



GREENBERG MILLENNIAL PROJECT

FOCUS GROUP #5
AFRICAN-AMERICANS, MIXED GENDER
BIRMINGHAM, AL
DECEMBER 4, 2007

MODERATOR: INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS.

My name is Latasha. I live in [Choiceforth]. I do billing for a mental health practice. I live with my 7 year old son.

My name is Avon and I live on 280. I live alone. I am a customer service rep for a local insurance company.

My name is Demarius. I live at home with my wife and 2 kids. I'm a financial desk supervisor and we live in Preston.

Nancy, I'm 25. I stay at home and live alone. I work baking.

My name is Kenneth. 29. I live with my wife in Forest Hills and I work at a help desk.

My name is Judilou. 23. I live in the Gardendale area. I work in sales (inaudible) and I live with my mother.

My name is James. I work with Wachovia. Have a 1 year old. Live in the area.

My name is Nadia. I'm a pharmacist's aide (inaudible) Alabama. And I have a one year old and I live in Fairfield.

My name is Clarence, 28 years old, live in the Crossville area. I'm an engineer with (inaudible).

My name is Nicky, 29, I live right down the street in Hoover and I work in the healthcare field. I have 13 year old.

MODERATOR – WE THOUGHT WE WOULD START BY HAVING YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR GENERATION. ALL OF YOU HERE ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 29. WE OFTEN TALK ABOUT AMERICAN HISTORY IN TERMS OF GENERATIONS. THE BABY BOOMERS, THE GREATEST GENERATION WHO FOUGHT IN WWII, GENERATION X AND WHAT NOT. DO YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE A GENERATION? WHAT IS IT THAT WOULD DEFINE YOUR GENERATION IN THE WAYS THAT WE THOUGHT

ABOUT THOSE OTHER GENERATIONS IN THE PAST? WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE YOU?

The access to technology, I would say. Just the ability to find out information more than other generations.

MODERATOR – WHAT KIND OF TECHNOLOGY DO YOU ALL HAVE ACCESS TO, WHEN YOU SAY ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY?

The internet. That's the biggest one.

Cell phones.

MODERATOR – DO YOU ALL HAVE REGULAR INTERNET ACCESS?

Yes.

Yes.

Yes.

MODERATOR – I'M GOING TO COME BACK TO THIS INTERNET THING. BUT ARE THERE ANY OTHER THINGS THAT YOU THINK ABOUT AS OPPOSED TO YOUR PARENTS THAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT FROM THEM?

I think our generation is more apt to change. We're quicker at going after an opportunity where they've been thinking about it, and pondering over it. The access to jobs. My generation, we don't stay in a job for 15-20 years. We go where the money is. Loyalty, we're not married to them, our jobs.

MODERATOR – WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THAT? COULD YOU GIVE A NAME TO THAT? WHAT KIND OF QUALITY IS THAT?

More spontaneous, I think.

Opportunistic.

Yeah.

I think we're more open to different perspectives or different opinions.

MODERATOR – IN WHAT WAY?

As far as you know, from a corporate standpoint, we're a little more open than maybe our parents were, just from accepting of others maybe, to some degree.

I agree with what he was saying about being more open. Compared to when my mom was my age. I know that I'm more outgoing and more willing to take a chance than she would have ever been.

Our generation, like now, it's basically like normal if you see someone who is homosexual or things like that. In my parents' generation, that was just taboo. No way. But now it's so wide open. It's not surprising, it's not a shock.

I think with our generation, the difference is that violence and crime are more on the rise because of the difference in the way the kids are being raised these days. Back in the day, the whole village would raise you. Nowadays, you can't say anything to your neighbor's kids or they will be standing at your door trying to kill you or shoot you or anything. So there's a difference in the raising of the kids has shifted the generation and crime is more on the rise because a lot of parents are having these kids at a young age. Which is maybe putting crime up on the rise.

MODERATOR – SO WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THE EFFECT OF THAT ON YOUR GENERATION? THE FACT THAT THERE'S MORE CRIME MAKES YOU MORE OR LESS WHAT?

I know where he's going, but I can't think of a good word.

MODERATOR – THINK ABOUT IT.

I also think that people believe we're less responsible than a lot of people. I think that we should really go and we're looked at like that because we have so much technology that we have at our hands. And a lot of people won't use it. Education wise, being a higher learner, as far as not college and everything like that. But I do feel like as sometimes as irresponsible.

MODERATOR – DO ANY OF THE REST OF YOU FEEL THAT WAY?

Not really.

MODERATOR – DOES ANYONE ELSE FEEL THAT?

No.

MODERATOR – HOW DO YOU SEE THAT MANIFESTED?

Really it's how the older generation will talk to you. It's like whatever they say just has to go. If I give my opinion, like where I work, there's some people, I just got there but I'm in a position over them and they're older. But if I tell them something, it really doesn't come across well because they think I don't know what I'm talking about. I just feel that they think we're not as responsible as they are. To really look for things.

I think our generation is more (inaudible). We have more opportunity to go off to college, to do greater things than our parents because just for the different financial programs and funding that is in place that wasn't there. We're more wise and more aware going off to college than they were.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER THINGS THAT YOU CAN THINK OF THAT SEPARATE YOU FROM THE OLDER GENERATION?

I think our generation is a little lazier than the past generations.

MODERATOR – IN WHAT SENSE?

In a sense like, I don't mind if I had to, if I absolutely work hard to provide a living. But in that generation our parents, it took 12, 14, 16 hours a day, then that's what it is. In our generation, we prefer the easy way out.

Yeah, work smarter, not harder.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – ANYTHING THAT YOU NOTICED ABOUT YOU AND YOUR PEERS THAT ARE DIFFERENT FROM OLDER FOLKS?

I pretty much agree with most of the things that have been said so far. Just as an example, the difference with us and them is music, style, dress, things like that. Our generation is a little bit more open to do things like that. I think our generation would, part of the reason we might be a little bit lazy might be because of the technology that you were talking about. A lot of the things that we have now are so automatic. I have a remote for my car stereo. You know what I'm saying?

MODERATOR – YES.

That's pretty much how I handle it.

MODERATOR – ON THAT WHOLE ASPECT OF THE TECHNOLOGY, WHAT DOES THE TECHNOLOGY OFFER YOU THAT YOU FEEL WAS NOT AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE WHO ARE OLDER THAN YOU WHEN THEY WERE YOUR AGE?

For one thing, (inaudible) real estate. But I know from my mom and my dad, they would have to go out and literally drive for hours to houses and homes to meet people. With the internet, this is in this location and then you call this person. I save myself 3 or 4 hours drive time just by making a phone call. I think that's what in part makes us lazy. I don't think we're lazy, but we're just so used to taking advantage of these are the things that are easily accessible.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER ADVANTAGES THAT THE TECHNOLOGY ARE GIVING YOU THAT WEREN'T AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE OLDER THAN YOU? OR AT LEAST NOT WHEN THEY WERE YOUR AGE?

