



TRANSCRIPT

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**(HEAD-
LINES)**

MR. ROLAND MARTIN: At the top of our agenda this week, weak job growth, down stock market. How much more pain in the economy? Oil in the Gulf. Environmental and political problems continue to spread for the White House. Plus, what do this week’s primary election results really mean? Our “Washington Watch” newsmakers, two top economists, Michael Ettlinger, from the Center for American Progress; and Peter Morici from the University of Maryland, talk job creation, the deficit, Wall Street, and how it all affects your bottom line. Plus, Texas congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson shares what’s being done to save struggling homeowners from losing their homes. In our “Washington Watch” roundtable: April Ryan, White House correspondent for American Urban Radio Networks; Karen Finney, Democratic political strategist and MSNBC contributor; Robert Traynham, host of “Roll Call TV” on the Comcast Network; and Van Jones, former White House Green Jobs Czar and senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. All that and more today, on “Washington Watch.”

**(SEG-
MENT 1)**

MR. MARTIN: So much attention is still focused on the oil disaster in the Gulf, and we’ll talk about that later in the program, but the real disaster that we still continue to face: our economy. While the economic outlook is improving, the fact still remains millions of people – especially African-Americans – are jobless and struggling. What

can be done, and what should be done, to fix this problem? With me are two men with somewhat different answers. Dr. Peter Morici is an economics professor at the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland, and Michael Ettliger is the vice president for economic policy at the Center for American Progress, a progressive think-tank.

Gentlemen, welcome to “Washington Watch.”

DR. PETER MORICI: Nice to be with you.

MR. MICHAEL ETTLINGER: Good to be here.

MR. MARTIN: We always haze newbies, and some[?] might happen here as well, so thanks a bunch. Let’s get right to it.

Weak private-sector growth. [The] jobs report comes out, but most of those jobs came from, you know, really, the Census jobs. They’ll go away in a month, month and-a-half. And so what does it really tell us – the weak private-sector growth, the sell-off on Wall Street? What does it really speak to us about?

DR. MORICI: Well, businesses need two things to expand. They need customers, and they need capital. And the things that haven’t been fixed are the huge deficit, which is making too many dollars go overseas, but not come back to buy U.S. exports, so there’s not enough demand for what businesses make; and the TARP really didn’t help those 8,000 regional banks. Every weekend, the FDIC closes another three, four, five banks. They don’t have money to lend. The TARP funded big bonuses on Wall Street, but it didn’t help all those businesses out, there that create the jobs, hire or

get the financing they need to pay for the equipment workers need.

MR. MARTIN: And, Michael, we know for African-American businesses, they're likely to get their loans from community banks, from regional banks.

MR. ETTLINGER: Right, and there's a big problem right now, still, with particularly small business lending. You know, the big companies, they – the bond market's functioning much better than it did. I mean a lot was done, in fact – including TARP, which helped restore lending for – at the highest levels for the big guys, but for the little guys, it's still very tough. And the President has some proposals to deal with that, and I think that's very important.

Sort of going back to your question about what did the jobs report mean, I – I think what it means is that the economy is still teetering, 'cause the month before, we'd had a very positive jobs report. Things were looking good. Then we have a bad one. I think things can still go either way.

MR. MARTIN: Now, we've always looked at jobless ... claims as a leading economic indicator, but should we still focus on that? Because it seems every month when the report comes out – as you said, last month people said, "Oh! Good thing." Next month: "Man! Not so good." So, what really should we be looking at to measure how the economy is doing to get a better understanding?

DR. MORICI: People should be focusing on the jobless claims. Although weekly data – those, weekly, tend to go up and down, those have actually been pretty consistent. You know, yesterday people made a big deal that the number of continuing

claims went away. Well, that's because the jobless benefits are running out. So many people are beyond the limit. They're no longer collecting, and they've quit the labor force. Still, we're losing about 450, 460 jobs a month in the sense – a week, people filing [for] unemployment insurance. That number has to get down below 350, down to 325, before we start to have a healthy jobs picture. Wall Street misread yesterday. It's unfortunate. The market often does that – in both directions.

MR. ETTLINGER: Yeah, I – you know, I would say that I actually don't put as much stock in the weekly numbers, but I think the monthly jobs numbers that people *do* focus on are one of the key things. You know, I think that's very important. I also think, you know, the traditional measures of gross domestic product have meaning as well. I mean if we're not having broad economic growth, we're not going to have jobs; but it is – the next key indicator is whether that growth *is* translating into jobs, and the best measure of that is those monthly numbers that we get.

MR. MARTIN: Peter, earlier you said TARP was not beneficial to regional banks. Yet, we're also hearing people say the key to this [is] we need more stimulus spending. Is that really the answer when you have a Republican Party, where you have congressmen all over the place who are saying, "Look. We're going to ride fiscal conservatism back to power"? *Does that make sense?*

DR. MORICI: If there's ever something that's been misunderstood, it's the role of stimulus spending. For the – for the Democrats, *any* kind of spending is stimulus. It's *magic*. For the Republicans, it's absolute evil. The reality is it's someplace in

between. It depends on how you spend the money. If you put money out there to renovate a school, and you hire a local contractor who uses local materials and local labor, *you're going to get jobs*. If you put money into a green building that'll be built six years from now, and in the meantime you put \$2 million into an architect, you put *two* people to work: the architect and his receptionist. Too much of the stimulus money was spent *that* way. And also, a lot of the construction money went into Chinese imports, which don't create many jobs here. *You have to spend it right*. The Chinese did, and they got a *lot* of stimulus out of their 500 billion. We didn't, and we didn't get much stimulus out of our 800 billion.

MR. ETTLINGER: Yeah, I –

MR. MARTIN: Michael, agree? Disagree?

MR. ETTLINGER: -- I completely – [chuckles] – disagree with that. I mean I think – look, there is a small portion of the money that – that wa- -- doesn't get spent out for a longer period of time, but almost all the money goes out in the first two years, which was always the intention. Most of the money *went* to the things like, you know, building roads, building bridges – that sort of thing – or, a third of it went to tax cuts. You know, it was a very small portion of it, I think, [that] would meet the characterization that he just[?] – [crosstalk].

DR. MORICI: Well, only 100 billion went into infrastructure spending, and the President promised us brick and mortar. A third of it went into – approximately – into tax cuts. It didn't work for Bush, a good Republican, and it didn't work for Obama, a

good Democrat, because people are rebuilding their *savings*.

MR. ETTLINGER: I think it *did* work. I mean we were losing 750,000 jobs a month when the stimulus package passed.

DR. MORICI: You and I –

MR. ETTLINGER: We're now starting to *gain* jobs. I mean it was – we averted having a Great Depression. This comes back to the TARP as well. I'm not a big fan of the way the TARP was done, *but*, on the other hand, I think we would've had a complete financial collapse, which would've taken down not just the national banks, but the regional banks as well, if we hadn't done the TARP. Now, there's – lots of mistakes were made in the TARP that was passed, you know, in late 2008; but the – but, getting back to the stimulus, I mean I think it's been a huge improvement.

Now, we have a long ways to go before we have a strong economy creating jobs, but in terms of what the stimulus was designed to do –

MR. MARTIN: And –

MR. ETTLINGER: -- I think it *did* it.

