THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

FAITH IN EQUALITY:
ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND THE FUTURE OF RELIGIOUS PROGRESSIVES

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Moderator:

WILLIAM A. GALSTON
Ezra K. Zilkha Chair and Senior Fellow
The Brookings Institution

Report Presentation:

E.J. DIONNE, JR.
Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution

Panel I: An Historic Perspective:

GARY DORRIEN
Reinhold Niebuhr Professor of Social Ethics
Union Theological Seminary

ROSS DOUTHAT
Columnist, *The New York Times*

Panel II: The Current Landscape and a Look Ahead:

JENNIFER BUTLER
Chief Executive Officer, Faith in Public Life

REVEREND GABRIEL SALGEURO
President, National Latino Evangelical Coalition

DORIAN T. WARREN
Associate Professor, Political Science & School of International & Public Affairs
Columbia University

MICHAEL WEAR
Consultant
Former White House and Campaign Aide to President Obama

Closing Remarks:

SR. SIMONE CAMPBELL
Executive Director
NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. GALSTON: If I might ask this rowdy crowd to come to order, we can begin.

Good morning to everybody. I'm Bill Galston, a senior fellow in Governance Studies here at Brookings, and on behalf of the Brookings project on religion, policy, and politics, we are really pleased to be able to welcome such distinguished panelists and guests to join in a discussion of the report that we are releasing this morning entitled "Faith In Equality: Economic Justice and the Future of Religious Progressives."

As you know, since, really, the mid to late 1970s, the big religion in politics story has been the rise of what's known in some quarters as the religious right. According to Bob Putnam and Dave Campbell in their landmark book *American Grace*, demographically that movement may have peaked in the mid-1990s, but politically it is a very important presence in American culture and politics, so much so that to many of today's young adults, the phrase "religious progressives" may sound like an oxymoron.

But, as I'm sure you know, taking a longer view of American history, we can look back to the social gospel movement; we can look to the Catholic participation in the intellectual and political preparation for the New Deal; we can look at the multiple forms of religious participation that helped sustain the civil rights movement; and even farther back than that we can look at the interaction between religion and abolitionism.

So, the purpose of this report and of this morning's discussion is to explore the scope, the strength, and the practical implications of what may, in history's review mirror 10 or 20 years from now, prove to be the beginning of a counter-mobilization of religious progressives, focused largely though not entirely on questions of economic justice. That is our topic for today. We're going to explore it in what I expect to be three wonderful panels.

It has taken us a long time to reach this day, and we did not do it by

ourselves. So many people made indispensable contributions to this day that I could spend the rest of the morning reading their names and discussing their individual contributions. That is obviously not practical. If you want to see the full list, please turn to the very first page, the Acknowledgements page, of the report. But let me just take a minute or two to single out some key contributors.

Let me begin with the Ford Foundation and with the staunch support of Ford's Jonathan Barzilay. And we're also very pleased to welcome to the friendly confines of Brooking's Falk Auditorium Brad Braxston, who has recently joined the Ford Foundation. And I should also recognize Adam and Ariel Zurofsky and Seymour and Kate Weingarten for their contribution to the survey research, which is one of the principal intellectual pillars of this report.

I should also recognize our friends and wonderful and, thankfully, frequent collaborators of the Public Religion Research Institute -- in particular Robbie Jones, Dan Cox, and Juhem Navarro-Rivera. They are an extraordinary team of survey researchers who are intimately acquainted with the faith communities of the United States and the issues that they care most about. And it has been a joy to collaborate with them on numerous projects, and we hope this collaboration lasts for a long time.

I should mention also the many members of the daylong convening toward the end of 2012, the transcript of which and the members of which constitute the second pillar of this report. And as they know, probably, and can recall with some weariness, we went back to them over and over again to help nourish and perfect the report that you have today.

A final basket is the many Brookings colleagues who helped us edit, design, illustrate, and publicize this report -- again, too numerous to mention, but I wonder if I can conclude these acknowledges on a personal note.

First of all, to my Brookings colleague and, in many ways, the senior

author of this report, E. J. Dionne -- my spirit sometimes flagged; his never did. (Laughter) And I think that the report that you have before you today -- there's the distinctive hallmarks of his unswerving commitment to the topic and to the product.

And, secondly, and even more personally, to our co-author and project manager extraordinaire Corrine Davis -- we were talking in her office yesterday. She has been focused on this project and the report for two years, and we would not be here had it not been for the glue, the energy, and occasionally the rebukes that she provided to keep us on the straight and narrow.

So, thanks to all of you.

We now turn to the first panel. The full bios are available in your packets. I am not going to take even more of your time and attention by reading them, but let me just introduce the members of Panel I in the order of their appearance.

First, the aforementioned E. J. Dionne, who is, I suspect, a clone because he has at least four careers. He's a Senior Fellow and constant presence here at Brookings. He is a longtime, twice-weekly syndicated columnist for the *Washington Post*, and as a once-weekly columnist I'm trying to imagine what it's like to come up with ideas twice a week and then write them up. He's also a university professor in the foundations of democracy and culture at Georgetown University, the second most resident professorial title on this panel. You'll find out about the first in just a minute. And he is the author of five books and working on a sixth.

Then Professor Gary Dorrien -- and here comes the title I love, the Reinhold Niebuhr Professor of Social Ethics at the Union Theological Seminary. You cannot do better than that, ladies and gentlemen, nor can anyone top his list of 16 books, one of which recently won an award from the Association of American Publishers as the best book of 2012 in theology and religious studies.

And, finally, Ross Douthat, who comes to us fresh off delivering kids to daycare, and we are thrilled that he was able to make it on time despite what my tribe

would think of as family mishegoss. But here he is. He is, as most of you know, an op-ed columnist for the *New York Times* and has been since April of 2009. Boy, how time does fly. He is the author or co-author of three books, most recently and most provocatively the book entitled *Bad Religion* -- you know, how we became a nation of heretics.

So, without further ado, E. J.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you so much, Bill.

I just want to pick up very briefly on a few things that Bill said. The first is he mentions that the term "religious progressive" sounds, to many, like an oxymoron. Paul Begala once said that it sounds like the term "jumbo shrimp." (Laughter) But, then, it's worth bearing in mind that jumbo shrimp actually exist, and so do religious progressives. Secondly, Bill was so right to underscore how much we owe to so many people in this report. Hilary Clinton made famous the term "it takes a village," as in it takes a village to raise a child. In the case of this report, it took a congregation, and there were so many people who came to our original convening and allowed us to go back and back to them and others who weren't part of that.

And I also want to thank Jonathan Barzilay and Brad Braxton of Ford. Jonathan never asked us when is this thing coming out. He maintained faith -- and God bless you for that.

I also want to add my thanks to Corrine. First of all, she did make sure we got it done. And, second. The beauty of this report -- I really -- I love the report as a physical object, and Corrine put this together.

And, last, I really appreciated Bill's line on my never losing faith. What you need to know is that Bill is deeply philosophically serious, and God endowed me when necessary with an unflinching naivety, which allows me to maintain some hope in even unusual circumstances.

I just want to summarize a few things from the report. Most of you

should have it. There are only a couple of charts I'm going to refer to in the report. It will be, like, Chapter 1, verse 6, or this page in the Torah or Haftarah.

The first point that I think is very important is that religion in America has always had progressive and conservative sides -- reformist and restorationist sides. But as Bill suggested, with the rise of the religious right, we have tended, for a very long time, to see religion as living only on the right in this country. That's not true of a lot of religious people. It has often been true in the media and in accounts of religion. But it's historically very mistaken, as Bill suggested, in talking about the the abolitionist movement, the progressive movement, the civil rights movement. These are just a few examples.

Some of you have heard me tell this story before, but I always love to tell the story of Mrs. O'Reilly, who is always taken to the polls by her son on election day, and Ms. O'Reilly has always voted Democratic. Her son has gotten quite affluent and votes for a fair number of Republicans, but he dutifully takes his mother to the polls every year. And one day he asked his mom, "How are you going to vote?" And she says, "As always, straight Democratic." And the son says, "You know, Mom, if Jesus came back to Earth and ran as a Republican, you wouldn't vote against him." And Mrs. O'Reilly says, "Oh, hush, why should he change his party after all these years?" Now, I don't tell that story to suggest that either Jesus or the Almighty is of either political party, which I think is a mistake in many ways theologically and politically, but that should remind us that this was not an automatic association in our past. Or, another way to look at it is some people in our country have come to believe that Jesus has changed his political party after all these years.

A second point is that something very new is happening in American religious life. It's very important to bear in mind, and this in some ways seems to contradict the theme of our report, but I will argue that it doesn't, which is the rise of the religiously unaffiliated. And we talk quite a lot about the rise of the religiously unaffiliated.

They are often called the “nones,” which bothers me, because that’s spelled n-o-n-e-s, not to be confused with great people like Sister Simone. But if you look at Americans under 30 in particular, there is almost what you might think of as a Europeanization of the United States.

According to our surveys with PRRI, 30 to to 35 percent of millennials are religiously unaffiliated. That is a huge change. You know, people will always say that young people tend to be less affiliated with religion than older people. That’s partly true, but this is a change across cohorts. This younger generation is more on church than synagogue, than mosque, than previous generations and that is something that we are going to have to take into account as we talk about religion in American public life in a way that we have not had to take into account before.

One result of this -- and this is the third point I want to make and the one reference I want to make to the charts, the beautiful charts in the report -- is there is a big difference between our political parties in terms of their religious makeups, which means that the Democratic Party has a far more complicated coalition management task than the Republican Party does. That’s on the one side. On the other side, the Republican Party has a bigger, longer-term problem because of where they are demographically.

So, I would refer you first to the chart on page 10 where you look at the religious makeup of the Obama and Romney coalitions overlaid on the religious makeup of various cohorts in the population. And, as you will see, the Obama coalition is much more diverse, has a much higher proportion of religiously unaffiliated; also, a much higher proportion of nonwhite Christians. And it is much closer to the younger cohort. It lies somewhere between the 18 to 29s and the 30 to 49s. The Romney coalition actually has a religious makeup that is even more white and Christian than Americans over 65 years old if you look at that bar. Just compare the Obama and Romney bars. I think this chart, which our friend Robbie Jones created, is a very instructive chart to think about for the long term.

The other set of pictures I want to refer you to is on page 28. If you look at the left side -- and we can explain or you can find on online how we came up with a difference between religious and theological orientation. It was based on a series of questions in a survey. But, again, here you see the diversity of the Democratic Party and the relative homogeneity of the Republican Party. 56 percent of Republicans by our reckoning are, given their views, religious conservatives. Only 13 percent of Democrats are religious conservatives. Both parties have a large cohort of religious moderates. 28 percent of Democrats but only 5 percent of Republicans are religious progressives. But then there are the nonreligious 17 percent of Democrats and only 6 percent of Republicans.

This has a lot of implications for our politics, and it had some important implications for our paper. Our paper is about the future of progressive religious activism and, in particular, the role of religious groups and traditions in the battle for social justice. There are two presumptions in the paper -- first, that religious progressivism, precisely because of its diversity, will never constitute the same cohesive and relatively homogeneous force that religious conservatism represents.

But the second is that despite this growing secularization or disaffiliation, particularly among the young, a religious voice will remain essential to movements on behalf of the poor and the marginalized and also on behalf of middle-class Americans who are under increasing pressure at a time in equality.

One of the interesting things that happened on the way to the completion of this paper is the election of Pope Francis. I think that Pope Francis, in some ways, has given everyone a new optic, but I think he gave us a new optic, and I think there are many things we can say about Pope Francis. Ross and I could talk about him for quite some time.