An easy way out. When I was in high school, copy and paste.

[Laughter.]

MODERATOR – I'M OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER WHITE OUT AND TYPEWRITERS. ANYTHING ELSE?

It keeps us informed about things that are going on around us.

The big thing is our cell phones. I remember when you had a flat and for some reason you can't change it, you've got to walk to a pay phone. Now you can pick your cell phone up, hey, I'm right here, can you come?

MODERATOR – WHAT DOES THAT DO FOR YOU? THAT SENSE THAT YOU CAN DO THINGS LIKE THAT IN THOSE SITUATIONS? HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF OR ABOUT LIFE?

More secure.

I would say secure.

Secure.

Convenient.

But I think it would had to come to something actually happening.

MODERATOR – IN WHAT SENSE?

Like those things that we're so used to, they're unable to just touch. If something were to happen where they're not there anymore, then how would we adapt to that situation?

This is true because if my phone went dead, I probably couldn't tell you my sister's telephone number.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – OKAY.

It's like with the internet. I pay my bills. Everything is done online. I don't do anything paper. Everything is online. That's why I'm handicapped when my computer is down. I don't know what to do.

(Inaudible).

MODERATOR – ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES THAT YOU FEEL HAVE HELPED DEFINE YOUR GENERATION?

Gangsta rap and stuff like that. That's what started it. Most of those things, especially in the music.

It's like we have no, I would say my generation is not afraid, like no one believes that anything is going to happen to them. We have no sense of consequences.

Everybody lives for today and not worry about what's going to happen tomorrow.

9/11 also kind of defines us.

MODERATOR – WHAT WAS THE EFFECT OF 9/11?

It kind of made us think, like she said. Everybody lives for today. It's something that happened here and now. So you know it's no longer out there in the world. Now we live, if I want to do something, I'm going to do it because you never know.

MODERATOR – OKAY, I SEE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING. WHAT KIND OF THINGS MOTIVATE YOU? OR PEOPLE YOUR AGE?

Money.

MODERATOR – EVERYBODY'S NODDING ON THE MONEY. ANYTHING ELSE?

Status, money and status. Just you being somebody which equals money. Money equals status.

MODERATOR – MOTIVATED BY MONEY, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY YOUR MOST IMPORTANT VALUES ARE AT THIS POINT IN YOUR LIFE?

Treat people the way you want to be treated because you never know whose path you're going to cross. So you should always treat people the way you want to be treated.

Integrity.

MODERATOR – WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY INTEGRITY?

Treat people the way you want to be treated. And also be who you are all the time. Do it right just because it's right. Not because you can get something out of it.

Be a man or woman of your word. If you say you're going to do it, do it. If you can't, tell the person you can't.

MODERATOR – DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES YOUR AGE FEEL THAT WAY, TOO? OR IS THAT A PERSONAL THING?

No. I think they do because the majority of the people I work with (inaudible).

I think our generation is more willing to stand up for what's right in spite of maybe what [the odds make it].

MODERATOR – IN THE FACE OF...?

Disagreement.

Opposition.

I don't know about that. Just thinking back to the civil rights movements, just like that thing that happened at Jena 6. It was a nice crowd, but it was like nothing compared to marches that they went on. I don't think we would stand up as quickly like they did. I believe we would stand up.

It has to be personal.

A lot of us would say, hey I tried, but a lot of them stuck in there until the end.

I'm not thinking about Jena 6, something that big. I'm thinking like in this room. I'm going to stand for what I think is my opinion. I wasn't born during the Civil rights or Jena 6. I wasn't talking that big, I was talking about standing up for what I believe.

MODERATOR – JUST SUMMING UP ON THAT, BECAUSE THE SENSE THAT I HAD WHEN YOU SAID THAT, AND CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG, BUT GOING BACK TO WHAT YOU ALL WERE SAYING BEFORE ABOUT BEING MORE OPEN TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF THINGS THAT POSSIBLY WOULD HAVE SCANDALIZED YOUR PARENTS. BUT FOR YOU, THAT'S JUST LIFE, THAT'S THE WAY IT IS.

Yeah.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKING. SO I JUST WANTED TO CRYSTALIZE THAT. SO IN THE 80'S AND 90'S, THEY GENERALLY TALKED ABOUT

YOUNG PEOPLE AS THE “ME GENERATION”. WHAT WOULD YOU CALL YOUR GENERATION IF YOU HAD TO GIVE IT A NAME?

The microwaves.

[Laughter.]

I like that, too.

MODERATOR – YOU LIKE THAT, TOO?

Yeah.

MODERATOR – AND THAT’S BASED ON QUICK AND EASY.

Right.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER IDEAS FOR YOUR GENERATION?

I’m just going off of what he said about the microwave. We want immediate gratification. I want results and I don’t want to have to wait a long time. I want to see something immediately in pretty much everything that I do.

MODERATOR – CAN YOU GIVE A NAME TO THAT?

I guess immediate gratification.

MODERATOR – CLARENCE?

I think they summed it up. The ability to get what you want when you want it.

MODERATOR – IS YOUR SENSE THAT YOUR GENERATION AT THIS TIME TENDS TO FOCUS. . .WHERE’S THE FOCUS? IS IT MORE TOWARDS PERSONAL GOALS, THE COMMON GOOD, THE GENERAL GOOD OF PEOPLE?

Personal.

Personal.

Personal.

Personal.

MODERATOR – ANYONE DISAGREE WITH THAT?

When you have to be holistic about it, just from a generation standpoint.

MODERATOR – YES.

I agree.

MODERATOR – IS THAT BECAUSE OF WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU ARE, A PARTICULAR AGE? DO YOU HAVE A SENSE OF WHY IT WOULD BE MORE PERSONAL THAN GENERAL?

It may have a little bit to do with the age in a sense that, at our age, you're trying to make a way for yourself. For those who don't have a family, we're trying to prepare ourselves for that. People who do have a family, they're trying to make way for their family. It's really at this age, you kind of divide where you're going to be when you retire and all these other things, so I think it has a lot to do with that.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER THOUGHTS ON THAT?

I think some of it is the way you were raised. My parents raised me to reach for the stars and to keep trying. So I think a lot of it has to do with your raising, too.

I think some has to do with how our society is now. When my parents were growing up, everybody would raise their child. But now, society is more personal goal driven. Everybody's is looking out for themselves.

MODERATOR – LET ME ASK ABOUT POLITICS.

MODERATOR – SPEAKING OF BELIEFS, LET'S TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR POLITICAL VIEWS. WHEN PEOPLE TALK ABOUT IDEOLOGY, THEY TALK ABOUT LIBERALS OVER HERE ON THE LEFT OF THIS SCALE AND YOU'VE GOT CONSERVATIVES OVER HERE ON THE RIGHT. DO YOU THINK THAT YOU COULD BE FIT ON HERE OR DOES THE RANGE NEED TO BE SOMETHING ELSE?

