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BILL MOYERS: Welcome to the JOURNAL.

This Halloween, my grandchildren's neighborhood was crowded with little McCains, Obamas, Bidens and Palins, knocking on doors and scaring us with threats and promises of trick or treat. Just like real candidates. For a moment I was grateful for an excuse not to be so serious about politics. But the children also got me thinking of how every election is always haunted by the ghosts of presidents past.

Soon after he was tragically thrust into the White House, my old boss, Lyndon Johnson, could be heard ruminating on all the fingerprints left on the place by his predecessors, as if he were struggling to reconcile his own destiny with their legacy. He ran hard in 1964 for election in his own right, to free himself from the past, as if that were really possible.

Barack Obama and John McCain couldn't help being reminded this week that they are not wholly free agents, either. President Bush, an ethereal lame duck, paid a surprise visit to the headquarters of the Republican National Committee in Washington. The president, who hasn't been seen publicly with his party's candidate since May, told staffers and volunteers that McCain is within striking distance and all it would take was their hard work to put him over the top.

And then, in Florida, former president Bill Clinton, showed up at Barack Obama's side to make a rousing endorsement:

BILL CLINTON: There's not any real question here! This is not a close question!

If you're making a decision based on who can best get us out of the ditch - he's got the best philosophy, the best positions, the best ability and the best judgment - I think it's clear. The next president of the United States should be, and with your help, will be Senator Barack Obama!

BILL MOYERS: THE WALL STREET JOURNAL columnist Daniel Henninger this week cast it as a potential change in America's idea of itself - a "philosophical tipping point" he said away from the "free-market" model of capitalism toward the "social market economy" with a more decided mix of public and private forces. For some, that would be a trick. For others, a treat. One person's scare is another's salvation.

This election could be a watershed in another way as well. For the first time ever a black man could become president something many people never thought imaginable, given the unholy, past and present terrors of slavery, violence, and bigotry. Leave it to Jon Stewart to grasp the live wire with a light touch.

JON STEWART: I don't even know how to bring this up. Obviously, your mother is from Kansas, she's a white woman. Your father African. Are you concerned that you may go into the voting booth and...

BARACK OBAMA: I won't know what to do.

JON STEWART: Your white half will all of a sudden decide I can't do this.

BARACK OBAMA: Yeah, yeah, it's a problem
BILL MOYERS: Over on CNN that same night, Senator McCain told Larry King he doubted race would affect the outcome.

JOHN MCCAIN: Look, there is racism in America. We all know that because we can’t stop working against it. But I am totally convinced that 99 and 44 one hundredths percent of the American people are going to make a decision on who is best to lead this country... I have faith in the American people that they’ll make the judgment for the best of reasons, not the worst of reasons.

BILL MOYERS: So here we are, at one of those moments when we roll the dice and by the conglomerated action of 130 million or more people, give the rough beast of democracy a shove in a new direction. But which direction? Here to talk with me about this are two scholars of politics and democracy.

Glenn Loury was the first, tenured African American Professor in the Economics Department at Harvard University, he is now a Professor of Social Sciences and Economics at Brown University. His books include ONE BY ONE FROM THE INSIDE OUT: ESSAYS AND REVIEWS ON RACE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN AMERICA and this, THE ANATOMY OF RACIAL INEQUALITY this is his latest RACE, INCARCERATION, AND AMERICAN VALUES.

Kathleen Hall Jamieson, a regular contributor to the JOURNAL, is the Director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, her many books include this one, published this year, PRESIDENTS CREATING THE PRESIDENCY: DEEDS DONE IN WORDS.

Kathleen, Glenn, welcome back to the JOURNAL.

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON: Thank you.

BILL MOYERS: Are people exaggerating to read this as a potentially historic election?

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON: Even if we’re not for the historic candidacies, this would be an historic election for the range and complexity of issues the next President will face. And if people doubt that, ask the issues that we didn’t focus on that the President has to address in the next term. Climate change about which there was actually substantial agreement between the two candidates, hence little discussion. And immigration reform, also areas in which there was a lot of agreement.

BILL MOYERS: Has either candidate addressed the world as it is?

GLENN LOURY: Well, I don’t know that the world as it is can be addressed in a political campaign. I mean, I think isn’t there something about the very nature of this marketing and persuasion enterprise which is the selling of a candidate that obviates dealing with the world as it really is?

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON: You also have in campaigns the kind of calculated ambiguity. So each candidate has some rhetoric back there that the candidate can fall back to say, “Well, we’re going to face difficult choices. And we may, as a result, have to create new priorities.” And I suspect that they’re going to go back to that kind of language to say, “Well, I did forecast that we might have to change some of those things. You do remember that I told you that, don’t you?”

BILL MOYERS: I heard you say the other day that what we need is heroic rhetoric. Now, what do you mean by that?

