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PREVENTING TARGETED VIOLENCE AGAINST COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

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Remarks:

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Panelists:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. WEST: Good afternoon. I'm Darrell West, vice president of Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution. And I would like to welcome you to our event on targeted violence against communities of faith. And for those of you are watching on our webcast, I'd like to welcome you as well. And for all of you, we have set up a Twitter feed at hashtag combat hate. That's hashtag combat hate. So, feel free to make any comments or outline your own views on the subject that we are going to be discussing today.

So, the right to practice religion is one of our nation's most indelible rights. But over the last few years, the United States has experienced an increase in attacks targeting houses of worship. Following a string of attacks on synagogues, temples, churches and mosques, the Department of Homeland Security launched a task force to examine the threat posed by violent extremists.

As co-chair of this task force, Brookings President John Allen worked with leaders from the Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Christian faiths to issue a new report that offers recommendations for how law enforcement and communities of faith can work together to deal with mass casualty attacks.

In addition, this week John has an article in The Atlantic entitled, "White Supremacist Violence is Terrorism," which I highly recommend to you. In it, he argues that we need to pay close attention to violent white supremacist organizations that targets religious and racial minorities. And he argues that it is important to strengthen our nation's laws in these areas.

So, today, we're going to be focusing on the rising threat of targeted violence based on race and religion and what to do about it. So, we're going to start with a short presentation from President Allen. He's going to outline the risks we face from targeted violence and his concerns about those threats.

Many of you know he is the eighth president of Brookings, and he has served in that position since November of 2017. He is a retired four-star Marine Corps general, who commanded the NATO International Security Assistance Force, as well as U.S. forces in Afghanistan. And having spent many years fighting foreign terrorism, he now is very worried about the threat of domestic terrorism. So, please join me in welcoming John to the podium. (Applause)

MR. ALLEN: Darrell, thanks very much. Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. It is wonderful to welcome you all here for the Brookings Institution, and to include those of you coming in via the webcast. And we welcome you today to our event on the prevention of targeted violence against precious faith communities in the United States.

We've had an excellent -- we have an excellent panel that'll be coming up in just a moment. But before that begins, I wanted to share a bit of my own experiences and my views on this issue, an issue I view as a true national security threat to the United States.

Last month, I had the honor of testifying before the House Subcommittee on Intelligence and Counterterrorism regarding the topic of anti-Semitic violence. I have in addition to my Brookings responsibilities, I've been a member of the Homeland Security Advisory Council, or the HSAC, or the HSAC, I'm sorry, is how we call it. And I've been specifically the co-chair of the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Targeted Violence Against Faith-Based Communities.

It was in that capacity that I spoke of the threat faith-based communities are facing today. And the recommendations of our recent HSAC Subcommittee Report. It was an important convening and conversation and a critical moment to highlight the urgency of this issue that we're discussing today. I know our panelists will do it justice in just a few moments. And I encourage you all to read that report, which is online at the Homeland Security Advisory Council.

It's especially important at this moment, now in Black History Month, I view it as a crucial -- as crucial that we address the greater context of these issues and the conversations that describe them. These issues of race and racism and prejudice in America, and what it means for us as a people, as well as the overarching threat that ties these issues together. The reemergence of violent white supremacy and domestic terrorism in our nation today.

Let me first make something absolutely clear. Slavery was America's original sin. This is an issue that permeates all that we have been, and all that we are today, and sadly its legacy still persists, today and well, into the future. Slavery did not resolve itself with the end of the American Civil War, nor through the heroic efforts of our Civil Rights Movement. It simply changed its odious form and continued a generational enslavement of an entire strata of American society.

For America, racism and by extension prejudice, has always been there. And unless we collectively recognize and fight it in all of its despicable forms, it will remain an irreconcilable stain on our national soul and an inevitable characteristic of what we are and what we'll ever hope to strive to be.

That remains doubly true given the ominous rise and the empowerment of white nationalist hate groups around the globe today, which pose a real threat to every American regardless of background. The communities our Subcommittee visited as part of our HSAC mission highlighted the current reality in stark and often horrific terms. These communities represented congregation, and communities who had lived through vicious murders, firebombing attacks and shootings targeted against those whose only "crime", crime in quotes, was having a different belief system or racial background.

This is happening now. This is not a bygone era in the United States. And our group had the opportunity to meet with and interview hundreds of community members who'd experienced these attacks, or the damage, or the destruction of their houses of worship.

The experience for me was both heart wrenching and uplifting. Heart wrenching because of the tragedy and the trauma meted out to so many innocent individuals by cold blooded attackers. But uplifting. Uplifting in the courage and resilience displayed by these communities in seeking to bind up their wounds and carry on with their daily lives.

This has been highlighted in the last several days, both with the conversation about the shooting at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina in conjunction with the conversation around the South Carolina Democratic primary. And more specifically, and I think as a matter of celebration, the passage in Congress of law long overdue, The Emmett Till Anti-Lynching Act, adding lynching to the U.S. code.

And I might add, I'm also very proud that the commandant of the Marine Corps has directed the removal of any Confederate paraphernalia from all Marine Corps bases around the world. Indeed, during our travels, the fact that many of our meetings occurred not far from monuments and banners still brandishing Confederate iconography, the ultimate expression of institutionalized slavery, this was not lost on us as well.

