

BROOKINGS DOHA CENTER
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THE U.S. ELECTIONS: HOW AMERICANS WILL VOTE

Wednesday, October 29, 2008

Doha, Qatar

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. AMR: (inaudible) -- We will conclude 90 minutes from now and -- just before we start, I think I can say pretty fairly that in my 40 year lifetime, I haven't seen a presidential election that's been this followed around the world -- particularly in the Muslim world -- and so I mean I think it's really interesting and part of it is due to the result of new media and I think part of it is a result of America's tremendous footprint in the Middle East, in Iraq and Afghanistan. It's relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And, so I'm looking forward to having our two speakers present on this and then we'll have an opportunity to do questions and answers with them. If it's alright, I'd like to sort of turn to Tom Mann first from a perspective from Washington and before we begin -- just a reminder to everyone to please turn off your cell phones or silence them. And, again, I apologize because this is a small room and it is our

first video conference, we did not have translation available at this event. Normally we do our events in English and in Arabic. And Tom, why don't you, you know, talk to us for 10 minutes about two things -- a general overview of the American electoral system as well as perhaps what it's like -- what is it like in Washington and around the country today? How is the election going to go? What should we be expecting? Things like that. So, without further adieu, Tom, I'll turn it to you. And then Jerry for 10 minutes, then we'll go to question and answer.

DR. MANN: Thank you, Hady. I'm pleased to be with you, if only as a disembodied voice in video form here. As you said, this is an extraordinary American election season. I've traveled around the country and around the world this year and never have I encountered the level of interest that we've experienced this year. It's partly because (inaudible) of the unprecedented competition between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama for the Democratic nomination -- the first really serious female

candidate and the first serious black candidate -- and they were superb and evenly matched and a great uncertainty. It provided a narrative that was more exciting than anything available on television. It was our genuine reality show. But now we're less than a week away and I have to tell you is -- is it really difficult to maintain the sense of uncertainty, excitement because the broad feeling in the country -- not just among the pundits, but among the public -- is that, is that Barack Obama will win this election and win it handily. As you would expect, the McCain Campaign is doing everything it can to suggest that the polls are closing, that, you know, they have a new closing argument that's resonating that Joe the Plumber has revealed Barack Obama to be the redistributionist candidate who will -- who will transfer wealth rather than create it. And all of that is to be expected, but if you look at the evidence coming in already, you will -- you will see that if McCain were to win this election, a greater upset than Harry Truman's come from behind victory in

1948. And you will not be surprised to hear that McCain is (inaudible) without a campaign trail in recent weeks. Tonight we will have an Obama TV extravaganza. He has purchased 30 minutes of television prime time on three of the major networks - - NBC was too late to agree and so he's (inaudible) them as well as a number of cable networks to present his sort of closing argument. It will be a combination of Obama speaking to the camera, of some taped packages showing ordinary Americans and finally cut to a live appearance of Obama before a crowd in Sarasota, Florida. The fact that he has \$3 million to spend on this 30 minute television (inaudible) underscores the reality that by declining the public financing can raise an unprecedented amounts of money and Obama has a huge resource advantage and has had during the weeks of the general election campaign. Another thing to say, Hady, is that -- is that we had a major increase in what we call early voting in America. We've long had absentee balloting and in recent elections, most choosed absentee balloting.

That is, you can get an absentee ballot without any reason for doing so and there's been an increase so now more and more states and localities are opening their polls a couple of weeks early before election day and the turnout has really been quite extraordinary. We've hit -- over 20 percent of the electorate has already cast their ballot and another 10 percent are likely to do so in the upcoming -- the coming weekend. And we're also know from that early voting that Obama and the Democrats are doing very well. Typically, the early voting participants are older, are more sort of established and anchored voters with a slight Republican advantage. But this time, Democrat registrants are vastly outperforming Republican registrants in the early voting and from surveys taken, people who say they've already cast their ballot, Obama is running about a 60 to 40 percent lead over McCain. Now, it could be that Obama supporters are just more enthusiastic and they're getting to the polls early. It doesn't mean that will carry through on election day, but it's certainly an

encouraging sign for the Democrats. The national polls had been pretty stable -- not individual polls. You know on one day we can get one firm release in the polls saying a two point lead for Obama and another poll a 15 point lead. This is hardly a consequence of the difficulty of identifying likely voters -- who will actually show up at the polls. Will it be -- will it be the (inaudible) huge infusion of young voters, of African-American voters or will it be pretty much like it's been in the past? Nonetheless, if you look at all of the polls, the center of gravity has left Obama with a national lead that's been roughly six to eight or nine points in the last month. But today's have confirmed that rather than changed that in any fundamental way and perhaps even more importantly, if you look at the battleground states, you realize that all of the states won by John Kerry in 2004, with the possible exception of Pennsylvania, are comfortably in Obama's (inaudible). There's simply no campaign being waged any more in say Iowa. Iowa was a state that was actually won by Bush and now

it's firmly in Obama's camp -- but, say New Hampshire or Wisconsin -- states won by Kerry -- and even in Pennsylvania, Obama retains at this late stage about a 10 point lead on average in the polls that have been taken. So all of the fight is being waged in red states and in states won by George Bush in 2004 and if you look at those states right now, Obama has strong leads in Iowa, New Mexico, Virginia and Colorado. So if he would only win those four, plus hold on to the Kerry states and he would have 286 electoral votes, which is 16 more than he needs to become President. But he's also ahead in states like Ohio, Florida, Nevada, North Carolina, Missouri. If he won all of those, he'd be over 350. And there's even another half dozen states -- red states where -- where if there is a landslide, he has a chance of carrying those as well. So, so the evidence points to a very healthy Democratic victory at the presidential level. We're seeing the same thing happening in the Congressional elections. In fact, right now with Ted Stevens' conviction in a -- in a felony trial, it now

looks as if Democrats have a good chance of gaining anywhere from seven to eleven seats in the Senate. At the high end, that would -- that would really place them around 60 votes which are the number needed to vote (inaudible) and close all filibusters in the Senate. And in the House, 25, 30 or more seats are -- could be picked up by the Democrats. So it appears likely we will have back that Democratic wave elections. We had one in the mid-term in 2006. All signs now point to another one. We can see this reflected in the amount of money being raised by either Presidential or Congressional candidates and by the political parties and the level of enthusiasm of Democrats versus Republicans and in the number of ads that are being run in contests of the Presidency or the House or the Senate and in the extraordinary get out to vote operation that Obama has -- has put together, basically overcoming what had been a Republican advantage. Now, I close with two observations. The reality is that this election cycle had began with and is ending with a huge Democratic

advantage. The fact is the Republicans have controlled the White House for eight years. It's always difficult to extend one's hold on the White House beyond eight years. But in this case, it's even more difficult. What with George Bush's enormous unpopularity, his approval ratings are now in the low 20's. With the economy performing very badly really throughout this year, but now in a meltdown and because of the financial instability and by all serious accounts, the American economy already in a recession, with the costly war in Iraq and in Afghanistan, with the country that in which 90 percent of its citizens believe we're seriously off track. And with a desperate desire for change, it was always going to be an uphill struggle for the Republican nominee and the Republican Party more generally. I think the Republicans nominated their -- the most electable candidate, but he has proved how difficult it is to swing against the tide, to try to put together a competent and capable campaign when all the external environmental factors are working against you

-- which brings us to the final point -- the choice of candidates. McCain's only hope in this campaign year was to persuade the public that Obama is too risky a choice. He is too young, too inexperienced, too liberal, too uncertain in his background and his associates and simply not of the standing to be able to lead America in these very challenging times. That -- and that he, John McCain -- a war hero, a man with an extraordinary biography, would provide that kind of risk-free choice for Americans confronting a very -- a very dangerous world in a difficult economy and, as a bonus, he, John McCain, was a maverick and someone who could provide as much change from George Bush as could the Democratic nominee. Now, that was always going to be a tough case to make and John McCain has not made the case. One -- Obama has been very reassuring to Americans that saw him at the Democratic Convention and then during the debates and John McCain has -- has made voters uneasy because of his choice of Sarah Palin as his running mate, because of his somewhat erratic actions in response to the financial meltdown.