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON: I was hoping that in this past week when Senator Obama had purchased the amount of time that made it possible to be on seven different networks, almost what used to be called road blocking, to speak to more than 25 million people, that he would also pay for a half hour for Senator McCain and say to the American people, “He can’t afford it. I can. And I’m going to give some of the money that you gave me over. Put my name at the end it ‘cause I’m required to do that so that he has the chance to tell you how he sees the future of governing and what he will do and how it will differ from what I will do.

“And then I’m gonna tell you the same thing from my point of view.” And I was hoping that in this last week of the campaign each of them would say, you know, “We promised a lot of things in different circumstances. The world has changed in the
last month to two months. The financial realities are now biting in. And as a result, there are things that we're going to have to do differently, and here are the sacrifices and here are the tradeoffs."

I think if President Obama or President McCain, either one, had set themselves into that situation and acted as president of the United States for a half hour, let us try on their presidency with the challenges, with the tradeoffs, and with the costs as well as the promises, we would have had an election outcome that everyone would have been happier with regardless of which candidate had won. And I would have considered that to be heroic.

GLENN LOURY: Well, lovely vision. Lovely. But the campaign that would have done such as you've just recommended perhaps would have also agreed to sit down for regular town meeting style conversations with the opponent over the course of the months in order to inform the American people respectively as to where they stood.

Such a campaign might also have entered into negotiations about the financing issue so as to preserve the general interests that we all have as Americans in limiting the role of money in politics - presidential politics more broadly. So while it's a lovely vision, I kind of find it impossible to imagine that it would actually have been acted on-

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON Let me ask you a question.

GLENN LOURY: -by this campaign.

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON What does it tell you about the Obama campaign, which has been brilliantly run, probably the best I've seen in my lifetime, that it made those decisions? And does that for you forecast anything about governance?

GLENN LOURY: I don't know that it tells me very much at all about governance other than we've got a shrewd, tough, smart candidate. If he gets elected, I expect him to govern shrewdly, toughly, smartly. But I don't know if content-wise what that means. I don't know what that means about free trade and protectionism and you know, agreements.

I don't know what that means about war in Pakistan and Afghanistan five years down the road or whatever it might be. I'm not sure what it means about taxes given the huge, you know, budget problems and such that we're facing. I don't know.

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON I think the question as we look at Senator Obama is, is he going to be acting out of the liberal progressive philosophy? Or does the way in which he's conducted his campaign, the way in which it - he has moved on some arguments such as an individual right to own arms, for example such as the backing away from negotiate with certain foreign leaders without preconditions, does that demonstrate a kind of pragmatism-

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON -that is not anchored in a coherent ideology that we recognize from the past? This may be a campaign that forecasts a new pragmatism.

BILL MOYERS: Which means a lot of hearts will be broken out there, right?

GLENN LOURY: Yes, it does. And mine will be one of them. And, you know, I think some arguments are worth engaging and refuting. I mean, this is a thing that has fascinated me about the Obama campaign from the very start. The conflict is managed in an indirect way. We're going to transcend, not litigate these culture war questions, for example.

We hope to bring people together around a table, hear all sides, and come up with a new synthesis. And that's great on paper. But I wonder if one doesn't have to have, you know, some fire in the belly and some fairly clearly defined ideological suppositions to guide one through the difficult, you know, negotiations and all the rest, keeping one's eye on a bottom line. And I'm also wondering if voters don't have a right to know about one's bottom line before they cast their ballots.

BILL MOYERS: You said the other day to a colleague of mine that there's something dreadfully wrong about our political discourse.

GLENN LOURY: We draw lines and boundaries about what is legitimate and illegitimate to be said. And then we conduct our political conversations mindful of
those boundaries. And often times profoundly important, substantive matters get left by the wayside. So we've got two and a quarter million people under lock and key on a given day in this country.

Now, we are a nation of jailers, it could be said. We are international outliers relative to any other country in the world with respect to the intensity of incarceration. There's a huge racial disproportion in what we do. Vast communities in our cities are policed in extremely heavy-handed way. You know here's an opportunity to actually during a campaign engage the country on such a question and we don't get there.

BILL MOYERS: Do you think that running what has been called a race-neutral campaign has helped or hindered Obama?

GLENN LOURY: I don't think the campaign has been race neutral. I think the candidate has stressed that he's not only a black candidate in the traditional sense. The candidate has stressed in his very DNA that with his mixed race heritage that he spans and bridges lines. And the candidate has pointed toward high ground with respect to that.

And yet I think how can one not see in the huge increase in registration, early voting, and the rest amongst African Americans in certainly key constituencies and the great sort of cultural up-swelling of pride and excitement about an African American candidacy and the narrative construction of, well, we had the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King. Somehow the wheel has turned. We've come to a completion of a certain historical dynamic and so forth.

All of that is based on race. All of it's based on understandings about race.

And, of course, on the other side, on the Republican side, we've seen, I think, I'd be interested to know what Kathleen thinks, the mobilization of race, a kind of creation of a whiteness identity or promotion of a whiteness identity as a counterpart to the blackness identity that lurks just beneath the surface of Obama's aspiration, or so it seems to me.