These are tragic contrasts, and they're mind boggling incongruities that exists in the year

2020. And of course, these incongruities extend deeply into a wide variety of American faith communities as well.

Now, these underlying issues are not new. Yet today they feed a resurgent danger to our white way of life, that of domestic terrorism. This issue represents a serious threat to America. One that rivals and perhaps eclipses that of foreign terrorist threats, something I know a little bit about. There are those who would seek to deflect our attention away from this reality, focusing it rather on the so called radical Islamic terror, vilifying in the process our American Muslim community, and broadly condemning the faith of Islam.

The truth, however, is this, and only this, far more Americans of all races and faiths and backgrounds have been murdered, injured, victimized and terrorized by white supremacists than the full extent of foreign terrorist organizations who have attacked our homeland.

With those same groups and individuals growing bolder by the day, that reality should define how we respond. And for me that starts with calling these individuals what they are, terrorists. Let me just say that again. With this -- these same groups and individuals growing bolder by the day, that reality should define how we respond. And that for me, as I said, is by calling these individuals what they are, and that's terrorist.

And right on schedule, and right on cue, racists and xenophobes and white supremacists are terrorizing Asian-Americans now, and our Asian guests and Asians around the world, in response to the noble coronavirus.

In the strongest possible terms, we must condemn these vile acts and declare our communities and our nation a safe haven against this behavior.

Now, to draw a line back to our discussion today, however, in many cases the diversity and the distinctiveness of any minority is manifested often in their houses of worship, and the reality that these communities gather on a regular scheduled basis, to worship in their own ways. This makes them a convenient target of domestic terrorists who both attack a faith, but also a unique and a cherished segment of our society.

The Subcommittee, before which I testified, was cited as having a bipartisan support,

focused on dealing with anti-Semitic violence. And I'm thankful for that truth. Yet, at the same time, efforts to combat violence against those whose skin color is different than my own, does not receive the same level of support in this country. It's simply unacceptable and directly linked to our collective inability to confront the legacy of slavery and widespread systematic prejudice in our nation.

As a people we simply cannot be outraged against one form of race-based hatred and violence and ambivalent about another one -- and another form of race based hate and prejudice. We have to solve this as a people if we're going to go forward and leverage the great diversity of this country.

So, to close, ladies and gentlemen, in my testimony I called on the U.S. Congress to be seized with this issue. The individuals you're about to hear with -- hear from are in fact seized with this issue of fighting this terrible threat to our society. It's such an important topic to be discussing today.

And at this particular moment in American history, for truly our actions today will define our children's futures. But more specifically, it will define us as a great people and a great country. So, with that, let me turn it back to Darrell who can invite our panel to the stage. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

MR. WEST: So, thank you, John, for those remarks and your leadership on this important issue. And there certainly is tremendous amount of worry that we should have about targeted violence based on both the religion and race. And we need to think seriously about how to deal with this issue.

So, this afternoon, we are fortunate to have four distinguished experts who can help us think about this topic. Oren Segal is vice president of the Center of Extremism at the Anti-Defamation League. There he works to combat extremism, terrorism and all forms of hate. One of his recent reports found a dramatic rise in white supremacy propaganda in the United States over the last year. In addition to research, his center helps to train law enforcement, public officials and technology experts on ways to identify and counter emerging threats.

Also pleased to welcome Rashawn Ray. He is the David Rubenstein fellow in Governance Studies at Brookings. He's also an associate professor of sociology at the University of Maryland, where he serves as executive director of the Lab for Applied Social Science Research. He is a

co-editor of Context Magazine, which covers sociology for the public and provides accessible articles about societal issues. His current work looks at race in law enforcement, and he is writing a book on that topic.

Mary McCord is a visiting professor of law at Georgetown Law School. She also serves as a Legal Director of the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection. Prior to that she was an Assistant U.S. Attorney for nearly 20 years. She's also testified before a House Financial Services Committee on the persistent and evolving threats that America faces in the financing of domestic terrorism and extremism.

Fred Lawrence is a distinguished lecturer at Georgetown Law Center, and the CEO of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, our nation's most prestigious honor society that was founded in 1776. And prior to that, he served as president of Brandeis University, and also dean of the George Washington University Law School. He's been a strong advocate for strong bias crime legislation, as well as the importance of addressing bigotry in general.

I also want to point out that on your chairs, you have evaluation forms, so we'd be pleased if at the end of this forum, you could fill them out and give us any feedback that you would like on this event.

So, as John Allen noted, the United States and other places around the world are experiencing a rise in violent extremism. So, this afternoon, we want to address why this is happening and what we can do about it. So, I want to start with Oren.

So, the Anti-Defamation League has put out two reports recently showing an increase in white supremacy propaganda. And then a new report that just came out this morning, documenting that right-wing extremists have been responsible for 75 percent of the extremist related murders in this country over the past decade. So, could you summarize each of those reports and explain what they tell us about extremist violence in America?

MR. SEGAL: Sure. Thank you, Darrell. I should start by saying that the work that we do in the center is not just to collect data and stats which is very, very much important. You know, having that information enables you to sort of understand trends and resource to that threat. But it's also to

understand the narratives and tropes that are motivating those who are inspired by these ideologies.

So, it's not just sort of how anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant racism, and misogyny, for example, all come together to underscore these fundamental ideologies. But the way that they're communicated, you know, through memes, through flyers, through posters, through social media in particular, creating online spaces that are more accessible to anybody than we've ever seen in human history.