So we go into election day with Americans disposed to vote against the Republican Party, the party of the White House, and for Barack Obama, the candidate of the Democratic Party, based on those personal qualities as well -- all of which lead us to expect a very comfortable Democratic victory less than a week from now. Thank you.

MR. AMR: Thanks, Tom. We're privileged and thank you for joining us. Before I turn to Jerry Leach, let me just ask you a quick question. Qatar, starting this weekend, will be eight hours ahead of Washington, so when we wake up, when people are, you know, listening to the radio and turning on the TV at seven a.m. before they go to school or work on Wednesday morning, it will be 11 p.m. in Washington, will we know who the President will be then? And let me also ask -- and that is do you expect a result by 11 p.m.? And let me also ask if John McCain has won, why will he have won this election -- I mean if we wake up, you know, at seven and eight o'clock in the morning and they're like John McCain has won the

election. What states will he have won and what will the factors have been? I mean given what you've just told us -- so two questions. The timing of the decision and how can John McCain win this election?

DR. MANN: If the results are in accord with my belief and forecast, we'll know very early in the evening. Virginia polls close at seven. If the results there point to a decisive Obama victory, we effectively will know then. It's, it's -- it's almost impossible to come up with a scenario whereby Obama carries Virginia but loses -- loses the election. Certainly an hour later there will be enough other states in to confirm that. We will -- we will see that if he -- if Obama holds onto Pennsylvania comfortably, then all the blue states have attacked and with Iowa and -- which is a certain Obama victory in Virginia, he would have -- he would have more than 270 electoral votes. So, odds are it will be early in the evening and I urge your colleagues to tune in even before the radio -- morning radio shows.

MR. AMR: Thank you, Tom.

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MR. MANN: Now, if John McCain wins, I'm going to (inaudible) profession and take up brain surgery. I figure -- I figure that if my understanding of American politics is, is, is that off base, then I need to get into another line of work, because I honestly -- I honestly think that the only way that could happen is if between now and election day there was some cataclysmic event and that probably means a terrorist attack in the U.S. that somehow moves the focus of the public attention from the economy to national security and the response of the candidates is such that Americans say McCain is the safer choice. Absent that, you have to believe there is some (inaudible) racial vote that hasn't been apparent in the polls that -- that could move a substantial number of voters. Every bit of evidence we have from the past and the present suggests any (inaudible) is likely to be very -- very minimal. But that would be the only sort of (inaudible). I suppose the final item would be to get all the -- all of the evidence of the increased registration of Democrats,

especially among blacks and young people, who -- not to be followed by their actual votes -- that is to say rather than an increase in turnout, there was a fallout in turnout among core Obama supporters. There would have to some combination of who shows up at the polls and a hidden racial vote to be able to produce a McCain victory.

MR. AMR: Thanks, Tom. I want to turn now to Dr. Jerry Leach of the Center for American Studies at American University of Cairo. And Tom, we hope you'll stay with us for the question and answer session. And Jerry, we're looking forward to your remarks and thank you for traveling here to be with us this evening.

DR. LEACH: My pleasure. Thank you for the invitation. Tom, nice to meet you. I've seen you on television many times. So pleasure to get acquainted, albeit at long distance. You mentioned Joe the Plumber at the outset and I thought I'd let the audience know that we have an American Study Center team -- a student team -- entered into an American

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elections quiz poll that's taking place this Friday, and the team just chose it's name yesterday and (inaudible) the name is Ahmed the Plumber. Okay. So all of this is spreading out around the world in a most amusing kind of way. Both of the candidates who we've got now were underdogs this time last year. Barack Obama was a long shot candidate. He was attractive. He had a lot of people who believed in him, but it was not at all clear that white people were going to vote for him. So this time last year -- November or October thereabouts -- he was out there campaigning -- certainly raising money, getting his team together, but he had yet to prove that large numbers of white people would turn out for him and that was the importance of the Iowa victory right at the beginning of the electoral season in January. Iowa has about one percent black voters and about two percent Hispanic/Latino voters and he won very handily in Iowa and as you know went on to win, albeit a very close race with Hillary Clinton in the primary season, the beginnings of what Tom Mann was telling you about

-- this enthusiasm and expansion of interest in the Democratic Party taking place which we'll talk about in a minute -- it was clear that something really unusual was happening largely because so many people were turning out in the primaries. It's not normally the case that a large portion of the electorate turns out in the primaries. They wait until November. In this particular case, the Democrats received almost 36 million votes in the primaries and the Republicans, 19 million votes. So there are about twice as many Democratic -- Democratic turnout around the country was approximately twice. If you actually stopped the counting at the time at which John McCain won -- which as I remember it is around about March or end of March or thereabouts -- the voting was 18 million to 7 million, for what it's worth. So there was a big turnout factor and people were beginning to say, hey, this may be a very different kind of election coming up. Well, in one respect, it is different. It's the longest election we've ever had, because, in fact, it started 22 months ago. In another respect, it's a

different election in the sense that on neither team do we have an incumbent. There's no incumbent former Vice President or President on the ticket at all. So they're all new in the sense of challenging for the election albeit John McCain had a short burst of interest in the year 2000. Now the context of the campaign is really set, as Tom said from Washington, by the unpopularity of the Bush Administration, the low approval rating of the President, but the country itself has changed throughout the course of this particular year. In January, the people who said they approved the discipline -- approved of the direction in which the country was moving was in the order of about 75 percent or thereabouts. They were happy about the state of affairs, new there was an election coming, but basically said I'm happy with my circumstances. Today, the approval rating or the sense that the country is not on the right track is at 85 percent disapproval. So it basically flipped completely during the course of this year, not the least reason of which is that, of course, of the

financial crisis which struck in the middle of September. Whenever I come to an election year, I start with a template in my mind that one-third of the country is Democratic, one-third is Republican and one-third is in the middle and they are -- therein lies the swing voters and either side has got to play for them, etc. However, on this particular occasion, 2008, the amount of registered Republicans has actually been going down and is in the order of about 28 percent -- so down in the order of about five percent over the last two years and concurrently the registrations for the Democrats is up by about five percent. So we're at about 38 percent Democrats and 28 percent registered Republicans and in the order of about 34 percent are independents, which means essentially not registered with either party. Just as a minor footnote, there are actually several parties competing for this election -- though the other five have become almost invisible largely because they don't have attractive candidates and they don't have nationwide organizations and the like. The country

has been trading elections back and forth between Democrats and Republicans for essentially 152 straight years -- right after the Republican Party was created in 1854. Tom from Washington mentioned that, of course, we have something very unusual going on -- that is early voting. In fact, I left Washington at the end -- towards the end of September and I had already voted on about the 20th of September. So I had -- and the state of Virginia has six weeks of open voting in all of its precincts, and when I went to vote in Fairfax County, which is a suburb of Washington, the lines were very long and all the rest of it, but it was clear that the turnout was going to be very large this year. People were voting essentially five and six weeks ahead of time. States set the rules for the voting, so some states like Virginia are six weeks ahead of time. In other cases, it's a month ahead of time. In other cases, two weeks ahead of the election, one week, etc. But 43 of the states have early voting and this is unprecedented in American history. It was much lower in the last