BILL MOYERS: But have you seen race injected into this campaign and using his term "subtly"?

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON Yes. And some of it not so subtly. In the last week and a half to two weeks of the campaign we've seen forms of advertising that have allied visually Barack Obama with Mohammad Ata.

FEMALE VOICE: Barack Obama's plan gives a driver's license to any illegal who wants one. Obama, too radical, too risky. The National Republican Trust PAC is responsible for the content of this advertisement.

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON Well, you see a visual amalgamation between Barack Obama and a terrorist.

And the suggestion being that a proposal about driver's licenses taken out of context and made into a plan that was never articulated somehow suggests that he would abet terrorism, he would make it more likely that terrorism would occur. That's playing on stereotypes. And those visual amalgamations, those are despicable.

BILL MOYERS: What do you think about that ad, Glenn?

GLENN LOURY: You know, well, there's the election and then there's the election and then there is after the election. The ad is going to echo and resonate after the election.

BILL MOYERS: How so?

GLENN LOURY: Should Obama win, now you have a president of the United States who a lot of people think is illegitimate as a person who consorts with murderers, as a person who's sympathetic to terrorists. It's de-legitimating of the president of the United States. It's poisoning the well in a certain way.

You do what you have to do to win an election. But then after the election the person has to govern. And now what has been said about that person continues to echo in the minds of citizens. And I'm worried that in this case the suggestion that Obama is somehow going to get in the White House and, you know, sell out the country will
hurt all of us should he win and need to govern.

**BILL MOYERS:** You used the word "despicable." Some of the really despicable signals have come in flyers that you can find on the train station and the bulletin board and other places. I mean, here's, you know, you can put lipstick on a pig but it's still a pig. And there's Obama. Then there's the one, the famous one, Obama bucks United States food stamps. And it just goes on. And then here's one very explicit. Do you want a black president? And then this one. America must look evil in the eye and never flinch. I mean, do you think these work?

**GLENN LOURY:** I don't think the question can be do they work in the general abstract. I think the question has to be doesn't it-will they be effective in certain key constituencies in certain states that are close where people are trying to fight this thing out? And I just don't know the answer to that. I certainly hope not. I expect not. But we're going to find out.

**KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON** One of the things that I think has happened in this election is that the symbol of Barack Obama has been taken by the world community as a symbol of change. And that's not simply a change in a reconciliation with a troubled part of the United States' past but also change from the Bush administration, change from a world in which anchoring in the international community was frowned upon. Here's a candidate whose biography is anchored in the international community. Time in Indonesia, father from Kenya.

And so I think the symbolic importance of an Obama candidacy to the world community at a time in which our relations have with other parts of the world are somewhat troubled is, in fact, one of the important symbolic elements of this campaign.

**GLENN LOURY:** Certainly on the surface, it seems to me, there would be gains. There would be a re-branding effect beneficially to the United States in the eyes of many people throughout the world.

But what I'm wondering is how important can that be relative to the fundamentals that cause us to find ourselves in conflict with so much of the world? That is, we maintain a vast military capacity. We have arrogated to ourselves the right to go to war in places in the world when we feel like doing so if our interests dictate that with or without the consent of our partners in democracy or the United Nations Security Council, whatever it might be. We have staked out a position in the conflict in the Middle East which is alienating to many people in the world who sympathize with the plight of the Palestinians and so on.

I mean, when we maintain a nuclear arsenal that's capable of incinerating most of mankind, and yet one could wonder what the military rationale for that could possibly be. I've not heard any serious discussion about these things in this presidential campaign. And I'm wondering whether or not America's problem to the extent that we have one with people elsewhere in the world, can be solved with cosmetics, you know, by the biography and the skin color of person who happens to be elected without addressing any of the underlying fundamentals.

**KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON** But I think there's something else that one should say. Lost in this whole discussion and something that involves the world community has been the fact that we have presupposed as a political process that the war in Afghanistan is the good war, that we're going to now continue to prosecute the war in Afghanistan.

There was no serious case made that perhaps that's a problematic war. And when Senator Obama suggests that he'll pay for some of his programs with cuts because we're not going to be paying for Iraq, he is, nonetheless, forecasting ramping up in Afghanistan, which is going to take some of that money into that other venue.

**BILL MOYERS:** So is McCain.

**KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON** So is McCain. So when you have no difference between candidates, we don't discuss the issue.

I think one of the things that we know about Senator McCain is that in important ways he isn't President George W. Bush. And he hasn't been able in the campaign to talk about those things.

**BILL MOYERS:** Why?
KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON Because to the extent that he does, he alienates part of the base that he needs to be elected. This was the person who stood up to the tobacco industry, favoring a tax and trying to ensure that the tobacco industry wouldn't market to kids. He clearly sees a government role when it’s a role on behalf of those who are in desperate need of protection from something that potentially endangers them.