MR. MARTIN: -- it's also –

DR. MORICI: Well –

MR. MARTIN: -- ending, though.

DR. MORICI: It's ending.

MR. ETTLINGER: *Exactly*.

DR. MORICI: It's ending, and we're not out.

I think it's important, looking forward, to say, "What *can* we do?" "Where do the solutions lie?" I mean not all stimulus spending has equal traction, so if we're going to have a second jobs bill, then we have to make sure that it's focused, it's spent on American products, and it's spent on putting people to work here and now – especially within the demographics that really need work.

With regard to the TARP, some of that money's coming back. You know, during the savings and loan crisis, we had a Resolution Trust, which made a profit for the government. The big New York banks didn't want that, so the Resolution Trust wasn't created. We didn't clean up the books of the regional banks, and they continue to fail. We *have* to come up with a solution to the regional banks so, for example, African-American businesses can borrow.

MR. MARTIN: And also let's – also b- -- let's be clear. Black businesses? Stimulus? One percent of those contracts -- abysmal. Hispanics: 2 percent. So, you had the two largest groups when it comes to being unemployed also not truly benefiting from those same stimulus –

DR. MORICI: Well, when you –

MR. MARTIN: -- contracts.

DR. MORICI: -- when you –

MR. ETTLINGER: Well –

DR. MORICI: -- use your stimulus money to build windmills, you end up buying the components in China. It doesn't matter whether you're White –

MR. ETTLINGER: -- that's --

DR. MORICI: -- or Black, or *whatever*. You're not going to get any of that money, if the money goes to China.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- when you put money into the economy, in a global economy, the money ends up all over the place. That's inevitable. The -- the -- there were windmills --

MR. MARTIN: Yeah, but --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- made --

MR. MARTIN: -- the reality is that --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- there were windmills made --

MR. MARTIN: -- African-Americans have --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- here --

MR. MARTIN: -- 16 percent unemployment.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- yeah.

MR. MARTIN: You look at Hispanics -- about 14 percent.

DR. MORICI: I guess all stimulus --

MR. ETTLINGER: I mean --

DR. MORICI: -- money is --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- so --

DR. MORICI: -- equal? Is that right? No matter -- it doesn't matter --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- of course, not.

DR. MORICI: -- how you s- -- well, what I'm talking about is --

MR. ETTLINGER: I don't recall *saying* --

DR. MORICI: -- *focusing* it.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- that.

DR. MORICI: Well, but you're sort of --

MR. ETTLINGER: So, I think --

DR. MORICI: -- *implying* it.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- so -- I don't think so, but --

DR. MORICI: [Crosstalk] --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- but -- so --

DR. MORICI: -- goes out into the global economy, and sooner or later it comes back? I'd like to know what really -- what do you think --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- so --

DR. MORICI: -- works better than others, if you would agree that --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- no, I'd agree. But on the other hand, there's --

DR. MORICI: -- well, what --

MR. ETTLINGER: -- only --

DR. MORICI: -- works best?

MR. ETTLINGER: -- so, I think that -- for instance, moving ahead, what we should be doing now? I think there -- there're some key steps we should be taking. One key step is that we should absolutely be stopping the bleeding in state and local

governments. I mean we're laying off teachers; firefighters; you know, police officers and the rest right now –

MR. MARTIN: But –

MR. ETTLINGER: -- and that's a big drag on the economy. And let me just –

MR. MARTIN: -- but – but –

MR. ETTLINGER: -- say –

MR. MARTIN: -- when you say "stopping the bleeding," the reality is – I mean, look. I mean I covered city hall and county government. They're largely getting their dollars from property taxes. If people are losing their homes, they're not sitting here paying property taxes.

MR. ETTLINGER: Right.

MR. MARTIN: You also – and people also are not spending. They're not sitting here – you're see- -- not seeing increases when it comes to sales taxes. So, really, what can the federal government do to stop the bleeding when, frankly, the folks on the local level are *truly* being im- -- I mean that – that – that's where the –

DR. MORICI: With a lot of folk –

MR. MARTIN: -- impact is taking place.

MR. ETTLINGER: That's exa- -- that's exactly –

MR. MARTIN: Michael, then Peter. Go ahead, go ahead.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- that's exactly the *point*. I mean we need to do st- -- the federal – that's why the federal government has to step in. And let me just say that

when you do – when you put money to do tha- -- that sort of thing – to create jobs directly –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- it's not just about helping those people; or even just preserving state and local services; or even, you know, the investment that education is. It's also about changing the momentum of the economy. It's about putting money in people's pockets so that they're co- -- the people going through the doors of business, so business then has the confidence to hire and invest.

So, you know, I abs- -- I think that's an important part of the Recovery Act, that people forget, that was key. It wasn't just about the direct job creation.

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. ETTLINGER: It was about changing the momentum of the economy –

MR. MARTIN: Peter.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- and breaking –

DR. MORICI: The momentum –

MR. ETTLINGER: -- the freefall.

DR. MORICI: -- of the economy is sliding in a downward direction. Private jobs creation over the last three months has gone down. We – you know, we –

MR. ETTLINGER: [Crosstalk] – job –

DR. MORICI: -- had a –

MR. ETTLINGER: -- creation. Right? Which is a nice change.

DR. MORICI: -- we had a blip, and now we're going down, and *that's a real* –

MR. ETTLINGER: Ah!

DR. MORICI: -- *problem*. You know, the trade deficit comes to much more than the stimulus in terms of its impact on demand for U.S. goods and services. When the President was campaigning, he said he'd do something about it, and he continues the policy of George Bush, which is to have discussions, dialogue, diplomacy with China; and he's been called to task by – he was called to task this week by Democratic senators on the Hill – that is, through Tim Geithner, and Geithner simply didn't have good *answers*.

MR. MARTIN: And you've been critical –

MR. ETTLINGER: Actually, things are[?] –

MR. MARTIN: -- of the President.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- very different.

MR. MARTIN: You've been critical of the President. You said, quote, "Either Barack Obama fixes what's broken in the economy, or he will be remembered for spending his entire first term blaming George Bush."

DR. MORICI: Well, we s- -- *do* spend a lot of time in this administration blaming George Bush, and stimulus spending is proving to have only been a temporary tourniquet, because now that its impact is dissipating, the private economy is slipping away. *What's really broken* – *what's really broken* is the trade deficit and the regional banks, and they *haven't addressed that problem*.

MR. MARTIN: Last question for you two gentlemen: if you're sitting in front of the President, and Summers is not in the room, Geithner is not in the room – some folks might say that's a good thing – Romer -- Christine Romer's not in the room. If you say, "Mr. President, these are the two, three things you need to do *now*," what are they?

MR. ETTLINGER: I'd actually agree with Summers, so I wouldn't mind him in the room. So, I – you know, I absolutely think we need to –

MR. MARTIN: That's a – that's a pretty short list, Michael.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- yeah.

MR. MARTIN: [Chuckles.]

MR. ETTLINGER: State – [chuckles] – state and local – well – anyway –

MR. MARTIN: I gotcha.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- I wo- -- I won't take –

MR. MARTIN: I gotcha.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- that[?] time. But state – you know, putting money into the state and local to – to stop the bleeding on that side, getting money to –

MR. MARTIN: So – so – so, ho- -- hold [on].

MR. ETTLINGER: -- yes?