election and it said -- the pundits, as they view it, say that about one-third of all Americans will have voted before November the 4th, if you like, and Tom mentioned 20 percent having voted already. There is about this election clearly a greater sense of participation. More funds have been raised, certainly by Barack Obama. He's been -- he has shown almost unprecedented genius -- he and his team in terms of bringing in funds in small amounts largely through the internet. He raised \$150 million in the month of September alone. He is said to be raising \$7 million a day now and the average contribution is \$86 per contributor. So that means his base -- his base of contributors is extremely broad by comparison with the Republican Party. Another thing is going on and Tom mentioned it, and that is that this election is generating an awful lot of excitement and people believe this is a watershed election. Any number of the pundits and television commentators have already declared this is the most important election in American history. This is going to shift the

direction of the future. This is going to begin to basically take us into the era of, you know, environmental -- environmentally sensitive policies. We are going to begin to solve a number of our problems that have been festering for a very, very long time without resolution. So I have to say that I have -- hold that very same view -- that this is a watershed election. Indeed I'll go one step beyond that and say I think this may turn out to be what Americans call the realignment election. Realignment means an era dominated by one party -- in this case the Republican Party -- and what the era that we're in is called, at least in academia now, the Age of Reagan, started in 1981 and has been dominated by Republican victories and Republican Congress and, of course, except for Clinton, Republican Presidents and the like. And people are saying this is the end this year, the end of the Age of Reagan and it will begin a new era which will be dominated by Democrats. Now Democrats can, of course, lose it and all of the can flip around in four years time. That's certainly

possible. But it is the case that American politics and American elections don't go Republican, Democrat, Republican, Democrat, Republican. It doesn't work that way. They actually go in eras. So they go in periods. So you get a period of a Republican dominance and then a period of Democratic dominance and then back to Republican and there is an underlying dynamic to that which we can go into later if you like. All politicians hate what is called the October surprise. Our elections, as you know, the main, the regularly scheduled elections are in November -- in the first week of November -- and they hate what happens, what can happen hoisted upon them by the other party, all about the economy or why the world -- world events, etc. -- the October surprise. This year the October surprise happened in September. It happened around the middle of September and it was the beginning of the financial crisis, which is still going on. Neither of the two candidates was prepared for this. Neither of the two candidates had anything in their platforms which essentially said how they

were going to deal with a crisis of this sort. The world was surprised. President Bush was surprised. Henry Paulson, the Secretary of the Treasury, was surprised. The head of the Federal Reserve Bank was surprised. So everybody was caught off guard. What the October -- that is, September surprise has meant in electoral terms is, of course, as you heard earlier, the tilting of giving electoral advantage to Barack Obama. Putting all of the polls together as of today, he appears to have about an eight or nine or ten percent lead nationwide. One of the reasons for this is when you have an economic crisis running into an election, people begin to get really afraid in their households. The actual voter begins to feel things that are happening. What are they feeling? They are feeling their stock portfolio -- 60 percent of Americans own stocks. Everybody's stock portfolios are down. Everybody is looking at their results from the mutual funds they own or the bonds they own, etc., and saying my heavens, I never thought I would see this in my lifetime. People are beginning to fear for

their jobs. People are having their credit cards blocked or foreclosed or basically eliminated. People are not being able to go to banks and borrow money. Now they are beginning to fear the loss of their jobs. They're beginning to wonder how they're going to finance their children's college if it's coming up soon or even over the long term, etc. So a recession, which we are in -- in my opinion, we are in now because of the financial crisis -- bites at the household level and it's a household level where all the voters are found in the country. The household level (inaudible), of course, is going to Barack Obama. One of the two or three things to say that's been behind that is that John McCain has had the unfortunate bit of his timing in his presentations to the public. About a week ahead of the financial crisis breaking, he was on national television saying the fundamentals of the American economy is strong. And then a week later, the President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the head of the Federal Reserve Board are saying we are in an unprecedented crisis, the like

of which we've never seen before. It raises the specter of the Great Depression again. We've got to act urgently. Everybody has got to get on the same page. Congress has got to get on the same page. If we don't, the worst is going to happen and we're going to have a very serious meltdown. In addition to that, of course, John McCain has been a champion in Republican terms of deregulation -- and deregulation that is not regulating parts of the financial system of the U.S. has been regarded as one of the problems lying behind this financial crisis. That basically things got out of hand without raising the -- without -- basically got out of hand without proper regulation and essentially borrowed house of cards built out of borrowed money took place and the beginning of the end of the collapse of the house of cards started back in September with the building up of the loss of value in houses around the U.S. The houses are down by about 17 percent as compared with this time last year and, of course, it's now clear that there are lots and lots of bad mortgages being held by Americans and

foreclosure rate. There have been two million foreclosed mortgages to date. Two million more are pending and there are said to be about 11 million bad mortgages in the hands of Americans basically pushed at them and pushed on them. They being irresponsible, but, of course, lenders pushing irresponsibly these mortgages upon them, etc. So the candidate, McCain, has basically suffered the most and it's largely because of having declared the economy to be very strong, secondly saying earlier in the primaries that he knew he wasn't much good at economics. That was not his specialty and people have come to agree with him about that. And basically being a champion of deregulation over many, many years. Health care is probably the second big issue and therein lie differences in health care amongst the -- between the two candidates. We have about 47 million Americans who are not covered by health insurance, which means health delivery for them and health care for them is very, very poor. We also have a situation where the cost of both premiums and the cost of actual health

care rise always more rapidly than the rate of inflation, so they're always taking a bigger and bigger bite out of people's hotel -- their household budgets. And, of course, we have companies that are now shedding insurance -- health insurance -- and therefore more people are going out on their own because they're losing their health care from companies. I won't go into the details because it would take us away from the discussion, but there's a substantial difference between the two in health care, and yet there's a very high concern. And this is one of those problems that Americans say has festered and festered and festered and been blocked on Capital Hill, been blocked between the two Houses, between the President, between the Clinton Administration and the Republicans and it's time to solve this problem and we want a champion in the White House that's going to lead us in the direction of solving this problem. I don't think the American people are real clear yet on what the differences in the health care plan, or at least proposals are, but they want a resolution and

they're going to vote for the person they believe is the most likely to bring it. And at the moment, that is favoring Barack Obama. Taxes is a third big issue. It has become an issue -- it's a standard Republican refrain against Democrats that the Democrats support big government, which means the Democrats are going to raise your taxes and they're going to spend more, etc. So that's now an everyday call throughout the Republican Campaign machinery and from Mr. McCain and from Sarah Palin and also many of the other candidates. Who's going to cut taxes? Who's going to raise taxes, etc.? Barack Obama has been straight forward and said if you're in the top five percent of income earners in the U.S., I'm going to raise your taxes. No question about it. I'm not going to duck that. He gets challenged on that repeatedly on an everyday basis and he doesn't change his tune and he doesn't try to hide. You've been -- you've gotten an enormous advantage out of the huge Bush tax cuts of 2001 and 2003. I'm going to raise your taxes if you're in the top five percent, but I'm going to cut

your taxes if you're in the bottom 95% -- namely the rest of the -- the rest of the population. Now, race is a big issue. Race is not an issue that divides the candidates per se. The candidates are not out there campaigning -- that is, McCain campaigning against Barack Obama because he's black, or Barack Obama basically trying to use his race to advantage. So this is really not an issue that divides the candidates so much as an issue that you know is there in the population as a whole. It's a people's issue and it's a voter's issue. But from the point of view of the candidates, race should not be a factor in the selection and in the vote, etc. Now, as I said earlier, Barack Obama -- half black, half white, Kenyan father, also Indonesian step-father for what it's worth -- basically had to overcome the belief that he would not be able to get sufficient number of white people to vote for him -- about 75 percent, 70 to 75 percent of the American electorate is still white, so you can't win without a substantial body of white voters and he slayed that dragon -- slew that

dragon in Iowa and he's done very well since that time. Now, will there be white people who go to the polls on November the 4th and vote against Barack Obama because he's black? Well, the answer to that is yes. There are certainly people who are going to do that. Now the trick is when you take this question to the next level. Who are those people that are going to vote against him because he's black? Well, the fact is most of them are actually already over in the Republican Party, so most of the people who are going to vote against him are going to be voting Republican anyway and are going to be voting against him doubly because he's black. The issue of how many Independents or Democrats are basically going to vote against him, particularly if they've said, you know, I'm really for him, but when they get to the polling place on the 4th, they pull the lever for John McCain or one of the other five candidates. Tom, as I said, as I understood said and I believe rightly that the number of people that are going to be doing that is, in fact, very low. So we're talking about a small

number of people -- one percent, two percent at the absolute most. Probably not even that who are going to be voting as Independents or Democrats against Barack Obama because he's black.