He didn’t defend his immigration policy, his immigration platform, although I don’t believe he actually backed away from it. He just simply reprioritized it. But he didn’t stress that because that also wasn’t popular with the conservative base. And he didn’t stress his proposals on cap and trade, global climate change legislation, which he championed with Senator Lieberman. And he didn’t tell us things about his own biography.

Speaking to this impulse to use government to protect people, virtually no one knows that he championed the Patient’s Bill of Rights, something that runs counter to virtually everything a real conservative would want to see government do.

BILL MOYERS: Is that a failure to communicate?

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON It’s a failure to be able to find a way to deliver a message that would let his base still support him and yet speak to the rest of the folks about what his actual record was. And I wonder if he hadn't stressed all those things, if his electoral equation right now wouldn't be a lot more positive. I think he is more inclined than people think he is to use government when necessary to protect the individual against forces that are acting against them. I think largely the American people don't know that.

BILL MOYERS: So is it the press's responsibility to make up for what, say, a candidate fails to communicate?

GLENN LOURY: I think so. I mean I think that, isn't it the press's ultimate responsibility to ensure that the American public has the information that it needs in order to make an informed judgment in a democracy? And to the extent that that requires filling in the gaps, isn't that, you know, going against the dominant narrative of a campaign when an analyst would have reason to think on the basis of objective evidence that that narrative is not faithful to the actual state of affairs? Sure, I don't see why that's not the press's obligation to do.

BILL MOYERS: Speaking of narrative, I remember something you wrote on your website. You said Obama's candidacy is likely to interrupt the white narrative in this country. But it's also likely to interrupt the black narrative in this country. And you said that if Obama succeeds, the prophetic African American voice, which is occasionally strident and necessarily a dissident outsider's voice, could be lost forever. Are you still fearful of that?

GLENN LOURY: Well, I don't know. I said that in the context of the Reverend Wright, Trinity United Church of Christ controversy and Obama's speech in Philadelphia on race. And I was thinking at the time, as Obama distanced himself from not just the specific comments that Wright had made but, in a way, from the root source of those comments. This is the south side of Chicago, three quarters of a million African American people, movements as deep and divers as Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam on the one hand and Jeremiah Wright on the other, and many things besides.

And out there on the south side of Chicago tends to be where I’m from, you know, people take a pretty skeptical view toward American power in the world. They're not exactly credulous about all the claims of the city on the Hill. They know from their own life experience that everything's not quite right and everything's not quite fair. And I know that Barack Obama recognizes that.

And in that Philadelphia speech he said as much on Reverend Wright's behalf. But he also went on to say, you know, times have changed. We got to move on. We, in a sense, have to transcend this. Wright is a relic of another era. He's stuck in the old times and so forth. And I'm thinking when I heard about black liberation theology in the 1960s, 1970s, I thought, well, I don't know if I want to sign on but I kind of see where they're coming from, you know?

And I’m thinking, you know, some of this stuff, maybe it won’t sell in middle America. But there’s nothing wrong with it as such. There’s nothing that should be disqualifying about it. It should have a place at the table of American conversation.
And my fear was that as Obama, of necessity, needed to sort of marginalize that kind of thing, which had been important in his own life coming along. But now to move on, he needed to marginalize it, that the result would be that it would end up being marginalized across the board. It would end up a kind of commonplace assumption that that kind of talk is un-American or mildly offensive or whacko or something like that. And I just don't think that's so.

BILL MOYERS: Just this morning the NEW YORK TIMES-CBS News poll said that Obama's candidacy, whether he wins or loses, has changed some perceptions of race in America. Nearly two thirds of those polls said whites and blacks have an equal chance of getting ahead in today's society. Up from the half who said they thought so in July. And while 14 percent still said most people they knew would not vote for a black presidential candidate, the number has dropped considerably since the campaign began. Do you take this survey as a positive development?

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON: Not if it means that we neglect the fact that African American youngsters have a more difficult time getting through high school and getting to successful graduation, that they're underemployed in disproportionate percents. I think we need to realize that just because this remarkable individual has run a very successful campaign and may become president of the United States doesn't mean that there aren't serious problems that disproportionately affect particularly the African American poor.

BILL MOYERS: Are we saying that President McCain could more openly and aggressively take on the issues of the African American community, incarceration, and others that you have written and talked about than President Obama?

GLENN LOURY: Could and would are, of course, two different things. I think a case could be made that, you know, it's a Nixon to China kind of case. That for a candidate to take on something like let's say the hyper incarceration of poorly educated urban black males, the disparities of the impact of the war on drugs by race and American communities and so on, you might argue in some hypothetical argument that a more or less conservative Republican who was bent on doing something about that might have an easier time getting it done than would someone who had to look over their shoulder all the time for fear that they would be somehow pigeon holed, you know, as unacceptable to America.