MR. MARTIN: So, stimulus money – as opposed to sending it to the governors – to the states –

MR. ETTLINGER: Right?

MR. MARTIN: -- go right to the *local* –

MR. ETTLINGER: Yeah, and communities, too.

MR. MARTIN: -- okay. Gotcha.

MR. ETTLINGER: Absolutely.

MR. MARTIN: Okay.

MR. ETTLINGER: That's one. Two, we ought to, you know, extend unemployment; extend COBRA -- those things. Again, it's a twofer; it helps those people who need it, *plus* it gets money out into the economy. And -- and, third -- here's where I agree with Peter -- we need to do something about small business lending. Whether it's through the regional banks, or otherwise, we need to --

MR. MARTIN: Okay.

MR. ETTLINGER: -- do something about that.

MR. MARTIN: Peter.

DR. MORICI: A Resolution Trust to clean up the books of the regional banks so they can loan money again, like the sa- -- we did with the savings and loan crisis.

MR. MARTIN: Meaning those toxic assets.

DR. MORICI: Right. Get 'em off their books for good. The second thing, I just -- I would tax dollar-yuan conversion until the Chinese revalue their currency. It really should be trading at 4. It's trading somewhere above 6 -- about 6.81, 6.82. Let's get it down to 4, its effective rate, by taxing that.

Finally, what do you do with those revenues? You know, we import too much oil. We *use* too much oil. I think we'd agree about *that*.

MR. ETTLINGER: [Nods in agreement.]

DR. MORICI: We *have* the technology at our disposal to have a – much more fuel-efficient vehicles on the road, but we’re going to have to assist Detroit in getting it out to make it economic. Use that money there – a national industrial policy to roll out those fuel-efficient vehicles for the purposes of getting oil imports down once and for and for good.

MR. MARTIN: I’ll tell you what. I’m sure T. Boone Pickens would love to talk about natural gas and also wind –

DR. MORICI: Abso- -- I’m all for that kind of stuff, too.

MR. MARTIN: Okay. All right. Peter, Michael, we certainly appreciate it. Thank you so very much. We’ll see what happens in the next few months, but you’re absolutely right. People are broke. They’re tired, and they want to see something done – and it could impact Democrats in a negative way come November.

DR. MORICI: Take care.

MR. MARTIN: Thanks a bunch.

MR. ETTLINGER: Thank you.

MR. MARTIN: Folks, it’s Tea Party time. Tea Party candidates make strides in Tuesday’s primaries, but will they end up helping Republicans or Democrats? Plus, President Barack Obama says he’s ready to “kick some butt” on the oil spill. Too little too late when it comes to emotion? Our roundtable discussion is up next with April Ryan of American Urban Radio Networks; Karen Finney, political strategist on the

Democratic side, also an analyst for MSNBC; Robert Traynham, the host of “Roll Call TV”; and Van Jones, the former Green Jobs Czar for the Obama Administration.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-
MENT 2)**

MR. MARTIN: All right, folks, big elections this week all across the country.

We’re going to delve right into it. And also, we’ll deal with *bruthas* bein’ *angry*! Can the President show some emotion? Here to discuss this story and much more: April Ryan, White House correspondent for American Urban Radio Networks; Karen Finney, Democratic political strategist and MSNB contributor; Robert Traynham, host of “Roll Call TV” on the Comcast Network – I’ll get to his white pants in a moment – and –

[CHUCKLING.]

MR. MARTIN: -- Van Jones, the former green jobs advisor for the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

All right, folks. Get right into it. [A] lot – drama –

MS. APRIL RYAN: Drama, drama, *drama*!

MR. MARTIN: -- this week. The President used the word “ass”!

[CHUCKLING.]

MR. MARTIN: And folks are just trippin’. Here’s, actually, the exchange between him and NBC’s Matt. Lauer.

[VIDEO CLIP.]

PRES. BARACK OBAMA: I was down there a *month* ago, before most of these

talking heads were even paying *attention* to the Gulf. A *month* ago, I was meeting with fishermen down there, standing in the rain, talking about what a potential crisis this could be. And I don't sit around just talking to experts because this is a college seminar. We talked to these folks because they potentially had the best answers, so I know whose ass to *kick*.

[END OF VIDEO CLIP.]

MR. MARTIN: [Raises his hands in mock frenzy.] *O-o-oh*, folks sayin' the President was –

MS. KAREN FINNEY: "I'm not a college" –

MR. MARTIN: -- upset!

MS. FINNEY: -- "professor!" [Chuckles.]

OFF CAMERA: "I know whose butt to" –

MR. MARTIN: That *really* wasn't –

OFF CAMERA: -- "kick."

MR. MARTIN: -- like, *angry*. Let's just be honest about it.

MR. ROBERT TRAYNHAM: But he *does* sound defensive.

MS. FINNEY: He *does* sound –

MR. TRAYNHAM: He s- --

MS. FINNEY: -- defensive.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- he sounds very defensive. You could – look. One thing we know about Barack Obama: there's no drama.

MR. MARTIN: “*President Barack Obama.*”

MR. TRAYNHAM: Pres- -- correct. And one thing Ob- -- we also know about President Obama is that he’s pretty predictable. For him to be very defensive and to talk about the college [professorship] and the whole nine yards – that’s him being on the defense, and here’s –

MS. RYAN: We didn’t –

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- why.

MS. RYAN: -- predict “kicking *blank*,” though.

MR. TRAYNHAM: Well, here – here’s why.

MR. MARTIN: Okay. We can say “ass” on this –

MS. FINNEY: Well –

MR. MARTIN: -- show, April.

MS. RYAN: Well, *you* can say it.

MR. MARTIN: Go right ahead.

MS. FINNEY: -- but you know what –

MS. RYAN: *I’m* not going to say it.

MR. MARTIN: Go-o-ol-ly!

MS. FINNEY: -- once in a while, though –

MR. TRAYNHAM: Well, it *is* on Sunday, but here – but here’s why. As we go –

MS. RYAN: Thank you! [Chuckles.]

[CHUCKLING.]

MR. MARTIN: So, you ca- -- so! What? You cuss Monday through *Saturday*?

MS. RYAN: [Cracks up.]

MS. FINNEY: -- of *course*!

[LAUGHTER.]

MR. TRAYNHAM: Look. But I'm just –

MR. VAN JONES: [Crosstalk] – not gettin' to heaven *that way*!

[LAUGHTER.]

MR. MARTIN: Right! Right! Like God *don't* know! But –

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- but look. But look.

[CHUCKLING.]

MR. MARTIN: -- go ahead, Robert.

MR. TRAYNHAM: But look. This is serendipitous to the conversation, because Barack Obama doesn't *use* that word. We've *never* heard him use that *word* before.

OFF CAMERA: He may use it privately, but –

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: Uh, actually, he does.

MR. TRAYNHAM: We've never –

OFF CAMERA: No, no, no, no.

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- we've never –

MR. MARTIN: [Chuckles.] Actually –

MS. FINNEY: I think –

MR. MARTIN: -- he *does*.

TRAYNHAM: [Crosstalk] –

MR. MARTIN: [Chuckles.] Actually, he does – but go ahead. Go ahead, Ka- --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- but not publicly.

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: Go ahead.

MS. FINNEY: There'[re] two issues in what –

MR. MARTIN: Ka- -- Karen, then Van.