And so, you know, in the context of that, understanding the language and the tropes, we do try to find a way to slice and dice it with data. And the report that was just mentioned about white supremacist propaganda in particular, I think really underscores this rise that we're seeing.

And so here's just some basic data, 2019, 2,713 incidents of white supremacist propaganda were distributed throughout the country. You know, that's a flyer, that's a banner, that's a sticker. And why is that important? Well, (a) it's 120 percent increase from the year before. And in 2017 to '18 there was 180 percent increase.

And so this is a tried and true tactic to not only create fear and anxiety in communities, but also to reach, recruit and radicalize. It's a very cheap and easy way. No one's going to die from getting you know, 100 paper cuts from a flyer. That's not why it's important. It's important because this is often the entry point into a violent movement that's more broad than simply a flyer. Right.

So, we saw 2,713, and yet we also saw what three weeks ago here in D.C., 150 members of the Patriot Front marching on the Capitol. Now, Patriot Front was responsible for 66 percent of those 2,713 flyers. Again, this is the gateway. This is the entry point.

And one last point about these propaganda incidents is that they also tell you a little bit more about the tactics that white supremacists are using more broadly. We've talked a lot about how the alt right was a new term that was used to describe what supremacy and by the way, alt right is just a repackaging of white supremacy. But what we've seen is in some of these flyers, yes there's the explicit calls for violence, etc. But they are using more patriotic and toned down rhetoric, right, about know your identity, you know, reclaim your country.

You know, ideas that aren't necessarily connected at first blush with white supremacist

narratives, but are designed to bring people in, cast a wide net. Once you scratch the surface, though, you see what these groups are all about. That's why the messaging on these flyers is important.

And one last point, on the report that we issued today, every year we track extremist related murders in this country. And pretty much every year aside from one, the year of the shooting at the nightclub in Orlando, right wing extremists have killed more people in this country than any other form of extremism.

So, in the last ten years, we have seen 75 percent of the extremist-related murders in this country carried out by right wing extremists, and the majority of the right-wing extremists have been white supremacists. So, you have some anti-government, you know, sovereign citizen types, there's murders. And we don't have a luxury, by the way, not just as a Jewish community, but any community to ignore a threat of any ideologically motivated extremist.

But the numbers are important, because if year after year, we see right wing extremists killing American citizens, we are killing ourselves from within. And as President Allen noted, we need to resource to that threat now. The data is available for everybody to see and we need to start treating it the way we have treated the foreign threat.

MR. WEST. Thank you, Oren. So, Rashawn, at the same time that we're seeing increases in attacks based on religion and ethnicity, there also has been an outpouring of hate speech and hate violence directed against African Americans. So, what is driving this increase in hate violence? And what do you see as the roots of this problem?

MR. RAY: Yeah, I think that's a great question. I mean, I think there are two incidents that really kind of encapsulate this. First is what happened as General Allen said at the Mother Emanuel AME Church, where nine parishioners were killed by white supremacists.

I think the other is what happened at the University of Maryland where I happened to be a professor, where Second Army Lieutenant Richard W. Collins, III, was waiting for an Uber -- and it's very, very important to capture the context here. Lieutenant Collins is -- was a black man who was waiting with an Asian woman and a white man.

And I think when we think about what America should be, and what universities should

look like when we see students on campus, that type of friendship is potentially what we desire. And I think that's one of the exact things that Sean Urbanski, who was the white supremacist who was recently convicted of murder against Lieutenant Collins, I think that's one of the exact things that he was trying to deal with and actually shut down.

And I think these two incidents really captured this They not only capture this because the victims were black. but I think also what we don't realize is when these incidents happen, they actually impact and terrorize entire communities. Not only that, the social institutions where these incidents occurred it are important, churches, and universities.

These are two of the spaces where historically, black Americans have seen some type of reprieve where they have been able to engage in certain types of activism that actually kind of embrace their full identities. These spaces are spaces that white supremacists are also trying to acquire and steal back.

So, when I look at University of Maryland is one of the most racially diverse universities in the country, it's not an accident that that happened there. Because now that university will never ever be the same for students, for faculty, for staff, for anyone who comes on to that campus. And that's one of the exact things that white supremacists want to have happen.

I think we've heard some stats as it relates to who's actually committing these acts. I think one of the biggest things over the past 20 years we've seen an over 100 percent increase in hate groups in the United States.

I think the other thing that we have to be realistic about is that in places where Donald Trump campaigned at in 2016, hate crimes increased over 200 percent in those locations.

So, I think part of it is kind of recognizing that this isn't simply just a few people, this is spreading. So, these flyers that we're talking about, I mean I get these in my campus box all the time, because one of the courses that I teach is race, my students get them. So, universities become targeted places where white supremacists are trying to do something about.

And then I think there's another group that a lot of people don't know about, that's called the base, which there was some members who recently got arrested, and we were talking about this

before the panel. That there were individuals who were arrested in Prince George's County right down the road. And then also in Georgia, a little bit outside of Atlanta. Those two places were not by accident.

Prince George's County and Atlanta, the Dekalb County, are two of the most affluent African American areas in the United States. It's not by accident that these places are being chosen.

The final point that I'll make here is as General Allen said this in his report, or I think the Atlantic piece, that these groups -- because I think for a lot of people they looked into in the '80s, '90s, definitely when Obama got elected. People were like oh we're finally post-racial, like some kind of way of victory by a black identifying President just removes all the hate. No it actually potentially made it worse.