No one's going to think that McCain is somehow a radical black liberation theology loving whatever if he were to take it on. But the "would" part is another matter altogether. I mean, I think this is something that Obama would regard as very desirable to do if he could get it done. And I'm not sure that I could say with the same degree of competence that it would be as high on McCain's agenda.

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON: This has been a disappointing election year in which there were major problems facing the electorate, a campaign process that didn't address them, debates that didn't do as much as they could to inform people about the tough challenges, the tradeoffs, and the likely solutions. Candidates who didn't tell us the full truth about everything that we know that they stood for in the past and would stand for in the future but which nonetheless put forward I think two qualified individuals to be president of the United States.

BILL MOYERS: And there is considerable enthusiasm out there.

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON: And unprecedented amounts of potential involvement among a sector of the population that could forecast a different kind of century. If the young vote mobilizes in the numbers that we expect, what that means among other things is that politicians are going to start speaking in the long term and not having the young generation carry the costs of programs that we offer to the electorate today but plan to pay for tomorrow. So the energizing of the young is one of the most important things that's happened in this election regardless of the outcome.

BILL MOYERS: Agree?

GLENN LOURY: Oh, yeah. I think that's such an important and interesting point. The generational politics that are built into issues like Social Security and Medicare, where younger generations will be paying throughout their working lives but where the fiscal dilemmas are such that they might not expect to get the same benefits. And what would bring politicians to the table and force them to grapple with it? And the idea that a demographic transformation of the electorate would have the effect of altering the terms on which this generational politics has played out is fascinating to me. So we will get to see.
BILL MOYERS: Glenn Loury, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, thank you very much for joining me.

KATHLEEN HALL JAMIESON You're welcome.

GLENN LOURY: Thank you, Bill.

BILL MOYERS: Our Manhattan offices are in a building that also houses the New York City Board of Elections. So this is the season when we hear above our heads the sounds of heavy objects rolling across the floor into freight elevators.

The moving men have arrived and what they're transporting are voting machines being carted off to polling places.

It’s reassuring, the sound of those big metal boxes being rolled out so we can cast our votes, but democracy's great vulnerability, as we all know, is that our political class doesn’t really trust what comes out of the ballot box on election day unless it has first fixed what goes in.

We just had that happen here in our fair city. Once upon a time our Mayor Mike Bloomberg, who has done well by most accounts during almost seven years in office, supported term limits - two terms and you’re out. With his time as mayor coming to an end next year, he even briefly explored running for president. But that went nowhere, so now he’s decided he wants a third term in city hall, something prohibited by law.

But instead of asking voters in a public referendum to change the law, the mayor chose to work his will through a series of backroom deals. First, he enlisted the support of the fellow moguls who own the city's three major newspapers. Next, having spread his multibillionaire's largesse around to local charities, he leaned on them for support, then he strong-armed the city council, most of whose members also get an extra term if the mayor does.

Presto, it worked. And once again we are reminded of how the love of power can lead even gifted politicians to contempt for the cardinal commandment of democracy that no one is above the law, even when they have the power to change it to their own benefit.

And then we have the spectacle of Alaska Senator Ted Stevens, 84 years old, his favorite necktie emblazoned with that popular anti-hero, the incredible hulk. Stevens was convicted this week on seven counts of lying on financial disclosure forms. The curmudgeonly Stevens declared: "It's not over yet!" And off he headed back to a hero's welcome in Alaska. He’s campaigning for re-election there under the aegis of the state Republican Party which says voters shouldn’t be denied the services of their prolific. Earmarker and pork producer just because he's a convicted felon.

That's the kind of argument we've long heard in Washington, and you have to wonder if Barack Obama and John McCain really think they can deliver on their promises to change the dominant culture of our nation's capitol.

JOHN MCCAIN: The American people know my record, they know I am going to change Washington because I've done it before.

BARACK OBAMA: The change we need doesn't come from Washington, change comes to Washington.

SARAH PALIN: If you want change in Washington, if you hope for a better America...

BARACK OBAMA: Change is not about slogans, it's not about TV commercials.

JOHN MCCAIN: Change is coming. Change is coming. Change is coming, my Friends.

BILL MOYERS: But will change really come? Is the power of money so entrenched and incorrigible that real change in Washington is impossible, no matter what happens on Tuesday? My next guests have some opinions on that. They’re real reformers - non-partisan champions of the public interest - who have the scars to show for it.
Joan Claybrook is considered one of the founders of the modern public interest movement. After serving in the Carter administration she's been, for 26 years now, the president of Public Citizen, the non-profit organization that advocates greater public participation in government decision-making.

After six terms in Congress, Bob Edgar became general secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. He is now president of the citizen's lobby Common Cause, founded in 1970 with the aim of keeping government honest and accountable.

Bob, Joan, welcome to the Journal.

BILL MOYERS: Your organization, Common Cause, a few weeks ago, ran a full page ad with the United States flag flying upside down. Why?