MS. FINNEY: -- there'[re] two issues in what h- -- in what he said and what's happening here. Right? One is this “angry Black man” discussion that we've been needing to have, frankly, for a very long time. It's the same thing for women. You know the code, or you don't. And when you know the code, you know, as a Black man in America, or you know as a woman, there is a certain way, if you want to get along in mass culture, that's how you behave.

The other piece of this, though, is the White House has not done a good job actually showing what is happening on the ground. They *let* it get to the point where they have to be on defense. *He's right*. He's been there from the beginning.

MR. MARTIN: A press release is different [from] saying –

MS. FINNEY: Right.

MR. MARTIN: -- “number of people,” “this cleanup,” “doing this,” “We've done

this,” “We’ve done that.”

MS. FINNEY: Or, *showing* – *showing*.

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. FINNEY: At a time –

MR. MARTIN: That’s what I’m saying.

MS. FINNEY: -- when people’s belief in government is as low as it’s ever been, you’ve got to *show* ‘em – not just tell ‘em.

MR. MARTIN: Van, do- -- di- -- didn’t you think it was hilarious, though, you had the people who were criticizing him for not showing emotion?

MR. JONES: Right.

MR. MARTIN: Then he shows some emotion, and they say, “Well, my God! What was he doin’? What” – “What” – “What’s goin’ on?”

MR. JONES: I – I think what you’re seeing is – you know, the – the country’s frustrated, and the President has not had his megaphone moment. Remember the last president. After 9-11, people were very frustrated. They said, you know, “Where” – “Where is the President?” et cetera, et cetera. He couldn’t find his voice. And then he’s stumbling at the megaphone moment.

MS. RYAN: At Ground Zero.

MR. JONES: And at Ground Zero.

MS. RYAN: Um-hum.

MR. JONES: And he stood up, and he said, “They’re gonna hear from us,” you

know, “soon.” And then the country said, “Okay. He gets it.”

The President has not yet had his megaphone moment. When he has it, things will calm down, and in the mea- -- but in the meantime, what ... -- what we wind up doing is distracting ourselves with, “Was he mad enough?” “Is he not mad enough?” “Well, ... he said” – “he said ‘ass.’” “Well, he said ‘jackass’ about Kanye. Well, let’s talk about Kanye.”

Listen.

[CHUCKLING.]

MR. JONES: People actually just want to be called to service: “What are we supposed to do, Mr. President? And we will do it.” *That’s* what’s missing.

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: But – but – but ... April – but ... one second. One second. But, April, here’s the reality. A- -- and I g- -- I get – I get the comparison with Pres. George W. Bush and 9-11. The difference there was President Bush can *tell* the military, “Draw plans up.” “Send planes.” “Attack.” There are *two, fundamental* issues here. BP has to fix the leak, because the federal government doesn’t have the capa- –

MS. RYAN: Capacity.

MR. MARTIN: -- -city.

MS. RYAN: We don’t have the –

MR. MARTIN: Now, the federal –

MS. RYAN: -- or equipment –

MR. MARTIN: -- nu- -- number one --

MS. RYAN: -- or --

MR. MARTIN: -- one second. One second.

MS. RYAN: -- we don't have the --

MR. MARTIN: But the federal *government's* --

MS. RYAN: -- equipment, or the --

MR. MARTIN: -- part --

MS. RYAN: -- know-how. Yes?

MR. MARTIN: -- is you ha- -- dealing with the cleanup. There're *two distinct issues* to Karen's point. So, really, they can do all of that; but until BP plugs the leak, it doesn't *matter* what he says. This --

MS. RYAN: But it *does* --

MR. MARTIN: -- is going to continue.

MS. RYAN: -- matter! [Crosstalk] --

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: One se- -- oh, no, no. O- -- one second. Go ahead.

MS. RYAN: -- i- -- it *does* matter. And the reason why [is] this president has gone down, and he's going down again this week, and he's staying for two days -- going to Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida this time. But *this* president has got to show that he is in control. And what? He's, just this week coming, going to meet with the chairman of the board of BP. That should've happened a long time ago. People are

not seeing the President in charge. They don't want to hear – and I've – and I've been on Twitter, and I've been on the social networks. People are – are not worried about the – the word “ass.” Okay? They want to see this president show emotion. He is a very laid-back man. They want [him] to show that he is in charge. They want to see that he's in charge. And they want to see – they want to see Robert Gibbs also stand there, saying, “This is what's happening today,” and, “We're in charge.”

MR. MARTIN: [Crosstalk.]

MS. RYAN: They want to –

MR. MARTIN: And, Robert, when I –

MS. RYAN: -- see the *gestures*.

MR. MARTIN: -- but, Robert, when I say it doesn't matter, what I'm saying is the- -- again, there're two, distinct de- -- deals here.

MR. TRAYNHAM: Absolutely.

MR. MARTIN: But the reality is he can say all he wants to, but as long as 40,000 barrels are gushing out *every day*, he can talk and scream at the top of a mountain. That problem, unless it is fixed, will –

MR. TRAYNHAM: Right.

MR. MARTIN: -- persist.

MR. TRAYNHAM: Ri- -- Roland there'[re] two sides of this coin. The first coin is what you're talking about. This is BP's mess to clean up. No question about it. The flipside to that coin is let's go back 20 years, back to 1989, when the Exxon Valdez

obviously ran aground. George H. W. Bush went on national television and said, “I will hold people accountable.” “Heads” – quote – “will roll” – end quote – when this is done.

And so what Pres. Oba- –

MR. MARTIN: Now – now, the – correct me if I’m wrong.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- and so what – and –

MR. MARTIN: First of all –

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- what Pres. –

MR. MARTIN: -- first of all, Valdez – that was a *tanker*.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- but – but –

MR. MARTIN: *Listen*.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- but – but –

MR. MARTIN: O- -- o- -- one second.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- [crosstalk] – it was an accident –

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: No, no, no ... no.

MS. RYAN: [Crosstalk] – a limited amount –

MR. MARTIN: Excuse me. Excuse me.

MS. RYAN: -- of oil.

MR. MARTIN: Excuse me. I want to finish my point. There was a tanker. [The oil] spilled out. You can haul in the tanker. You can capture the oil. I’m not dismissing it. The difference here is it is a mile underground, and they don’t –

MR. TRAYNHAM: But – but ... hold on. Hold –

MR. MARTIN: -- know how to stop it.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- on.

MR. MARTIN: Go ahead.

MR. TRAYNHAM: But – but – but – right, but the issue is ... that it still – it still was, and is, a national catastrophe –

MR. MARTIN: Yes! Yes!

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- where the President speaks to it on his podium and says, “I will hold people accountable.” It’s called being authoritative, and it’s also called being in control –

MR. MARTIN: Karen then Van.

MS. FINNEY: Right.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- even when you can’t control the situation.

MR. MARTIN: Gotcha.

MS. FINNEY: The difference we – our culture was very different when Va- -- Exxon Valdez happened. We didn’t have 24-hour cable. We didn’t have an – what I’m saying is –

MR. MARTIN: Well, yeah. We – [crosstalk] –

MS. FINNEY: -- I think –

MR. MARTIN: -- one network, yes.

MS. FINNEY: -- if we would have seen –

MS. RYAN: We didn't have the visuals.

MR. MARTIN: Yes.