Oh, I agree.

MODERATOR – YOU THINK YOU COULD BE FIT ON HERE?

Oh, yeah. Definitely. More so on the liberal side.

MODERATOR – HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT?

I guess I agree to some extent. I just think that I don't feel that you can group everyone. Not everyone is going to be on that spectrum or any spectrum. But I just think that as a generation, we're kind of in the middle.

MODERATOR – DOES ANYONE FEEL THAT THIS SCALE, THIS WAY OF LOOKING AT POLITICAL POSITIONING JUST DOESN'T DEFINE YOU? ANYONE HAVE THAT SENSE?

I think it's a little bit difficult at times when you just say a [little off the surface]. A lot of times you have to look at it, well, what's the issue. If it's a personal issue, I'm more conservative on that issue. Do I think this is more of a societal issue, then I may be a little bit more liberal. If anything, you could create more X's on there.

MODERATOR – BUT IN TERMS OF JUST THE GENERAL TERMS, LIBERAL TO CONSERVATIVE AS A RANGE STILL MAKES SENSE TO YOU?

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yes.

MODERATOR – THAT'S THE SENSE THAT I'M GETTING.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – OKAY, FINE. AND LET'S SAY MY HAND IS A RANGE, BECAUSE AS YOU SAID IT VARIES. I'M GOING TO MOVE ACROSS AND TELL ME WHEN I'M SORTING OF GETTING IN THE GENERAL AREA OF WHERE YOU THINK MOST OF YOU AND YOUR PEERS ARE.

It depends on what we're talking about. Are we talking about pollution or the war. What are we talking? Are we just talking general?

MODERATOR – JUST GENERALLY IF YOU HAD TO DESCRIBE WHERE YOU ARE ON THIS RANGE.

Okay.

MODERATOR – THAT'S A GOOD RANGE, RIGHT? SO STOP ME WHEN IT LOOKS GOOD.

Stop.

Stop.

Stop.

Stop.

MODERATOR – ANYBODY WANT ME TO GO ANY FURTHER? NO? ALL RIGHT. LEFT OF CENTER, BUT NOT ALL THE WAY OVER.

Right.

MODERATOR – ALL RIGHT. ANOTHER TERM THAT PEOPLE ARE USING ABOUT YOUR GENERATION IS PROGRESSIVE. SOMEONE WHO IS BEING PROGRESSIVE. DO YOU THINK THAT'S AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION?

Yes.

MODERATOR – NICKY THINKS SO. ANYONE ELSE THINK SO?

Yeah.

MODERATOR – WHAT WOULD PROGRESSIVE MEAN TO YOU?

I think we're progressive because we're constantly striving. That's basically what everybody said today. We're not a generation that gets comfortable. We're constantly looking to move up. I'm not saying everybody's like that. But I'm sure a great percentage of us are. We're always looking for advances to do better. We always want to know why. How does it work? There's a lot of things that we didn't talk about. We want to know why. We ask a lot of questions. Asking questions, we do make progress. We're not just blind about the issues. We're trying to find out why something is. We're trying to get to the next level to see how we can change something.

I was thinking like if you take our parents who were on the job for 20 or 30 years. But if someone called me tomorrow saying they're going to pay me more than what I'm making now, then. . .

Bye.

. . .that's just the way it is. I think that I have to do what is best for me and my family.

He's right.

MODERATOR – IN TERMS OF WHAT IS PROGRESSIVE, LOOKING TO BETTER YOURSELF, ASKING WHY, GETTING A BETTER QUALITY-OF-LIFE, DO ANY OF YOU FEEL THAT PROGRESSIVE IS NOT THE RIGHT TERM? THAT ANOTHER TERM WOULD BE BETTER? OR THAT THERE MIGHT BE ANOTHER WAY TO DESCRIBE IT?

We're motivated.

I think a little bit more proactive.

Yeah.

Goal driven.

MODERATOR – HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE PATRIOTISM?

I don't know.

MODERATOR – GINA?

Oh, god. Repeat the question.

MODERATOR – HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE PATRIOTISM?

Loyalty.

MODERATOR – LOYALTY TO WHAT?

Typically it means your country. That's what it means to me.

Love and faith in one's country.

MODERATOR – DO ANY OF YOU CONSIDER YOURSELVES TO BE PATRIOTIC?

I love my country.

Yeah.

I wouldn't want to go anywhere else because we have freedom. There are a lot of things that I don't agree with. But we're more open here. We get to do a lot. People are always trying to leave their countries and come over here.

That's the reason why I wouldn't go anywhere else because as far as like the values of this country and leadership and with Iraq, it's really sickening and sad of how things are going on. But if I had to move to another country that would allow the freedoms to be whatever you want to be, I don't know if a lot of people would still be here or trying their best to get here. We have a lot of people trying to get here because they think they'll get the American Dream.

MODERATOR – HOW DO THE REST OF YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT? OF THE IDEA THAT IF THERE WAS SOMEPLACE ELSE TO GO WHERE YOU WOULD HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITY, GOING MIGHT BE AN OPTION?

As far as our leadership is right now, the standpoint that we're in. . .you love your. . .I love my family, but you have crazy people in your family. You love the USA but you've got some people who are crazy.

It's almost the same as he was saying about leaving his job.

If someone offered me something better, I'd go.

I love my job and the pay and everything, but if there was more money, with the same freedoms and just a little bit more (inaudible).

MODERATOR – WE'RE GOING TO SHIFT GEARS AND TALK ABOUT LEADERSHIP, OUR COUNTRY'S LEADERS. HOW WOULD YOU RATE OVERALL, THE LEADERSHIP IN OUR COUNTRY TODAY, MEANING POLITICAL LEADERS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, CORPORATE LEADERS.

Poor.

Scandalous.

Can do better.

Incompetent.

In for themselves.

Different agendas.

MODERATOR – WHAT DOES THAT SAY TO YOU ABOUT THE MAJOR INSTITUTIONS IN OUR COUNTRY? THAT THEY'RE ALL OF THIS?

A lot of them are crooked. A lot of them have a lot of inner things going on that we'll never know about.

It's like everybody in a hospital. Everybody is in a certain group, if you can't click, you can't be in the group because you might not reach that level. And if you are in that group, there's no telling that the people that were there before you might set you up and criticize you.

Right.

Either you've got to change or pretty much chill.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT THAT? WHAT THAT STATE OF OUR LEADERSHIP IS DOING, SAYS ABOUT OUR SOCIETY, SAYS ABOUT OUR COUNTRY?

I think it kind of goes, well, you were talking earlier about people being self-serving. I think to some degree, it becomes evident even in higher offices. You can see that self-serving nature

come out in the sense that hidden agendas. Everything's not transparent. It makes you wonder where your tax dollars are going, what's happening here.