BOB EDGAR: Well, we noticed that when ships at sea are faced with a tsunami or a hurricane and they're in distress, they fly the flag upside down. We're saying that democracy is in distress. When you have Abu Ghraib prisons, when you have torture, when you have preemptive war, and when you have so many of our own people poor and disadvantaged, democracy needs to be renewed, refreshed.

We flew the flag upside down to say it. We hope over the next period of time, we can turn that flag up, right side up, and see with some clarity, what democracy really ought to look like.

BILL MOYERS: No matter who wins, Joan, what's the most important change you think Washington needs right now?

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Well, I think that it needs to have the people have a voice. There has to be more trust in the people, and the people have to trust the government. And so, the most important thing that I think that any new administration needs to do is to tackle the issues that the public cares about, and to appoint people to public office who are going carry that out.

I mean, Bush has appointed some of the true right wing deregulators and business-oriented deregulators that has caused so much of the harm that we're now suffering in the United States. And so, the people that he appoints, I think there are all sorts of signals that could be sent by the new president, signals of what kind of inauguration they're going to have. Is it going to be fur coats and limousines? Or is it going to be the people's inaugural?

What kind of budget he's going to propose or have for the first go at this difficult time? And what kind of people are they going to appoint? Are they going to appoint the large givers and as to the ambassadorships and to the treasury department, and so on? Or are they going to appoint people who really represent the public interest?

BOB EDGAR: Joan's right. On November 5th begins a new era, where we have to look at the issue of people. But equally important, I think, is the role of money in politics. And I'm pretty optimistic that whoever gets elected on Tuesday will be committed to public financing.

There's been a lot of feeling and rumors that because Obama didn't sign up for the presidential public financing system, that suddenly, that whole system is broken. But on Tuesday, in Connecticut, 75 percent of those running for the state House of Representatives have voluntarily opted into public financing. And we see it in Maine, we see it in Arizona, and we see it city by city across the country. People realize that there's too much influence of special interests.

We're not going to have health care legislation or environmental legislation, or fix some of the problems we face as a nation until we lessen the amount of special interest money that invades the system.

BILL MOYERS: But some people will say you're letting Obama off the hook, because the fact that he reneged on his pledge to use public funding for his presidential race sends a message to everyone that the means - the end justifies the means.

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Well, I think that Obama first of all, he has committed publicly to support both public financing of elections for the Congress, which we've never had, and to fix the presidential system, which is-
BILL MOYERS: But just not now.

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Well, I agree with you.

BILL MOYERS: He broke his promise for his own advantage.

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Right. And I think that that puts a tremendous pressure on him.

BOB EDGAR: He broke his promise, but also, the system itself, before either of the candidates got in, was broken. And Common Cause pointed out to both candidates that the system needed to be renewed. In fact, the whole primary system, I think, needs to be renewed, but particularly, presidential public financing.

And we wanted a pledge out of both McCain and Obama that one of the first agenda items would be to fix the presidential system. And I think even though Obama did not use the system, I think he realizes that not all the candidates can get 3,100,000 donors to their campaign. And while there are a number of small donors in the system, we think there ought to be a system of clean elections, public financing at the city level, at the state level, at the Congressional level, and particularly at the presidential level.

BILL MOYERS: What does it say to you that Obama has spent more in this election than John Kerry and George W. Bush spent together in 2004?

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Well, this is a most unusual election. He's raised a huge amount of this money through the internet. About 30 percent of his donations are from smaller donors, under $200. He has also, of course, raised a lot of money from special interests. And particularly, both he and McCain have raised a lot of money from the financial services industry. They are among their top bundlers, bundling money together and handing it over to the candidate. And that's true for both McCain and for Obama. So there's no lack of special interest money in this election.

BILL MOYERS: Politico.com did some fine reporting just this week, and came up with a list of Obama advisors you could pay to meet for $28,000. You could laugh, but this is not funny.

JOAN CLAYBROOK: No, I know.

BOB EDGAR: It's exactly what both political parties do every four years. And it's exactly why we need to fix the presidential financing system, because those people who pay those high dollars to meet those powerful people, do it so that they can have access.

BILL MOYERS: Joan, you just wrote the other day: "When the campaign ends, it's payback time." What special interest groups will be camped on the White House doors for either McCain or Obama?

JOAN CLAYBROOK: I'll tell you the first one that's going to be there. And that's going to be a financial services industry. The banks, the insurance companies, the securities companies they're all going to be there. They gave Obama and have given Obama and McCain huge amounts of money. They are the largest among their bundlers, and among their large donors. They're in trouble. All these decisions that are now being made on the disbursal of the $700 billion. They are going to be right there.

BOB EDGAR: Common Cause just did a study of how many House and Senate members who serve on committees of jurisdiction, have taken money from these very same industries. And we discovered that some of the people that we considered good guys in both parties took gobs of money from the banking interests. And it's no secret that the Glass-Steagall Act and other regulatory provisions that were in the
law, were weakened because of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and the leaders giving large amounts of money. And to add to your banking interests, I think reports are that the auto industry is also now in Washington-

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Really?