MS. FINNEY: -- right. If we would have seen earlier on -- I want to see a *war room*. I want to see maps on the wall. I want to see --

MS. RYAN: [Crosstalk.]

MS. FINNEY: -- the *plan*. I want to see *what is happening*. I think they would buy themselves a lot more credibility, frankly, if people could see and feel like we all *get* it; that until we stop the leak, this is -- I mean that is the major thing that has to happen.

MR. MARTIN: Now, Van --

MS. FINNEY: But I wanna *see* --

MR. MARTIN: -- y- --

MS. FINNEY: -- how they're trying to *do* it.

MR. MARTIN: -- Van, you served in the White House, and so you have [seen] these issues in terms of how they actually construct things. *Is that part of the problem* -- not presenting that visual to the American people?

MR. JONES: I -- I -- I think that's right, but the- -- ... there're two things here. One is the President is actually doing everything that this man just said. The -- the attorney general is down there, treating this whole Gulf like a corporate crime scene, waving handcuffs. And if you're at BP, you're not saying they're not in charge. They['ve] got the attorney general -- Lisa Jackson from EP- --

MS. RYAN: They're investigating --

MR. JONES: -- let me finish.

MS. RYAN: -- though, the initial –

MR. JONES: Lisa Jackson from –

MS. RYAN: -- part of it.

MR. JONES: -- E- -- Lisa Jackson from EPA is saying – starting the process to strip away every one of their cor- -- contracts from the government. If you're a BP executive, you're saying, "This guy is" – "might put me in jail and take all my money away."

The *problem* is that you – you are in a situation – because of what you describe, you have a volcano of oil coming. Your tendency is to go in to manage the crisis, and you don't know when to turn to lead the country. And this – this is the – the – the turning point now – where people are frustrated with this [is], "I see you're trying to manage the crisis. Now I want you to lead the country."

MS. RYAN: There're two situations –

MR. JONES: And – and –

[CROSSTALK.]

MS. FINNEY: But you don't – [crosstalk] –

MR. MARTIN: As long as –

MR. JONES: -- and the way that you do that –

MS. FINNEY: -- but you don't – [crosstalk] –

MR. MARTIN: -- hold on.... One second.

MS. FINNEY: -- [crosstalk] – decisive – [crosstalk] –

MR. MARTIN: Finish the point.

MR. JONES: -- and – and ... I think the way that you do that is – is what you see them doing now. You're going to see him down, boots on the ground. You're going to see him speaking more from his heart, and people are going to be shocked when they actually hear how much passion this president has to see a *foreign company* come over here, corrupt our government [sic], kill innocent workers, slag up the coastline, destroy the ecology and economy in an *American* region that has been a – a – a *jewel* for us. When you hear his passion, I think people are going to be shocked.

MS. RYAN: There's –

MR. JONES: And then we're – and ... we [are] not going to be talking about the *profanity*; we're going to be talking about the *profundity* –

MS. RYAN: -- there's –

MR. JONES: -- of having a president that cares as much as the President does

–

MS. RYAN: -- there're –

MR. JONES: -- care.

MS. RYAN: -- two is- --

MR. MARTIN: April.

MS. RYAN: -- there're two issues going on. You have to remember at the very beginning, 11 people died from an explosion. There's an investigation going on there

with the attorney general and others. But then you also have this situation of trying to capture this oil, trying to make sure that the environment is – is straight, trying to make sure that life – that – that life in those areas [is] not affected. But the – what I think we're going to see this week, and the thing that this is where the President can come out and show that he's authoritative, that he has the passion, is when he meets with the – the chairman of the board of BP and talks about the fact that BP, who's making all of this money, as we've talked about before, in profits – they need to pay these claims. They need to go through the claims process expeditiously. These people are losing their livelihoods –

MR. MARTIN: But you –

MS. RYAN: -- down there.

MR. MARTIN: -- handle[?] – but – but, again, though, until it is plugged, these questions are going to persist.

MR. TRAYNHAM: Well – [crosstalk] – but –

MR. MARTIN: This – this is a secondary issue, and the problem is –

MS. RYAN: It's *not* a secondary –

MR. MARTIN: -- e- -- *excuse me. Excuse me.*

MS. RYAN: -- issue for those who –

MR. MARTIN: *Excuse me. Excuse me.*

MS. RYAN: -- live down there.

MR. MARTIN: It *is* a secondary issue in that the oil leak itself is the primary

issue. And until that is fixed –

MS. RYAN: All of it's –

MR. MARTIN: -- they are –

MS. RYAN: -- at the surface at –

MR. MARTIN: -- at the –

MS. RYAN: -- same time.

MR. MARTIN: -- mercy of –

MS. RYAN: All of this –

MR. MARTIN: -- this leak.

MS. RYAN: -- he can –

MR. TRAYNHAM: But, Roland –

MS. RYAN: -- chew gum and walk –

MR. MARTIN: Robert –

MS. RYAN: -- at the same –

MR. MARTIN: -- they're at –

MS. RYAN: -- time. Correct?

MR. MARTIN: -- the mercy of the leak –

MS. FINNEY: But –

MR. MARTIN: -- April. So, you can't deny that. Robert –

MR. TRAYNHAM: But, Roland –

MR. MARTIN: -- go ahead.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- there[re] -- there[re] two, different things that we haven't really talked about.

MR. MARTIN: About --

MR. TRAYNHAM: One --

MR. MARTIN: -- 20 seconds before I go to a break.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- this is not really part of the President's DNA. He's not a passionate guy. We need to --

MR. MARTIN: He's *not*!

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- we -- we need ... --

MS. FINNEY: [Crosstalk.]

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- to acknowledge that. The second acknowledgement is that -- as we talked about a few moments ago -- he's an African-American who's President of the United States. And the last time I checked --

MS. RYAN: This has nothing to do with race.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- and the la- --

MR. MARTIN: No. [Crosstalk]- --

MR. TRAYNHAM: It doe- -- it *does*.

MR. MARTIN: -- excuse me.

MR. TRAYNHAM: It *does*.

MR. MARTIN: Finish your point.

MR. TRAYNHAM: And the -- and the last time I checked, there is a majority in

this country that do not like angry Black men in fro- -- in their living rooms.

MR. MARTIN: So, hold that point, because I want to pick up on that when we come back. There's a broader discussion that we have to have as relates to this whole notion of angry Black male. And, really, this is a learning opportunity that we can pick up on with the President.

Folks, hold tight. We'll be back with our roundtable in a moment.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-
MENT 3)**

MR. MARTIN: All right, folks. Back with our roundtable guests.

Here's what Jonathan Capehart of *The Washington Post* wrote this week. He's an editorial writer of the *Post*. "African American men are taught at very young ages (or learn the hard way) to keep our emotions in check, to not lose our [cool], lest we be perceived as dangerous or menacing or give someone a reason to doubt our ability to handle our jobs. There's no African American version of, say, Rahm Emanuel, the White House Chief of Staff with a widely known and celebrated reputation for F-bombs and confrontation."

Folks have been saying, "Well, it's really" -- "it's" -- "It" -- you know, "It's n-" -- "Well, it's not because he's Black," but I *do* believe, though, that part of the President's natural reaction has been reinforced and created over these years because of this very perception.