MR. AMR: Jerry, let me jump in there and ask you a couple of quick questions. This has been an excellent presentation. Two questions I have are if I could -- one is last night we had one of the Doha debates here, you know, that broadcasts on the BBC. They have a town hall voting thing and the question was, you know, will John McCain be better for the Middle East? And the answer that -- well, in the debate, we had Americans. We had people from the region debating. And the vote came out 87 percent preferring Barack Obama, 13 percent preferring John McCain. I guess my question is what about U.S. policy in the Middle East? What can the Middle East expect from these two candidates? And then the second question I have if you could sort of, you know, channel your remarks in this direction -- is you just mentioned race. One of the ethnic groups in the U.S.

is the Arab-American community. There are about three million. They are -- make up about one percent of the U.S. electorate, but they live mostly it turns out in battleground states -- Ohio, Virginia, Florida, Michigan -- where they can make up between one and even four percent of the population. And I think we've seen this sort of shift that you've been talking about -- this realignment -- in the Arab-American community, where they preferred Bush by seven percent in 2000, but then they preferred Kerry by 35 percent in 2004, and today -- the latest polls out yesterday, actually -- on the Arab-American community show Obama leading McCain 62 percent to 22 percent with still a significant portion undecided. What do you make of, on the one hand, where the Arab-American community is? Maybe both -- Jerry first and then Tom later. And then second, what about U.S. policy in the Middle East? Which candidate -- what are the differences you see between the candidates?

MR. LEACH: In terms of your second question there, I would start by saying, of course, Barack

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Obama opposed the war in Iraq. He then opposed the surge, which has been relatively successful in terms of stemming the violence, but not necessarily in terms of producing political reconciliation. He regards the war as a mistake. Two-thirds of the American people now have arrived at the view that the war was a mistake. In terms of Iraq, the person most likely to extract almost all or all of troops out of Iraq in the near term future, namely over the next two years, is Barack Obama. The person who will be most inclined to keep troops in Iraq on the grounds that it's not stable yet. It's not secure. You can go a long time after fighting stops and say the situation is not stable and not secure. John McCain is likely to take that position and therefore the likelihood of American troops in Iraq for a much longer period of time seems to me to be probable if you have a McCain victory. Both candidates are dedicated to the idea of American troops -- upping the troop strength in Afghanistan and being more aggressive with the Taliban and the -- and Al Qaeda. Both are -- basically regard the idea that

Afghan war was understaffed, underfunded as a mistake on the part of the Bush Administration. So -- and also, I might add, it's also clear that the American people have much greater -- there's much more support for American action in Afghanistan than there is in Iraq. That is, the American public support for the actions in Afghanistan are still in the majority numbers as opposed to Iraq, where the population is the -- regards war as a mistake and yet wants an honorable settlement, if you like. In terms of Middle East policy, of course, between the two candidates -- one is much more enthusiastic about alternative energies. That's Barack Obama. He clearly wants to be the transformational figure that shifts the American economy off of the (inaudible) oil and over to a broadly based, diversified energy base and diminishing forever, if not eliminating, the dependency on foreign oil. So that will obviously have an impact in the Middle East, and of the two -- they're both campaigning on the grounds of pushing renewable energies. It's very clear that Barack Obama

is much more interested in his proposal is much more specific, if you like. In terms of the Middle East, both of them have their eyes on Pakistan, and they believe that Pakistan is likely to be a future problem that the U.S. is going to have to address. Its fragile or potentially fragmented state with nuclear weapons and, of course, with a significant body of Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters within its borders, etc. So neither has a -- I would regard as a particularly good plan or a particularly good outlook on what to do about Pakistan, but they both basically very nervous about it and regard it as an area of future emphasis.

MR. AMR: Thanks -- thanks, Jerry. Let me turn this on. Thanks, Jerry. Let's -- the audience has been very patient. What I'd like to do is turn this over to a question and answer period. It would be -- I'm going to try to get as many questions in as we can, so try to keep your questions down to a minute and a half. And what I'd like just ask the audience to do is state your name, if you like, your age and perhaps we can even rotate the camera around to the

person who is speaking so Tom can see them. And Tom if you can't hear the question, let me know and I'll repeat the question. But, I think you will be able to hear and also to turn on your delegate mics before you start. So, let's open up the floor for questions. Please raise your hand and I'll try to recognize you in an order in which you've asked a question. Don't be shy. Sam, why don't you go ahead?

MR. FARRAN: Sam Farran with the Statefarm Group (inaudible) here in Doha, Qatar. Two things -- one for Dr. Leach and one for Dr. Mann actually. I'm glad you brought up one thing that a lot of people have not brought up -- that the Republicans lost the Reagan Democrats. Nobody realized that and all along the way I've even mentioned that the -- that's where -- that's the base that they have lost. That the Republican -- that the Reagan Democrats, they swung back over as Democrats. Do you think that they should have focused on trying to stay -- the Republicans should have tried to stay in the middle by not moving too far to the right like they did with the elections?

And, as for Dr. Mann, Tom -- you can hear the question? Hmm.

MR. AMR: We'll see.

MR. FARRAN: Okay.

MR. AMR: Tom can't hear you, but hopefully we'll get it back. One second. Sam, why don't you continue and I'll --

MR. FARRAN: (Inaudible) with McCain the election, you said there would have to be something catastrophic happening like a terrorist attack or something. I feel -- I think I would be -- differ with you on that. If something was to happen like to have a terrorist attack or something, I think that is the benefit to Obama because now he's going to show all along this is what I'm saying all along -- that we are fighting the wrong war. Do you think that should -- that Barack Obama would benefit some by terrorist attack?

MR. AMR: Alright. Why don't you turn off your delegate mic. That might be part of the issue. And Jerry, hold on -- Tom, why don't you hold on a

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second. Jerry, why don't you answer first, and then Tom afterwards.

DR. LEACH: Sorry, now the first question was? Remind me. Oh, the (inaudible) Right. Tom said earlier that this year was clearly going to be a very tough year for any Republican, and that's true. They ended up nominating someone who was counted out 18 months ago, whose campaign nearly came to an end in the middle of 2007 and he ended up with his typical dogged determination winning the campaign, but largely because he was a Centrist Republican and he had done a lot of things that people had really appreciated -- essentially flying in the face of his own party. In order to win the primary and win the Republican nomination, he then veered to the right -- that's, by the way, the standard strategy of veering to your base. Veering to the right in the case of the Republicans; veering to the left in the case of the Democrats. He veered to the right and all of a sudden began to embrace the positions of George Bush even though he had criticized in voting -- voted against.

This began to muddy his credentials as a centrist and as a maverick and it made it hard to come back and say I'm really the same old John McCain that you've know for 26 years and you've known where I stand on campaign finance reform and all that matters, etc. So it's made it hard for him to come back as a centrist. It's also made it easy for Barack Obama to label him as a George Bush look-a-like -- a person who is essentially going to deliver a George Bush third term. And if there's anything the American people do not want now, is a George Bush third term. They regard the Bush Presidency as one of the most unpopular in American history. The Bush second term is one of the most disastrous in the history of America -- of the United States and a repetition of what's just happened with George Bush in the White House is absolutely the last thing that most of the voters are going to want. Well, and, of course, McCain in -- or because of his strategy throughout the year, set -- basically set up a trap for himself and now he's fallen into the trap

and Barack Obama has labeled him as Bush three and basically a lot of people see it that way now.

