPUBLICANS SAY: THIS ELECTION IS A CHOICE BETWEEN TWO VERY DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT ECONOMIC CHOICE AND PROSPERITY. DEMOCRATS ARE TRYING TO RAISE TAXES BECAUSE THEIR SOLUTION TO EVERY CHALLENGE IS TO INCREASE SPENDING AND MORE GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS. REPUBLICANS BELIEVE THAT KEY TO ECONOMIC GROWTH IS ALLOWING TAX PAYERS TO KEEP MORE OF THE MONEY THEY EARN, TO SPEND AND INVEST IN A WAY THAT IS BEST FOR THEM AND THEIR FAMILIES. REPUBLICANS WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR LOWER TAXES AND NEW IDEAS ON HEALTHCARE AND RETIREMENT THAT LOWER COST AND GIVE INDIVIDUALS MORE CONTROL OVER THEIR OWN MONEY.

I like what I said earlier more, I wish I had more (interrupted)

MODERATOR - ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY?

...but I don't see that. Like this gentleman said earlier and what everybody is saying here: it is just not happening. It looks good on paper, like I'll buy that, (many people talking – interrupted)

We had it over 6 years.

...That's what I'm saying. I'm not seeing it. You're telling me but you're not doing. You're telling me and not doing it. Do it.

I don't believe this at all. I don't believe this election is this choice at all. I don't believe that the republicans are fighting for lower taxes. This is complete unadulterated bullshit.

The second sentence: Democrats are trying to raise taxes. That is your typical, they're liberals. It is another way of repackaging the liberal line and I don't think anybody is buying the liberal line anymore and the last sentence: Yeah, that sounds good but we have an enormous deficit. I'm not saying I want them to take more of my money. I'm not saying that at all but spend it wisely and so far they haven't proved that they can do that.

MODERATOR - OTHER REACTIONS TO THAT ONE?

The middle sentences sound like, where it says: Allowing people to keep more money and to spend it. It sounds like the overhaul in the social security system, which is the kind of thing (many people talking).

It is exactly what it is too, it's just repackaged.

MODERATOR - ALAN, REACTION?

I think the last couple of pages is just like regurgitating what people have been saying for years. Like they are just trying to sell it to you and it is just to black or white. Go with us, don't go with the democrats or don't go with the republicans. Again, it is all kind of the same (inaudible). Some of the democrats and the republicans want the same exact thing. They are making it too black and white.

MODERATOR - FLIP TO HANDOUT 9, LAST ONE.

DEMOCRATS SAY: THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT RESTORING ACCOUNTABILITY TO OUR GOVERNMENT. REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS HAVE GIVEN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION A BLANK CHECK LEADING TO UNPRECEDENTED LEVELS OF CORRUPTION AND WASTE. DEMOCRATS WILL USE CONGRESS'S SUBPOENA'S POWER TO RESTORE OUR GOVERNMENT'S SYSTEM OF CHECK AND BALANCES, DEMANDING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE ABUSE OF TAXPAYERS' MONEY INCLUDING HUNDREDS OR MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN FRAUD AFTER KATRINA, PRICE GOUGING BY OIL COMPANIES, \$50 BILLION IN NO BID CONTRACTS FOR HALIBURTON IN IRAQ, FORCING TAXPAYERS TO PAY THE CLEANUP FOR TOXIC POLLUTERS AND \$9 BILLION IN MISSING CASH GIVEN TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN IRAQ.

HOW DID YOU RATE THAT ONE?

(Laughter).

Yeah, there is no telling where that (interrupted).

This is good. This is what they need to be saying.

MODERATOR - WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK?

It is true. It pisses you off.

But this is the shit that went on here, I mean some of this stuff. This is what they really need to be (inaudible).

I just wonder how much of it is true.

Accountability in our government?

No, like the \$9 billion (interrupted)

Oh yeah, when you say that you always question how they come up with that.

Yeah.

\$9 billion, who is the (interrupted)

(Many people talking).

If they said Haliburton first then I would believe the rest of it.

Yeah.

But it must be right because Haliburton is right.

It disappears (interrupted)

That is called walking around money.

Yeah.

It is a hell of a lot of it but that happens in every election and that is what they are doing over there to get people, they are buying people.

You got to buy people. You got to pay somebody to get this truck down the highway safely.