Ross, my friend -- he's a very dear person with a good sense of humor, and he once told me, "Ah, there were years I said you had to listen to Pope Benedict, so

I'm now going to have to listen to you telling me that I have to listen to Pope Francis." God bless you, Ross.

But I think what Pope Francis has done is not change church doctrine. He has restored a concern for social justice for the least among us, the preferential option for the poor, back to center stage.

Benedict's teachings on economics were actually quite progressive. When President Obama met with him, he was meeting with someone well to President Obama's left on economic questions. He was a kind of progressive Christian Democrat in his views.

So, it's not that there's a difference in positions, but there is a difference in emphasis that we have all seen, and I think Pope Francis has served to call our attention to the importance of the tradition we talk about in this paper.

Corrine told me I have five minutes left, so I just want to run through a couple of points very quickly.

We argue in the paper that social and economic justice is actually, to a great degree, a unifying force within the religious community. We suggest that it's a mistake to look at the religious community purely in terms of red and blue despite those numbers I suggest, because among conservative evangelical Christians, particularly younger conservative evangelical Christians, there is an outpouring of concern for the least among us, for the poor, for the victims of AIDS in Africa; and those concerns are actually beginning to bleed over into domestic concerns. We may argue about government's exact role, but for Christians it is quite clear that Jesus cared quite a lot about the poor and talked quite a lot about the poor.

I will tell one more story and close.

I heard in church by Catholic parish about six months ago a wonderful story about the governor of Massachusetts back in the '50s, a gentleman named Christian Herter, and he was sort of visiting, traveling around the state campaigning, and

he went to a barbecue, and he was tired and he was hungry and the woman behind the counter gave him a piece of chicken. And he looked at her and said, "Can I have another piece of chicken?" And the lady said, "No, you can't. It's one piece of chicken per person, because I want to have enough chicken to go around to everybody." And Herter wasn't like this. Apparently he was a very gracious man, but he was kind of cranky that day. He said, "Do you know who I am? I am the governor of Massachusetts," and the lady looked at him and said, "And do you know who I am?" And he said, "No." And she said, "I am the lady in charge of the chicken." (Laughter) And in some ways this report is offered in honor of the lady in charge of the chicken and equal dignity of all of us.

So, I just want to close. I think that in many ways, for me at least, this is the most important finding of the paper, that there is a strong case to be made, that the current religious social justice movement looks more like the era leading up to the period of the civil rights activism than to the period that ushered in the religious right. Just as the civil rights movement spoke to a widespread desire in the nation to perfect the post-war social contract to include African-Americans, so do the new social movements on behalf of greater equality and mobility speak to a broadly felt need for a new social contract in our nation.

The religious right spoke to the country's worries about social change. The religious progressive movement speaks to the country's desire for economic change. In the late 20th century, family values were often invoked in opposition to what many saw and feared was a cultural revolution. In the early 21st century, family stability is most threatened by an economic revolution that has created a growing gap between the economy's productivity gains and the wage growth of most American workers.

The civil rights model, I think, has broad relevance to our current moment. First, it interwove religious and civic themes. It appealed to America's civic and Republican traditions, reflected in Martin Luther King's repeated invocations of both the scripture and the Declaration of Independence, the founders, and Abraham Lincoln. It

combined a strong secular justice tradition with deep religious feeling and especially the faith of the African-American church. It was resolutely ecumenical, drawing on the theology of Reinhold Neibuhr. That's why we are so pleased to have the Neibuhr scholar here and Abraham Heschel, as well as the reformist energies in the American Catholic community set loose by Pope John the 23rd and the Second Vatican Council, another echo I think we can hear today.

Civil rights Christianity was a resolutely multi-racial and hopeful creed. It was centered more on the conversion of adversaries than their defeat. It emphasized struggle, organizing, movement building, and the fierce urgency of now. And it seeded the fertile ground of a post-World War II nation that was prepared to move toward racial justice by the shared struggles of the Great Depression and the shared sacrifices that victory and war required. And I believe that economic justice may prove to be the fertile ground of this era.

"With this faith," Dr. King declared in 1963, "we will be able to hew out of a mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood."

Religious witness, as we have said throughout, has always been essential to the success of movements for justice throughout our history. While religion in the United States has always shown progressive and conservative sides and has sometimes been an uneasy combination of the two, our country's faith community has at critical moments been able to speak to the jangling discords of our nation with prophetic power. At a time of deep mistrust of politics, government, and collective action, religious Americans engaged in public life have both an opportunity and an obligation to challenge, to inspire, and to heal.

Thank you very much.

MR. GALSTON: And now, for two perspectives on the report, and

perhaps, even what has just been said about the report -- Gary Dorrien and Ross Douthat, in that order.

MR. DORRIEN: Thanks, Bill. Well, good morning, friends. That was a strong ghost of the spirit of this report, and I'm delighted to be here and talk about it. It's a wonderful report. It's perceptive and clear, and good spirited. I'm glad it was just confirmed that E.J. is the sort of principal guiding author of it, because it is loaded with his go -- favorite sort of go to references and the sort of tenure of much of his work.

And of course, much of that work is rooted in social Christianity of the early 20th century -- the Catholic Social Gospel that starts in the 1920s -- what got the Protestant social gospel behind it by a whole generation. What launched the social gospel, more than anything -- there are plenty of things that caused it, but more than anything else is just the sheer embarrassment of middle class ministers being told by a rising trade union movement that it's obvious that churches just don't really care about poor and vulnerable people. And there are a lot of -- enough of them anyway -- white ministers who realize that it was pointless to even try to defend Christianity, if the churches took an indefensible attitude about that issue, and so, they are virtually embarrassed into founding what was later called the Social Gospel Movement.

They called it other things for many years -- applied Christianity, often called Social Christianity and the like. And this report is straight out of those traditions of thinking, and of arguing that whatever else progressive religious organizing needs to be about, and whatever else needs to go into this, or a content of the Social Gospel move, which is the argument that the church has a mission to transform the structures of Society and the direction of social justice. Whatever else that means, it does mean we've to be able to try to unify around common -- economic justice concerns. And this report is straight in that line.

I am grateful for, and I commend the authors for the emphasis on community organizing that's in this document. It sometimes falls by the wayside in

reports of this sort, especially reports written, if they are written by academics, or by people who are not sort of in the trenches, and yet community organizing is tremendously important. Everything, actually, that's going on in progressive religious organizing today, goes to, or is in some ways implicated with what's going on in community organizing. And I think, though it's not quite explicitly acknowledged in the report, there is an argument here about how that's going that I am going to say explicitly.

Obviously, the gold standard community organizing interfaith organization, for a long time, has been IAF, and it still is. It does tremendous work all over the country, but there are parts of the country where it's taking on certain kind of dinosaur characteristics, and in, I think in places -- a little bit lost it's way. The second major interfaith community organizing organization for some time, has been Gamaliel, sometimes pronounced Go-mal-leo, sometimes Go-Mal-iel -- we never really decided how you're supposed to say this, but -- with a black church origin in Chicago -- and Gamaliel, in my experience, community organizing does the best at drawing out community leaders from congregations, getting them to be involved in highly intentional communities, where people are accountable to each other, and will work for a whole year before they even know -- before they've even decided what it is they're going to work on.

And that model has done more, in terms of helping people from different kinds of congregations, build bonds of trust across racial and class lines, than anything else I've ever been a part of. Gamaliel is -- it's hurting a little bit right now and in various areas, but it's still -- it's an enormously important organization. It represents some of what I'm going to talk about in my third point here. The third one is the one that gets a little more play here, and I confirm what I think is implicit, in the emphasis given here to PICO, and PICO is surging.

It is thriving, and it still, in terms of formal number is probably number three, but there's no question, I think, that it's the one that's coming on. And part of the reason is that -- well, it's more recent in origin, so it just doesn't even have some of those

dinosaur characteristics to have to deal with, but more importantly, the PICO model does -- is a little bit alleviated from some of the problems of Alinsky style organizing, that have always gone a little bit against the grain of the very religious congregations that you're drawing leaders and people from that you know, identify problems and emphasis grievances, and get people in a fighting mood, and be confrontational.

All of that has always gone a little bit -- well, more than a little really, against who it is you're drawing from. And PICO gets all of that, and so I think has organized in a sort of different way, and trying to nurture and build on shared values. It's also got a systemic analysis about economic justice and what's needed, and it's got analysis about racial justice that isn't just mere bias, but about taking on structures of privilege. So, I -- though you don't say it quite this explicitly, the fact that you'd give it as much attention as you do to PICO, I think shows that you see what in fact is happening out there.

And then DART would be the other, fourth sort of major interfaith community organizing group. And the great thing about DART -- I mean, DART does a lot of things based in Florida, but it goes hard after just the issue of training people to be community organizers. And then, you do mention interfaith worker justice, which is a different kind of organization, but, which puts out just tremendous information.

I want to just say a brief word -- I am, yes, the reference has already been made. I'm the liberal Protestant with an Eborian heritage on this panel, so I'm supposed to say something about this, I think. I think the one thing I just want to say is that, you know, it's, we're -- it's a little light here on liberal Protestantism in this report, right?

I mean, we've got some sparkling quote from Jim Butler in there, but otherwise, it's mostly about other groups, and so I just want to say here that, yes, it's so hard not to sort of fall into this narrative about oh well, this used to be the group, you know. And (inaudible) could call people in the state department and so on, and so since

that world is no more, and we're down, and we've had a 30 year story here about mainline decline, that it's hard not to just sort of indwell that narrative.

I just want to say, Bob, that for all of that decline and all that bleeding and suffering that went on, and party because the liberal Protestant churches just never outgrew their ethnic families of origin, and they didn't even replace themselves demographically, so of course that just adds up to decline. Despite all that, there are still, there are 32 Protestant denominations in the national council of churches, and almost all of them have faith and you know, peace and justice, fellowships and jubilee ministries and so on, who are feeding the whole list of community organizations I just rattled off.

That's the real sort of work -- social justice work of the churches, and often, it's hard to see. It's not as visible as say, (inaudible) calling the state department, but I'm actually far more impressed by it than by that. And there's a lot of it. Every year here, the Ecumenical Advocacy Days Organization holds a big convention, somewhere here in DC. They have to find a big hotel, fill a huge auditorium, and it just fills up. Every year, it's a different issue, but it fills up with all the people working in those organizations.

My next to last point has to do with what isn't quite in here. I agree -- I so get the emphasis on economic justice here. But I want to say, emphatically, that I don't believe that there's any kind of economic justice organizing going on to go on in the next, any number of years, even today, that doesn't in some way get its arms around the environmental crisis. That -- we're in a fire alarm necessity of doing that.

Everyone gets that crisis, and instead of talking people into how one thing leads to another, we just need to show it, and these two things will rise together. And the same thing is true, I believe, about racial justice, and dealing with people's racial and sexual identities. Most of the caucuses in most div schools today have to do with these two things. Not with things that really, more go on in this report. And I do think, even if we accept the focus to say, well, this is about economic justice, I don't believe that the way to do that is to say, this is a way to not talk about people's sexual identities, race,

and the like -- to the contrary. I'm getting the signal here, so. I had one more point, but maybe I'll sneak it in later. Thanks.

MR. DIONNE: I just want to report that there were a couple of main line people in the audience who gave silent clap signals to his call out to them.

MR. DOUTHAT: Well, thank you. It's wonderful to be here, it's a great privilege to share the panel with such distinguished figures. And it's always also a privilege to represent religious conservatism, I suppose, at a gathering devoted to religious progressivism, because I think that it -- hopefully lets me give a sort of -- an outsider's perspective that's also hopefully a kind of fraternal perspective as well.