BOB EDGAR: -begging for money.

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Right.

BOB EDGAR: And we haven't talked-

BILL MOYERS: $25 billion dollars, and the merger between Chrysler and General Motors was hinging on the fact that the White House had pledged $50 billion to pay for the merger.

BOB EDGAR: Right.

BILL MOYERS: I mean, what-

BOB EDGAR: What an outrageous statement. But you know, I think that the defense industry, the auto industry, the banking industry, the health care industry, they're in both parties. They're funding the elections on both sides. And it just points out, lobbyists aren't bad in and of themselves. But it's the amount of money that they put into the system that corrupts the system

BILL MOYERS: Joan, there was a story this morning in the WASHINGTON POST by Jeffrey Smith. Quote: "The White House is working to enact a wide array of federal regulations, many of which would weaken government rules aimed at protecting consumers and the environment" your great concerns "before President Bush leaves office in January... The doors at the New Executive Office Building have been whirling with corporate officials pleading for relief, or in many cases, for hastened decision making." What does that say to you?

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Well, this is just a continuation of what Bush has done. And the reason we're in this economic distress is because he's deregulated all the financial services industry rules. And now, he's trying to finish up by deregulating the rules that protect us in global warming.

And so, this has long term impact. But I will say that as a former regulator, I think that it's possible to undo some of that if a new administration comes in and wants to. So there are ways of getting rid of what he's doing.

BOB EDGAR: Well, I agree with Joan. If I were the president of the United States going out of office, I would suggest doing exactly opposite to what this story talks about. Strengthen the rules on the environment, strengthen the rules on safety.

We're living in a time when deregulation has caused the economic tsunami that we're in. And I think we're looking at other actions of deregulating the environment, deregulating safety, deregulating justice. And you know, when I look in the president's eyes, I see a president that really wants to go home to Texas.

But I think there are still people around him who want to use the remaining days of this administration to do harm. And I think the American public, Republicans, Independents, Democrats, have caused a wave out there that Obama is riding and McCain is riding, that simply say, let's get Democrats and Republicans and Independents to work together to fix the health care problem and to fix the environmental issues. And let's look and work with a new attitude towards how we approach fixing the problems we face.

BILL MOYERS: And yet, the very people you need to enact the reforms you advocate: the president of the United States, whomever that might be, the new Congress, they're so beholden to this big money. I mean, Joan, big PhRMA, that's the drug companies' lobbyist, is spending $13 million in advertising on 28 Senate and House campaigns, 25 of them Democrats.

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Well, you know, we have to make the life of those recipients of that money more unpleasant if they don't vote for the people, than the PhRMA makes them happy with having given them that money.
BILL MOYERS: How do you do that? I want to know. How do you make the people unhappy who get all this money?

JOAN CLAYBROOK: You go to their speeches, you listen to their radio programs. You call in and you ask them the nasty questions. You write letters to the editor that criticize them. You picket their local district office if they vote the wrong way. You pay attention to the voting records. All of this is now on the internet. You can send letters to them every single day and harass them.

They need to hear from the people, and if the people don't react to this and read what's going on, either on the internet or in newspapers or television, and get back to their members of Congress and make life unpleasant for them, and for the new president. The new president's not immune from this, either. So we think that, you know, our voice has to be heard, and it has to be heard loud and clear again and again and again.

BOB EDGAR: Organizations like ours have to be more creative in our marketing and more able to research those dollars and who is taking the dollars, and how they're voting. There is a conflict of interest that is there. And we've got to expose that conflict of interest by getting that information out to their constituents, that the good government House member or Senate member that they thought they elected, may in fact, be in the pocket of these special interests.

BILL MOYERS: There's a very good organization in Washington, a new organization called the Sunlight Foundation, that is what it says. It's disinfecting the fog that hangs over the public records in Washington, and making transparency available on these records to people across to Public Citizen and Common Cause, right?

BOB EDGAR: They have to use more deep and more toxic cleansing material, because it hasn't gotten out. The Sunlight Foundation's doing a great job. And I think there are a number of people out there who are trying to research and study and expose those elected officials who are crossing the line.

BILL MOYERS: But as a journalist who has to see the world without rose colored glasses, we see it as it is, the fact of the matter is that public financing, which you both support, broke down this time. Congress is being elected with huge sums of money coming from people who will have the access that your average citizens can never achieve. And I'm wondering what it is, after 26 years, despite rolling that stone up the hill only to see it come down, keeps you going as you do.

JOAN CLAYBROOK: We've had so many successes. That's what keeps me going.

BILL MOYERS: Such as?

JOAN CLAYBROOK: Well, we've gotten all sorts of health and safety environmental laws changed. If you ask the conservatives and the business guys whether or not we have challenged them at every stage and won so many of our battles, then they're going to say, "That's why we, you know, had to put all this money into the system." Of course we have. We've won and won and won. And I believe that the people understand the role that we play. They care about it deeply. They support and help with that.