MODERATOR - ALL RIGHT, SO THEY'RE SAYING THEY ARE USING SUBPOENA POWER, SO BASICALLY WE ARE TALKING ABOUT CONGRESS LAUNCHING A SERIES OF INVESTIGATIONS, SUBPOENAS, HEARINGS, ALL OF THIS STUFF (INTERRUPTED)

That is a waste of time. That is a waste of taxpayers' money.

MODERATOR - ...IS THAT SOMETHING THAT YOU THINK DEMOCRATS SHOULD BE DOING? IS THAT HOW THEY GO ABOUT RESTORING ACCOUNTABILITY?

No.

That is how they go about making a name for themselves.

Yeah, but there has to be some of that because there has to be accountability. You have to go after the Enron's. you have to go after the, who is the lobbyist, Abramoff and all the congressmen who are in his pocket, so there has to be some of that, but it has to be done without grandstanding.

Yeah, you just can't slap it with censorship either. I mean you got to put people in jail. You just can't say be censored (interrupted).

(Many people talking).

Out of all the big congressional investigations over the last 20 years, what has reaped the most benefit? Can anybody think of anybody other than Nixon resigning?

That is the first place my mind went.

MODERATOR - DO YOU GUYS THINK THAT THEY SHOULD BE INVESTIGATING ALL OF THESE THINGS? IS IT ONE OR TWO OF THEM THAT YOU THINK (INTERRUPTED).

(Inaudible).

They pretty well got it controlled on Katrina. You know people are going to fudge wherever they can and there were a lot of citizens who fudged on Katrina and most of them got caught. They got slapped. Some of them got jail-time.

And what is happening right now with the Abramoff case, that has already happened. There is no reason to go back and go after that. I'll be the first one to admit, I would love to see the democrats get in there and impeach Bush but I don't think it would be worth (interrupted)

Starting a war for which he done wrong.

(Many people talking).

MODERATOR - STAY FOCUSED ON THE STATEMENTS IN FRONT OF YOU. ARE THERE ANY OF THESE THAT YOU THINK ARE IMPORTANT ENOUGH THAT THEY SHOULD BE LAUNCHING THESE INVESTIGATIONS AND USING SUBPOENAS AND (INTERRUPTED)

How long to they take? How long do these investigations take, weeks, months, years?

Years.

Remember White Water?

Yeah.

(Many people talking).

It is a nice plan of attack but if you tackle one at a time be sure you can do it.

MODERATOR - YOU AGREE WITH IT AS A FIRST STEP, MOVE AWAY FROM WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THERE, WITH THE IDEA THAT THIS ELECTION SHOULD BE ABOUT RESTORING ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE REPUBLICANS HAVE GIVEN BUSH A BLANK CHECK.

It is a good focal point.

And restoring the system of checks and balances. Maybe get rid of the subpoena power because that to me, (many people talking)...many, many years of litigation and committees and you never see the end results of it, but the system of checks and balances, I think we all, a few of us said that.

Yeah, it has to be restored because right now he has totally dismantled it.

I don't know what another way is that can measure accountability. I don't know what another way is to change that besides to bring congress in.

What, bring it in for investigation?

Yeah, what's another way? What is another method?

Well, I think what you do is you strengthen the checks and balances and you really have to come up with some tough rules and (interrupted)

Somebody else gets in there and changes the rules. How do you (interrupted).

MODERATOR - OKAY, WE WENT THROUGH FIVE DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT WHAT THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT. LOOK AT THESE FIVE AND TELL ME WHICH ONE BEST MATCHES YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT WHAT THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT. AGAIN, WHAT IS GOING TO INFLUENCE YOU WHEN YOU GOT TO THE POLLS? (RECAPPING HANDOUTS 5-9).

5.

5.

5.

I'm going to say national security.

I like #9 but I have to go with 5 too.

Yeah, I'm like a 9 too but I'm undecided yet.

5.

6.

5.

5, (interrupted)...pullout from Iraq, gradual pullout.

9 seems to be a little more rhetoric. It has some good points in there but it seems more rhetoric.

I think 5 is achievable and I'll agree with Gary.

MODERATOR - 5 WITH THE SIDE OF IRAQ. ALAN?

5 or 6. I mean 6 kind of brought me kind of like was the sign for me. The first thing it says is the national security, which I think is the biggest, most important thing by far. I really don't know how much I agree with this but at least it broke it off right away, you know, right at the first sentence. The rest of this, I think most of the stuff about the gas prices and the things like that, I think that can kind of be put in the background. National security is the biggest.