MODERATOR – ARE THERE ANY PEOPLE OR ORGANIZATIONS THAT YOU COULD THINK OF RIGHT NOW THAT ARE SORT OF PROVIDING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP?

Yes, the church.

The church.

MODERATOR – ANY PARTICULAR CHURCH, OR JUST CHURCH IN GENERAL?

Any Bible based church.

MODERATOR – WHAT SETS THEM APART FROM THE OTHER LEADERSHIP? WHO ELSE SAID CHURCH? WHAT SETS THEM APART FROM CORPORATE AND POLITICAL LEADERS THAT MAKES THEM BETTER?

More morals.

Morals.

Yeah.

They've got to.

In the corporate and political world, you can't bring the church into this. So a lot of those people, their morals and values, they hide them and it's just a self-preservation thing. Out for me.

MODERATOR – LET ME RE-PHRASE THAT QUESTION. WHAT WOULD CHURCHES, WHO ARE IN YOUR VIEW MORE EFFECTIVE, THAN THE POLITICIANS OR THE CORPORATE LEADERS?

You can see it.

I think people who have faith in the church for what they're being taught. But with government, it's (inaudible).

Them being real. There's more negative as far as politically or even at your job. You may answer to someone who is a Christian or Muslim or something else. You don't know what they stand for. But they're bringing you pretty much face value as far as church.

I was going to say accountability.

MODERATOR – ANY PARTICULAR PEOPLE THAT STICK OUT IN YOUR MIND AS EITHER BEING EFFECTIVE OR PORTRAYING THESE KINDS OF THE POSITIVE THINGS THAT YOU LOOK FOR?

Oprah.

(Inaudible – many people speaking at once.)

MODERATOR – I WANT TO TALK ABOUT OUR POLITICAL LEADERS. HOW WOULD YOU CATEGORIZE OUR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP?

They're in a state of confusion.

MODERATOR – WHAT'S ANOTHER WAY OF PUTTING IT?

They need to be gone.

I just get a sense that I'm not getting the full picture. . .

Right.

. . .that I'm getting a piece of it here, a piece of there. I think the truth is probably somewhere in the middle. But there's just always these two extremes.

I think if we just had time to sit down and put each piece together, we would get the truth. But basically they're being (inaudible) with all things.

They're out for them or their friends. Like with the cliques. Whoever was within that group, that's what they're out for. Any type of law or anything that they come up with, there's always something behind it that you don't see, that benefits them more than it does you. They tell you one thing, and do something else.

They tell you what sounds good, what you want to hear.

Right.

Our nation is like a big business. That's what it is. It's run like a huge company and we're the employees. It's like, we're going to do this. But we're only going to tell them this information just so they'll go along with it. But in the end, it's going to hurt and that's how the government is running.

MODERATOR – YOUR REACTION IS NOT VERY POSITIVE. WHERE DOES THAT LEAD YOU? WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT IT?

We used to think voting would do it.

Yeah, that's right. If you voted, it would change.

It's proving to be incorrect.

You've got to keep voting and keep hoping. . .

Correct.

. . .but really, our hands are tied. There's nothing that we can do because when it comes down to it, the decisions are going to be made by the people we put in office. The only thing we can do is hope that what they're saying is truth. They're not just trying to get in office or just do what their cliques want.

I don't think voting helps.

What happened to collective change? I understand it that you have leaders in government. But it's not hard to believe that when you get a group of people together, they can change their corner of the world and that can spread. That sounds like a great story, but I really believe that. I think it has to be a collective change. That we're not necessarily bound by the government. We have to take it upon ourselves.

MODERATOR – HOW MIGHT YOU DO THAT?

I felt a little (inaudible) earlier when you asked about patriotism because when I am not happy with what's going on in the government. But then when I look at my behavior, it's not necessarily tied to anything. I do vote. I understand political things. But when it comes to my particular actions, I can't say that I'm doing so much, and I'm so disgusted with the way things are. The question was how do you do that? I think you have to get involved at your local level and try to build that collective voice.

MODERATOR – GETTING INVOLVED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, CAN YOU GIVE ME SOME EXAMPLES OF THINGS THAT YOU COULD DO?

Try for some leadership positions or groups in the community and then they can spread out to the city and then the state. It's like starting something small because we need so much. I agree with the point as far as you feel like there's really no hope. But are we really doing everything that we could possibly be doing? Are we at least speaking our voice about the issues?

MODERATOR – WHAT'S THE ANSWER TO THAT? HAVE YOU EXHAUSTED ALL OPTIONS?

No.

No.

No.

No.

No.

MODERATOR – WHAT DO YOU THINK IT WOULD TAKE TO GET PEOPLE THAT YOU KNOW TO DO SOMETHING AT THIS POINT?

Personally, I feel that some things would have to happen to me personally or somebody immediately around me for me to really just get that fire, just get that reaction. I'm hearing something about somebody and I think about it with them. I can say, oh man, you normally hate when that happens. I think about it for a second and then I've moved on to something else. But when it's somebody like my sister, this is really affecting me. So I think it really has to be someone or something that's really close. Or an issue that's really dear to my heart for me to just really do something.

Or show me that it works. I would have to show them that something actually works. Then you get a lot of people to jump on board. If they did it there, then you can do it here.

Show me if you have a plan. I've been to organizations and you go there and you expect to see that it's kind of developed. And you get there and it's just confusion and you don't see a developed plan. So that would be a turn off.

MODERATOR – WE WERE TALKING EARLIER ABOUT THE PLACE THAT MORAL ISSUES PLAY IN OUR POLITICS. IT SEEMS LIKE YOU GUYS ARE SAYING THAT WE SHOULD BE MORE CONCERNED WITH ECONOMIC ISSUES, RATHER THAN BEING FOCUSED ON ISSUES LIKE GAY MARRIAGE, ABORTION. DO YOU THINK ISSUES LIKE THAT HAVE A PLACE IN POLITICS? THAT WE SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT THAT IN A NATION?

I do because those are issues that are happening now so they need to be addressed. I can remember that back in the day when abortions were secret. Or gay marriages weren't as flamboyant as they are now. So I feel that because they're so out in the open now, yeah, they need to be addressed because they're not (inaudible) anymore.

I think they talk about it too much. I think it should be addressed, but I think that they put too much emphasis on it because at the end of the day, America was founded on being able to do what you want. Freedom of choice. The only thing that we can talk about is can this man get married to this man? Can this lady have an abortion? Those things should be addressed, not just all day, that shouldn't a topic of a candidate's debate. That shouldn't be their main focus because it really doesn't affect everybody. Gay marriages, I'm not for it or against it. Anything that doesn't affect me, I could care less. If he wants to marry that man, that's his thing. That has nothing to do with me.

That kicks in with the moral things like, that's not number one on my list. That should be addressed, but there are more important things that they should be addressing than gay marriages and abortion. Like Social Security.

Social Security and healthcare, those are positive things. Those can produce positive things. But abortion, that stuff is drama. So drama will always stand out more than the good things. So that's why all that is being addressed because those are the attention-getters.