MR. AMR: Let's see, Tom. If we can try to bring you in and hopefully we can hear you. You tried to speak earlier and we could not hear you. But let's try it again and see if it works. Go ahead.

SPEAKER: It might be his microphone might be off.

MR. AMR: Yeah. We can't hear you for some reason. Is (inaudible) working on it? Is he there? Tom, for some reason we can't hear you. Your microphone must be switched off. I think he did. Tom, if you can -- you can hear us? Yes? Yeah, you can hear us. Okay, that's good. Unfortunately, we can't hear you, so if you can bear with us for the next bit, we're going to try and (inaudible) is going to work to try and get that on. And let's just move to another question and then we'll see what happens. So -- please. Sir and then (inaudible).

SPEAKER: I'm Montez -- Victor Montez also for Asian League from the National Institutes of

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Health in the U.S., currently with the Mission of Health here in Qatar (inaudible) political (inaudible). Well, as a director it usually depends on the team that you put around you to help you out with your -- with your job. As a chief executive in the U.S., most likely Obama sounds to be a winner. Do you think or would you have any evidence to show that he probably will choose the right teams around him to be able to run a large and most powerful country in the world?

DR. LEACH: That's a wonderful question. I'm so glad you asked it. Let me, let me start in saying Barack Obama's thin resume has been held against him and the idea that he hasn't done very much and achieved very much has been held against him and used frequently by his opponents, starting with Senator McCain. They have belittled his lengthy period of time as a community organizer. They have basically said well that doesn't amount to a hill of beans. There's no substantial knowledge that people need. That doesn't help you understand the economy,

etc. All the while belittling his skill as a community organizer, they failed to recognize that the Obama group has been building up a team on the ground -- grassroots organizing -- based out of the experience of Barack Obama and the team that he's assembled. Not only building a very, very strong team in the different states and at headquarters, but also using the internet in a way that's unprecedented in American history. When this is over with, even if Barack Obama -- in the unlikely event that he were to lose -- it is likely that his campaign will be used as a pattern for future campaigns. For example, we have out raised George Bush in terms of funding for the Presidency at this point by about \$200 million and he's also not beholden to the -- you know, let's call on the deep pockets of the United States, just the wealthy people. And he has brought in essentially about 80 percent of his funds through small donors rather than large donors, so he doesn't have the same structure of personal obligation and debt when he gets into office -- assuming that he does. Now, in terms

of judgment, of course, the thing that's being used as the diagnostic feature -- because judgment on the part of the American President is a very, very big deal and the person has got to be good in their skill making decisions over and over and over again. And two things stand out. One -- Senator Obama basically chose Joe Biden who everybody recognized is a viable alternative President, and also one of the country's foremost foreign policy experts. So everybody agrees that judgment in choosing his vice presidential candidate was vastly better than that shown by Senator McCain who choose -- chose an outsider who tried to, you know, roll the dice in Las Vegas and win the election by a surprise choice and probably got a lot that he wasn't anticipating and, of course, she made quite a splash back in early September and the middle of September and now 55 percent of the country have determined that she's not qualified to be President, if you like. So the decision that he made has effectively turned against him and it appears that she is a drag on the Republican ticket. The other thing

to say is in terms of judgment, when the financial crisis hit, the two candidates basically approached it very differently. When the financial crisis hit -- I put day one of the financial crisis at September the 19th. All of a sudden John McCain was basically stopping his campaign momentarily, going in to salvage Washington, making this proposal, making that proposal. He's actually had in the order of about five different proposals about what to do -- clearly not understanding the depths of the problem, which of course is extremely hard to understand. The financial crisis is extremely complicated and it's not easy for people to understand what the problem is and therefore put a solution in place. Barack Obama didn't do that. He didn't change the pattern. He said what we need to do is gather experts and start to figure out what the problem is before we start proposing what the solution is. And he gathered his experts starting with Warren Buffett and Joseph Stegerts and Paul Krugman and Robert Rubin and the like. And he's been bringing them together on the weekends, in the evenings and

basically using them as a kind of set of tutors of seminar so that he could get himself smart on what he thinks needs to be done. So there's a much more considered approach to complicated decision making and not shoot from the hip, come up with this idea, then this idea, then this other idea. And that hasn't impressed people. In other words, John McCain has shown the type of decision making that he's -- that he's often noted for in this particular financial crisis and it's hurt him rather than help him.

MR. AMR: Thanks, Jerry. Let's see if we've got Washington back. Tom, can you -- we can't see you yet, but can you hear us?

DR. MANN: Hady, I can see you and is my voice coming through?

MR. AMR: Your voice is coming through. Now we've got your voice and your picture. Thanks for your patience.

DR. MANN: Amazing.

MR. AMR: Tom, there were a few questions that came in and you hadn't heard them --

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DR. MANN: But listen (inaudible).

MR. AMR: -- so why don't you answer some of the questions. Why don't you answer some of the questions?

DR. MANN: Thanks, Hady. I've been taking notes. In fact, Jerry has been doing such a terrific job, I figure if we lose my voice again, I'll simply move my lips and he can speak (inaudible). Let me -- let me offer a couple of comments. The question about the Reagan Democrats was a very interesting one. It raises the issue really of the level of ideological voting versus, if you will, performance based voting in American politics. I would argue that there's much less of the former than the latter. That, in fact, Reagan's opportunity to govern was provided because of Jimmy Carter's failures in the late 1970s with the economy, with foreign policy, or more generally it's not that the country turns sharply to the right, it's more that Democrats had failed and the public was willing to give Reagan a chance. He certainly (inaudible) as long as that worked out well, producing

results that were acceptable, it was fine. It wasn't acceptable in 1982 and we were in a recession and Democrats had a big year. But by 1984, the economy was growing. We had made some progress internationally and it was morning again in America and sure enough Reagan won a landslide election. That carried over to Bush's first election, but economic downturns in 1991 and two gave Jimmy Carter an opportunity to govern which, you know -- which he (inaudible) initially, but then producing good economic results himself led to his reelection. I think therefore the opportunity being presented Democrats today is the consequence of the public's belief that -- that the Bush Administration and its policies have failed and that provides a new opportunity. Now as part of that, which -- I think Jerry's right. There is a palpable sense that the conservative era that had dominated our politics with the -- with the three pillars. Low taxes and smaller government, more traditionalism and asserted (inaudible) unilateral nationalism have all produced

policies that have left Americans feeling very uncomfortable. And there is now an opportunity to move -- to move our sort of centered left agenda with Government playing a more important role and to the extent Republicans, as they decline in numbers, move even more to the right, they will put themselves in a very difficult position --

SPEAKER: Oh no.

SPEAKER: Oh no.

MR. AMR: Tom, we lost your sound again. So we can't hear you. So we're going to -- we'll get a reconnection and we'll take another question. Sorry about that. Go ahead.

SPEAKER: Hi. (Inaudible) with Georgetown University. Thank you both for your insight and your enthusiasm. I just want to get this on record. Can we confidently say that Barack Obama will win on Tuesday because the anxiety here is increasing a bit and so if you could assure -- if you can assure me in that would be great. And secondly, I've been hearing some disturbing reports about (inaudible) just

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campaigning (inaudible) rural and urban neighborhoods with a lot of misinformation about the campaign day and just fear (inaudible) tactics, discouraging voters and actually going and participating. If you could talk a little bit about that and the (inaudible) on that, I'd appreciate it.