But part of that is that they've always been extremely organized. And the digital space, they've been able to go underground in the digital space and use social media in ways that people don't necessarily recognize.

Some of my colleagues and I, we did an analysis of Twitter data. And we collected 30 million tweets from essentially from the time that Michael Brown was killed in Ferguson, Missouri until the year after. And one of the things we discovered was a group called TCOT stands for Top Conservatives on Twitter.

They take credit for firmly cementing the Tea Party and the Republican Party. They take credit for revitalizing the alt right, which is simply just another way of framing it as white supremacy.

And the key point here is that when we looked at the overlap in tweets, people who were tweeting say about Ferguson, people were tweeting about TCOT, people were tweeting about Black Lives Matter, these people were in completely different echo chambers. And that really speaks to the way that social media algorithms operate.

What your social media profile looks like, looks completely different for a white supremacist. Like it will probably be difficult, unless there are white supremacists in this room which I hope not, but if they are, part of what happens with these algorithms is that you can't even manipulate your algorithm to do that.

So, what that means is the information that you're getting fed are extremely different pieces of information. that other people are being fed. And I think in this regard, there are also everyday

acts of hate and domestic terrorism that never go reported. And in that regard, it becomes a very pervasive problem that we must deal with as a nation.

MR. WEST: Thank you very much for that. So, Mary, you've been on the front lines as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, and also as Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, and Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security at the Department of Justice. So, with various types of extremist violence, there seem to be similar grievances that propel violence and similar stages through which people go on the path to radicalization. So, based on your experiences, why do you think we're seeing this increase in white nationalism and domestic terrorism?

MS. MCCORD: Thank you. To be clear, we've had domestic terrorism in this country since its founding. We just didn't call it terrorism. We are coming upon the 100-year anniversary of the massacre in Tulsa, that was a classic act of terroristic violence. It took out not only many, many lives of black Americans, but also took out what had been known as Black Wall Street, a very thriving financial district in Tulsa, Oklahoma. There was even air assets used in that massacre.

And yet most people, many people around the country weren't even aware of it until recently. And I think now it's the subject of a new series on HBO, which is probably why people are aware of it.

We, you know, Oklahoma City, a lot of people didn't actually call that terrorism. They called it a massacre. They called it a horrible attack on a government facility. But I don't think people recognize some of the ties of Timothy McVeigh to white supremacy.

And so I think, I don't want to suggest that the rise here is something new, because it's existed in this country for centuries. But I think what has been alarming or significant to me is, particularly given my time in the National Security Division of the Department of Justice, where so many of our resources, law enforcement, FBI, the intelligence community, the military, the State Department, etc., were directed toward international terrorism. Meaning terrorism committed in furtherance of the goals of a designated foreign terrorist organization like ISIS, like Al Qaeda.

So, many resources were put toward that. It's not that we were ignorant of the domestic terrorist threat, it's just not where post 9-11 so many resources had been put.

But what we are seeing now is that the far right extremists are really modeling everything, their recruitment, their vetting, their radicalization to violence, on exactly what ISIS has been so successful at.

So, ISIS was the first foreign terrorist organization to make prolific use of social media and the digital platforms for its propaganda. And because of social media and the ubiquity of it, they are able to reach from foreign lands right into every community across the world and including in America with their propaganda.

Well, white supremacist are doing the same thing. And I don't really want to say which came first because I think these are tactics that the far right has also used for some time. But they're able to, you know, no longer do you have to find likeminded people in the physical space and get together, you know, at a restaurant or a park or whatever. You can find likeminded people on the internet, you know, without ever leaving your desk or your laptop.

And that does many things. It allows for increased radicalization because there's this view that there are others like me who have agreements, we can be part of something bigger than ourselves. For those who became adherence to ISIS' ideology was about jihad. And it was about the creation of an Islamist utopia with Syria law, and to fight back against the oppressive Western civilizations.

With white supremacists, we're seeing similar, very similar ideologies. We're seeing this desire for a white ethnostate, we're seeing concern white -- about white replacement theory, concern about this country becoming majority minority population. And it's not limited to the U.S., we're seeing it across Western Europe, Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand. We're seeing the interconnectedness of the white supremacist movement in ways that we have, when I was particularly in government and still now, saw the same type of interconnectedness about -- between Islamic extremists.

So, and I think the base is an excellent example of that. So, the base is this relatively new, I think 2018 white supremacist militia organization, who is doing so many things that we saw with ISIS. They recruit online specifically looking for people with skills like engineering, firearm skills, you know, chemical and other type of high-level skills that they can use to plan acts of violence. They vet

those who apply for membership and once vetted, then they get entry into the private chat rooms and the private forums where the base does its planning.

They have actual training camps, paramilitary training camps in Georgia and elsewhere, and they are planning and hoping to be able to create a civil war type situation in the U.S. that will lead to an actual physical territory white ethnostate in the Pacific Northwest.

And this sounds just like ISIS right? We wanted -- they wanted physical space, they took over actual territory in Syria and in Iraq and claimed a caliphate. And we're seeing so many repeats.

So, I think, you know, happily the FBI, people in the intelligence community are starting to make statements, noting that the white supremacist or far right threat is equal now to the threat of international terrorist violence here in the U.S. Director Ray has recently said that of the FBI, his assistant director Jill Sanborn just yesterday said this. Pointed out anti-Semitism and attacks on religious communities has been unique not just to white supremacists, but also to ISIS. And the need to put many more resources toward it.