[. . .END OF SIDE A/BEGINNING OF SIDE B. . .]

MODERATOR – . . .AND IDEAS THAT I WANT TO GET YOUR REACTIONS TO. I'M GOING TO PASS AROUND THESE HANDOUTS. BELOW IS A LIST OF 10 ISSUES THAT WE FACE IN OUR COUNTRY TODAY. READ THROUGH THE LIST AND RANK ORDER THE TEN IN TERMS OF IMPORTANCE THAT THAT ISSUE HAS WITH YOU AND THE URGENCY WHICH YOU BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED. ONE IS THE MORE IMPORTANT, 10 IS THE LEAST IMPORTANT. OKAY FOR NOW, TELL ME IF YOU GAVE THE LETTER YOUR NUMBER ONE?

A – 0
B – 0
C – 1
D – 2
E – 4
F – 0
G – 2
H – 0
I – 2
J – 2

NOW I'M GOING TO GET THE ONE THAT YOUR RANKED SECOND:

A – 1
B – 2
C – 1
D – 2
E – 2
F – 0
G – 1
H – 0
I – 0
J – 2

OKAY. LET'S SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT HERE. THE ONE THAT SORT IS COMING OUT ON THE TOP IS E, THE FUTURE IS SOLID, SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE AND

OTHER SOCIAL INSURANCE PROGRAMS. WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? WHAT'S THE CONCERN?

There won't be any Social Security when we get there.

We won't get it.

MODERATOR – IS THAT AN ACTIVE CONCERN THAT SOCIAL SECURITY WON'T BE AROUND?

Yes.

Yes.

It is since you mentioned it.

MODERATOR – DO YOU HAVE THE SENSE THAT THERE IS ANYTHING THAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT?

Save your money.

Learn in invest.

Invest.

401K. I know a lot of people around my age are saying, hey, I'm 25, I don't need a 401K.

You have to. It's the only thing.

MODERATOR – THE SECOND ONE UP HERE IS LACK OF LONG TERM JOB BENEFITS AND RETIREMENT SECURITY FOR U.S. WORKERS. ANYTHING ANYBODY WANT TO SAY TO FLESH THAT OUT ANY? ANYTHING YOU WANT TO ADD?

When I look at from the country's standpoint, we're a pretty powerful country. I wonder over time, jobs are shipped overseas, how will we look 50 years from now? Will we still look the same? So just from a more country perspective.

We really don't have job security at all.

Right.

It's really hard to find a job unless you're in healthcare, nursing or something. In that field. But sort of the outlook on it is that it's really hard to find a decent job these days.

I don't think we're making the shift as a country. A lot of stuff is being shifted overseas and I don't think we're getting the cue that we need to maybe focus in on other industries in this country. We're still trying to do work that's being shipped overseas. Maybe we need to see the bigger picture and transition, I guess, a little bit.

MODERATOR – SO MY SENSE IS THAT WITH THESE THINGS, THE SOCIAL SECURITY AND JOB SECURITY, THAT THIS IS RELATING BACK TO WHAT YOU WERE SAYING BEFORE ABOUT THE COMMON GOOD VERSUS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT. THAT THE FOCUS SEEMS TO BE MORE TOWARDS YOUR PERSONAL AS OPPOSED TO MORE GENERAL. IS THAT CORRECT OR AM I WRONG ON THAT?

I was coming from a different perspective on E. I was thinking about my parents and older relatives, that they may not have made the wisest decisions when they were younger. So the onus is going to rest on me to take care of them to some degree.

MODERATOR – BUT YOU WERE THINKING HOW IT WAS GOING TO AFFECT YOUR PARENTS AND NOT AFFECT YOU?

Right.

MODERATOR – THEN MY SENSE WAS GENERALLY YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT HOW IT WAS GOING TO AFFECT YOU.

I don't plan on having Social Security.

MODERATOR – ARE THERE ANY OTHER CHALLENGES FACING THE UNITED STATES THAT YOU THINK ARE IMPORTANT THAT AREN'T ON THIS LIST?

Crime.

Yeah.

A lot of violence. The main thing that's sticking out to me is terrorism. I just don't want to wake up one day and that's the most important right now. I want to be able to travel and not have to basically remove all my clothes to get on a plane. And to know that I can safely go there without somebody just popping up and hijacking the plane. That scares. Me. 9/11, it just really shook me. So I really pay attention to terrorism and all that that goes on. This is real. So I think that's the main thing. It falls into violence.

MODERATOR – ANY SENSE OF ANYTHING THAT COULD BE DONE AT YOUR LEVEL ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

The only thing I can do is just hope that I don't come across a terrorist.

I always thought that, as a country, we are too lenient on the criminals. We spend millions and millions of dollars on trials where we've got evidence. And we've got to have a trial. There's really no (inaudible) in you go to jail, if I kill somebody and I admit to it, that's a plea bargain. So now I don't get the death penalty, I get life. 20 years or things like that. I think if we started doing like some of these other countries, really punishing them and making examples out of some of these people that don't really care about what they did, we could cut some of this stuff out.

I'm for that.

(Many speaking at once.)

The punishment to fit your crime.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER ISSUES THAT YOU FEEL ARE IMPORTANT AND CHALLENGING THAT AREN'T ON HERE?

Illegal immigration.

MODERATOR – THIS IS A LIST OF PROBLEMS AND WE'VE TALKED ABOUT SOME OF THEM. DO YOU HAVE A SENSE THAT ANY OF THE BIG PROBLEMS THAT ARE FACING THE UNITED STATES, THAT WE'RE SEEING ANY PROGRESS BEING MADE IN SOLVING THEM?

Yeah, they'll be solved next year when Bush gets out.

Right.

[Laughter.]

MODERATOR – SO NO RIGHT NOW, BUT POSSIBLY IN A YEAR.

I hope so.

As far as the threat of terrorism, I don't know what more they can do.

We can stop telling them where we're looking for them.

We pretty much advertise everything that we're doing pretty much. So they're always a step ahead of us. If you're looking for something circular, I'll do some square. That's the way it is.

MODERATOR – DO YOU HAVE ANY SENSE WHY YOU FEEL THAT PROGRESS IS NOT BEING MADE ON ANY OF THESE PROBLEMS?

Because of the leadership.

Too busy making money.

There's too much money being made. With our dependence on foreign oil, from what I'm hearing, we have plenty of resources here for oil. But like Bush owns oil companies. So why would he worry about anything? So what if gas goes to \$5.00/gallon? Great! More money for us. So it's too much money being made for them to care what's going on.

MODERATOR – WHAT CAN BE DONE TO CHANGE THAT?

An impeachment.

I think if there was more transparency in government. I don't know if that can be done or not. Then we have our desire to know why and how. We don't get that a lot.

And you still won't get the truth.

See I have my own opinion. I think no matter who is in government, there's some degree that you're always going to have some dishonesty.