MR. TRAYNHAM: Roland, I went to an HBCU in undergrad, and -- and

undergrad during business classes, my African-American professor would say, “You need to be careful as an African-American in a White boardroom. You just have to watch” – “be very careful how you speak, be very careful how you just comport yourself.”

MR. MARTIN: And the brother was saying, “You can’t have too much bass in your voice.”

[LAUGHTER.]

MR. TRAYNHAM: And in gra- -- and – and when I went to grad school, which wa- -- in – here in D.C., which was a majority school, I brought that up to my White professor. They had no idea what I was talking about. It’s like, literally, night and day. And –

MR. MARTIN: [Crosstalk] – wait, wait, wait –

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- so there’s an –

MR. MARTIN: -- ... wait –

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- *issue* in America.

MR. MARTIN: -- ... wait a minute. They had – they had no idea what you were *talking* about, *but* –

MR. JONES: Consciously.

MR. MARTIN: -- when it – *consciously*. But when it *happens*, it’s all of a sudden, you’re “volatile.” You’re “difficult.” “Why are you upset?” when it’s, “No, I’m actually asking pointed question.” But the *White* guy over here is kickin’ in doors, yellin’

and screamin' –

MS. FINNEY: That's right.

MR. MARTIN: -- [unintelligible] – he's "pas-" –

MR. JONES: He's – [chuckles] – passionate."

MR. MARTIN: -- "-sionate."

MS. FINNEY: That's *right*.

MR. JONES: [Chuckles.] He's "passionate."

MS. FINNEY: Look. I mean we know that people have their biases, whether they're conscious of it or not. It's the same thing for women. You talk to women candidates who say the biggest challenge is they have to be tough enough and show they won't cry like a baby –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

[CROSSTALK.]

MS. FINNEY: -- but they also have to -- *bu-u-ut* –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. FINNEY: -- they have to be – they have to also show they can be empathetic, because as women, we're supposed to show – be able to show some empathy.

MR. MARTIN: I use the example if you're an African-American on a mainstream, cable television, [it's] the exact, same thing. Bill O'Reilly, Glenn Beck – all those – Sean Hannity – they can go *ballistic* – yell, scream, curse, holler; but the moment a *Black* guy

does it, oh, he's not comin' back. And the difference that people don't understand is Black men are conscious of this every, single step of the way. And so all of a sudden, you're being criticized for something you had to train yourself not to do.

MR. JONES: Yeah, that's right. But the – I think the – the good thing about Pres. Obama is he's such a ... learner. And I think you're right. Ev- -- every African-American man learns – you go through the whole process. You['ve] got to be a very, very different kind of communicator. And now he's being given a final exam with a totally different question.

Any time spent doubting Pres. Obama is time wasted. He understands that people want to be taken care of at an emotional level. He's not going to do it the way that maybe Jim Carville is doing it right now – [chuckles] – which is, you know, he –

MR. MARTIN: Right, right, right.

MR. JONES: -- he's got – he's – he's got – emoting for *all* of us.

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. JONES: You know ...he's not[?] –

[LAUGHTER.]

MR. JONES: -- [crosstalk] – “Ragin' Cajun.”

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. JONES: But I *do* think there's a sweet spot for him here. And the sweet spot for him is to be Dad. [Unintelligible] – you know, “Dad is mad.” Okay? But, “Dad is still in charge.” And once – when he – when he – and that's his voice. That – that's

natural for him.

MR. MARTIN: Gotcha.

MR. JONES: "Dad is mad." And ... once that becomes where he is standing, then I think you're going – you're going to find people's anxiety level begin to go down.

MR. MARTIN: I'm – I'm not[?] making a speech right now, because I want to deal with the whole – what's happening in politics. The White House – highly critical of labor because of the amount of money they spent in the Blanche Lincoln race, senator for Arkansas, saying, boy, that was 10 million or so down the drain. But when you look at what's happening in Nevada: Tea Party candidate facing Sen. Harry Reid, when you also look at the fact that there's a three-way race going on in Florida, some people are saying the Democrats are not doing enough to back Meek, even though they have a – Ke- -- Congressman Kendrick Meek, even though they have a 700,000 vote advantage in Florida. What does the elections – what do the elections this week mean for Democrats come November?

MS. RYAN: Well, I'm going to say one thing, for sure, that the White House is definitely saying: for November, things are going to be tight. They haven't given up, but we saw something in Arkansas. Bill Clinton is still very viable, and that's one –

MR. MARTIN: Well, first of all –

MS. RYAN: -- thing – [crosstalk]- --

MR. MARTIN: -- he was the governor – he wa- -- first of all, he was the governor of –

MS. RYAN: -- right.

MR. MARTIN: -- Arkansas.

MS. RYAN: Right.

MR. MARTIN: I mean -- I mean he -- he -- his -- his presidential library is there, so it's not like he went to a state where no one truly knows him --

[CROSSTALK.]

MR. MARTIN: -- personally.

MS. RYAN: See, but -- but our -- but our --

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. RYAN: -- but our test case was Al Gore, who chose not to really use then Pres. Bill Clinton to go out. And -- and I think that was a test case. And we see that he still is very viable. People love him, and he reaches out even in his own state, because Al Gore wasn't able to get his own state, or Arkansas.

Now, with the upcoming elections for Democrats, I think the President needs to be out there, no matter what the economy looks like; and I think Bill Clinton needs to be out there.

MR. MARTIN: I'll tell you what, Karen. I talked to some of the Democratic strategists. They also said labor made a horrible mistake in not targeting Black voters --

MS. FINNEY: Um-hum.

MR. MARTIN: -- when it came to Halter. It was a cla- -- they said it was a classic deal. Labor sort of rolls these ads out and everything. They don't put boots on

the ground. So, you're trying to win a close election, and you ignore the most important constituency for the Democrats in *any* co- -- *any* state.

MS. FINNEY: Well, absolutely true. And I think what happens with the African-American vote – and, frankly, the Latino vote – in this election cycle will be very interesting to watch. Everybody – you know, conventional wisdom is, “They’re not going to turn out because Obama’s not on the ticket.” I certainly hope we see *big* turnout in the Black community, because I think that is better for the Black community in the long term in terms of our political power.

But I think, for Democrats, it could be a very good year; but here’s the problem. The Democratic Party has been on defense, I believe, on the national narrative for about a year. The Tea Party movement is moving the Republican Party farther and farther –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MS. FINNEY: -- to the right. Does that – do the Democrats then use that opportunity to step up and make their case about why they deserve to remain in power?

MR. MARTIN: Robert, I do believe Democrats have a problem, because you look at the election results in 2009. Young voters have disappeared. African-American[s] – numbers down. Overall, Democrats are still lagging behind 15, 20 points when it comes to enthusiasm. That is not a good recipe for victory.

MR. TRAYNHAM: The Democratic patient is still in ICU.

MS. RYAN: Oh!

MR. TRAYNHAM: Six w- --

MS. FINNEY: [Chuckles.]

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- six weeks --

MS. FINNEY: Oh, wow.

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- ago, it was near death. I don't say it's near death now, but it's still touch and go. And the reason why I use that analogy is because there is still time for the Democratic Party to rally behind -- h-m-m, I don't whether it's healthcare. I don't know if it's around this BP oil spill. I don't know what it is, because they're so under enthusiastic right now.