So, it's a welcome development. Unfortunately, we're not hearing it out of the very highest leadership in this country, that being the White House.

MR. WEST: Thank you. That's very chilling to hear the parallels there. But so Fred, many years ago, you wrote a pathbreaking book entitled, “Punishing Hate: Bias Crimes Under American Law.” So, it's now 18 years later, and things seem to be getting worse. So, why are so many people seemingly feeling free to spout hate views?

MR. LAWRENCE: Well, I think one of the reasons that it's so important to discuss how we label these -- this kind of criminal activity, you know, to a certain extent people think this could be hyper technical or hyper academic. If there's a racially motivated murder why not just prosecute it as a murder? Why does it have to be called a hate crime?

And the answer is precisely what we've been talking about, that the message that is communicated is that either that extremism, either that domestic terrorist behavior has an additional harm, or it doesn't. There's no neutral position anymore. Well, however, we choose to prosecute crimes, however, we choose to describe crimes is making a kind of normative statement.

So, for example, if you look at American police blotters right through the 1970's, early 1980's, what we would now recognize as acts of racially motivated violence just show up as garden variety crimes.

Another example that may be closer to home for some is that acts of domestic violence were not labeled as acts of domestic violence. Acts of rape within the context of a marriage were not called rape. What's so important about how we label it? It's exactly how we decide as a society who we are, what we announce and what we denounce, right.

Our values come through our criminal law. So, when we don't call hate crimes, hate crimes, we give a kind of breath to this kind of pain.

President Allen talked about slavery as the original sin of America that we're still dealing with which in some ways seems hard to imagine, but it's really not. Frederick Douglass brilliantly observed after the Civil War that slavery did not die an honest death. Right, at the time, he saw that the great win of the Civil War, but he said slavery as an institution did not die an honest death because the values associated with it were never actually destroyed, they were still there waiting to come back and come back shockingly quickly after the Civil War.

So, that's still part of our vocabulary. When there is an act of bias motivated violence, we know that it doesn't just hurt the individual victim in a particular way, but also the target community. In the aftermath of Tree of Life, surveys of American Jews going to synagogue thousands of miles away from Pittsburgh, show that they behave not just in a sense of feeling empathy for the people in Pittsburgh, but actually the victimological pattern of actual crime victims.

Same thing after Charleston, where you have members of the African American community, not just in South Carolina, thousands of miles away who feel victimized and they should because they were targets of those crimes.

So, if those crimes are not specifically labeled, prosecuted that way, and here I agree with Mary, and labeled at the highest level of society, as not just a violation of the criminal law, but violation of the core moral commitment that holds a multicultural society together, there is no neutral position. The absence of that condemnation is a kind of permissiveness.

MR. WEST: Thank you. So, I want to pose a question to everyone on the panel. So, we've talked a little bit about the sources of the problem and heard various aspects of the issue. I also want to focus on remedies. What can we do about this? There been a number of different ideas, tougher laws, John Allen and his Atlantic piece proposed the development of labeling domestic terrorist organizations as similar to the way we label foreign terrorist organizations, and equipping law enforcement with tougher enforcement powers there. Improved training for community leaders, stronger FBI and law enforcement actions.

So, let's just hear from each of you what you think we should do that would make a difference. And we'll start with Oren.

MR. SEGAL: So, I think you've articulated really several important steps that can be taken. I'll just name a couple more. And some of these are more, you know, we're trying to win hearts and minds in this effort. But I still think they're really valuable.

You know, years from now, this moment in time isn't going to be remembered solely for the hate and the violence, but what good people did to respond. And that includes using your voice to reject bigotry and hatred wherever you see it.

Now, that might sound very hypothetical, how do you do that? Well, there's ways to do that. So, you know, we know in Poway, the individual that shot up the Jewish Chabad Center there, also attacked a mosque about a month before. We know that when in Charlottesville, the lasting refrain is the Jews will not replace us. We know what led to that was anti-immigrant sentiment, misogyny, anti-Muslim rhetoric, right. We know that the shooting in Pittsburgh was motivated by an anti-immigrant rhetoric and yet the target was Jews.

So, we are inextricably linked. And that means that when somebody is targeting any community, we have to stand up for those people. If they don't look like us, if they don't speak like us, they don't have the same cultural values, whatever it is that we describe it even more important for us to show up.

And I think that's something that we really have to underscore. Yes, there are laws that I'm sure my colleagues will talk about that we, as policy advocates talk about as well. But I just want to

focus on that very fundamental thing. We need to be able to identify hate, call it out for what it is, but then actually take that step to stand up with those in our community.

MR. WEST: Yeah, I completely agree. I think one of the -- we had Congressman Hakeem Jeffries here recently. And one of the things he said was that America has a genetic birth defect when it comes to dealing with race and racism. And the thing about a defect is that it must be continuously dealt with on a regular basis, like the yearly flu virus rather than treating it like a plague.

And in order to do that, we have to kind of realize that it is embedded in our DNA as a nation that we have to continuously grapple with. Black Wall Street was mentioned. I mean, that's the one that people are starting to know about. But there will also other massacres, in St. Louis, in Detroit and Rosewood. And we have to be very realistic that people not only lost their lives, people lost land, people lost property. And so in that regard, white nationalism and white supremacy has helped to increase the racial wealth gap.