And to that end, and hopefully this will be sort of a compliment to what Gary just did -- talking about sort of the ground level issues -- I just want to sketch out a potential sort of macro level political framework, for thinking about the challenge that's discussed in this very rich report, and basically that challenge is, as the report's data about religions role within the democratic coalition suggests, it's the challenge of how to be politically influential, in a coalition where you aren't necessarily the dominant player, which is obviously a different challenge from the one that confront religious conservatism within the republican coalition.

And I think that's one useful way to think about how that challenge could be met, or the context in which that challenge would be met, would be to think about three factors, right? One factor would be, you would need, you know, as a sort of basic foundation, a national political climate that is interested in the specific kind of issues that religious progressivism is inclined to orient itself around. Issues in particular of economic justice.

Second, you would need religious progressivism within the democratic coalition to be working effectively to essentially pull the existing Democratic Party leftward on economic issues. And in that sense, I think, religious progressivism should pretty obviously see itself as a potential counterweight to what has emerged over the last 30 to

40 years as the kind of business Wall Street wing of the Democratic Party, which didn't exist in really, in Mrs. O'Leary days of FDR and catholic democrats, and so on, and is a different kind of challenge, I think, than religious progressive's face to the past.

So you have that kind of dynamic, within the party, and then, and that involves, essentially, a kind of successful partnering, in a way, with sort of more secular voices that are also interested in taking the democratic part in some kind of more populous direction. And then finally, you need to be able to successfully build some kind of bridges to the other side, to the Repubican Party, and find a way to effectively either create or search for a center to American politics, that is a little bit different from the center that is created when Wall Street democrats and Wall Street Republicans get together and sit down, and agree that, you know, what we really need is just to cut the deficit and then wash our hands and walk away.

And so there, I think, and then again, I think the data in this report provides grounds for thinking that that kind of slightly different center is a plausible reality, in the sense that you know, once you actually dig into the polling numbers, you find that there is a lot of common ground on economic issues between some religious conservatives, and some religious progressives, and so on. And so then, to sort of try and translate that kind of abstract sketch into the last ten or 15 years of American politics -- I think if you go back to the Bush era, in -- especially the portion of the Bush era before his presidency completely collapsed around the failed occupation of Iraq -- I think what you see is the latter two elements sort of existing.

That, in the form of compassionate conservatism, and in the form of a republican president, who was very interested, often for cynical, political reasons, that in doing outreach to, you know, moderate Catholics, and sort of keeping younger evangelicals in the tent, and so on. You had issue areas, where there was a sort of potential common ground between religious progressives, and some of the things the Bush White House and the Bush Repubican Party were interested in doing, whether it

was on immigration reform, or AIDS in Africa or to some extent, though obviously not to the extent that many religious progressives wanted, poverty and education spending, and so on.

So, you had that dynamic, and then you also had, especially after the 2004 election, a sense within the democratic coalition, and I think the report does a good job of discussing this -- that there was a need to sort of get religion right in some sense. That there was a need to sort of compete more for religious votes for the Repubican Party, but also more generally just sort of listen to religious voices within the party, in an attempt to figure out what had gone wrong.

Now, what didn't exist, I think, to anything like the extent that it exists now, is the original, the sort of political foundation, in the sense that, in the Bush era, while there were all kinds of economic problems in the U.S., we were in the midst of a period of decent economic growth. There was, what we know in hindsight was a housing bubble, but middle class incomes were rising to some extent, because house values were rising -- sorry, incomes weren't rising, but middle class -- middle class economic security seemed to be improving.

And there wasn't the sense of economic crisis, basically, that we've had in the country, and in the west since 2007 and 2008. So, even though there were sort of, ways in which the political coalitions seemed to be creating openings for religious progressives, there wasn't the sense of sort of felt urgency about economic challenges that we feel today. So then, flash forward to the 2012 election, I think you have a sort of flip flop, where, by 2012, the foundation was there. Everyone was talking about sort of, economic crisis, and you know, the problems of the poor and the problems of the working class, and the challenge of unemployment, and so on.

But the two parties had diverged in ways that, I think, made it much harder for religious progressives to find a foothold, in the sense that, the Republican Party sort of reacting against the Bush era had moved in a much more libertarian

direction, the influence of the tea party, and so on, culminating, and Mitt Romney's famous 47 percent comment, which could be seen as the most anti-religious, progressive comment uttered by a major presidential candidate in my lifetime. And by the same token, the Democratic Party having sort of gained some religious votes successfully in 2006 and 2008, increasingly seemed to have the sense that it didn't actually need to court that demographic in order to win, and that really, the best way to sort of consolidate its majority was to campaign heavily on social issues, and to pick fights with the catholic bishops, with religious institutions, and so on.

So, I have, I think about 20 seconds left. So, in an ideal world, I'd talk about how I think that dynamic has shifted further in the year since, just in extremely briefly, I'd just say, I think there's been at least something of an opening on the republican side again, to the kind of discussions that were possible in the Bush era. It's very embryonic. It might disappear after 2014, during the 2016 campaign, but it is -- there is at least a sense among republicans that they need to talk about poverty, talk about middle class wages, and so on, that wasn't there in 2011.

And, the, you know, and the influence of Pope Francis and sort of, other developments, and so on, I think, has also been good news for religious progressives in both of their missions within the democratic coalition, and then building bridges. At the same time, I also think that the sort of -- the secularist mentality, if you will, within the democratic coalition, has, if anything, also strengthened, because of debates around same sex marriage, the continuing debates around the HHS mandate, and so on, and you have an even more palpable sense, and I'm saying this as an outsider, but someone who argues frequently with liberal journalists -- I think there's an even more palpable sense among younger liberals, especially that they only need religious progressives, and they only need religious people, in so far as the religious basically just agree with them, and that religious institutions in particular, it's more important to be focused on sort of bringing them to heal, in an effort to sort of fulfill the sexual revolution, than it is to partner

with them in terms of economic outreach. So, but that's something I guess we can get into. So, thank you very much.

MR. GALSTON: Well, thank you very much. And, let me make -- let me make a brief procedural comment. We are running a bit late, but I will accept that. And we have about ten minutes for cross talk between and among the panelists, which I will try to orchestrate as best I can. After this panel concludes, and this is my second procedural point, the members of the second panel will come on stage immediately, and at the end of the second panel, the patient audience will have the chance to take some shots at the members of both panels put together, with the possible exception of Ross Douthat, who may have to leave early for personal reasons. And we're very grateful.

MR. DIONNE: In fear of your questions. You've never shown fear, Ross.

MR. GALSTON: Okay, and you know, in the interest of spending the next ten minutes as wisely and efficiently as possible, I know that E.J. is chapping at the bit to say something about what has just been said, and after that colloquy concludes, or after I conclude it, if it doesn't subside naturally, I have a question that I'd like to put to Professor Dorrien, and after that, we'll proceed straight to the second panel. So, E.J?

MR. DIONNE: Yes, thank you to both of you very, very much for really constructive and insightful comments. I just want to say a couple of things very quickly. One is, we should have mentioned Gameliel, and the beauty of -- or Galaliel, which happened to employ somebody rather important in our lives called Barrack Obama, with funding from the Roman Catholic church, which is an interesting thing all by itself. And the beauty of publishing things online is, we can add them in, and we should do that, and DART as well.

Second, I am happy that Gary talked about the main line, and I think it is a complicated thing to talk about, and we do talk about -- I don't think we treat the main line as chopped liver in the report. We do not act as if they are unimportant in the report,

and I think main line Protestants are important, both at an intellectual level, but also at an electoral level. If you look at the religious landscape, in many ways there were two big swing groups in the electorate. One are Roman Catholics, and the other are main line Protestants.

Roman Catholics, because they're less democratic than they once were, and main line Protestants, because they are less republican than they once were. We have data that show, in the last four elections, it's actually remarkable. It's almost like one of those biblical numbers. In all three elections, main line Protestants gave 44 percent of their votes to the Democrats. The Republican number went, you know, 55, 56, but it was 44 across the board.

Once upon a time, the main line numbers would have been much higher for the Republicans, and it's particularly in the northeast, Midwest and west coasts, main liners are even more democratic than that. And so, I do think they're very important.

It is true that we do not talk much, if at all, about the environmental movement. That is obviously an important piece of this discussion. Our report focused on economic justice principally, but it is good that Gary brought that up. And then, three points in response to Ross. First, we do, in the report, talk about tensions in the progressive coalition between more secular people, and more religious people, and one of the interesting things about our consultations is, we had somewhat different views among participants over the extent to which this was a problem.

Some of our participants, if you will, in the progressive religious movement, felt that the problem was exaggerated, that there were many examples all over the country on immigration in particular, but on many economic justice questions on cooperation across secular and religious lines.

Other participants are quite concerned that religious voices have been somewhat marginalized by a stronger secular movement. I do think there is work to do in this area. I'm not talking about academic work, which I'm always interested in, but actual

political work, and if you will, work of fellowship. Because you have the -- what you've had over the last 30 years is the simultaneous rise, at least until the 1990s, of a much more conservative brand of religious, parallel with the rise of a large, secular movement, and that's created unusual tensions in American life.

I am glad Ross mentioned the prospect of a different center. I do think Wall Street's also had a role in the Democratic Party, but it's role strengthened in the 90s, and I think something important happened, which is in the 90s, when everybody is more or less getting better off, Wall Street looks better. In this period, when we finally begun to come to -- with the great crash that originated on Wall Street, and really coming to terms with something Bill has written about a great deal, which is the split between productivity growth and wage growth. We have a different view, and I think that changes the nature of the conversation.

And the last thing, which needs to be mentioned, and I would love ross to talk about this -- when you look at the rise of seculars, if you will, or the nones, N-O-N-E-S, one of the factors, according to the research done by Bob Putnam and David Campbell, is that for many young American, religious is now associated, in their heads, with the right. And with, particularly, issues such as opposition to gay marriage, which, within the younger cohort is overwhelmingly favored, and so we make a little bit of a marketer's point in passing in our report, that actually, a concern for economic justice is not only from our point right, but could do an awful lot of good for our religious traditions, which is why, I think, or one of the reasons why, what Pope Francis is saying, is having a kind of resonance among younger people that other pronouncements by religious leaders didn't have. And I'll leave it at that.

MR. GALSTON: Ross, do you want to reply in any way to that?

MR. GOUTHAT: I will say something -- hopefully very quickly, that will hopefully feed into whatever you're going to ask Gary. To E.J.'s last point, I think the really interesting and important question facing progressive religious in general, and

maybe more liberal main line churches in particular, is can -- is what you suggest a viable strategy, for not only sort of political engagement, but more importantly church building, right? And this has been, you know, the big problem, and it's becoming a problem across the board, but it was clearly a particular problem across 1970s, 1980s and 1990s for religious progressives, was that their message did not seem to be keeping people in the pews, or maybe it was just that it wasn't encouraging them to have enough children. I mean, there are sort of interesting -- seriously, there arte sort of interesting demographic questions there.

But, and the point that religious conservatives would often make is yes, if you know, if you look at sort of where young people are, where, sort of, post 1960s America is, you clearly do have people who are sort of -- seem to be turned off from religious, both specifically by the conflation of you know, religion with the Repubican Party, but also who are just -- sort of feel that you know, religion is too conservative on social issues out of touch with contemporary realities, and so on. But, those people were not ending up in the churches that seem to be doing outreach to them. They were ending up becoming unaffiliated, becoming lukewarm, drifting away, and so on.

And so, it's an interesting question, whether, did that only happen because the -- in a sense, the religious rite was getting all the attention, and maybe in a different world, a world of Pope Francis talking about economic justice, a world of sort of a declining religious rite, those Americans would give more liberal churches a new hearing. Or is there, and this is the view that I and my cynical conservative pessimism incline a little bit more towards, a sort of certain flaw at the heart of post 1960s liberal religion that makes it harder for it to sustain itself as a religious, as opposed to just a political tendency, with a sort of religious overlay.