MODERATOR - SO AGAIN, YOU WANT TO ADD IRAQ TO #5 MAYBE?

Yeah, so it would be #5 with national security.

MODERATOR - JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY WENT TO #5, WHY? IS IT MORE BELIEVABLE?

Yeah.

Yeah.

More doable.

More achievable.

It is more believable.

It is general (inaudible) and then it throws in some specifics, so it is kind of broad based. The new direction is obvious. The fact that the crux of the matter is you're having a problem now. You think something is wrong, you go into a new direction, which is the opposite, which is right. We're going to make it right. We're going to try to make it right.

Yeah, it is let's say what is not going to happen, let's say what can happen.

It is positive.

Yeah.

Hopeful.

Makes you feel better.

What I like about it: the democrats will immediately start to deliver change. When you hear that, you just can't say that without following up with something. This follows up with some ideas that they can actually do and maybe because of that, you don't want to put Iraq in there because that's not (interrupted)

But you have to mention it.

It is like the elephant in the world.

Security, national security, it is part of that.

Right.

Right, so if you talk about that as doable as everything else, that just kind of kills the legitimacy of it.

Well, that's it. You don't want to put something, you know we are all reacting negatively to the same old bullshit that we've been hearing over and over again. The last thing you want to do is throw one of those pieces, one of those sound bites in there.

And hurt the credibility of doing, like what they're talking about at the bottom, right?

Yeah.

MODERATOR - OKAY. LAST THING I WANT TO DO IS KIND OF FOCUS US FROM THE MORE GENERIC DISCUSSION OR DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS TO MORE SPECIFICALLY AT WHAT CHOICES YOU GUYS ARE GOING TO BE FACING IN NOVEMBER. YOU GOT A CAMPAIGN FOR CONGRESS. CURT WELDON IS THE CONGRESSMAN RIGHT NOW RUNNING AGAINST THIS GUY NAMED JOE SESTAK, THE DEMOCRATIC NOMINEE. HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT THIS ELECTION? HAS THERE BEEN ANYTHING IN THE MEDIA OR ANYTHING HEARD FROM THE PEOPLE OR COMMUNITY GROUPS OR ANYTHING?

No.

No.

(Many people talking).

MODERATOR - AND THAT IS WHAT I FIGURED HONESTLY. I DIDN'T FIGURE THAT ANYBODY WOULD HAVE HEARD OF THE GUY SO WHAT I DID, I GOT TWO ARTICLES HERE, AS YOU GET CLOSE TO THE ELECTION YOU WILL SEE ARTICLES ABOUT THESE PEOPLE AND SO I GRABBED TWO. THERE IS AN INTERVIEW WITH CURT WELDON (INAUDIBLE) TIMES AND THIS GUY JOE SESTAK WAS WRITTEN IN THIS MAGAZINE CALLED THE HILL, WHICH IS A NEWSPAPER DOWN AT CAPITOL HILL THAT IS A LITTLE BIT ABOUT HIM, SO JUST A LITTLE BIT OF BACKGROUND ON THE TWO OF THEM. TWO DIFFERENT ARTICLES. TAKE A MINUTE, READ THEM KIND OF LIKE YOU WERE READING THE SUNDAY PAPER OR SOMETHING AND GET SOME INFORMATION AND AFTER YOU HAVE READ THEM BOTH WE WILL TALK ABOUT THEM. IF YOU ARE STILL READING TAKE YOUR TIME BUT IF YOU'RE DONE TELL ME. WE'LL START WITH WELDON. WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT WELDON? WHAT IS YOUR IMPRESSION OF HIM?

(Inaudible – speaking softly).

He likes himself a lot.

Yeah.

MODERATOR - DID YOU HAVE THOSE OPINIONS BEFORE YOU CAME HERE OR IS IT JUST BASED ON THIS ARTICLE?

Just based on this article, but then again, if you are going to be in a position of power you got to really be a little arrogant and you got to know where to push and whose buttons to push and how much to push in order to get what you want. He may be a little overboard but he has done some pretty good things too.

It almost seems like the same level of expertise, the same level of experience in the Ed Rendell, Lynn Swann race. I mean it is comparable. I mean it is like, well yeah, I have been an admiral, yeah I have been a football player but what do I really know about running the nuts and bolts of everyday politics.

Rendell came to mind. He is a savvy politician. I don't think he is as good as Rendell but arrogance is interesting. And they are just cheap shots. It is politics as usual as far as what is wrong with the [admiral].