DR. LEACH: Tom, in your absence, I'll attempt those. First, will Barack Obama win? Well, of course, the polls -- we have about 12 or 14 polling organizations that are now polling every few days, sometimes even every day -- and they are saying essentially that he is going to win. Now, when you put them all together, which at this point in time is the best way to make a projection for yourself that is often called the poll of polls. When you add them all together and average them out, it's in the order of eight or nine percent. Now, it's possible that a lot of people will not show up. But remember, one-third of them are going to have voted ahead of time anyway, so it's not all going to be contingent on who shows up on the day and whether it's snowing and whether it's

raining and whether your boss gives you an assignment that keeps you there at midnight. All those things are becoming rapidly features of the past. So I think we can, in my opinion, say we're going to have record turnout in this election. Now, polls. Polls have -- as Tom said earlier -- difficulty in determining who is a likely voter. They can determine who is a registered voter. That's up in the public domain and not difficult to come up with. But who's likely to vote and who's not, that's a real problem for polling organizations and then there are new and unusual problems for polling organizations and there are three big ones. One is it's hard -- polling is essentially done by telephone, calling a random sample around the U.S. Well, Federal regulation prevents handing out cell phone telephone numbers and there are about -- there's about 13 percent of the eligible, voting-age population that lives exclusively on cell phones. Only cell phones. No land line telephones. Well, they're very hard to call. So the polling organization starts out missing 13 percent. Now

they've got to try to figure out how they're going to cover that 13 percent or they just say well we'll deal with everybody else and hope it's right. But there's likely to be some slippage in there for that 13 percent. And, of course, that 13 percent is mostly people under 30.

MR. AMR: Jerry, let me stop (inaudible).

Tom, can you hear us again? Are you there?

(Inaudible) supposed to be there? Soon. Okay. Keep going, Jerry.

DR. LEACH: Technology. What can you do?

Now, second -- second body of people who are going to be hard for pollsters to get hold of particularly fast in the month of September and October -- black people who have never voted before. There's a lot of them. They've looked at elections before and said well this is a bunch of white people divvying up the pie and they're not going to do anything for me, and so why am I going to go spend my time and show up voting because a lot of what's going to happen isn't going to help me at all. They don't pay attention to me and they don't

pay attention to my issues. Well they don't feel that way now. Now they've got a champion. Now they've got somebody that they didn't dream they would have in this century. Any number of people who are black will tell you I never thought in my lifetime there would ever be a candidate, much less a viable candidate and near president, who had black skin, etc. Well that's causing black turnout in a way that's never been seen before. For example, in Virginia where I'm from, there are 550,000 new registrants on the Democratic side in Virginia and in the order of about 350,000 of those in Virginia are black. Now, new registrants -- eight million new registered voters in the U.S., something in the order of five million or so four thereabouts are black. Now that's a hard group for polling organizations to tap into because they didn't vote before. So it's very hard to say they didn't vote before, but I'm going to call them a likely voter -- and by the way, they don't have the telephone numbers for easy access, etc. So this group -- newly registered black voters, namely young people who have

just turned 18, 19, 20, etc. -- but also older black voters who are 55, 65, 75 and 80, who have sat it out because they haven't been -- they haven't felt like elections would do them any good. They're not sitting it out any longer. The people who are look at this problem hard say they expect something in the order of 95 percent of black voters to turn out at the polls and vote because the enthusiasm level is so high. Third group (inaudible) -- third group real fast. Since November 9th, 2004 -- the last election -- the U.S. has had 2.5 million new naturalized citizens added to the roles. Well, of course, they're not your standard, average, white, Anglo, Irish, Scottish Americans. No. They come from all around the world. The majority of them are Spanish speaking. One thing you can always say about a newly naturalized citizen - - one of the first things they want. They are so proud of making it and having the passport and having citizenship, there's no way -- no way on this earth they're going to miss their first chance to vote. They may not vote after that, but there's no way

they're going to miss it. So, you've got basically 2.5 million of them. The majority are Hispanic and two-thirds of Hispanics support Democrats and one-third support Republicans. So if anything, the polls are underestimating Barack Obama's support and Tom has just given a sort of hint. The early voters -- 20 percent so far - 60 percent for Barack, 40 percent for McCain. That may be the difference, you see (inaudible) percent.

MR. AMR: Thanks, Jerry. I think -- Tom are you back? Can you hear -- you've been able to hear us (inaudible)?

DR. MANN: Yes. Can you hear me?

MR. AMR: We can hear you. Yes. We can't see you yet, but we'll take your voice. There you are. Now we can even see you again. The question that was asked was basically will Barack win and the answer that we got was effectively yes and it was -- some of the reasons stated were that, you know, 13 percent of the voters don't have land lines, they have cell phones now only, and so they're not included in

the polls, and perhaps more likely to vote for Barack. African-Americans may have a higher turn out and that they were -- have I got that right? Two point five million new --

DR. LEACH: Naturalized citizens.

MR. AMR: New citizens. But do we know if they're registered to vote? Do we have data on that?

DR. LEACH: Well, I -- the subtext of the argument is once you become a new citizen, then you make sure you get to the polls the first time. You don't sit out your first opportunity to vote.

MR. AMR: Tom, do you want to comment on all that?

DR. MANN: Yes, I heard that last question. It was almost (inaudible) will Barack Obama win? And I think -- I think Jerry's response is atypical and this entire hour was dead on. To the extent that we know anything and understand anything about American politics, he will indeed win and win comfortably. Just a couple of footnotes here -- the cell phone problem is finally being resolved. Most -- many of

the major pollsters are now doing separate cell phone only samples and building those in to their reported results. Gallup is doing that. Washington Post, ABC, CBS, New York Times. And it does make a difference of one or two percentage points. That is to say including them increases Obama's standing in the national polls by one to two percent. It turns out the cell phone only users are even more Democratic than their comparable cohort 18 to 29 years (inaudible) -- more like 70 percent. Lots of uncertainties about likely voters -- I think Jerry is absolutely right about this. Gallup has two models now they're reporting because they were giving such anomalous results. The traditional model that relies on (inaudible) and a new model that listens more to what people say about their intention to vote, their enthusiasm about the election. The difference between those two is often times quite large. It could be five or six percentage points with Gallup. So, in very high turnout elections, it is almost certain to produce a benefit for Obama in the Democratic Party.

If I could just while I'm still on-line, respond to a couple of the other points that were made. I didn't mean to imply that a terrorist attack on the U.S. would naturally help McCain and elevate him to the White House. I don't believe that and I don't -- I don't think we know how the public would respond. The odds are it wouldn't change their mind at the last minute, but it's the only thing I could imagine that could alter the dynamic in any way. But I certainly wouldn't forecast that it would produce a McCain victory. Finally on the question of Obama's credentials, Jerry touched on much of this. Listen, it is unusual for someone with this modest amount of experience in national politics and policy (inaudible) to become such a formidable candidate for the White House, to have vanquished the front runner and formidable Hillary Clinton in the primary and then perform so well during the general election campaign. We're not used to that, but I remind you we have had such experience in the past. There is no relationship between length of resume and successful governance as

President of the United States. In fact, interestingly the man who is -- who is (inaudible) is our most successful president. Abraham Lincoln had the least experience. One term in the U.S. House of Representatives and (inaudible) he had a tenure in the Illinois State Legislature -- very much like Obama's. But, of course, Lincoln was an amazing man -- self-taught, widely read, but driven to do something, to make something of his life in a national political and policy sense and one I wouldn't -- wouldn't have the -- you know, the audacity to suggest Obama is -- is another Lincoln. What I just want to say though is that -- is that the sort of potential is there in the sense that he appears to have the intelligence, the knowledge, the temperament, and the decision making style to go along with (inaudible) or a set of crises -- perhaps the worst policy and arrogance of any president since Franklin Roosevelt. So, it's not clear that the longer resume is an advantage in this -- in this kind of setting.

MR. AMR: Thanks, Tom. Why don't -- if you want to ask a follow up question, then we'll take another question next to you, then we'll keep going. Go ahead.