MR. GALSTON: Well, thank you so much, Ross, and I think that's a very productive challenge that Professor Dorrien will have an opportunity to respond to in just a minute, after I put my own challenge on the table, just to make things interesting.

When I was in graduate school, in the late 60s and early 70s, there was a new Holy Trinity, of race, class and gender. Some of you of a certain age will probably recognize that.

And in a recent talk, just last week in Chicago, I sort of issued a challenge, and I said, it seemed to me that since that trinity was institutionalized in academia, and in divinity schools, that race and gender had received an enormous amount of attention. At every aspect of our, not only academic life, but political life, and the question of class had suffered neglect in the process, and that one of the most dramatic features of the current moment is, so to speak, the return of the repressed -- that the neglected issue is suddenly the felt issue of the moment.

And I would suggest that unless divinity schools, especially liberal Protestant divinity schools, respond to that felt need. You know, rather than trying to say, we cannot relent in our attention to the others, that you're going to be missing a bet. Because the most urgent question facing the country is the question of a viable economy, sustainable for the long term, that works for all Americans. That's the question. And the other questions in my judgment are subsidiary and secondary to that question. So that's my challenge.

MR. DORRIEN: Alright. This past November, at American academy of religion, (inaudible) and I did a session on class and religion. And the sponsors gave us a room about this size, which they were worried we wound 't be able to fill, and it was overflow. So we showed them something, and now we've created a session within AAR, that'll be ongoing. There was a question about whether you really wanted to have a whole you know, group, just devoted to class issues, in an outfit like AAR, given that you know, it would only have such a limited appeal.

So, I think that this is getting -- this is reaching even to that, your challenge. It's reaching even that high. I've been writing about economic justice all my life. Every few years, I write a book about economic democracy, and so I certainly agree

that that is the (inaudible), that's where this all starts, and that's where it holds it together, and indeed, as you say, this is the part of it that has dropped out or fallen back.

There was a period in the 90s when I wrote books on myth, and interpretation, and Bartian Theology, and other things, just to give myself something else to talk about, because all this economic justice stuff that I do, you know, it's like, talk to a wall. Even my friends are, you know, checking out their, you know, have their investments, and they know how they're doing, and it was just not a moment when you could talk about structural alternatives, the economic system that we have, the time.

That time has passed. That is a much easier argument to make now. In fact, to pick up on one of the things that Ross said, I have seen it. I agree that there are ways in which one could talk about economic justice, that cut right across some of these ideological lines that we've received that have been given. I wrote a book a couple years ago called the Obama question, which was mostly directed to my friends in the liberal left, who just had given up and didn't want to have anything to do with Obama. Basically, the argument was, you know, of course he's disappointed us, but you must not sit out this election. So I'm out there speaking.

MR. DIONNE: So you were responsible? It wasn't that turnout operation; it was Gary Dorrien's book.

MR. DORRIEN: So I'm out there speaking about this all over, and I spoke to an awful lot of tea party people, and it's, whenever I got to the part where we're taking about economic alternatives that are not the state, and it's not the market, it's worker ownership, it's decentralized forms of worker and community control, it's public banks, it's things like that. Fully credentialed tea party people are up shouting, saying yes, that's what we need. And it surprised me a little, I thought about how strong it was, but it did show me that it is possible. There's something to it, and of course, we see that all the time, when you do community organizing. It draws out people from all -- you get people from all kind of theologies, even ideologies, doing community organizing together.

MR. GALSTON: Well, this has been a terrific first panel launch for the discussion of this report, and I am now going to ask the first round of panelists to stand down, and the second to come up. Thanks once again.

(Recess)

MR. GALSTON: Well, as you can see this is an event with a lot of moving parts. So let me move quickly to and through the introductions. You have full bios in your packets, but in order of their initial remarks we have Dorian Warren who's an associate professor in the Department of Political Science at Columbia University. He specializes in the study of inequality in American politics. He has been the older of numerous research fellowships, and he has worked with a long list of national and local organizations involved in civil rights and labor organizing, so welcome.

Second, Michael Wear, an extraordinary young man. He directed faith outreach for President Obama's 2012 reelection campaign, and he served in the White House faith-based initiative during President Obama's first term, let evangelical outreach, helped manage the White House's engagement on religion and value issues. I suspect he is one of the youngest staffers ever to hold, you know, such important positions.

Go to his right or state left, depending on your optic, Reverend Gabriel Salgeuro, who's the President of the National Latino Evangelical Coalition. If you know anything about this world and that coalition you'll know what kind of powerhouse it's become, and, you know, what kind of influence and leadership our panelist has provided to it. We are very grateful as well for his tough and insightful remarks during our convening. Among his other achievements he founded Nuestro Futuro, a Latino youth targeted voter mobilization campaign which has been working in a number of states.

Finally, someone I suspect who's very well-known to most, if not all, people in the room, Reverend Jennifer Butler who is the founding CEO of Faith in Public Life. She's an author. She wrote Born Again: The Christian Right Globalized. She's a graduate of Princeton theological seminary. She's also studied public policy and

community organizing, and graduated with a Masters in social work from Rutgers University.

So this is a talented and diverse panel, and we look forward to their remarks and conversation. Dorrien?

MR. WARREN: Great. So thanks to E.J. and Bill and Puran and everyone who invited me, and who wrote this fantastic report. I think it's really wonderful and I just have a few reflections on it. Although, as I was telling Professor Dorrien, he stole my thunder a little because most I wanted to say you've already said. So it will bear repeating.

I think this report comes at the right time in a moment of high levels of inequality as we learned last week from a recent political science study the fact that we live in an oligarchy, and the decline of both unions and religious institutions. Insofar as, especially progressive religious institutions and unions were two of the few institutions poor and working class Americans could access and turn to for politics and political engagements. So this report, I think, comes at the right political moment to raise that up.

Let me go a bit deeper on this point. Besides churches the labor movement, I think, is the other independent institution serving poor and working class Americans. Historically, if you think about it, unions and churches are self-financed. No offense to our foundation friends in the room, but that, I think, makes a huge difference on the type of politics we might imagine and see out of those institutions.

But besides being self-funded institutions, both unions and churches are schools of democracy. That's where people learn the skills of politics and how to engage in politics. This is even more important in the context of the rise, and the report talks about this, in the context of the rise of professionalized efficacy organizations.

Theta Scotchpal, Dara Strolovich, and Alama Brookings have written about this. We're in a different civic moment where we have a proliferation of professionally staffed advocacy organizations, and progressive advocacy organizations

at the same moment we have the decline of unions and the religious left.

Having said that, and this is where I'm going to just reinforce Professor Dorrien's comments, there is exciting organizing happening in faith-based community organizing. Being a Chicagoan I can't help but point out that Saul Lalinsky, who's considered the founder of community organizing, the model was based on the mix of the Catholic Church and a union, and a community organization. That was how IF was born in the stockyards in Chicago.

So we see both the continuation of that tradition, but also really great innovation, and a turn away from the more hardline Lalinsky models, so PICO, Gamaliel, IEF, Interfaith Worker Justice. I agree with Professor Dorrien that I think PICO is actually the one that's working most innovatively around racial justice and with worker organizations.

I might also add, there's been the rise of something called the worker center movement in the last 15, 20 years. These are organizations of low wage workers, primarily of immigrant workers outside of unions.

In 1992, based on a study by Janice Fine, there were only five of these organizations. Today they're over 300. These organizations of low wage workers who fight for their rights on the job, who fight for back pay against something called wage threat which is a growing epidemic of employers not paying their workers what they have earned. The vast majority, I want to suggest that these worker centers are tied very closely to churches, and have a faith-based connection. So in terms of community organizing, I think there's exciting innovation happening today.

The third point I wanted to make is about the black church. I think the report does a wonderful job of pointing out what we might say are the contradictions of the black church. I'm not sure how else to say it. In the sense of having progressive and conservative sides in the same institution.

So if you look at the data in the report you'll see that especially among

black voters they're theologically much more conservative than other Americans, but politically progressive, much more progressive. So it's interesting to me how both racial and economic justice for black church goers almost always trumps social issues.

I think that that's -- there's been some studies of this, but I think that we can dive deeper into this. This was the point that you were just making about the Holy Trinity. I think for, especially black Protestants, race and class have been so intertwined in American history that black voters almost always vote their economic and racial justice interests over social issues unlike white Americans, which is an interesting finding to me.

If you look at the public opinion data in the report inequality, the role of government, blacks overwhelmingly are much more in favor of government intervention, to a much greater degree believe inequality is a problem. I do want to lift up something, again, Professor Dorrien mentioned. There is this nagging issue within the black church around sexuality and sexual identity.

Especially if we were to go back 20 years and look at the black church response to the HIV and AIDS crisis, there's still a lot of work to be done within black churches on the issue of sexual identity. Even if they're very, very progressive in terms of economic justice.

One more thing about the black church that the report hinted at or made me think of in talking about the global south and how churches are engaged in global south justice movements. The black church for over 100 years has always been in some ways a transnational social movement. Gauge, especially, if you think about South Africa the black church was always connected to anti-apartheid activists and the movement for a long time.

Two more points, one thing I didn't read much in the report was about the role of Muslims in a post-9/11 world. I would love to understand what are the possible connections between progressive Muslims who are doing amazing organizing around racial profiling, around a range of other issues with other religious traditions.

Last, but not least, the report mentioned Reverend Barber of North Carolina and the Moral Mondays movement campaign in North Carolina. I was at an event last night where we got to bear witness to Reverend Barber who inspired us all, but also at that event was Harry Belafonte who told this phenomenal story about one of the first times he met Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. I think Dr. King was in Harry's New York apartment.

This is the way that Harry Belafonte talks. He just says, 'Well, you know, Martin asked me.' Martin? 'Martin asked me, are you a religious man?' And Belafonte says no. And so Martin says, 'Well, why not?' And so Belafonte tells a story about how he grew up Catholic and how through his personal experiences, even some abuses he just could not believe in God, or he couldn't believe in the religious institution.

So then Dr. King asked him, 'Well, do you believe in God?' And he says, yes. And he says, Dr. King responds, 'Well, we'll be just fine as long as we both believe in God. You have to deal with the Catholic Church. Trust me, I have to deal with all my churches that are resisting me. So we'll get along just fine in this movement.'

So I'll stop there and turn it over to my colleague.

MR. WEAR: First to E.J. and Bill, just thank you for your continued leadership on this important, essential intersection of faith and public life.

I'd like to use my opening comments to touch on three ideas that I think are touched on in various degrees in the report, but I think are central to understanding the present and future of religion and politics in this country.

First idea is a big one, and I'm just going to be able to briefly outline, but I think it's crucial. I'll call it today a distorted view of holiness. In part in reaction to the religious right, and I think E.J. was right, it's somewhat an ironic point of history that the modern religious progressive movement, which actually the issues of economic justice have much greater, deeper roots of religious tradition. The modern movement that we're talking about today is largely in reaction to and in response to the religious right which is

important to keep in mind.

Both the institutions that have been set up, but also just short of the tone and tenure of how religious progressives engage in politics. But in part in reaction to the religious right, the fact that religious progressives just don't want to be like them and what kind of happened to the moral majority and that kind of thing. In part because of certain aspects of progressive religious culture.

Finally, because I think this anti-institutional individualistic moment we're in right now, I think that some efforts of progressive, religious political engagement end up in this place of making bold declarations and moral pronouncements without a real engagement in the political process.

The primary failure of the religious right was not simply that they had too much of a presence in politics it was that they ceded aspects of their agenda to a partisan party, to the Republican Party.