(Agreement).

Maybe some people don't see through that stuff but when I read that, it is just (interrupted).

MODERATOR - HOW ABOUT YOU GUYS DOWN THERE, IMPRESSIONS OF WELDON?

Reading it, just for these two, it is my opinion that I think the guy that is coming in, what's his name, you want Weldon or you want them both?

MODERATOR - TELL ME WHATEVER YOUR IMPRESSIONS ARE?

I think Sestak is the better man. I think this guy is the better BSer. Again, they can slant this anyway they want. That is why it is so hard to watch the news or read the paper, right! You're going to believe what somebody wants you to believe but according to this Sestak is the greatest guy in the world but I mean I guess his qualifications are good. I mean he was like a big deal in the Navy, right.

MODERATOR - OBVIOUSLY, THE GUY MADE IT VERY FAR IN THE NAVY, 31 YEARS, AN ADMIRAL, ALL THAT STUFF BUT THINKING ABOUT THE ELECTION YOU ARE GOING TO FACE, WHAT IS THE RELATIVE VALUE TO YOU OF A GUY WHO HAS BEEN IN CONGRESS FOR A LONG TIME, KNOWS THE INS AND OUTS, HAS DONE ALL THESE THINGS THAT HE SAYS HE HAS DONE, PROTECTING THE BOEING PLANT, BRINGING MONEY TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS, YOU KNOW ALL THIS KIND OF STUFF, YOU KNOW BEEN AROUND LOCAL POLITICS FOR ALL THESE YEARS VERSUS A GUY WHO HASN'T BEEN AROUND LOCAL POLITICS, DOESN'T HAVE THE SAME EXPERIENCE BUT BRINGS A DIFFERENT SET OF QUALITIES AS AN INDIVIDUAL?

I mean is that really arrogant to say that Boeing wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for me. I mean isn't that like the biggest company in America.

Well, no, that plant has been on the chopping block a few times in the past 20 years.

So, wasn't that, I mean was he talking about the entire, everybody (interrupted).

No, no, he was just talking about the plant down in (interrupted).

But if that plant had closed probably most of the county would have closed as well. It is ripple effect.

It has a big impact on (inaudible), that is about it.

MODERATOR - LET ME ASK THIS. THE WHOLE CONVERSATION THAT WE'VE HAD, YOU HAD VERY NEGATIVE FEELINGS ABOUT WASHINGTON, EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN GOING ON THERE, CONGRESS, YOU KNOW ONE OF THE GREAT MYSTERY OF POLITICAL LIFE IN THIS COUNTRY, EVERYBODY THINKS CONGRESS IS DOING A HORRIBLE JOB YET 96% OF THEM GET RE-ELECTED EVERY TIME, SO SOMETHING IS GOING ON HERE. DO YOU THINK THAT CURT WELDON IS JUST KIND OF POLITICS AS USUAL, THE SAME AS ALL THE OTHER ONES DOWN THERE OR DO YOU THINK THAT HE IS DIFFERENT? DOES HE REPRESENT WHAT IS WRONG IN CONGRESS OR IS IT OTHER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WHO ARE MORE (INTERRUPTED)?

He is the same.

MODERATOR - WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK?

He knows how to work and play the system. He is like a PhD in political savvy and I don't know if that is good or bad. You get things done, whether it (interrupted).

He was a freshman congressman at one point. He had to learn the ways. Now to say that this guy can't do it, come on, you were there too.

Oh, I'm sure he is (inaudible) and I am not saying that I would vote for Weldon, I'm just saying that the typical voters, well, if it is not broke.

Exactly. If it is not broke, why fix it.

MODERATOR - WHAT DO THE REST OF YOU THINK?

I guess it would be good to get like a breath of fresh air, you know what I mean, to see what somebody else can do. It is like the same team on the Worlds Series all the time. Everybody is happy to see the Yankees lose sometimes, right.

Always.

Always.

Every night.

I think if Weldon was in the middle of a scandal of some sort, whether it was a bribe or kickbacks or something like that, I think Sestak might have a chance but I think that Weldon has had a pretty good record, can stand on it, can sling all the mud he wants and probably not get too dirty himself. I think Sestak got enough uphill fight just to get his name out. I'm sure he has a lot of political connections in Washington. You get those after 31 years in the military.

Oh yeah.

MODERATOR - EVERYBODY HERE WANTS CHANGE. DOES SESTAK REPRESENT CHANGE OR NO?