SPEAKER: It's actually not a follow up, but something that came to mind.

MR. AMR: That's great.

SPEAKER: Okay. Great. Thanks. So, let me actually -- I'm a Muslim American and something that's been very disturbing to me is, you know, the constant allegations of Barack Obama being a Muslim and him saying no, I'm not a Christian and but never having the courage enough to be like so what -- so what if there was a presidential candidate running as Muslim. Right. Do you think this will change like his reaction and response to the whole Muslim era whatever kind of issue once he is elected? Will he have the freedom and courage to speak up against these things as it transcends in transform into a figure that we'd like for him to be?

MR. AMR: Let's just take another question (inaudible). While don't we just take another just so we -- we're running out of time.

MR. NAILEN: I'm Charles Nailen from Georgetown University. Jerry, you made a comment a few minutes ago talking about the brilliance of the Obama campaign. I'm wondering if Obama is actually winning this election or if the economy and McCain have lost it. You talked about the brilliance of their fundraising model and the systems they've put together. But it seems to me a lot of that's really a natural progression from the fundraising model of the Dean campaign previously, and then followed on by actually the ground -- the ground war so to speak that Bush put on in 2004. So I'd be curious to hear your comments on that.

MR. AMR: Both excellent questions. I'm going to defer to Tom just because of the technology issue while we still have him and then -- if it's alright with Jerry.

DR. LEACH: Sure.

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MR. AMR: Okay. Go ahead.

DR. MANN: Thank you. First of all, I'm glad that first question was asked because I wanted to say something about that in response to the question about Arab-Americans political tendencies in this election. One of the more prominent features has been the sort of underground campaign. To say Barack Obama is a Muslim and therefore presumably we should be terrified of that. It is very encouraging when Colin Powell made his endorsement of Obama on Meet the Press and mentioned this. And he said well, so what if would be, lie about something ugly. So, Obama has -- has been very careful in this campaign to avoid matters of race and ethnicity and religion even. He's -- he has believed that he could only be elected if he -- if he runs and appeals to the broad American experience. So the question becomes would he then avoid these matters in office or would he help to advance them. Keep in mind, my judgment is more the latter than the former. That is, once elected he is in a position to do things with respect to inherent

prejudices based on race or ethnicity or religion that he could not do seeking office for the first time. America is moving in a direction that is very much more socially tolerant. It's very encouraging to see these developments. So for those who long for a champion of these things in a campaign, I'm afraid you will be disappointed. But remember, Franklin Roosevelt ran for the Presidency in 1932 on a platform to balance the budget. Everything he did in office came separate from his -- the campaign itself. It's important -- it's important to remember that. I think the question about whether Obama is winning or McCain is losing and, you know, losing because of the economy is a -- it's a good one. I honestly believe this environment is so hostile to Republicans that anyone who could survive the Democratic nominating process and win that nomination was very likely to win the general election. So in that sense, yes -- Obama is doing so well in large part because all of those broad political forces are fueled by the economy and the (inaudible) and the President's unpopularity are moved

in a sharply Democratic direction. In fact, we don't have any experience in -- in American history except for 1876 and no American history books (inaudible) remember -- Rutherford B. Hayes and Samuel Tilden -- that's -- when you (inaudible) grand the Republican President of two-terms fell on hard times -- scandal, economic difficulties. He was leaving office and Republicans nominated the reform Governor from Ohio, Hayes -- Democrat Tilden of New York won the popular vote, but (inaudible) for southern states and this Reconstruction Era after the Civil War actually lead to a (inaudible) in which the Democrats gave the Republicans the White House in return for a promise to withdraw Federal troops from the southern states and end reconstruction. In effect, denying blacks their newly gained franchise. Not a good model for 2008. The fact is we don't return that party to the White House when things are going so badly. However, on top of that, Obama set aside his success in the nominating process against Clinton -- he has, he has performed exceedingly well as a candidate and managed in the

course of debates, in the convention, the public responses to the various crises that have immerged to get Americans to feel really comfortable with someone we couldn't imagine them feeling comfortable with a few years ago. It's his temperament. He's cool. He's calm. He's collected. He's deliberate. He's thoughtful. He's knowledgeable and he is intelligent and he's not -- he's open. He's comfortable with hearing people disagree with him. He doesn't demonize them. He seems not to be ideologically bound and restricted and I think all of those things add on to the inheritance from the political as opposed to the policy inheritance account for his almost certain victory next week.

MR. AMR: Thank you, Tom. Jerry, why don't -- why don't you go too.

DR. LEACH: Oh. Not a lot to -- not a lot to add to that. I think it's fair to say that Barack is a substantially better speaker than John McCain. That I'll just add to Tom's list. People have taken note of that and, of course, now having gone through

the mechanics of proposals and the like, he is returning to his lofty rhetoric which he started in on about two days ago and that's what will probably be a part of his speech which will follow in a few hours from now and the last few days of the campaign. So I think his charisma, if you like, is helping him at -- end up in the race. And I also will turn it around and say American people, of course, mostly connect with their candidate through television and a candidate that comes off as angry, basically doesn't get elected. Americans basically don't go for angry people. And John McCain has a long history of anger and you can just sort of intuitively sense that it's there even though he's working hard to control it. But he's had a lifetime problem with anger and anger management, if you like, and it comes across on the television screen and basically turns some people off -- even those who might be inclined to agree with him on particular issues. So he's, he's -- he's got a problem with anger and it's costing him votes and support.

MR. AMR: Thanks, Jerry. I -- actually I wanted to ask a follow up question to both of our speakers. Tom, I heard you say something very interesting which -- which might be that it -- maybe I'm extrapolating a little bit from it, but I thought I heard you saying that, you know, Barack has been very careful to not associate with race and ethnicity and religion. I had never thought about it this way, but do you think Obama's blackness is somehow causing him to -- I don't want to say distance himself, but to sort of try to not connect both on his blackness and on that part of his heritage which is Muslim. And do you think -- or do you think it's just the Muslimness that's causing him to distance himself from that? So that's one interesting thing. And the other interesting thing I thought I heard you say -- both of you say -- is that he has emerged from the Democratic primary. Was -- I remember, you know, Democrats -- all Democrats I know in Washington were lamenting this horrible primary process which was going to destroy the Democratic -- if you can remember back two years -

- was going to destroy the Democratic Party and these candidates were going to eat each other up. Is there a new paradigm now that the competitive primary is better for the candidate or is, is -- is that just an aberration? So, again technology deferring, we'll go to -- we'll go to Washington first and then -- and then (inaudible). That's not a political statement. That's just technology in this case.

DR. MANN: Hady, two very interesting, interesting questions. One advantage Obama has had with his race is that at the beginning of this process, Hillary Clinton was attracting over 60 percent of the black vote in the polls throughout 2007. The Clintons have a strong association with black supporters. Clinton is called our first black President. What happened though is once Obama won Iowa, black citizens around the country said Oh, my God! He actually has a chance of winning. And you quickly saw a shift within the community and it wasn't very long before he was attracting 70, 80 plus percent of the vote. And it got up to 90 and higher over

time. What that meant is he didn't have to do anything to (inaudible). Our appeal today, he could shoot the focus on the broader set of concerns of the American people. He's going to get probably 97 or eight percent of the black vote without having himself -- his campaigning even to emphasize the blackness. And mind you, there are tremendous get out to vote efforts underway in the black community and that will pay dividends. So that gave him the freedom. Similarly he -- he knows -- he knows that the resentment in the air of American community toward the candidates Republicans now with their rhetoric about his (inaudible) terrorism and fundamentalism and therefore he naturally emphasizes his sort of Christian faith. And will they (inaudible) speaks in those terms without having to sort of confront another matter that his opponent could use to say he's soft on terrorism. So, she's had the advantage of being able to keep things visible, public. She had an approach of in this terrain that's not likely to pay dividends, but I think coming to office, being in the White

House, he's going to be in a position to do the kind of public educating that's going to be very helpful. Just a word about the Democratic primary process. I was always a -- (inaudible) votes who were, who were bellyaching about the long extended process. You only have a long extended process when there are two really competitive candidates. We don't often times have that. In fact, we almost never have that. Usually it's wrapped up in a matter of weeks once the formal process begins. But this time, we did. It was a real fight. They had different bases of strength and appealed different campaign strategies. They both got better as candidates over the course of the primary season and yes, it took a while for Hillary supporters to get over it. It was a deep disappointment -- not just to Hillary Clinton, but to many of her supporters. But, as time has gone on, those voters have come into the Obama camp and now it looks as if he will easily win 90 percent of the Democratic voting in virtually all of the Hillary Clinton Democrats. So you win by design a system to say we want this to go

on as long as possible, whatever the underlying pattern of competition, but when you have that competition, I say it's a good thing we had this process and it played out.