So, we see the transfers. It's not simply about hating people, losing lives, I think it's two main things. I think one of the main things is we have to be very realistic about where racism comes from and the fact that is deeply embedded in our lives. It comes from our environment; it comes from our family and friendship networks. In that regard, all of us are impacted by it and it's around us all the time.

I think it's a policy solution and it's a personal solution that Oren mentioned. On the policy side, of course, we recently had the Emmett Till Anti-Lynching Bill. My grandfather served 21 years in the military, Purple Heart, Bronze Star. One of the statements he would always say to me is, well, that's just a day late and a dollar short, like we're like 100 years late from that. So, what we need to do is deal with what's happening today with policy and not be dealing with something 100 years from now.

I recently testified in the Maryland General Assembly for the Lieutenant Collins, III Law, I just told you about him. That's important because Sean Urbanski, the white supremacist who murdered him, was only convicted of murder. The judge threw out the hate crime, because as General Allen and his colleagues report actually highlights, it's very difficult for law enforcement to bring charges of hate, and then actually be able to prove that in open court.

So, there is a distinction in the Lieutenant Collins law from a policy standpoint that's

important. The current law simply reads, a person had to engage in an activity or a crime and is solely kind of based on one of these protected causes, race, religion, and the like.

The Lieutenant Collins Law says that the activity in the behavior only had to be in part motivated by race or religion and like. That motivated in part is extremely, extremely important. Because one thing I know, as a sociologist who studies attitudes, rarely are people's decisions based on one thing, they're based on multiple things. But if race, religion, or any sort of other ism is related to it, that's something we need to weed out.

The final thing I'll mention is, let's put some language on what it means to speak up and speak out. There's a typology I use, which is really what it means to be a racial equity broker, what it means to be a racial equity advocate. See a lot of people say that their allies, you can be silent and be an ally. Like you can wear a little pin, you can walk around and just yeah, I'm in solidarity with people, that doesn't do anything.

What you need to do is be an advocate. And what it means to be an advocate oftentimes, is speaking up and speaking out when the people that's being attacked are not present. See we have to be very clear, like rarely is somebody going to say something overtly racist to my face. Like that, it just doesn't really happen. It has happened more than it should, but it does happen regularly.

But instead, it happens behind my back all the time, where oftentimes my white friends are standing there, and they don't say anything. So, the same way that I have to speak up and speak out, when people are targeted based on religion, when people are targeted based on their sexual orientation, is what we need people to do is to be advocates and speak out for people. Then we need people to be brokers to actually help to alter the policies that exists where they work, where they live, and where they play. Because all of us have a responsibility here. So, it's a policy solution, and then it's a personal solution.

MS. MCCORD: So, I agree with everything that's been said and would just add a couple of other thoughts. I have written about fairly extensively the need, in my view for a domestic terrorism statute that would actually apply to acts of terrorism occurring in the U.S. no matter what the ideology. So, they would actually apply even to Islamic extremist's violence as well as the white supremacist

violence.

Not as a -- not because there are no criminal tools can be used because a murder is a murder in all 50 states and a person who commits a murder, like the murder of Lieutenant Collins will be punished. But to Professor Lawrence's point, it also shows society's condemnation for acts of domestic terrorism.

But more importantly, I think what we need to do is integrate into our nationwide counterterrorism program, countering domestic terrorism. And so that means focusing on prevention and not just getting justice after the fact. We'd rather have prevented the murder of Lieutenant Collins then prosecute the killer after the fact.

And that's complicated business. And it's particularly difficult when you have individuals who are radicalized online, but they don't actually talk to anyone in advance about what they're going to do. That's hard whether they're doing their acts of violence, acts of terrorism on behalf of ISIS or be on behalf of white supremacist ideologies.

It's hard to do but it is something that a law enforcement has some experience at in the international terrorism arena and needs to put that experience toward the domestic terrorism arena.

Now, the concern here, of course, is that we have first amendment rights in this country that are unlike in any other country, and we protect vigorously under our Constitution the right of people to say even hateful and horrible things.

And what's important to know is a couple of things about that. One is that the First Amendment does not protect acts of violence and it doesn't protect incitement to violence, notwithstanding that you could say there is something expressive about an act of violence. It's not protected by the First Amendment.

And secondly, social media companies, private sector, tech sector are not bound by the First Amendment. First Amendment binds government, so they are free to take down content that is hateful, that spreads hate and that radicalizes people. They just so far have, by and large, lacked the spine to really do that in an aggressive way.

And the other point I want to make in terms of prevention is that we have an enormous

trust gap in this country, because I've been focusing on law enforcement tools, we have an enormous trust gap between our law enforcement and vulnerable and minority communities. Those who are most often victimized by acts of white supremacist and far right violence.

And that dates back to a lot of the things we've been talking about and it's understandable. We also know that there are some white supremacists in our law enforcement. There are some white supremacists in our military. I've heard General Allen speak about this in the past.

And so, but we have got to make a more concerted effort to close that trust gap so that the communities who are victimized, who may be also in positions of reporting things, can feel comfortable going to law enforcement and talking about what they're seeing, what they're expecting. And feel like then they're going to have law enforcement on their side and not on the side of the far right.

And that is a big issue. And I don't think we've done nearly enough in this country to bridge that gap. And as we've been, you know, igniting conversations about this all over the country, all of us up on this panel have spoken many occasions about issues involving white supremacist violence, I think we need to start really also focusing on how law enforcement can better build a relationship -- relationships of trust with the communities that they serve.