The common example of this is I traveled around the country during 2008 and 2012 campaign, and talking to even young evangelicals that used to be Republicans and were now either Independents or Democrats were the voter guides that would be in churches, in their Baptists churches growing up that had traditional social issues on them along with eliminating the capital gains tax. Issues that seemed to arise not from the tenants of a faith, but from the platform of a political party. That sort of points to all sorts of notions of hypocrisy and sort of a Trojan horse sort of element of how religion intersects in the public sphere.

But this ceding of ones' agenda is different than a wise and faithful stewardship of power and influence in the political process. The distortion of holiness that we see not just in politics, but in other areas of like, I think like family and relationships and religious life itself is this idea that institutional commitments that put us into contact with imperfections, failures, and weakness in the situations in which the outcome is not completely up to us, in which the credit does not completely come to the

participants in that political activism are inherent forfeitures of our personal ideological or spiritual purity.

There is great value in the prophetic, and there's a great tradition of prophetic speaking in the religious progressive movement, but it is much less valuable when it is detached from a commitment to institutions and the political process.

The progressive religious movement must be able to advance both a firm conviction of the ideal while also participating in the complex, multi-polar muck of politics. It is a common religious saying, one that appears in this report, that we are to be in this world not of it.

The common sort of interpretation of this, and I'll hear it in my evangelical background, but I think it's also sort of how it's talked about in the report a bit is this interpretation that the first clause in this world is a statement of the obvious, the natural, the inferior which is then followed by the alternative holier, not of it.

But this is not the way that religious people and social teaching teaches us to look at our faith. The most appropriate use of this phrase is not to position the two clauses as opposing one another, but as mutually essential aspects of a faithful presence in the world. We are to be in the world and not of it.

Just quickly, John 3:16 does not say that God so loved the world that he created it or that he created heaven. It says that God so loved the world that he sent his son into it, to live in it fully, to deal with our mess. The idea of incarnation is relevant and helpful here.

Faith does not drive us to avoid darkness, but to confront it. Faith does not excuse of from participation in the difficult processes of citizenship. It, in fact, calls us to a higher exercise of our duties as citizens.

But if faith is not a barrier, but an invitation to civic involvement to be in the world. It's equally important that we are not of the world, and this is my second point.

For religious progressives who discard this distortive view of holiness

that excludes engagement with the messiness of politics a faithful presence in politics has to include, this may sound obvious, but it's a necessary reminder, has to include faith.

It is important to be clear that the future of the religious progressive movement needs to center around faith. There are many reasons with Pope Francis is so widely admired. I'd say at the top of the list is the fact that this is a man who so clearly loves Jesus, and I think in D.C. we kind of dismiss that as sort of a spiritual sort of extraneous thing to public life which is sort of a testament to the fact of how secularized faith political engagement has become that when you talk about Jesus or about big tenants or about scripture that it somehow seems like an extraneous detail to, you know, political tactics and organizing, and voting lists.

But the spiritual character of political engagement when it is from the faith perspective is not just some extraneous detail. It is what makes it unique. It's what makes it relevant. It's what makes it valuable, especially in the progressive movement. There are so many avenues for people to enter into the Democrat party into the progressive movement without faith.

The purpose of the religious progressive movement is to offer an avenue for progressive, religious people to voice their concerns, and to offer not just a counter way, but an express of aspects of the gospel that we believe to be part of a holistic gospel and part of a holistic religious tradition.

So though short-term gains might be made by ceding our agenda to a political party or by secularizing to expand our reach I think this will ultimately lead to irrelevancy.

I'll say just quickly, I know my time's running out, but I think this is what was so powerful about Nuns on the Bus, Sister Simone and network. That whole movement made it clear from the outset, and throughout, that its motivation was the gospel. It was open to many faiths. I was on some of the bus tours, and people came

and felt welcomed, felt included.

But you knew that the nuns were there because it was their faith that was driving them. It wasn't something that they through in in stump speeches to just sort of attack from a different angle. It was why they were there.

When Sister Simone spoke at the Democratic convention I was honored to be a part of that. The nuns did not come to the Democrats in 2012, the Democrats came to the nuns.

MR. GALSTON: We always do that. I'm not taking about Democrats. I'm talking about anyone with experience with this.

MR. WEAR: That's right. The Circle of Protection is another great example of this where we saw a movement that because of its diversity, its political diversity, its theological diversity was sort of a testament that this wasn't sort of a guise for political ideology, but this was something coming out of their faith.

The last point I want to make and this is important. I think Ross touched on it. I think the religious progressive movement has the potential to play a crucial role over the next few decades in this country, but I think it's going to be difficult for them. In an increasing secular country, culturally and demographically, the need for religious education and understanding is and will become even more apparent.

It will be essential for the general public, the millennial generation is the first to live their formative years in the nation where religion no longer provides the backdrop, the overarching narrative for religious life, for national life. We no longer learn about religious life simply by living in this country through a sort of cultural osmosis.

No just members of the general public, but policymakers of both parties have an understanding of what it means to be religious that is vague at best. There is much to say about the implications of this sociologically, culturally, politically, demographically, but the specific point I want to make is this.

It may be that religious progressives will find themselves as the best

position to explain to the secular left the religiously motivated positions of those who are not in the progressive camp at all. After decades of fighting for a place at the table from a religious right they had monopolized the question of what religious political engagement looks like.

It might fall on religious progressives to once again seek the peace of the nation, as we're told to do in the Book of Jeremiah, and help to answer what I think is a crucial question for us in this new century which is how do we live together in this increasingly diverse pluralistic society? How do we live together despite and amidst our differences?

I'm hopeful that religious progressives with great discernment and humility will be able to help our nation answer this question, serving in this world in a way that is not of it. Thank you.

MR. SALGEURO: Thank you, Michael and Dorian. I want to thank also E.J. and Bill and Ross and Corrine who is having a baby in the middle of this report.

MR. GALSTON: She was solving that demographic problem that someone referred to earlier.

MR. SALGEURO: It's not lost on me.

SPEAKER: But not the religious problem.

MR. SALGEURO: The great sacrifice -- I know how E.J. can insert new text at any time in the process, so I'm grateful for your flexibility.

I come to this conversation, I was there the night Sister Simone spoke at the DNC. I actually did the opening invocation. I think it was the first time a Latino evangelical did it. To paraphrase Michael, the Latinos evangelicals didn't come to the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party came to us.

I studied at Union, but an evangelical menagerical pastor. My father's a Pentecostal bishop. I'm not confused. I'm just integrated. It's not lost on me the preeminence of Reinhold Niebuhr, and my former advisor Dr. Dorrien. What's interesting

for me many years ago Niebuhr was on the cover of Time. Last year a Hispanic evangelical pastor was on the cover of Time. The title of that Time magazine was the Latino Reformation.

Talking about the growth of Hispanic evangelicals, in particular, Hispanic Christianity. In general, in the United Stated according to Robbie Jones and others at PRRI Hispanic evangelicals are about 13 to 15 percent of the Latino demographic in the United States, 13 to 15 percent of the 50 million Hispanics in the United States. That puts us somewhat over 7 million or around that if you count Puerto Rico which is another discussion.

So the rise of Hispanic evangelicals provide a case study for, I think, what Michael has said, and some others have said, and also Ross in the first panel about the dialectic, how we engage, right? The word oxymoron has been used a lot progressive, religious and progressive, well. Hispanic evangelical often sounds oxymoronic.

Because when I go to certain places and I say, I'm Latino, they say, oh, well, you must be a Democrat. 71 percent of Hispanics voted for Obama in 2012. When I say I'm evangelical they say, oh, you must be a Republican. So they don't really know what to do with me which is good.

We're part of the new social movement and we, like analogous to the black church, we are theologically conservative generally speaking, but we have a real passion for economic issues. The last four elections Bush carried the Hispanic evangelical vote by a slim majority, and then Obama carried the Hispanic evangelical vote by a slim majority. CNN once quoted me as saying Hispanic evangelicals are the quintessential swing voters.

The question, I think, for us as Hispanic evangelicals, particularly around the economic justice issue is what priorities will we vote on? Will Hispanic, will Latino and Latina evangelicals vote on the social issues, class evangelical issues, white

evangelical issues? Or will we vote on the economic issues, and race issues, and housing, and immigration?

One of the reasons I think we're being brought to the table is because Hispanic evangelical have provided a new accent, pun intended, to the political priorities of evangelicals. So immigration and economics, living wage it is not uncommon for me to be at a National Association of Evangelical Board meeting on Monday then working with, you know, the United Farm Workers on Wednesday. At both places I think I'm saying the same thing that immigration reform is an economic issue that has serious implications for the country not just Hispanic, Asian, and STEM immigrants, but everybody.

That living wage is an issue. I2, and NLEC, the organization that I have the privilege of serving is part of the circle of protection. One of the things that we talked about were not just domestic budgets, but what that means in Africa, when we visited Malawi and Zambia with some African-American sisters and brothers, but also Latin America like Peru and (inaudible) were stunting, and cut to U.S. aid has serious deleterious effects which churches we have planted in Latin America. So that brings another thing.

In the Affordable Care Act Hispanic evangelicals will one of the few evangelical groups that publicly said we think the Affordable Care Act is an issue of life and economic opportunity, and that there were 10.4 million Hispanics uninsured or underinsured is an economic nightmare and crisis. We took some heat from our sisters and brothers.

In the issues of mass incarceration, Hispanic evangelical are not far from Michelle Alexander's masterful opus on what that means and the deleterious impacts it has in our communities, particularly economic and upward social mobility.

So the first thing I want to say is that Latina evangelicals and Hispanic evangelicals we bring a different accent to the evangelical movement that can create bridges with unusual partners in issues of economic empowerment and economic

liberation, to use a union term.

The second thing is echoing what Michael said. We are very concerned with of this world, but not of it. He says and, I say but. The problem is that the Greek chi can be interpreted either way.

It's very important, not just from our Biblical hermeneutic, but also from our experience in Latin American, and our high level of suspicion of coopting of religious groups for nefarious and deleterious effects by strong men coleus and things like that.

So we come from our historical experience with a very high suspicion of what faith and government can do together when it advocates a thing. Simultaneously we're very well aware that it's the faith movement that have created liberation, Oscar Romero, and other things like that, so it's a very complicated dialectic that we bring that it's not either or.

So one of the things that I've been really working on is, you read it in the report, the quote which is what happens when this new partner, Hispanic evangelicals, come to the table? I heard a lot. I've worked with people. I know Michael Ray Matthews and Gordon. They do a lot of outreach to Hispanic evangelicals in Florida, a lot. They meet in Pentecostal Hispanic churches, particular in Orlando, Miami, Tampa, and they reach out to us. This is the Hispanic church like the black church is the meeting place, right?

But this new partner we didn't learn community organizing from Saul Lalinsky. We probably know more about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and A. Phillip Randal then we ever know about Saul Lalinsky or ACORN or -- that's just not in our universe. Not that it's a bad things it's just (speaking Spanish). It's not our language. We don't dialogue. It's a different universe.

So how do you then engage people? I think that first is what PICO is doing I think is a great contribution is they're organizing around the way we organize, right? The Hispanic evangelical church learned a lot from the civil rights movement, but

our other mentor in public engagement is the Christian right. Is Jerry Falwell and his right.

That's where they learn how to engage. Particular media, Christian media, Christian radio, TBN, CBN. I'm sure you all watch those stations here at Brookings. Top channel here at the Brookings Institution, right? So it's this mixed legacy of public engagement, right?

Progressives are about 20 to 30 years behind in engaging Latinos. James Dobson has had his program translated in Spanish for over 25 years. In Latin America it's called (speaking Spanish), Focus on a Family, right? And it's political branch, right?

So this new partner has done community organizing and mobilization in a different way. We're from the Latino trenches. But we are able to mobilize quickly because our relationships are very organic, right?