And our job is to try and give them the access that allows them to have some kind of influence in the future. I believe that in this next administration, whether it's John McCain, the maverick, or whether it's Obama, the change agent, we are going to see a lot of change. And that they're going to be forced by the circumstances of the economic downturn that we have, virtually a recession. They're going to be forced by the bailing out of these banks and these rich entities that have engaged in such outrageous misbehavior, that should be put in jail, in my view.

They're going to say it's our turn. And they're going to act on that, because they're outraged. And that's why so many people have been participating in this election. And I think that they're going to be fed up with any president, any president who does not give the public a voice.

BOB EDGAR: Bill, I'm going to give you some hope.

BILL MOYERS: Yeah, right.

BOB EDGAR: Go take a look at Connecticut and what they're doing with public
financing. Take a look at cities like Albuquerque and Portland and other cities that are beginning to move towards public financing. There are victories there. And as Joan has said, we wouldn't have seat belts or air bags if it were not for people like Joan getting involved in the transportation area.

So there are victories that can be there. But we have to recognize since 1980, the religious right and the political right have had a civil marriage. And they've dictated the policies. I think this election is a seminal election that's changing the beatitude of where we're going.

BILL MOYERS: No matter which candidate wins, whether it's Obama?

BOB EDGAR: No matter which candidate.

BILL MOYERS: Or McCain, you sense reform?

BOB EDGAR: I sense reform and change, and hunger across this nation to do what's right.

BILL MOYERS: Bob Edgar of Common Cause, and Joan Claybrook of Public Citizen, thank you very much for being on The JOURNAL.

BOB EDGAR: Thank you.

BILL MOYERS: As we just heard, democracy is a beautiful idea but a rough practice. Over the years I've covered or been part of some tough, hard fought and close elections, with unexpected consequences. It was just eight years ago this weekend that Al Gore was behind George W. Bush in two of three major polls. He wound up winning the popular vote only to lose to Bush in the Electoral College and the Supreme Court.

One of the most memorable moments for me actually came on the morning before the election. The actress Marlo Thomas went on the TODAY SHOW to rebuke her husband, my friend Phil Donahue, for agreeing with Ralph Nader that it made no difference whether Al Gore or George W. Bush won the presidency. Marlo was so upset over Phil's refusal to recognize profound differences between the two candidates, she said, that she had to, "Come out fighting."

We should all be grateful to her for reminding us it does matter who is elected. And that our votes just might make the difference to the outcome. I still remember election night in 1960; it was nearing dawn when we finally learned that John Kennedy had won over Richard Nixon by just point two percent of the vote...a margin of 118,574 of the popular votes.

Eight years later we had another momentous election. 1968 was one of those years when you felt as if the worst was never behind you. Starting with the Tet Offensive that staggered the American military in Vietnam, the weeks that followed brought President Johnson's decision not to run for re-election, the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., days of death and rioting in our cities, and police mayhem in Chicago during the Democratic Convention. It seemed possible we would all go down in chaos. Yet the electoral process continued, through all the primaries and two conventions, until, on election day, Richard Nixon beat Hubert Humphrey by a margin of 510,314 votes - fewer, in fact, than Gore received over Bush eight years ago.

We know tragically how bullets can change the course of history - bullets cost us Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, his brother Robert, Martin Luther King.

But ballots change history, too, and when I say our votes matter, I speak not out of some mystical belief in "the will of the people" but because elections - imperfect as they are, twisted and smattered by smears and lies and counter-lies galore, subject to distortion and manipulation - elections offer an alternative to violence, they keep us from coming apart altogether.

Just before election day in 1968, a fellow in advertising who worked for Nixon wrote a newspaper ad that began, "It will be quiet on Tuesday. No speeches. No motorcades. No paid political announcements. It's a very special day, just for grown-ups. America votes Tuesday...and . . . on Tuesday, the shouting and the begging and the threatening and the heckling will be silenced. It's very quiet in a voting booth. And nobody's going to help you make up your mind. So - just for that instant - you'll
know what the man you're voting for will do a thousand times a day for the next four years. Now it's your turn."

Democracy, this is still the most radical idea ever let loose in the world -that masses of people, so feared and loathed by monarchs of old, so distrusted by monied and political elites, should be charged with self-government, and get on with it, imperfectly, crudely, but with the idea of creating a prosperous society that leaves no one out. That's not mystical, either. It's been at the heart of the American experience, the hope that sustains one generation to the next. Every election is an effort to retrieve that radical idea and breathe new life into it.

So don't forget or fail to vote. And when you show up at the polls on Tuesday, take part if you can in the "Video the Vote" campaign at pbs.org. Respecting the limits of your local or state laws, take your camera to the polling place and record what you see. Send what you've got to pbs.org.

That's it for the JOURNAL.

I'm Bill Moyers. See you next time.