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INTERVIEW WITH BARNEY FRANK, CHRIS SHAYS

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BARNEY FRANK:

00:00:00;01

(IN PROGRESS) --the nature of capitalism has changed and growth is no longer helping everybody. Growth is becoming also a means of-- inequality and wages don't go up. And so what you get is increasing anger on the part of-- the m-- the generally the-- the ethic (?) majority in each democracy is now not doing as well as they think they should be, and they blame the government, so that the trends you're talking about, and it's clearly there, since 2000, democracy is back on the downside.

00:00:28;26

It's down in the '30s, up in the '40s, '50s, '60s. Now it's going back down again. Not too outright (UNINTEL) although there's Russia, but

to a very different kind of democracy, a much illiberal democracy where you don't take each other's good faith for granted, where you don't take each other as having a-- valid set of interests. And I think the only way to do that is I (NOISE)-- a little arrogant. I think it's time to revise canes. (?) I think it's time to say that the distribution of growth is as important for public policy as growth because the maldistribution, it gets worse and worse and worse in-- in Europe and-- and but also here.

CHRIS SHAYS:

00:01:09;08

I would add immigration is a factor. The movement of poor people that-- are moving into prosperous countries and the folks in prosperous countries are scared about that. I think that's a factor. I also think, candidly, and this is politically incorrect, I guess, but China has a strategic plan. They are doing things that you and I would disagree with, but they're doing things that are incredibly smart economically that we would agree with.

00:01:39;29

They have the capacity do things that we don't seem to be able to do now in democracy, which gets to my point. Our founding fathers wanted democracy to work. That's why we have a Constitution, not the Articles of Federation-- of Confederation. And the American people are not seeing our democracy work. It needs to work.

BRUCE BOND:

00:02:04;24

Well, sadly, our-- our time has run out. So as we close-- I'd like to ask each of you for some final thoughts on this topic of bridging the-- the divides both within our government and within our population, our electorate. Barney, you first.

BARNEY FRANK:

00:02:19;11

Oh, very simple. I-- people, a larger sector of the voting population has to participate so that-- I-- I don't think you can-- you can fault the Congress for representing as they do the-- the votes that are registered. And I-- I believe-- one-- I guess two things. I should go back to

what he just said. I think we need to change public policy so that we counteract the effect of capitalism to greatly increase inequality as it increases wealth.

00:02:52;10

I think that-- that-- that's part of the problem. And the other thing is that the-- people have got to-- we've got to reverse this demonization of politics because what that does is it drives out the reasonable people and-- if-- if I-- if everybody voted-- if as many people voted in the primary as voted in the final election, that would go a long way to resolving things.

BRUCE BOND:

00:03:13;29

Chris.

CHRIS SHAYS:

00:03:14;26

I got a little emotional seeing that first screen. It is a proven fact that when people talk with each other in differing (?) views, as long as they have some love and respect for the-- that process, great things happen. I've seen it happen all the time in my community meetings. I've seen

it happen in meetings that I've attended. If we talk to each other-- I've found that my most conservative-- my most liberal Democrat wanted programs, but they didn't want waste in government. And I found that my most conservative Republicans didn't want waste in government, but they wanted people's problems to be resolved. There-- we're a lot-- closer to each other than we think if we're willing to listen to each other.

BARNEY FRANK:

00:04:03;07

Can I just say one thing? 'Cause I-- I'm a little less-- sanguine about people talking to each other. They often just rub each other the wrong way. I once-- I voted against the Democratic majority on seeding (?) a congressman in a contested election before you got there. The Indiana one. And I didn't vote to seed (?) the Democrat. And Tip O'Neill, people said, "How did Tip respond?" I said, "Well, he was mad at me until I explained myself. Then he got furious."

(LAUGHTER)

CHRIS SHAYS:

00:04:32;02 Well, you did a very courageous vote then.

BRUCE BOND:

00:04:36;16 Well, I hope tonight has lived up to our motto of bringing light, not heat, to public discourse. And I think we saw that in our panelists tonight, two people from different sides of the aisle, very different views of the world who can have a reasonable conversation and indeed, help us understand better what is going on in Congress. And-- if-- if you found that tonight was something that inspired you or that you enjoyed, we hope that you'll help us continue to deliver this kind of programming by going to our website commongroundcommittee.org and clicking on donate, and also check out some of the videos from our previous events-- which include Chris and Barney who have been to some of our events.

CHRIS SHAYS:

00:05:14;17 We-- we need to find common ground. That's the bottom line.

BRUCE BOND:

00:05:16;17

Yes, sir. We do. And I'd again li-- I'd like to thank-- the Nantucket Project again for hosting us here. (APPLAUSE) I just wanna give 'em a quick plug. They-- have a wonderful series of events throughout the year, but I'll draw your attention to the big one that they've got in Nantucket September 19th through 22nd. TNP9. And I hope you'll check that one out. So to our--

CHRIS SHAYS:

00:05:39;23

Can we thank the four people in these chairs (LAUGH) for not falling asleep? (LAUGHTER) (APPLAUSE)

BRUCE BOND:

00:05:45;11

Well, to both of you, thank you so much for being here tonight.

CHRIS SHAYS:

00:05:47;13

Thank you. Thank you.

BRUCE BOND:

00:05:47;26

You've really helped us--

00:05:48;22

(OVERTALK)

BRUCE BOND:

00:05:49;17 --and inspired us. (LAUGHTER)

BARNEY FRANK:

00:05:50;25 I wanna watch 'em get out of those chairs. (?)

BRUCE BOND:

00:05:53;07 Thank you very much. Thank you. Thanks.

(APPLAUSE) Good evening, everyone.

CHRIS SHAYS:

00:05:57;24 Thanks for taking that cane away from him.

(LAUGHTER)

* * *END OF TRANSCRIPT* * *