That's true.

Yeah, that's true.

But the stuff I hear, it's obvious.

(Inaudible – everyone speaking at once.)

I think that they should change that a President can be elected to 2 terms. When they realize that they can't be re-elected again, they start really, really looking out for themselves.

They really do.

I'm only here for 2 more years. Let me see which groups are out there that can help me.

Right.

MODERATOR – TURN TO PAGE 2. WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT HEALTHCARE AND RAISING COSTS AND MORE INSURED AND INCREASED IN OBESITY LEADING TO CHRONIC DISEASES AND HOW TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS. IF YOU LOOK AT THIS STATEMENT ABOUT ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE, TELL ME HOW YOU RESPOND.

EACH NEW GENERATION IS SUFFERING AN EPIDEMIC OF CHRONIC (INAUDIBLE) DISEASES DUE TO POLLUTED ENVIRONEMNT, A LACK OF BASIC HEALTHCARE AND THE POISONS WE FEED THEM EVERY DAY. EVERY CHILD IN AMERICA, REGARDLESS OF RACE, CLASS OR INCOME SHOULD HAVE FULL HEALTH COVERAGE AND PROPER NUTRITION. PARENTS MUST BE TAUGHT THE IMPACT THAT PREVENTATIVE CARE AND PROPER NOURISHMENT WILL HAVE ON A CHILD. IF WE CONTINUE TO SPEND MORE AND MORE MONEY ON HEALTHCARE WITHOUT ADDRESSING THE CAUSES OF THIS CRISIS, WE WILL ONLY WEAKEN OUR ECONOMY AND CONDEMN MILLIONS MORE CHILDREN TO SUFFERING AND DISEASE.

ANYONE HAVE A SERIOUS DISAGREEMENT WITH THIS STATEMENT? SO I'M ASSUMING THAT YOU ALL PRETTY MUCH AGREE WITH THIS?

Yes.

Yeah.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – WHAT THINGS STAND OUT FOR YOU AS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT?

Every child in America, regardless of race, class or income should have full health coverage and proper nutrition.

MODERATOR – OKAY. I SEE NODDING AROUDN THE TABLE ON THAT ONE.

Parents must be taught the impact that preventative care and proper nourishment will have on a child. I'm so tired at seeing little kids with silver in their mouth already. It's from the parents not really knowing how to take care of the kids' teeth.

The word, preventable or preventative, the idea that it's something doesn't have to be here. Putting the proper resources in place. And the idea of partnership, in this case, with the parents. I'm assume that it's with the government. It's not an (inaudible) that's just riding the government, but parents want to be taught. And the idea that the parents can make their decisions with the help.

MODERATOR – ANYTHING ELSE THAT STANDS OUT?

Blue collar also. Dealing with the symptoms rather than the root of something. That whole idea.

MODERATOR – IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU FEEL THAT PEOPLE YOUR AGE AND YOUR GENERATION CAN DO TO MAKE THIS START TO HAPPEN?

Educate ourselves.

Advise. We have a lot of young people, especially a lot of young people were not advised about going to the doctor and about healthcare. Young men aren't going to the doctor. It's just like you know what's going on with your body. You can educate as far as if I can help myself right here, with me making changes for myself is going to make my children, just like a lot of kids now, a lot of kids have asthma nowadays. It comes from smoking, just being around where parents smoke. A lot of them develop asthma from that.

MODERATOR – HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE KIDS? HALF OF YOU. OKAY. ANYTHING ELSE YOU CAN DO TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

We have to start on the local level. Demand it because we're really the working community. So if we start demanding these things, this is what we need, and start asking.

MODERATOR – WHAT'S GOING TO GET YOU TO START DEMANDING?

People that don't have healthcare, when something happens to them or their kids or their spouse.

We need to do the preventative and not wait for something to happen. What can I do to keep this from happening rather than do the band-aid afterwards?

MODERATOR – TURNING TO ANOTHER SHEET, #3. I WANT TO TALK ABOUT OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL AND FOSSIL FUELS.

OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL AND FOSSIL FUELS IS THE GREATEST THREAT TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY, OUR QUALITY OF LIFE, AND OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE. THAT'S WHY WE MUST LAUNCH A MASSIVE, CONCERTED NATIONAL EFFORT SIMILAR TO THE APOLLO PROGRAM THAT PUT A MAN ON THE MOON WITH THE GOAL OF MOVING AMERICA BEYOND FOSSIL FUELS AND INVENTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENERGY BASED ON NEW TECHNOLOGIES, SUCH AS HYDROGEN OR FUSION. THIS PLAN WOULD REQUIRE A HUGE NATIONAL INVESTMENT THAT WOULD PRODUCE MILLIONS OF NEW JOBS, DRAMATICALLY REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE AND FREE US FROM OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL THAT SUBSIDIZES REGIMES THAT SUPPORT THE TERRORISTS THAT ARE TARGETING US.

AGREE, DISAGREE?

I just want to roll my head.

I agree but who's to say that that wouldn't be us just like everything else? If we did have another way so we wouldn't have to use those fuels, who's to say that once that is established that we wouldn't go to another country for it? I don't know how much that would actually change how things are here holistically.

The thing that got to me was the huge national investment. I guess that's referring to capital and other resources. I wonder the balance between us investing that much capital and someone was talking earlier about we're into instant gratification. So when we invest all these capital, hydrogen based, energy, we're not going to see the results immediately. How long can we invest in something and not necessarily see the results? I kind of go back and forth on the energy thing. It really is a balance between capital and benefits.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER THOUGHTS? DO YOU ALL AGREE WITH THIS? DISAGREE?

I agree with it. But it's going to take those people who have an interest in the oil, big time oil executives. Because money runs things and they have a lot of it. For us, it's like hey, we're going to leave you alone. We're going to go here. They're going to. . . I don't know how we're going to convince, if I run an oil company how would you convince me, I'm the leader of a multi-billion dollar company that's going to get slashed? That's a lot of money to lose.

MODERATOR – HOW IMPORTANT OF AN ISSUE IS THIS TO YOU?

It's very important to me when I go to the gas station.

Gas station.

Every time I pay at the gas station.

[Laughter.]

It's like the prices go up as I go down the street.

I guess from an environmental standpoint, too, it's also important. We don't really talk about it that much but there's an environmental impact.

Right.

MODERATOR – THAT'S THE THING WHERE I'M FEELING A LITTLE DISCONNECT BECAUSE YOU'RE SAYING IT'S IMPORTANT BUT YOU SAY THAT YOU DON'T REALLY TALK ABOUT IT VERY MUCH.

Right.

MODERATOR – SO IS IT PERSONALLY IMPORTANT OR IS IT INTELLECTUALLY IMPORTANT? IS THIS AN AREA THAT YOU GET REALLY EXERCISED ABOUT?

I do. But I just can't figure out how it's messing up the environment. We know that it's doing this. It's not a secret.