Absolutely.

MODERATOR - I SHOULDN'T SAY: DOES HE REPRESENT CHANGE BUT DOES HE REPRESENT THE KIND OF CHANGE THAT YOU'D BE LOOKING FOR, THE GAMBLE YOU WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE?

Right.

Yeah.

That's the issue I think. We would like to see his (inaudible) experience (inaudible) but it is not necessarily reality.

I think he should run for a lower office to get his political name out, to get his feet wet, to have a history for lack of a better word.

Based on this article, I can't tell what (many people talking).

MODERATOR - (MANY PEOPLE TALKING)...IT IS ABOUT HIS PERSONAL BACKGROUND AND NOT A LOT ABOUT ISSUES.

Who is the general who ran in the last election, the democrats?

MODERATOR - WESLEY CLARK?

Clark, yeah. It is going to be, he quickly fell out of that but he did what he needed to do as far getting in the face of (inaudible). It will be an uphill battle.

Is this Sestak guy, I got a kick out of it, did this guy suggest in a negative way where the guy should send his daughter because if I was Sestak I would tell him to go "F" himself. I'll send my daughter wherever I want to.

Yeah.

That to me that, the man's daughter has cancer.

MODERATOR - WHAT DID YOU GUYS THINK ABOUT THAT? HE SAID: IF YOU REALLY CARED ABOUT DELAWARE COUNTY HE WOULD HAVE SENT HIS DAUGHTER THERE RATHER THAN (INTERRUPTED).

(Many people talking).

You don't tell him where to send his daughter.

If I'm Sestak, I would be like: Who the "F" are you to talk about my daughter? You've been in a hospital as a cancer patient for four months? I think I would have kicked his ass.

Weldon got into office 20 years ago by throwing mud at somebody who was in there doing just as good as he was doing. He was a democrat and he threw the mud basically calling him a baby killer because he was a democrat and he wasn't going to vote against abortion. That is how Weldon got into office.

I think to answer your question about the political mystery, I think the races just have to be tighter, somebody has to put out an image that people would like. Sestak, as he is talking now, he doesn't have an image. We can't connect to him. I mean, you're only going to see change when somebody is forceful about making change. I mean just to prove your point, this is all you could find about Sestak, who is the guy, so, (many people talking).

(Many people talking).

It is really Weldon's office to lose more than it is Sestak's office to get.

MODERATOR - THAT SEEMS TO BE THE CASE AND PEOPLE SEEM TO BE DECIDING IN OVERWHELMING NUMBERS THAT THEY HAVEN'T DONE ENOUGH TO LOSE IT INDIVIDUALLY BUT COLLECTIVELY THEY THINK THEY ARE DOING A HORRIBLE JOB AND THEY SHOULD ALL BE FIRED BUT INDIVIDUALLY WE KEEP RE-ELECTING THE ONES THAT WE HAVE A CONTROL OVER. AGAIN, I CAN'T VOTE FOR THE GUY IN NEBRASKA. I CAN ONLY VOTE FOR THE GUY WHERE I LIVE.

Right.

But look at the elections this past November with the state senate/congress, that pay raise came back and bit them in the ass. They elected a lot of (interrupted).

MODERATOR - THEY SAY LEGISLATURES VOTED THEMSELVES A PAY RAISE AND THEN SIX OR SEVEN OF THEM LOST THEIR PRIMARY.

(Many agreeing).

So, I think you are going to see a similar backlash but Weldon, he may not have it as easy as he thinks he does. That climate, and that is just in Pennsylvania, that climate is changing the course of the whole country.

MODERATOR - LAST THING I AM GOING TO ASK YOU TO DO. FLIP TO HANDOUT 10. WE SPENT THE LAST FEW MINUTES FOCUSING ON THE (INAUDIBLE - PAPERS RUSTLING) OF THE CANDIDATES. THINK ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT WE TALKED ABOUT TONIGHT, ALL THE ISSUES GOING ON, ALL THE DIFFERENT WAYS TO THINK ABOUT THIS ELECTION. IF YOU WERE GOING TO SEND A MESSAGE TO THESE TWO GUYS WHO ARE RUNNING FOR CONGRESS IN YOUR DISTRICT WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO TELL THEM? WHAT INFORMATION WOULD YOU WANT TO GIVE THEM? WHAT QUESTIONS WOULD YOU WANT TO ASK THEM? JUST WRITE IT DOWN.

(end of focus group)