MR. AMR: Thank you. Dr. Leach?

DR. LEACH: Yeah, just again a couple of notes. It's an interesting, ironic twist in the question of voting for or against Barack Obama because he's black. In fact, there are about 10 percent black Republicans and it's clear at this point that a certain portion of them are going to be voting for Barack because he's black, because they want the first black president. So it's highly unlikely that 10 percent of black voters are going to go the polls and vote for a Republican in this particular election, though that's their normal pattern at the national level. The second thing I'd say is that competition was just terrific. It of course made the election extremely exciting and everybody has been engaged in it. I've been watching it hour by hour since early January and I can -- I'm dreading November the 5th

when all of a sudden I have a big void in my life. I won't know what to do with myself. I'll be wandering around, twiddling my thumbs. But, so it generated an extremely exciting election. There's no doubt about that. And everybody will endorse Tom's view that competition is better than lack thereof. Of course, we have a big gangly, highly complicated system largely dominated by the states. It probably needs to be brought together in the sense that it needs to be organized so that it is shorter and maybe there will probably be more primaries next time and, you know, there were enormous number of primaries this time. But it's hard to imagine most of the rest of the states not jumping on the primary bandwagon. So there needs to be, in my opinion, some kind of legislative framework that's put around primary season. So perhaps maybe it starts later and ends later and maybe it doesn't take quite as much money to go through the process and things like that. But it's basically proven itself effective this go around and not many people will be criticizing it after the fact.

MR. AMR: Let me give an opportunity for any more hands up, for more questions before we wrap up. Anyone else? This is I think going to be the last round of questions. Okay, so one and two. Why don't you go ahead first? You had your hand up.

SPEAKER: Thank you very much for a very good briefing on the American elections. I'm politically elected. My name is (inaudible) from Pakistan Embassy. I'll be willing to (inaudible) as you said Obama is going to be the next President. And as we've seen in this decade of what the American era, that the main focus of the American policy, vis a vis the Muslim world, has been terrorism. So how, how good is Obama's perception of the Muslim world and will his policy will be any (inaudible) -- will we see any real change on ground vis a vis his relationship with the Muslim world or will it be the same with the (inaudible)? Thank you.

MR. AMR: Thank you, sir. And, ma'am, we'll take your question as well.

SPEAKER: Okay. My first --

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MR. AMR: Please turn on the mic.

SPEAKER: Okay. That has been really exciting. Thank you so much, Tom and Jerry. That is fantastic. My questions compares with Hady's about Pakistan and all about terrorism. Can you just say more? Because all of a sudden, I think it is becoming sharpened. The issue is a prominence of Pakistan in U.S. foreign policy. The other one, which is just totally (inaudible) of questions have been asked. But I'm wondering about to shift from Joe the Plumber and Joe (inaudible) to Joe Lieberman. So if -- what is his name -- McCain were to lose, what will Joe Lieberman say on all of this and will he tell him that Palin was the kiss of death?

MR. AMR: Tom, I don't know if you've heard the question. The first one being how will Barak Obama's position differ vis a vis the Muslim world and then secondly, if I'm stating it correctly, assuming that -- if McCain loses, what will Joe Lieberman's read be on this being the former Vice Presidential nominee himself of an innovative style as well -- the

first American Jew to be on a Presidential ticket. And again we'll -- again defer to Washington for the technology.

MR. MANN: Right. I am technologically challenged here so -- listen, I think Obama has or will have enormous opportunity at the beginning of his Presidency. Domestically, of course, he has to deal with the financial meltdown and the need for new regulatory structure and then to deal with the recession that could be long in deed, which is going to help him begin to reestablish some, some public trust in Government which is at a historic low level now. But, as far as foreign policy, our international standing -- the world I think is so anticipating this change and is open to it, that they're aware of his experience in Africa and Indonesia -- I think there -- there's a high expectation that he's going to set a different tone. So there's an opening and an opportunity. Yes, we will continue to be deeply concerned about terrorism, but it's not going to -- it's not going to convey the same rhetoric or,

frankly, strategy of a war on terrorism that seems directed in particular states and the like. It will show them and I actually anticipate changes that -- that the Muslim world will welcome. I also think that Obama will -- will be more like Clinton than Bush in terms of engaging in the peace process in the Middle East and in trying to move that along and working with the countries in the region. Joe Lieberman has fallen a long way. I still remember when Al Gore picked him as his running mate. It's been all down hill since then for Joe. Joe miscalculated this time and surprised his Democratic colleagues with -- with one sharpness in his anti-Obama rhetoric and his embrace at the defense of Sarah Palin. In their mind, it's one thing to be a friend of John McCain and support him for the White House. It's another thing to sort of set aside your -- your other views and wholly embrace things you don't find credible. So, Joe will, will -- will lose his committee chairmanship if the elections work out as I think they will and find that the Senate is a very unrewarding place to be. I

wouldn't be surprised if he would leave the Senate before the end of his term. If he runs for reelection, he will -- he will face serious state opposition. I think he's -- he's made some serious mistakes in judgment. Many of his strongest supporters and former aides have become very disconcerted.

MR. AMR: Thank you, Tom. Dr. Leach?.

DR. LEACH: The question of U.S standing in the world -- both candidates are well aware that the actions of the Bush Administration over eight years have caused a lowering -- drastic lowering of the U.S. approval and U.S. standing in credibility in the world today. The one that puts the most emphasis on doing something about that -- of raising it back up -- is Barack Obama. And I think he will be more actively engaged in meeting with foreign leaders, meeting quickly. I think he'll be more inclined to listen rather than to preach at them, if you like. I think he's aware of how arrogant the U.S. Government looks in many circumstances. That is how -- the arrogance

of power expresses itself in foreign policy. I think he'll put particular emphasis on raising our standing in the Islamic world because it's been lower there than anywhere else in the world and he has a great opportunity to do that. So I expect a kind of drive on his part to get to know the leaders of the Islamic world countries and to listen hard and figure out, you know, what we need to do to repair the damage. He'll really be -- he'll really care about that. In terms of the war on terrorism, it's clear that he regards that the war on terrorism was far too broadly defined and essentially should always have been a war on Al Qaeda. I believe he will narrow the definition of the war on terrorism -- maybe even change the vocabulary and it will become a war on Al Qaeda and not a war of the U.S. chasing everybody who is engaged in a violent act around the world. Essentially that's unwinnable. It's like we're declaring war on worldwide crime or something like that. You're never going to -- you're never going to win that war and you're never going to win the worldwide war on terrorism. So you could

possibly do a lot of damage. A lot of damage has been done. Maybe even eliminate or take to ineffectiveness Al Qaeda. And I think that will be his goal -- to redefine and much more narrowly focus on the war on terror. It will no longer be the top priority of the American administration. It will fall down the list of priorities and be in the middle somewhere.