The other day we had this mobilization on immigration, 700 people. It took us a week. Because they're passionate about it. It wasn't a lot of work. It was calling six pastors. That's it's, right? The new faces of messages, our tone, right? The tone and the tenure. We see ourselves as quintessential bridge builders even though we're deeply committed to economic justice and economic equality.

When we talk about living wage and when we present it to our evangelical brothers and sisters we say, hey, this is a moral issue. You know, it's right out of Matthew 25. We have the language of evangelicalism, right? We speak with (speaking Spanish), in their terms, and we speak with our evangelical brothers and sisters in their terms.

The last thing I want to say is deeply autobiographical, why I came to this work. It's, I think, antidotal for most of our work. I know Niebuhr. I studies Niebuhr with James Cohn at the Union Theological Seminary. I did Seminary work at Princeton, my Masters work at Princeton Theological. I know Abraham Khyber, and I know all

language, right?

But the truth is that for Hispanic evangelicals, y we probably do more around teen challenge, around drug rehab, around social transformation. Because although I went to all these great schools my father was a homeless man. He was a heroin junkie who had a radical conversion experience and that mobilized him.

There's real power, existential power, to quote Soren Kierkegaard, around people who are living it that often were cut out of the equation that we bring power, energy, and a different accent to recruit different people. Right? So I don't do it because I learned, you know, the (speaking Spanish) politic and pragmatism dialectic of Niebuhr, although that deeply influences me, right?

Yes. But really it's because my dad was a homeless guy. My mother had Salvation Army clothes. I am a SNAP recipient as a young man. That brings a whole different tenure and movement and energy to what, I think, has often been ignored around the economic issues. Thank you.

MS. BUTLER: Awesome. Well, thank you Brookings. I just am so excited about this report and the panelists. I have so much to say, so I'm going to have to talk fast. I hope you had a lot of coffee because I don't want to run out of time. But I have so much hope, you know, in terms of the future of what the progressive religious movement can bring to conversations about economic inequality, and I have no doubt that we're going to be playing a strong role there.

I want to start, first, with the observation that Americans have strong moral and even religious assumptions underlying their economic worldview. Yet most people seldom think of economic policy debates in ethical or moral terms.

This was driven home for me one day while I was talking to one of my cousins about faith and public life's work to advance moral budget policies. My cousin is a multi-millionaire who made his fortune in day trading. An intellectually curious man, he stopped me right at the word moral budget. 'Whoa, what did you just say?' he

demanded.

'What's that? A moral budget?' He'd never heard those two words together. Can budgets or economies have morals?

As a Protestant, inspired by what Pope Francis is reminding us of every day, I believe the economy exists for a human purpose. Money must serve humanity not rule humanity. When an economic system lacks a moral framework it makes profit alone a false God that can crush families, degrade the environment, and leave the most vulnerable behind. As was said earlier, I think we have to include the environment in this conversation, and the Pope certainly does.

I can hear Bill O'Reilly or Rush Limbaugh calling me a Communist already. Rush called Pope Francis a Marxist. And I think Simone Campbell was just recently called a Marxist as well, so I'm in great company.

This doesn't mean that Christians have to reject capitalism or the entrepreneurial business spirit, of course. It does mean that the moral measure of our economy is found in how we treat those who are struggling on the margins, the unemployed, the service worker, the immigrant day laborer, not how high the stock market rises.

The Pope's critic of trickle-down economics in his challenging call for greater social solidarity presents a profound paradigm shift for our culture. We've talked about a couple of holy trinities on these panels, but I want to mention another one. We've made a holy trinity of extreme individualism, rampant consumerism, and market supremacy.

Corporate America has managed to convince us, and sometimes we don't need much prodding, that the purpose of an economy is to make money and cool stuff to consume rather than serving a human purpose.

Until recently we couldn’t even have a national debate about economic inequality. Finally, economists and political leaders after ignoring or dismissing growing

economic inequality for decades are finally recognizing that it exists, and it's a serious problem.

Analysts have credited events like Occupy Wall Street and Mitt Romney's missteps in the last election cycle with bringing this conversation forward. Pope Francis has, perhaps, done more than any other political leader in the world to put inequality back on the map in a way that transcends partisan divides.

This month we had another milestone with Thomas Picketty's book: Capital in the 21st Century. Which, by the way, is sold out on Amazon. Who new Amazon could run out of books?

Religious leaders are not just debating. They are organizing. This is where the hope lies. During Occupy Wall Street the religious leaders marching through lower Manhattan carrying a five-foot replica of the golden calf became one of the income images of Occupy, and that was a largely mainline Protestant coalition of religious leaders, and it got covered worldwide.

Catholic theologian and nuns have consistently challenged Paul Ryan's draconian budget proposals. As my colleague Dorian Warren was mentioned, Reverend Barber of the North Carolina NAACP recently drew tens of thousands of people to the State Capital for an inter-racial rally to protest that state's regressive policies.

Moral Mondays is a movement to be watched, and if you haven't caught up on that Google it and watch those speeches. Reverend Barber is unabashedly religious, reclaiming the Bible and its authority, and the Constitution, and inspiring tens of thousands in a grass roots movements in North Carolina. But not only that, that movement has spread, and is beginning to develop in at least 12 other states as we speak.

These efforts are striking for their ability to cross ideological, generational, and racial divides. Catholic and evangelicals who have shared common ground on social issues have also joined together in the fight for immigration reform, and

to protest social safety net cuts.

Cooperative Baptists and black Baptists are joined in an alliance to oppose predatory lending. White and black evangelicals are teaming up on bipartisan prison reform efforts. Nuns on the Bus forged alliances across religious secular divides, and it drew in millennials who were disillusioned with the institutional church. Sister Simone's celebrity appearance on the Colbert Report didn't hurt either.

The challenge for faith leaders in moving ahead is to speak more boldly about the structural causes of economic inequality. Religious leaders and institutions have done a great job standing up to protect the social safety net, but we need a sharper economic justice critique that gets at the underlying faults, moral assumptions that give legitimacy to a broken economic system. The Pope's excoriation that our economy must serve a human purpose is a great place to start.

We might first start by joining in on the debate that Thomas Picketty has started, the book I mentioned earlier that's sold out on Amazon. He has suggested that Americans are intoxicated my meritocratic extremism. The impulse to pick winners and reward them enormously.

Americans have been led to believe, in other words, that those who attract money must be the best, they must deserve it. So, of course, the converse of this is that if you're poor you deserve to be poor.

Picketty's book exposes the fallacy of this on an economic level. The numbers are damming, but the moral argument is even more so. Our religious traditions teach us that human dignity and security should be the baseline, not something to earn. They teach us that putting human beings first and capital gains second is critical.

I do see tremendous opportunity for common ground when it comes to building a moral economy movement. Conservatives often have focused too narrowly on the role of family breakdown is the cause of poverty, and they ignore structural justice. But liberals largely make the structural argument and don't pay enough attention to

family, culture, and strengthening the bonds of civil society.

As E.J.'s latest book argues, we need to reclaim a lost consensus that community does matter, and the responsible government also has a basic responsibility to help the poor, the elderly, and the unemployed. It's time to build bridges and reject false choices.

For starters, I can see an interfaith coalition that includes evangelical and Catholics working together to help moms and dads get paid sick days in order to stay at home with family members who are ill. Do you know that half the workers in this country do not have paid sick days? There are movements afoot in many, many states around this country.

We must do more to protect the vital work of also faith-based community organizing which Gary and others have spoken eloquently to. It's important that we understand that that organizing which has been funded by the Catholic Church, by the Catholic campaign for human development throughout the years has been under attack from the Catholic right. It's important that progressives rally around and support that work. That's also mentioned in this report.

Finally, I hope that secular liberals in progressive organizations who care about issues of economic justice remember that religious leaders in faith communities have always been integral to securing progressive social change.

The religious right has been bad for the brand of Christianity, but they do not speak for most Christians. Conversely, I trust that all faith communities will take structural economic chance head-on.

As the Pope stated recently in apostolic exhortation communal commitment, this is essential for humanities very survival, and it's also essential for our spiritual well-being. Thank you.

MR. GALSTON: Well, I have two groups of people to thank at this point. First of all, our panelists for this extraordinary rich tableau of personally grounded

reflections on the subject matter of this report.

Secondly, to the audience for its great patience over a period of nearly two hours. You're going to get a reward in the first of two Q&A sessions. We have about 15 minutes for the first one, and we'll get another one after Sister Simone's comments.

So may I ask you when you are recognized to state your name and affiliation, if you care to, and then please do not make a speech, pose a question. So we will begin with the woman in the second row.

MS. GILMORE: Hi, Gigi Gilmore. I'm not affiliated with anybody. I am retired, and I'm here because I love the subject. I have three quick things to say.

First, a quick prayer that our words may be heard. Second, I'm an MSW with a concentration in community organization and hearing the name Saul Lalinsky again was wonderful.

The third thing that I never heard, but I know is underlying everything is children. Just could somebody address that for me? Thank you.

MR. GALSTON: To the issue of children.

MR. WARREN: I'll give a case and point and then you can draw larger implications. The circle of protection, particularly when it talked about drawing a circle of protection like programs like SNAP and WIC, one of the points of emphasis were women, maternal health, and also children.

I think on the immigration reform issue it's how many children are being separated from their parents that the most vulnerable, to quote Jesus of Nazareth, the least of these is often women and children. So I think you're absolutely right to point to that, and most campaigns underline that.

MR. DIONNE: Could I just say quickly, Bob Putnam's new book that people are waiting for is called Our Kids. He focuses entirely -- the book is about this intersection that genres, we talk about it in the report, where if you care about inequality and injustice you've got to care about the state of American families. But if you care

about the state of American families you've got to care about inequality and injustice.

The way I see it we could have a very productive conversation that would crisscross some of the left/right lines that said it really does matter to kids that they have, if at all possible, two parents, but also that we do things for single parents. The state of the family matters, but we also have to accept that economic trouble, the lack of paid sick leave and family leave is also a great burden on families.

So we have a good conversation across left/right lines or we can have one that just breaks down into a culture war, argument where all of the burden for poverty is placed on whatever parents did wrong. Which actually is not an argument about kids at all. It's just an argument about people trying to figure out who to condemn for the problem. So I think your question is a really good one.

MR. GALSTON: Okay. There's a women in beige on the fourth row.

MS. OCONNELL: Good morning. Thank you for your comments. My name is June O'Connell. I'm also unaffiliated. Mr. Dionne, I think a clarification when you talk about the nuns. It's my recollection that they were God believing, but they were not necessarily associated with any -- but that's not my question, so you can go either on it.

MR. DIONNE: Just real quick, some believe, some don't. We have some numbers in the report.

MS. OCONNELL: Right, but it didn't -- the suggestion that the nuns were -- many of them believe in a God, but they weren't associated with a particular church or religion.

My question to the panel, and also the gentleman from the former panel is, the role of leadership in endorsing candidates, and in elections as opposed to issues. As an example, the gentleman mentioned that, you know, he could bring out 700 people to a demonstration related to, say minimum wage or immigration, but would you be similarly inclined if you were in North Carolina or in Virginia to bring out 700 people to a Terry McAullife versus Cuccinelli to vote for -- I guess it is, the actual endorsement of

candidates?

Because you can espouse issues, but as we have learned if those people endorsing those issues aren't elected at the local and state level then there's a real lack of fulfillment of that agenda. So my question is the role of leadership in bringing people to the poles at the local and state level.

MR. GALSTON: Before the panel gets to that I wonder if the microphone could be passed to the gentleman to your right, and he will pose a question, and then the panelists will address both of them simultaneously.