MR. LAWRENCE: Well, I feel a little like the line attributed to the southern senator said everything that has to be said has been said, but not everybody who has to say it has said it. So, to a certain extent, I echo my colleagues' remarks, so let me add just a couple of words.

One on the legal side, and then one on the social and community side. On the legal side, why is it so important to have a federal anti-lynching law? I mean, the first legislation for the anti-lynching laws was proposed early in the 20th century. And it's a shameful story of all the different ways in which it's not enacted into law.

And part of it has to do with Franklin Roosevelt deciding that he needs to keep southern senators in line in order to pass his New Deal legislation. And so the tradeoff is he's not going to have anti-lynching legislation. So, we get close several times in the 1930's, 1940's, never passed.

Is it outrageous that it takes until 2020, better 2020 than 2021. Why is it important besides symbolically, because there are many states where there is either a lack of will to enforce hate

crime laws or whether even there's a will, some of these cases particularly when you get engaged in some of the very sophisticated online social media presences that we've been talking about, these are very complicated cases to prosecute. These are very complicated cases to investigate.

If the federal government does not have a criminal statute as a predicate for their work, they can't get involved and you've got local police departments who are really outside of their purview, outside of their ability. So, it is very important for the symbolic reasons I talked about earlier, but also for some very bottom line reasons of resources and expertise being directed to it.

The other point I want to make, and it really is a pickup from the point about the tension between the First Amendment on the one hand, and hateful divisive speech on the other. We often, and particularly on our campuses, are faced or describe really a false dichotomy, as if our only choice is either to prohibit certain kinds of speech, much of which is in fact protected, hate crimes are not protected, hateful speech is. Or that we are somehow giving wind to it, somehow we're putting gasoline on that fire.

There is a third alternative, which is in fact where society should live. You know, Louis Brandeis, a long time ago, said in the absence of incitement of imminent lawless activity, the answer to bad speech is not enforced silence, it's more speech. Well, people forget that the end of that sentence. More speech is not just an alternative strategy. It's a moral obligation.

And I think in many of our communities, it's almost too easy to say, they shouldn't be allowed to say that hateful speech. Better than that is to counter it in the most forceful way, and in the most persuasive way. I mean, I feel that acutely on our campuses, obviously.

But campuses are not the only places we're talking about this. So, the answer is not to derive our strategy around silencing others certainly is prohibiting hate crimes. But making the most forceful statement we can about the kind of society we want. You know, when these things happen, Charleston, Charlottesville, Pittsburgh, Poway, why do we have so many one lines that we all know what we're talking about, and there are a dozen more I could give you. When these things happen, what do people in the community say? They say, that's not us. That's not who we are.

Well, that's fine, but how about who are you? Don't say that's not us, who are you as a community? Each of these in fact tragically is an opportunity to define the community. And I think as

Brandeis told us about a century ago, it's not just an opportunity, it's a moral obligation.

MR. WEST: Let's open the floor to questions from you. So, there's a person with his hand up there if you can give us your name and organization. And we'll take two questions at a time and then give the panel a chance to respond.

MR. BACCARA: Thanks for holding this. My name is Baccara. I'm with the Muslim Public Affairs Council. As Muslim American researchers, we joke around that we're terrified to search about ISIS and other Islamist because we're afraid that the officials will show up at our doorstep. So, how are these groups being formed and collaborating and meeting and training and it's going through what -- without the government taking notice or taking action?

MR. WEST: Okay, great question. We'll take one more and then the audience can respond. Right here.

MS. KANGRI: Hi, my name is Ellen Kangri. And I just want to point out that there's no Muslims on your panel. And in fact, Muslims are a huge victim of what's happening in the United States. They're being, you know, they're -- I know somebody who's actually followed off the road and into his neighborhood where the man was selling -- he was yelling, all kinds of slurs and ended up shooting him in his own neighborhood.

I know of so many Muslims who have been targeted and not just killed -- maybe not, perhaps not killed, but certainly, you know, viciously attacked. And they're at the intersection of race because many Muslims are people of color. Many Muslims are either immigrants themselves or children of immigrants. They certainly look like they're immigrants. And they -- what's happened in this Administration is that they're being targeted for political reasons by, you know, by a party, one party in particular. And, you know, I think it's really a sort of a -- sad that you don't have that on your panel to speak to that.

And one other thing and I think Miss McCord probably knows that, there was funding for anti-hate groups that were trying to work for anti-hate groups that were by the DOJ and the ones that were actually targeting domestic terrorists, you know, kinds of issues. All of that funding was cancelled as soon as President Trump went into office. So, this Administration is definitely not, you know, working

towards trying to fight hate on any level.

MR. WEST: Okay, great questions from each of you, panel.

MR. SEGAL: I'm happy to start with the answer to the first question, which I believe was, how are these groups forming and et cetera? And I want to make just a couple of very brief points. One is, when we think about, you know, the threat of white supremacist violence, we have to think beyond purely sort of group and organizational structure, because when you look at a shooting like in South Carolina, or more recently in El Paso, or in Pittsburgh, or Poway, or Christ Church, or I can go on and on and on, which is part of the point here. Is that these people are not necessarily part of a group?

Indeed, most extremists are not part of a specific group per se. They are part of a movement. They're part of this online subculture. So, the idea of where they form and where they organize, it's very much in what I call sort of digital hate groups, if you will, which are on HN and GAB and a million other online spots, gaming apps. To the degree that in many of these cases, they're signaling back to these online communities about what they're doing, by live streaming their attacks on these platforms, right. By trying to recruit reaching radicalized on these platforms.