But the real is I disagree with Karen a little bit. It's not about the Tea Party; it's about *Obama*. It's about people not -- either saying: a) "This is not my guy. He's a socialist. He's taking this country to the left." Or, it's about, "This *was* my guy, but I'm not overly enthusiastic about" --

MS. FINNEY: But -- but --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- "him."

MR. MARTIN: And -- and -- and -- and, Van --

MS. FINNEY: -- this is about --

MR. TRAYNHAM: And *that's* the issue.

MR. MARTIN: -- and, Va- --

MS. FINNEY: -- this is about something --

MR. MARTIN: -- Van, I want you to --

MS. FINNEY: -- broader than --

MR. MARTIN: -- I wa- --

MS. FINNEY: -- just the President. This is about --

MR. TRAYNHAM: It's about the --

MS. FINNEY: -- the vision --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- President, Karen.

MS. FINNEY: -- for where -- where the country is going.

MR. TRAYNHAM: Karen, i- -- the -- the --

MS. FINNEY: If -- okay. If --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- Republican narrative --

MS. FINNEY: -- you want to --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- I -- I disagree with this, but --

MS. FINNEY: -- [crosstalk] -- and you're --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- Repub- -- the Repub- --

MS. FINNEY: -- so, why are your --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- the Repub- --

MS. FINNEY: -- Republican colleagues backpedaling on their whole --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- the -- the Re- --

MS. FINNEY: -- "We're gonna take over with a hundred seats"?

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- the -- the Republican narrative is not about --

MS. FINNEY: They're not quite so bold --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- what I'm for.

MS. FINNEY: -- right now -- are they?

MR. TRAYNHAM: It's -- it's not about what I'm for; it's about what I'm against.

It's all about Obama. There's nothing else the Republicans -- [crosstalk] --

MR. MARTIN: Van --

MR. TRAYNHAM: -- right now.

MR. MARTIN: -- Va- -- Van, I will say that when you look at the people who are in support of the President, you have people in the environmental community, the gay and lesbian community, Hispanic community -- people don't want to talk about it -- in the Black community who are saying, "Look, we came out in huge numbers for this guy. I'm not *seeing* it." Does that still pose a problem for those Democrats who are running in senate races, congressional races, gubernatorial races?

MR. JONES: Oh, I think -- I think that this -- this enthusiasm gap -- people talk about it as a snapshot. I think we have to look at it as a movie. 2008 was a -- a -- was a moment of unprecedented enthusiasm, and then you saw a natural drop-off. I think what you're -- what you're going to see is, frankly, the Tea Party --

MR. MARTIN: Drop-off, or letdown?

MR. JONES: -- I -- I would -- I would -- I -- tha- -- that's -- that's ... gonna be subjective, but --

MR. MARTIN: Okay. All right.

MR. JONES: -- ... but what I *will* say is this. You have a movement -- this Tea

Party movement – that right now has, I think, the wrong narrative. It's – it's a *winning* narrative, because it hasn't been combated yet.

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. JONES: But ... here's how the Democrats can – can combat it. What is the small-government response to BP? What is the “make America's go-“ – “government weaker” response to this catastrophe? What is the “make America” – “America's government weaker” response to this banking crisis?” There *is* no – they say, “We hate the federal government.” The last time I checked, the federal government was *America's* government. You explain to me how, given what we are facing today –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. JONES: -- a weaker American government will make us be- -- better off.

MR. MARTIN: Well, I'm face – right now, I'm facing a clock, because I'm totally out of time.

April, Karen –

MS. RYAN: [Chuckles.]

MR. MARTIN: -- Robert, Van, we certainly appreciate it. Thanks a bunch.

Folks you can keep this conversation going by logging on to TVOneOnline.com and leaving your comments there.

Coming up after the break, despite federal efforts, foreclosure rates continue to rise. Why isn't the Obama Administration's Making Home Affordable program working? We'll talk to Texas congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-
MENT 4)**

MR. MARTIN: For the second consecutive month, foreclosure rates rose in every state. It was the taxpayers who helped big banks stay afloat, so why aren't they helping homeowners stay in their homes? Texas congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson is here with more on that and what Congress is doing about the oil disaster in the Gulf.

Congresswoman, glad you're back.

REP. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON: Thank you.

MR. MARTIN: Ten states accounted for more than 70 percent of all the homes - ... all U.S. filings in April. Texas [was] one of those top ten. How is this hurting the folks in your district? I still own a home there, so I'm one of your constituents. And what can be done? Because the existing program the President laid out last year flat-out isn't working.

REP. JOHNSON: It is *not* working. It's because the banks are not cooperating. You know, it's interesting that the taxpayers' money helped to rescue these banks, and though they have paid the money back to the government, they have not kept their word. We need very much for them to make loans to small businesses.

MR. MARTIN: You said "kept their word." We had HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan here, and I asked him, "How did you not *mandate* it?" So, frankly, they made it *optional*, so the bank is saying, "We don't *have* to."

REP. JOHNSON: We tried to change the language on TARP to – to try to nudge them along. That still hasn't happened. The- -- there are some rules that we cannot push too far. Banks have a right to remain solvent and to protect the investments of the people who are making those investments.

MR. MARTIN: But we protected *their* butts, though.

REP. JOHNSON: We did that. The *taxpayers* did that. And I don't know what would've happened to our country if we had *not* done it, but I think there really is a commitment that the banks must keep with the American people. We know that when we get into a situation of this sort, the big businesses are not the businesses that keep the employment up. It would be the *small* businesses, the creative minds who can afford, with a loan, to create new jobs.

MR. MARTIN: Even if the people who still have their homes, they, frankly – the ... values have gone down so much, now you have property taxes that are impacted. So, now your school districts, your hospital districts, the city, the state – now they're receiving less money because of the property values – all because of the home foreclosure problem. So, what is Congress going to do? What specifically can be done to fix this problem?

REP. JOHNSON: Well, there *is* legislation to encourage the fix. It's moving *very*, *very* slowly; and the last we checked, *very*, *very* few people had received that consideration. Bank of America was one of the ones and [is] considered to be *extremely* slow in attempting to address these problems. But I don't think there's going

to be any other way out. I think it *must* be addressed.

MR. MARTIN: I want to get to BP. You were part of a group of House committee chairs who met with the Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, as relates to the oil spill. What is Congress' action? What are they going to do to target BP, or to fix this problem?

REP. JOHNSON: Well, we have a package of meetings coming along, and it – it's a lot we *must* do, because this has not happened before. This is an international company that is not subject to our rules, but it has done more damage to our country, in many of our states. So, there're a number of things we must do. We must raise the cap of liability. I think we should ask now for them to put up about \$5 billion in escrow, because it seems to me that, with their stocks going down right now, they can easily decide to go into bankruptcy. We do not want to be left holding this bag.

MR. MARTIN: Last question. Several members of the CBC are leading a charge against the Office of Congressional Ethics. Why?

REP. JOHNSON: Well, many members of the CBC feel that they've been treated unfairly. This is supposed to be a confidential investigation. Nobody's names are surfacing but members' of the Congressional Black Caucus. And we also have a system where anyone, even anonymously, can call in a complaint to start an investigation. Well, there is nothing that says it can't be your opponent making up something. By the time they go through the process of making sure that this is true or untrue, you've been damaged. And so that's one of the reasons why the Congressional

Black Caucus is taking a lead in asking for more fair rules – because it’s my understanding that we have about ten or 12 people that are under investigation. It’s very simple stuff, and probably when they finish, nobody will be in trouble; but it makes it *sound* bad when the public gets this information. There’re no other groups in the Congress that ‘ve had the attack as much as Congressional Black Caucus members.