MODERATOR – BUT IS IT REALLY BOTHERING YOU?

Yeah because I have a son. I'm thinking it's already a lot of things in the air now. What is it going to be like when he's 25, 30?

MODERATOR – ANYTHING YOU CAN SEE YOURSELVES DOING TO FIX THIS?

Those little cars they've got.

(Inaudible) a clean up program before. But clean-up programs and other things to benefit the environment. That's really kind of little compared to what we're talking about here.

MODERATOR – WOULD YOU DO IT?

Yeah.

Maybe if everybody did a little, it would turn into a lot.

When it comes to the environment, it's in our neighborhoods. It's closer to our neighborhoods than it is for (inaudible).

MODERATOR – ANYTHING ELSE THAT STRUCK YOU ABOUT THIS STATEMENT THAT WE HAVEN'T DISCUSSED? TURN BACK QUICKLY TO THE FIRST PAGE. I JUST WANT TO GO AROUND THE TABLE AND TELL ME WHAT NUMBER DID YOU GIVE TO LETTER "A"?

6.

2.

6.

4.

10.

7.

8.

7.

9.

3.

MODERATOR – OKAY, GREAT. THANK YOU. NOW I WANT TO GO TO #4. THIS ONE CONCERNS THE NATIONAL DEBT. THE NATIONAL DEBT NOW IS OVER \$8 TRILLION AND INCREASING AT A RECORD RATE. A GROWING PERCENTAGE OF THE DEBT IS OWNED BY OTHER COUNTRIES, MOST NOTABLY CHINA. THESE COUNTRIES WILL BE OUR GREATEST COMPETITORS AND POTENTIALLY ADVERSARIES IN FUTURE DECADES. THIS IS A STATEMENT ABOUT THAT SITUATION. IT SAYS HERE, READING ALONG:

WE MUST STOP OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS WHO ARE SPENDING MONEY THAT THEY DON'T HAVE AND PASS THEIR CRUSHING DEBTS ONTO OUR GENERATION. BUT WE CAN'T DIG OUT OF THIS HOLE SIMPLY BY CUTTING SPENDING HERE AND RAISING TAXES THERE. WE MUST REBUILD OUR ECONOMIC BASE BY RESTORING THE INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED TO PROVIDE THE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS FOR OUR DEFENSE AND BASIC NEEDS AND REVERSING THE DECLINE OF OUR MIDDLE CLASS WHICH HAS ALWAYS FUELED OUR GREATEST ECONOMIC EXPANSIONS. THIS WILL IN TURN ALLOW US TO END OUR HUGE STRUCTURAL TRADE INBALANCES AND MORE EFFECTIVELY COMPETE WITH COUNTRIES WHO CURRENTLY EXPLOIT OUR GROWING NEED FOR BASIC GOODS.

ANY THOUGHTS?

What I don't understand is we're facing so many economic challenges, why has Bush been spending so much money on this war? With so many other issues? I'm not really up on this but I'm just speaking off the top of my head. If you're in this economic difficulty, then why is all this money being generated out to the war?

How much does a bomb cost?

[Laughter.]

I wonder if the industrial infrastructure is really the route that we want to take. I know it's always has fueled our expansion. But I'm wondering is that really what we want to focus in on. And maybe not do some other things. That would be a cool shift to our society. But I don't know if we can continue to compete on an industrial level. If labor is always cheaper over there, then technically another country is always going to have a cheaper product.

MODERATOR – ANY THOUGHTS ON HOW WE COULD COMPETE?

I think it would have to be from an intellectual standpoint. Not saying that we don't have a place for industry in our country, but I think we have to take back some of the intellectual things that we had also.

MODERATOR – DID ANY OF YOU MARK ANYTHING ON HERE THAT’S WORTHY OF COMMENT? I’M NOT GETTING THE SENSE THAT THIS IS SOMETHING THAT YOU’RE FEELING VERY STRONGLY ABOUT? BUT IS THERE ANYTHING HERE THAT’S REALLY STRIKING?

I understand what Clarence is saying. But I really believe that we need to get back to that industrial infrastructure that we had because now a lot of things, you look out now and you see all these foreign cars. We used to be the biggest country as far as cars and things like that. That was a big part of our economy. I understand that he’s definitely right about the labor, that you can find someone who will work for \$5/hour instead of \$10/hour, that’s what you want to do. But now it gets to a point where they’re almost wiping the laborers out anyway because machines are building the cars and they’re going down the assembly line anyway.

They just need somebody to watch it.

We do need to go back, we definitely need to invest in the intellectual part of it and see what’s out there in that realm. But just good old American hard work, get back to that.

MODERATOR – IS THERE ANY SENSE THAT THERE’S SOMETHING THAT YOU ALL CAN DO TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN? LET THE RECORD SHOW THAT WE ARE GETTING NO RESPONSE ON THIS ONE.

I would say buy more American cars, but I don’t think the everything that is within an American vehicle is necessarily made in America. They’re from China or wherever, other than the U.S.

MODERATOR – RIGHT. WE’VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES IN THE U.S. AND SOME OF THE SOLUTIONS. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT WE KNOW IS THAT YOUR GENERATION ARE MOST AT RISK FOR ALL THE THINGS THAT ARE GOING ON. AND THAT YOU ALSO REPRESENT THE LARGEST GENERATION IN AMERICAN HISTORY. AND THAT YOU HAVE A UNIQUE SET OF EXPERIENCES AND BELIEFS AND THE POTENTIAL TO WIELD REAL POWER IN THESE ISSUES. WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT YOU GUYS, YOUR GENERATION, WOULD BE ABLE TO DO THAT’S DIFFERENT? SO TO FIX PROBLEMS AND DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT,. . .WHEN WE WERE TALKING ABOUT THE LEADERSHIP BEFORE, YOU WERE ALL SAYING THAT THEY’RE JUST NOT ADDRESSING IT AT ALL. IT’S NOT TRANSPARENT. IT’S NOT BEING HELPFUL. IS THERE A DIFFERENT WAY TO DO IT? IS THERE A DIFFERENT PATH?

Make that a little bit more clear.

MODERATOR – IF YOU HAD TO FIX THE PROBLEMS IN THE U.S. RIGHT NOW, HOW WOULD YOU DO IT?

I’d start with the education process. Because I really feel that other countries are better preparing their youth to be leaders and to be at the forefront of technology and ideas.

MODERATOR – SO WHAT WOULD YOU DO ABOUT THE EDUCATION PROCESS?

I would invest more money into the schools. Especially teachers because they're like one of the least paid professions, but they've got the biggest role in society. Your kids spend more time at school than they spend with you. You might instill the values in your child. But they spend more time with that teacher.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER THINGS THAT YOU WOULD CHANGE ABOUT THE COUNTRY? NOW I'M GOING ON WHAT YOU TOLD ME EARLIER THAT YOU ALL FEEL THAT THE COUNTRY NEEDS TO CHANGE? IS THAT CORRECT?