MR. ACHARIE: Thank you very much. I am Dr. Nice Acharie with (inaudible) American League. It was a great benefit to listen to such distinguished, our four panelists.

My question is related to the master creator who also has an actual loss and in man his creation has man-made loss. While making loss how do natural laws and God-made laws is relevant? If they have an relevance, is there ever a conflict making laws between the natural laws and the man-made laws? If there's a conflict who makes the compromise?

Somebody has said that if there was no God I should have created one because it only helps. Even in adverse conditions it gives you hope. The last thing is I think -- that is a question. I appreciate this if I get an answer.

MR. GALSTON: So politics, theology. Take your choice.

MR. SALGEURO: Well, you know, I think we see the conflict between this in many ways. I think that the obvious answer, right? Is to go to social issues. You know, I think we also see it with critiques of the role of government in serving the poor and sort of the idea that conservatives often find themselves in the way of opposing an imposition of natural law or religious tenants on government. They say, the common refrain is that it's almost immoral to impose religious giving as opposed to letting people give freely, and that charity should be at the heart of how we take care of the poor as

opposed to an expansive, big government.

I think to both questions I would say that the issue of discernment is absolutely key. I'm extreme, and I've led religious outreach for a presidential campaign, I'm extremely weary of giving any sort of guidance or responsibility, especially the pastors, it is their role to endorse candidates or nudge. Pastors' responsibility is to pastor.

So what we've seen, what's been helpful on the progressive side is we've seen a buildup of religious institutions that are parrot church, that are faith inspired, but don't have a responsibility for shepherding a congregation that are able to be more forceful in speaking to candidates and electoral issues.

But for the church, I think that's a matter of the church's tradition. I think different denominations and different backgrounds have a different tradition of political activism in that way. That should be respected. I'm really hesitant to put that kind of burden on pastors.

MR. WEAR: I just wanted to respond to the question about politics. There's a fantastic new book about by a Duke political science, his name, Nick Carnes, called White Collar Government. One of the findings in this book is that in the history of our Congress only 2 percent of members of Congress have come from working class backgrounds, only 2 percent.

Today the majority of the members of Congress are millionaires. I can go on and on, but I want to move the question from one about leadership to one about leadership development. Because when I talked about churches and progressive churches as schools of democracy, and those churches that are tied to faith-based community organizing that is precisely the value that they bring that I think we need to lift up, is the role of leadership development of ordinary people to realize, and to be able to do extraordinary things.

Including running for office, not just supporting or not supporting a

candidate, but being trained and developed to take political ownership of their own communities themselves. I think we can't underestimate or undervalue that role, especially amongst faith-based community organizing, leadership development.

MR. DIONNE: A quick sentence on that. I think one of the reasons religious voices are so important now is that in -- especially with the weakening of the labor movement, the churches are the only mass organization representing many, many poor people. They are the only organizations at a practical level that can often serve as an intersection with power.

Some research we did showed that, for example, on neighborhood community development the pastors are the only people who could get the attention of the banks, and they could vouch for community efforts. So there are many different reasons why faith is important, but at this moment it may be more important than ever for that reason.

MR. GALSTON: I wonder if I could -- since we only have two minutes left here, I would like to call an audible, not for the first time this morning. I would like at the conclusion of this panel, and following on the set of questions just addressed to give the Reinhold Niebuhr professor an opportunity to reflect on this theme of in the world, of the world, and dangerous as opposed to appropriate, or maybe appropriate, but dangerous ways in which religion and faith communities can engage the world of politics because this is a risky business.

MR. DORRIEN: Well, yes it is. Although, you know, I have found over the years that it's actually harder to draw this line in theory than it is in practice. I was a pastor for eight years in an Episcopal church. During that time I'm out raising medical aid money for Salvadorans and getting churches to become sanctuaries and the like, so just deeply involved in sort of classic work of this sort.

Social justice work. We are calling on the conscience of the church to transform structures with society in a direction of something that approximates a

social/ethical ideal.

Honestly, I don't ever remember being torn in any moment about where is the line about, you know, partisan politics. Any time you're in an issue, you're in a moment, you know who's president, you just know what not to say, and so you don't.

It was true of the whole -- I've written a lot about the social gospel movement, and it was true of them as well. This is the generation that's called into work that the church hadn't been used to previously, but then they get that if people suffer because of politics and economics then the church is going to have to deal with politics and economics. They're going to take it out and find ways that it can, indeed, bring its social conscience to the work of society in order to make it a better society because Christian convictions do have ethical implications that play out in public that would betraying the convictions if we're not, in fact, engaged in the work in the public. Right?

All of that wasn't any different then than it is today. There's just partisan lines where in a time, in a moment you know what they are. Frankly, I can't think of any Roush and Bush, Washington, Gladen, Francis, Greenwood, Peabody, John Ryan, go right down the list of the people who founded this approach to social Christianity where you can point to and say, well, you know, they crossed it. They didn't know where it was. They do know where it was -- were, was and is. Although it can be hard to say just in the abstract standing here, you know?

MR. GALSTON: Well, thank you so much, and please -- unless E.J. do you --

MR. DIONNE: I just want to say two quick things. One, thank you for that intervention. I still, I think it should be said here that Teddy Roosevelt ended his speech at the Progressive Party Convention, we stand at Armageddon and we battle for the Lord. I don't know how many lines that crossed.

But I also want to say that doing this report, and by the way, I want to thank one thing, we have to thank Corrine and Ross Tilchon for is we had a mass of

material from really brilliant people. You got a taste of that today and Ross and Corrine started getting it together and helped us focus on it, but I was excited by this report, but this conversation I just want to say thank you to all of you.

Because I think there is a great excitement here in the both intellectual, personal, and moral engagement that you brought to us today. I just want to express my deep gratitude.

MR. GALSTON: That will serve as the benediction. But wait, there's more. No, the actual benediction is coming from Sister Simone.

So the second panel will sit down and you are the whole panel, absolutely.

MS. CAMPBELL: Should I just do it?

MR. GALSTON: After I introduce you, but your instinct was correct because, in fact, you need no introduction, particularly in this room. But I'm going to give you one anyway. It's not going to be what you deserve, but it's what the time allows.

As I'm sure everybody knows this is Sister Simone Campbell. She served as the Executive Director of Network since 2004. I suspect that she's both best known to the public as the instrumental organizer of the Nuns on the Bus tour which was evoked, I believe by Congressman Ryan's budget.

She was a featured speaker at the 2012 Democratic National Convention. I am both authorized and directed to say that she's also the author of a fresh new book called: A Nun on the Bus. Surprise. She has graciously consented after he talk and the closing Q&A to sign copies of her book right outside the rear door.

So thank you so much for gracing us with your presence, and we look forward to what you have to say.

MS. CAMPBELL: Thank you so much. What a great honor to be here. It's taking a little to get used to the fact that I am now an author. I mean, hearing all of the books people have written it's like, whoa. I have one. It's very nice. It's pretty, and I

think you'd enjoy reading it.

But apart from that I want to look at what is the bridge forward? Where are we going? What does the consequence of this study? I was really touched, E.J., by the way you ended your opening with inspire, challenge, and heal. Because in my experience I think that is a hunger in our nation that transcends religion and transcends the identification of right/left, of Republican/Democrat, of Tea Party, of whatever. But there is a huge hunger to be inspired, to be challenged, and to heal.

Pope Francis, whom I'm affectionately calling Pope Frank, because I don't think he would mind at all, says in his exaltation that the third point, his third point about peace building, which in some sense we need to do in our nation in order to move forward. We need to build peace among this polarized reality that we experience politically.

But his third point is he says, there also exists a constant tension between ideas and realities. Realities simply are whereas ideas are worked out. Which Dr. Dorrien was just pointing out when it comes to where you know where the line is. You just know when you're in the midst of the reality.

Then he goes on to say, there has to be continuous dialogue between the two lest ideas become detached from realities. It's dangerous to dwell in the realm of words alone, or images, and rhetoric. So a third principle comes into play, realities are greater than ideas.

This calls for rejecting the various means of masking reality. Angelic forms of purity, dictatorships of realisms, empty rhetoric, objects of more ideal than real, brands of a historical fundamentalism, and ethical systems bereft of kindness, intellectual discourse bereft of wisdom.

It's that lack of reality that I think is at the heart of the tension and the political fight. The fact is the people of our nation know what is happening.

On our bus trip I think one of the things that captured imagination is that

we came to lift up the local stories. We came as learners to local reality to hear the story of the struggle of people, and to hear their worry, their concern.

We drew a bunch of Catholics who were quite upset, and what you have to know about the bus is while, yes, the bus was an amazing experience it was a direct response to the Vatican censure. So it was the Holy Spirit's fault that the whole thing happened. But it really was an effort to use our notoriety from the Vatican, thanks to the Vatican.

But what we discovered is as learners in the local reality is people have a story to tell. Everyone has a story to tell. We drew nuns, we drew Catholics, we drew a wide variety of faith folks. I'll never forget the first note in Des Moines. I had never realized that there was a Buddhist Temple in Des Moines and they all came to our opening event. It was a stunning thing for me. But we also touched, as has been mentioned, the N-O-N-E-S, the nones.

Because I think what we did was to speak with a heart of clarify, with a heart of candor, with a heart that welcomed the 100 percent. Our nation needs that healing so that we are no longer divided, but it is a way of coming together.

For me faith is why I do this. Faith is what motivates me, but faith has political consequences, and hence it's not so much what politics can do with faith, but what faith can do with politics.

So if we're candid and not calculating, if we're focused on justice in the 100 percent let me tell you a couple of quick stories because this is why we've got to do this work. A couple of weeks ago President Obama signed the Executive Order to lift minimum wage for Federal Contract workers and I got to be at the White House. I mean, really join the convent, lead a quiet life. It's just amazing.

But I got to sit next to this beautiful woman, Robin, who's probably her late-20s. She was so excited to be in the White House, and we were in the second row. It was fabulous. She had a new blue dress, and she told me that she worked at a

national chain of clothing stores. She worked full-time, but she was making minimum wage, so she was really excited that somebody would get a raise.

She had gotten her new blue dress with her employee discount and it cost her $20.43. It had been on sale first. Then after we talked a while she told me, 'Well, you know, by looking at me you would never know I have to live in a homeless shelter because I can't afford rent around here on my salary.' She's working full-time and she can't afford the rent.

That's wrong in the richest nation on earth. It's wrong because Robin is being robbed of a future. We've got to stand up for the Robins of this world.

Just a couple weeks later I was sitting at a fund raiser out in San Diego and I'm sitting next to Jason who's this 35-year-old entrepreneur who had built three companies already and sold two of them. But he was about to be a new dad. He and his wife were about to have a child. He was so excited.

Then he start talking about political realities that he pays a living wage to all of his employees. A living wage. So he said that he found his employees were more committed, more loyal, better productivity. It made sense for his business, but it was beginning to make him angry that his taxes were going to fund his competitors. Well, I had never thought of that.

His taxes were going to food stamps. They were going to a variety of other safety-net programs which Robin and her friends were having to use because they were being paid such low wages. It is wrong that our people cannot earn enough in their employment to live in dignity. In the richest nation on earth we're better than this. We need to speak of the stories of Robin and Jason.

We also need to speak of the story of Congressman Pete Gallego who at our Nuns on the Bus event in San Antonio came to the podium to tell us about his -- they had a whole prepared paper he was going to speak from. His son Nicholas had just arrived and hadn't seen his dad for a couple of days. Eight-year-old Nicholas calls out

from the back of this big audience, 300 people were outside in San Antonio in the heat of summer.