MR. MARTIN: All right. We’re out of time. We’re certainly glad that you were here and would love to have you back.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you –

MR. MARTIN: Congresswoman –

REP. JOHNSON: -- very much.

MR. MARTIN: -- Johnson, thanks a bunch.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you.

MR. MARTIN: All right, folks. Up next, backlash on the Net about rapper Slim Thug’s thoughts on Black women and their relationships with Black men. TVOneOnline’s James Hill has the details in this week’s “Web Watch.”
[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-
MENT 5)**

MR. MARTIN: Outrage over rapper Slim Thug’s comments on Black women and their relationships with Black men, and also, what’s up with Gary Coleman’s ex-wife? TVOneOnline’s director of digital media, James Hill, is here now with this story and more in this week’s “Web Watch.”

All right, James. Let's get right to Slim Thug. First of all, the name itself – he's not slim. *Might* be a thug.

MR. JAMES HILL: [Chuckles.] Right.

MR. MARTIN: But he's got folks ticked off, 'cause he talked about in terms of how Black women should be treating their men and how White women know how to treat their men.

MR. HILL: Right. Well, okay. So, Black women all over the web are upset about this – right – because Slim Thug, he was an interview with "Vibe" magazine. He said, quote – I want to make sure this is a quote.

MR. MARTIN: Right, right, right.

MR. HILL: [Crosstalk] – know / didn't say –

MR. MARTIN: Right, right.

MR. HILL: -- this. Right? He said, quote: "White women treat they man like a king, and Black women feel like they ain't gotta do" – blank. "Black women need to stand by their man more." He then threw some *more* salt in the wound by saying that his biracial girlfriend takes such good care of [him] due to her White heritage.

MR. MARTIN: Now, what's interesting is I saw a story where there was a relationship expert in the UK who criticized his comments, but then she sort of kind of *agreed* with what he had to say when it comes – when she said that sometimes Black women are so independent, so feisty, that causes problems in the relationship. So, are you seeing people who – who are actually *agreeing* with what he had to say?

MR. HILL: I'd say not much. [Chuckles.] I'll tell you. So, what we got was one woman on – tbaby on TVOneOnline said, "Slim Thug needs to shut his mouth and remember who gave birth to his ass." That was her quote. She said, "I am a black woman who stood by her man when [my husband] lost his job, and I had to take care of [my] whole family."

Another user named STATS turned the whole thing around and said, "Until brothers can get their national graduation rate above 50%, they are in no position to tell [us] black women" what to do.

MR. MARTIN: Um. Gotcha. All right.

MR. HILL: So, she flipped it.

MR. MARTIN: All right. Well, ... speaking of standing by her man, Gary Coleman's ex-wife –

MR. HILL: Shannon Price.

MR. MARTIN: -- White woman. Married to Gary Coleman, Black.

MR. HILL: [Chuckles.] Right. Right.

MR. MARTIN: She has – really got things a little fired up. The release of this photo –

MR. HILL: Yes.

MR. MARTIN: -- here he is in a – in a hospital bed, tubes coming all out his mouth. And she s- -- and she's looking at the *camera*. What –

MR. HILL: Yeah, this is – I mean – and –

MR. MARTIN: -- this is *nuts*!

MR. HILL: -- it's amazing. In two weeks, she went from, like, the obscure ex-wife of a sitcom star to, you know, potential murderer, steal- -- now, here's the -- the new story is -- is that the estate of Gary Coleman --

MR. MARTIN: Right?

MR. HILL: -- thinks that -- that she went and *stole* stuff from his property: his truck, videogames -- a whole bunch of stuff. So, now they're on her about --

MR. MARTIN: And thi- --

MR. HILL: -- this.

MR. MARTIN: -- this is crazy reaction online, too.

MR. HILL: Oh, yeah, *crazy* reaction. We[ve] got people -- we have some -- someone saying, you know, "Oh," you know, "it's not that bad. It's not that big ... a deal." You know, "We should see what's going on," yadda, yadda, yadda. We have one guy named John who said -- and I quote -- "She should rot in hell."

MR. MARTIN: Wow!

MR. HILL: [Chuckles.] So --

MR. MARTIN: Well, I'll tell you what. I mean thi- -- this is a perfect example of how the web had changed everything, because you have this instant reaction. So, I -- you know, I haven't seen anybody come to her defense --

MR. HILL: No.

MR. MARTIN: -- with the actions here, because people are saying, yeah, the

photo was sold to this – to – to this magazine – to the “Globe,” or whatever; but the reality is people are saying, “*Wait* a minute. Why did she even take it in the *first* place?”

MR. HILL: Right.

MR. MARTIN: Who wants to keep that?

MR. HILL: Exactly. One –

MR. MARTIN: Right.

MR. HILL: -- person’s saying, you know, “She may be White, but this is a ghetto act.”

MR. MARTIN: All right. James, we certainly appreciate it. Thanks a lot.

MR. HILL: All right. Thank *you*.

MR. MARTIN: All right, folks. Now it’s time for “My Perspective.”

You know, I was talking to Robert Traynham in our Green Room, ‘cause Robert had a pair of white pants on. And so he said you can only wear these a certain period of time. I think it’s ... between Memorial Day and Labor Day. So, I asked Robert, “Who in the hell sets these rules?” Why do we follow rules [when] we don’t even know why they’re set?

Here’s my whole deal. If it’s 75, 80, 85 outside, you want to wear white, and it’s December, *wear white*. I’m sick of being a follower. Why don’t you just lead? Wasn’t there a rule that you couldn’t wear tennis shoes with suits? Well, all these so-called “fashion experts” – you see them walking around with t-shirts with a jacket on and a pair of Converse tennis shoes on. This is *nonsense*.

I say wear what you want to wear. If you feel great, if you look great, just simply do you, and stop following some stupid rule, and you can't even determine where it came from.

That's my perspective. What's yours?

We'll be right back.

[END OF SEGMENT.]

**(SEG-
MENT 6)**

MR. MARTIN: It's time for our "Feedback" segment with my HP Touch Smart computer. Jwill7 left this e-mail about my perspective on legislators focusing on their constituents and not their careers. He had to say, "Your perspective was right on point. While I do not always agree with you, never have I found your analysis to be 'stupid.'" Well, thanks a bunch. "The problem, as you've cited, with many (not all) politicians are they focus more on being reelected than serving the voters, who elected them in the first lace."

DarkrThnMost wrote this e-mail about my interview with author Paul Butler about the influence of hip-hop. That comment: "Remember in the late '80s when Public Enemy, along with other groups, had everyone who listened to hip hop thinking consciously? They were stopped dead in their tracks when more money and better deals came into the equation."

Well, first of all, they're still involved. I know Chuck D well. They travel all around the world, so they're still doing music. So, they have not gone away.

Folks, if you want to sound off about a topic, go to TVOneOnline.com and leave your comments there.

Well, that's it for this edition of TV One's "Washington Watch." I'm Roland Martin. Goodbye and have a blessed week.

[END.]