Right.

Yeah.

We really don't know how to run a country, but we know it's not being run right. I don't know how to build a car, but if I set equipment together with scotch tape, I can build a car, but it won't be right.

MODERATOR – IS THERE ANY ROLE THAT YOU CAN SEE, ASSUMING THAT SINCE NOBODY'S CONTRADICTED JAMES, I'M GOING TO ASSUME THAT ON SOME LEVEL YOU ALL KIND OF AGREE BECAUSE YOU'RE ALSO NOT COMING OUT WITH SOLUTIONS. BUT IF IT'S NOT A QUESTION OF KNOWING HOW TO DO THINGS, DO YOU FEEL THAT THERE IS A ROLE THAT PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELVES CAN PLAY IN MAKING THE LEADERSHIP OR MAKING THE PEOPLE PAY ATTENTION TO THESE CHANGES? WHAT KINDS OF THINGS CAN YOU DO TO GET PEOPLE CONCERNED? TO GET PEOPLE TO DO THINGS A DIFFERENT WAY?

I think that we need to have organizations that have structured plans and that actually, we have so many organizations. Sometimes we take all the organizations and put them into 5 or 6 with a specific plan and mission and get people going in one direction instead of all these small organizations.

MODERATOR – I KNOW YOU WANT TO MAKE IT MORE LOCAL BECAUSE THAT'S SOMETHING THAT SOMEBODY CAN DO.

Right.

MODERATOR – WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU CAN DO IN THE PRIVACY OR THE PUBLICNESS OF YOUR HOME, YOUR SCHOOL, YOUR WORK, YOUR CHURCH, WHATEVER IT IS TO GET CHANGE MOVING?

The only thing that I can change is (inaudible) because we're not in a position to really, you know, we're talking about where we are here today. None of us are in a position to be a force to

push change. The only thing that we can do is pray for our government and the people in leadership.

I agree with that, too. But I do think everyone has a voice. You can pray about it. But me personally that is what I feel that the black community relies on, “oh we’re going to pray about it.” Praying is an action. Don’t get me wrong. But I think it takes more than that. If you’re going to have a voice in something, yeah, you can pray about it. But I think that you need to take action. You need to move forward. If that means you need to write letters to your local government. There are things in the newspaper, editorials, opinions. If you don’t like something and you don’t like the school system, go to PTA meetings. Go to different things that, I just think that there are so many things that people have an opportunity to speak out. We just kind of brush it aside. Yet we complain. We talk about the schools, but what are we really doing? Are we volunteering in the schools to help the teachers and aides? Different things like that.

MODERATOR – IF YOU WANT ANYTHING DONE, YOU HAVE TO DO IT YOURSELF. DOES THAT APPLY WHEN IT COMES TO THE PROBLEMS FACING THE UNITED STATES?

I believe so. If I see it handled on a national standpoint, how can I at least make it work for myself or in a positive way or at least try to make it work for me. So if we know we won’t have any Social Security, let me invest. Let me save. If they’re not going to have anything for me, I’ve got to put my own aside.

Right.

I guess it depends on what you’re passionate about. What affects you the most. From that point, finding your passion with that along with prayer, just like she was saying, is going to take some type of action. Let’s just say Social Security, for an example. I have children and it’s number one. Read up on finances. If you know anything find someone that works for a bank and invite them to your church. Have someone come out and speak about how they can save and have something for a later date. If it’s about the school, help out at the school. Start your own classes after school for the children. There’s many different things that you can do. It just depends on your passion and a plan of action that you take to get there.

I agree that everybody has a voice. But there are people that are doing things but they’re still not being heard. You can do all you can do. But some people are still not being heard.

MODERATOR – WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY RIGHT NOW AND ALL OF THESE ISSUES THAT WE’RE TALKING ABOUT, WITH THE CONFUSION AND THE LACK OF LEADERSHIP AND JUST ALL OF THE STUFF THAT WE’VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT FOR THE LAST 2 HOURS, ARE YOU ANGRY?

I think it’s disappointing.

Concerned.

I agree with that. I'm not angry. Just more so. . .

Mad.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – MAD?

Yeah, man. Because that's (inaudible).

MODERATOR – MAD, TOO?

Yeah.

Frustrated.

MODERATOR – HOW ABOUT YOU?

As a child growing up, I never thought I'd see the world where we are today. Some of the problems that we face. The financial situation that our government is in, it ain't looking good. That's the easiest way to put that.

MODERATOR – WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF YOU? ANGRY, NOT ANGRY?

I'm not angry. I'm definitely concerned about it. I think it's definitely something that we will need to pay attention to.

I am concerned. You don't have these dialogues every day where it just gets in your face a little bit. So I'm a little bit concerned, yeah.

MODERATOR –TURN TO #5. GO THROUGH THE LIST AND CHECK OFF WHICH OF THE THINGS YOU HAVE DONE, WHICH ARE THE THINGS YOU WOULD BE LIKELY TO DO, AND WHICH ONES THERE WOULD BE NO CHANCE? I'M GOING TO TAKE A TALLY.

VOTING IN FEDERAL, LOCAL ELECTIONS – 10.

BLOGGING ABOUT POLITICAL SOCIAL ISSUE – HAVE - 4. LIKELY – 4. UNLIKELY – 2.

SIGNING PETITIONS – HAVE – 5; LIKELY – 3; UNLIKELY – 2

ATTENDING PUBLIC MEETINGS – HAVE – 9; LIKELY – 1.

WRITING NEWSPAPERS – HAVE – 2; LIKELY – 4; UNLIKELY – 4

PARTICIPATING IN DEMONSTRATIONS – HAVE – 4; LIKELY – 5; UNLIKELY – 1

BASE PURCHASING DECISIONS – HAVE – 3; LIKELY – 7.

VOLUNTEERING FOR A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN – HAVE – 0; LIKELY – 6; UNLIKELY – 4

JOINING POLITICAL OR SOCIAL GROUPS – HAVE – 1; LIKELY – 6; UNLIKELY – 3

FOUNDING A BUSINESS – HAVE – 0; LIKELY – 5; UNLIKELY – 5

RUNNING FOR OFFICE – HAVE – 0; LIKELY – 0; UNLIKELY – 10

WHY WOULD YOU NOT RUN FOR OFFICE?

Don't want the headache.

Too much foolishness.

MODERATOR – WHAT KIND OF FOOLISHNESS ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

As far as things that don't even relate to the political standpoint that needs to come out.

Slander.

The negatives. All the pressure of people blaming me. . .like we blame Bush. But in reality, if Bush said something and the Supreme Court or the Congress don't want it to happen, a lot of times, his hands are tied.

MODERATOR – OTHER REASONS WHY YOU WOULDN'T RUN FOR POLITICAL OFFICE?

That was my reason.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – OKAY. WE HAVE ONE LAST THING THAT I'M GOING TO ASK YOU TO DO...

(end of session)