So, there are some groups, but we need to move beyond purely the group structure understanding because the threats have shown to be well beyond that.

MS. MCCORD: Particularly in, you know, with reference to the base that I was mentioning, and so was Rashawn. One challenge for our law enforcement investigating domestic groups is again the First Amendment. So, foreign terrorist organizations don't have First Amendment rights. And it is illegal to provide material, support or resources to a foreign terrorist organization, which means that it is easier for the FBI to open an investigation of someone who's communicating with a foreign terrorist organization because they don't have that same First Amendment barrier.

FBI's own guidelines prohibit it from opening an investigation into any type of -- any individual or group based solely on First Amendment protected activity. So, they have to have some indication that the group or individual is also preparing for or talking about engaging in violence or acquiring what weapons to engage in violence before they can open that type of investigation.

That's why we've seen interesting and creative investigations, and the reason the -- to

use the example of the bass, the three men arrested in Maryland by the FBI recently, they weren't charged with material support to terrorism. They weren't charged with a terrorism crime. They're charged with firearms offenses for some of the illegal firearms that they had, and also harboring an illegal alien because one of them was Canadian who had come in across the border without doing so legally.

So, we see, you know, Christopher Paulson, Coast Guard lieutenant who was amassing an arsenal of assault rifles in order to use those to commit mass shootings to create a white ethnostate was charged with unlawful possession of a silencer, unlawful possession of drugs and unlawful possession of a firearm by a drug addict. No terrorism crime, no crime of violence. So, law enforcement is being creative in thwarting plots and terrorism plots, but they don't have the same type of tools they have when it comes to international or foreign organizations.

MR. WEST: Okay, there's a question right up here up front. If we can -- there's a microphone coming up to you. So, if you can give us your name and organization.

MS. MCCORD: Well, I'd be happy. I didn't know you had a question there. You're absolutely right. There was a there was a joint DHS DOJ working task force formed toward the end of the last Administration. That one purpose it had it was to counter violent extremism, and one of its purposes was to issue grants to organizations involved in trying to counter violent extremism in the U.S.

And a number of grants were announced before the transition, including two groups like Life After Hate that combat white supremacist violence and after transition, those grants were all pulled back with the notion of reevaluating the applications and not giving money to groups focusing on white supremacy violence.

I think this is just one example of the lack of leadership coming out of the federal government on this issue. I mean, certainly DHS has put out a statement that it is, you know, making, combating domestic terrorism a priority. But this is the same organization that cages children at the border and separates families. So, I think their credibility in the community is probably not at a level where they can actually undertake that.

And we certainly have seen, like I said, the FBI making more robust statements about the resources it's putting toward the threat, and I'm sure that they are. But it's not coming from the top and I

don't know that we can expect that to happen from the top here this year, particularly this polarizing election year. So, the rest of us have gotten to get to work and do what we can.

MR. WEST: Okay do you have a question?

MS. KAGAN: Hi, Deborah Kagan, Transatlantic Leadership Network. For Professor Ray, I think this is a sociological question. Why so often does the promotion of the rights and freedoms of one minority group lead to the denigration of another group? Why is there this unhealthy and dare I say ungodly competition among minority groups where in order to rise up you have to put another group down?

MR. RAY: Yeah, that's a great question. And my sociological training will come into play for my undergraduate days at the University of Memphis. One of the first things I remember from one of my professors, Professor Warren, was she -- there was a concept called Oppression Olympics.

And it's the logic that oftentimes minority groups are competing with each other for scarce resources. And instead of necessarily looking at the broader picture, what happens is that, and I don't always like the kind of things being in a bucket competing in that way. But really, what we're talking about is that people are competing for scarce resources. And at times people kind of have a limit -- a limited scope of structure. And I think there's really one of the biggest issues.

It's very difficult for people to see and make sense of structural racism, it's just a difficult concept for people to make sense of the ways that policies, rules and regulations come together to actually discriminate against different groups and all of us become complicit in it.

I think the other part of kind of thinking about this though, is that oftentimes people have a glass empty and a glass half full perspective. What that means is there's only so much water that can actually go in the glass, instead of necessarily people looking at opportunities and resources as being an unlimited amount of oceans, which is the way that I think about it.

And so one of the things when I teach this is I talk about a transference that someone else getting more equity doesn't mean you losing that equity. And in fact, research continuously shows that when you help the most marginalized is -- the most marginalized groups of people, whether that be along race or religion or what have you that actually raises up everyone and creates more opportunities.

It's not necessarily one of those things where people get something taken away.

With that being said, one of the ideologies in part of from an identity standpoint, the way people make sense of the world, is that someone else getting an opportunity means something else is taken away from me. And I think particularly in the U.S. context, power, status and influence, are key ways that people make sense of the world. And they think there's only a certain amount of power status and influence that can go around.

So, part of what we have to do to combat that is actually really, in many regards start socializing young people to think differently about what opportunity means, think differently about what equity means, that other people getting a shot doesn't mean your shot is diminished, it actually means that both of us can actually go through and compete the way that we need to.

MR. WEST: So, I want to thank our panelists for sharing their views with us, Oren, Rashawn, Mary and Fred. And please fill out your evaluations and you can give them to the people at the back. So, thank you very much for joining our conversation. (Applause)

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