Nicholas says, 'Poppy,' and come running up and throws his arms around his dad, totally oblivious that his dad's about to give a speech to 300 people. What happened though for Congressman Gallego, was he said, I can't give you my speech. I have to tell you when my attitude toward immigration changed. My attitude toward immigration changed the first time I held this little boy in the delivery room, and I knew, I knew that I as a dad would do anything to protect him, to make sure he could have a better life. That was when I knew that's what all parents do, and we have an obligation to fix our broken system.

A couple of days later I was outside Tucson at the Pascua Yaqui Reservation. Chairman Pete told me that he himself had found the body of a woman curled under a big Palo Verde bush and when they rolled her body over she was holding the body of her young child. I knew in that, that that nameless woman in the desert had the same desire as Congressman Pete Gallego. Had the same hunger for her child. Had the same desire to care for her child and risked everything.

Now, where does this leave us? As people of faith for me immigration becomes a life issue. For me as a person of faith wages are a faith issue. For me as a person of faith we the people of the United States have work to do. It is wrong that we are so divided.

So I do think that faith can inspire. I do think that faith can challenge, but most of all, I think with loving heart, with our heart broken open we can welcome in the 100 percent. If we welcome in the 100 percent then we the people of the United States can be a more perfect union.

I think one of the great things about being a faithful progressive is that I have a high tolerance for pluralism. Even for Tea Party folks. It's a challenge, but we have to radically accept everyone in this 100 percent. In that process I think while I

commented from faith where we meet up in our Nation is the Constitution, and that's where we become we the people of the United States striving to form this more perfect union.

So progressive faith is desperately needed in the 100 percent. Conservative faith is desperately needed in the 100 percent. But what is needed most is healing so that we can have this conversation in our amazing country to build not only a nation, but a world where the world is cared for, create a sustainable environment, we honor the dignity of all.

We the people of the United States. We're that good that we can make that happen. Thank you.

MR. GALSTON: Sister Simone, you're not going to get off that easily. Please come up and join us because I suspect there are some people in the audience who may want to have a dialogue with you.

So as promised we have about 15 more minutes and please feel free since almost everybody who's spoken this morning is still here you may address your questions to Sister Simone Campbell or anyone else who may have peaked your interest.

So there is a hand, a young man in the -- just about the back row.

MR. BOCKNER: Hi. John Bockner, no affiliation here. I guess, my question here to the general panel was about, you spoke, Mr. Dionne, of a moment right now that sort of reminiscent of the moment leading up to the civil rights era and that activism there. I was thinking to myself that in that time the church played a key role in community building and outreach in communication and organization.

I'm wondering with the rise, sort of, of modern communication, of social media, the internet has the role of the church as a facilitator of that civic engagement changed in any way? Has it ben marginalized? Has it been strengthen by these new tools? That's my question.

MR. GALSTON: Fabulous question.

MR. WEAR: I'm going to take it, but I want Sister Simone to take it first.

MS. CAMPBELL: I love Twitter. Follow me on Twitter. But the thing is that I think is so -- or Facebook, our network lobby on Facebook is a fabulous place. The thing that is so important about social media is that it gets people in various parts of the country having this conversation, being able to build bridges not just in local communities, but build bridges across a variety of communities.

I think we're just beginning to figure out the strength of that. Also, it's limitations. Because it's tempting to substitute Facebook friends for face to face friends. That piece is where I think church can really help build the face to face relationships as well as that bigger connection.

MR. WEAR: I am struck by the links back from the new to what we look at as the old. You know, I've talked to Obama organizers and in some sense every electronic communication ended with a door knock which is the idea was not simply to communicate electronically it was to get people to sit in somebody's living room or to get somebody to go out and talk to someone else face to face.

There is this fear that we are all, you know, becoming screen people. It sounds like a bad science fiction movie. Yet, my experience, you know, with kids, with people is that it -- yes, you can spend too much times on screens, but mostly it leads to personal connection.

The space provided by the church, I think it very important to all of that kind of organizing. I mean, one of the reasons that church was so central to the civil rights movement, and to the African-American community generally is it was, for a long time, the only free space African-Americans had because everything else was subject to various kinds of oppression.

It was sort of, in some ways, the original free space out of which came -- it's not just a union seminary term, liberation. So, you know, I think that there is a real possibility of interaction here. It doesn't -- it cannot stop with the screen or the tweet.

MR. GALSTON: There are more than a few organizers in the front row if they want to add any comments to the first two or has everything been said? Okay.

I'm going to shift over to this side of the room. There's a gentleman all the way over on that row, the red tie.

MR. HALE: Hi. My name's Christopher Hale. I run Catholics in Alliance here in D.C., and I write weekly on Faith and Politics for Time.

I think Michael and Gabriel, they're names are both -- they're both named after angels, and I think it's great. I think it's great because they had really prophetic comments, I think, about the role of young people in the progressive movement.

It seems that they implied that a progressive faith movement without Jesus with only banners and balloons is dead. It seems like the future for the progressive faith movement with only banners and balloons is dead. I don't think that's really compelling to society. But there's a reality that we have to exist in a secular society.

So how can we be authentically faithful, authentically Christian, if you will, and proclaim Jesus and still exist in secular society and be in play in democratic politics?

MR. WEAR: One thing I wasn't able to say -- yeah, so it's hard for the progressive movement because what you find is that in the nominally religious conservatives, generally operate in a culture which values religiosity. So it's easier for the conservative movement to advance in inauthentic faith with a big coalition because it's just part of the political and social culture.

For progressives, and nominally religious progressives usually grow up and are comfortable with secular environment. So nominally religious progressives really don't demand faith being a part of the conversation, so they're very comfortable sort of leaving that out in most cases.

That's the reality. The thing that organizers have to do both on the political side and organizations like Faith in Public Life have to deal with the reality that's

given to us and recognize that there's a higher goal than just political power, and just expanding our organizations, and being invited to the most galas. Actually there's something profound and central about advancing the faith narrative that invites others to the conversation that wouldn't otherwise be there.

Faith brought religious people to unions that would not have made it to unions had it not been for faith. So that's really central moving forward.

MR. SALGEURO: Michael's an archangel. I'm just a regular angel in the hierarchy of angels. Just for Biblical accuracy.

You know, one of the things that troubles me is when I go into the media and, you know, you don't control what they put underneath. You know, and they'll put Reverend Salgeuro, Latino Activist. Already, you know, that nomenclature, you know, I always come to the table first as a follower of Jesus Christ, always.

That has a lot of traction in Christian colleges and universities. I think, you know, Aristotle, I think it was that said this, you know, multiple realities, the law of double effect can happen, right? So it's not just with secular, but what about the migration of the global south into the global north ala Philip Jenkins and the Next Christendom, right?

Which says this group, my group is not secular. And I mean, young Latino faith people, Catholics, evangelicals, whatever. Although there's some show of decline vis-à-vis Robbie Jones and a report. But we'll still, you know, that's a growing gap, right?

So to us that's central. I think Asian, particularly my Korean-American brothers and sisters, and there's a wonderful group of Korean community development that's -- Hipin Im, is her name. She's a powerful woman who's doing some movement around that which is hey, we're a different dynamic.

So I love when people describe America and they don't recognize the factors of immigration on religiosity and secularization, right? It's like two of three

different Americas to quote Gardner Taylor, right? We live in different Americas.

So I think that for me I come as a Christian and that appeals to young white evangelicals and Hispanic, and Korean, but also older ones. Which says, hey I'm coming to this because I'm a follower of Jesus. I think that's what appeals about Pope Francis, and Sisters Simone, and other people because of their Jewish faith or whatever tradition is doing.

That's a particular contribution, not the only contribution. It shouldn't be a monopoly of a contribution, but it's how I come to the table. Unapologetically, but in solidarity.

MR. GALSTON: We have time for one more question, and I think I see Brad Braxton with his hand up.

MR. BRAXTON: Thank you for this wonderfully rich dialogue. I'm Brad Braxton, Program Officer for Religion at the Ford Foundation, a former seminary professor, and also a pastor of a progressive congregation.

I am deeply struck by the optic of the report. We began with that and we ended with Sister Simone's wonderful image of healing. So my question is, is there a genuine appetite among religious progressives for radical critique?

Dr. King from '66 to '68 when he ran into the racialized poverty in Chicago was on his way to becoming a religious radical. Many of the doctors who have healed me hurt me, they did not harm me. Often healing involves some hurt.

So is there a capacity for this kind of deep, as Revered Butler called for, structural critique such that there can be a genuine religious progressive movement? Do we have a capacity for that King of '66, '67, '68 who lost access to the Johnson White House?

MS. CAMPBELL: Fabulously put, and welcome to Ford. You're going to have a platform to test the question, internal and external.

But I think for me the thing is -- that's why it's so important to be

grounded in the stories, in the real lives of people because it doesn't become this crusade of idea, rather it becomes a crusade for Robin. It becomes a crusade for the nameless women in the desert. It becomes a crusade for Congressman Pete Gallego.

The fact is we've got people in trouble and how can we close our hearts to those people? If, from my perspective, if I'm grounded in those stories, man, I'm kind of ferocious. I want to protect my people. These are my people.

So I've issued all these invitations to a much of politicians to come meet my people because I really think that it's meeting reality that we've got to do, and if we meet reality then that stretch to the ideal, to the change, it becomes natural.

Quite frankly, to Chris' point about, well, where do you do with Jesus in the face of it? Is exactly what Jesus did. Jesus told stories and touched people lives, and touched them where they hurt, and that was healing. So we've got to touch the pain of our society otherwise we'll never be healed.

So it's a challenge. But for me it's grounded in people stories.

MR. DIONNE: Could I just say something? First of all, I appreciate that question because I think all of us need to take our Dr. King hole, and that there is a tendency in our discussion of King to like a particular piece of him, hug that piece, and ignore the rest of it. So the King of the Vietnam years often disappears.

What I think the King, sort of take it whole, had in common is even in the radical years he never lost sight of the healing part. The idea of making a very tough critic of what is, is designed to lead to something better. I think, and we could have a long conversation about this, I think he never lost, even when things were not going as well, even when he was less welcomed, I think he never lost this idea of conversion of adversaries. In other words, that he was willing to confront adversaries, but always with the idea of conversion somewhere in his mind.

So I think it is possible, I think to hold two ideas in your head at the same time, and to hold the whole King together by saying that the hard critique never

excludes conversion or, as you suggested in your rich metaphor, healing.

MR. GALSTON: Well, I have been somewhat more restrained, then is my want, throughout this morning. Your question deserves a longer response then I can possibly give it.

But I would, you know, I would say this, and I guess this is in the spirit, though not exactly the letter of E.J.'s remarks that there's a distinction, at least in my mind, between an understanding that goes to the roots of the problem and is radical in the foundational meaning of that term, and an act of line drawing that in the world repeals rather attracting.

There is a right way or should I say a productive way, and an unproductive way of moving from a radical understanding, which is where any serious politics begins, to engagement with the world. If one engages in the spirit that there are, you know, there are permanent friends and permanent enemies people are going to respond. They probably will not respond the way you want them to.

So I think that, you know, radical understanding is one thing, and, you know, demonization is a very different thing. It is very difficult once one has a radical understanding of the problem to move across that line in the way that may make long-term healing harder rather than easier.

The word discernment has been used more than once this morning. I'm not saying that there's an, you know, an easy formula for figuring out how to be radical and a healer at the same time, but it seems to be those are the two things that need to be kept together.

You know, it's a challenge that goes to the heart of what I call the ethics of speech, right? The use of words has its own ethics and its own politics. I think we have to intend to that in everything we do, and in particular everything we say.

Because I've spend the past seven years of my life studying political polarization in the United States. This is a breaking society, and I hope and I pray that it

doesn't become a broken society. But we all have a responsibility to prevent that from happening, and what we say is just as important as what we think.

With that please join with me in thanking these extraordinary panelists.

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