

AMERICA THE INCLUSIVE

BUILDING ROBUST COMMUNITY AND INTERFAITH PARTNERSHIPS

March 30, 2011 • Washington, D.C.



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About the Justice and Society Program

For more than thirty years the Justice and Society Program has brought together individuals from diverse backgrounds to discuss what we mean by justice and how a just society ought to deal with longstanding philosophical disputes and contemporary social challenges. The annual Justice and Society Seminar, held in Aspen and co-founded by the late Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun, continues to be led by preeminent judges and law professors. The Program also conducts seminars to introduce judges to international human rights and humanitarian law.

The Justice and Society Program recently launched the public programming series *Intersections: Critical Conversations on Law, Justice, and Public Policy*, which focuses on critical issues confronting American democracy. Its gatherings bring to the table public officials, established and emerging opinion leaders, and grass-roots organizers to share their perspectives in a neutral and balanced forum. Our goal is to foster civil and respectful dialogue, seek compromise, and develop strategies for positive change.

Justice and Society Program conversations pose open-ended questions, elevate the public discourse, and enable participants to find common ground. In a climate where the loudest voices often come from one extreme or another, we provide a space to reconcile the demands of justice and fairness with the exigencies of public policy.

About the Aspen Institute

The Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues.

The Aspen Institute does this primarily in four ways:

- Seminars, which help participants reflect on what they think makes a good society, thereby deepening knowledge, broadening perspectives and enhancing their capacity to solve the problems leaders face.

- Young-leader fellowships around the globe, which bring a selected class of proven leaders together for an intense multi-year program and commitment. The fellows become better leaders and apply their skills to significant challenges.
- Policy programs, which serve as nonpartisan forums for analysis, consensus building, and problem solving on a wide variety of issues.
- Public conferences and events, which provide a commons for people to share ideas.

The Institute has campuses in Aspen, Colorado, and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It also maintains offices in New York City and has an international network of partners.

About Interfaith Youth Core:

Interfaith Youth Core is a Chicago-based non-profit organization that seeks to make interfaith cooperation a social norm. IFYC works to change the public discourse about religion from one of inevitable conflict to one of cooperation and religious pluralism; nurture and network a critical mass of emerging interfaith leaders; and partner with college campuses to build successful models of interfaith cooperation. Since 2002, Interfaith Youth Core has worked on five continents and with over 200 college and university campuses, training thousands in the principles of interfaith leadership, and reaching millions through the media.

The Justice and Society Program is grateful to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Bernstein Family Foundation of Washington, DC, and Martin and Aviva Budd for their generous support.

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Dear Aspen Friends and Partners,

John Winthrop's famed 1630 reference to "A City on a Hill"—the society the Puritans would make in the New World as they fled religious persecution in the Old—set an aspirational context for American views on faith and its relation to civic culture. Throughout our history, one ideal of American exceptionalism has been a commitment to the rights of all newcomers to practice their faith in freedom and security. George Washington's reassurances to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, and Thomas Jefferson's call for a separation of church and state in the new state of Virginia, are both testaments to the bedrock twin values of free exercise and disestablishment enshrined in the First Amendment. As new groups have arrived on our shores and endeavored to adjust to life in America, we have not at first always met our aspirations, but in the end our better angels as a nation have prevailed. We have been aided by both a court system that has protected the rights of minorities in the face of majoritarian pressure, and a shared, core sense of decency that is informed by notions of equality and inclusion.

That decency has been challenged of late through a series of incidents and statements, often made by those with cynical personal or political agendas, that suggest that as America enters the twenty-first century, some faiths are less equal than others. Of course, this is not so.

On March 30, the Aspen Institute, together with our conference partner Interfaith Youth Core, brought Americans of all faiths from the government, the private sector, and the media together to discuss "America the Inclusive" during a daylong conference at our Washington, DC office. Panels on the role of media, integration as a national security asset, and the role of civil society, along with key addresses by Michael Leiter of the National Security Council, Jane Harman of the Woodrow Wilson Center, and Eboo Patel of Interfaith Youth Core, painted a picture of a nation struggling to match our current social fabric to our ideals and aspirations. In the months ahead, through the Institute's Justice and Society Program, we plan to look more deeply into the challenges we face in maintaining religious inclusion and pluralism, vital traditions that are two of the great strengths of our nation.

In the pages that follow, we've highlighted some of the day's presentations.



Walter Isaacson

President and CEO, The Aspen Institute
September 30, 2011

Select Participant Remarks

I. Building the Positive



Meryl Chertoff

Director, Justice and Society Program,
The Aspen Institute

Thank you all for coming today to the Aspen Institute. I want to thank our co-organizer, Interfaith Youth Core, for their role in today's program. Eboo Patel and his group have been working on building interfaith cooperation through service for many years, and I am a great admirer of their work. I also want to thank the Carnegie Corporation and Marty and Aviva Budd for their support of today's event.

The conversation that we are going to have today grew out of an observation and a conversation. The observation was one I made over the period of last Ramadan in 2010, when there were a number of attacks and threatened attacks on mosques across the country. This sort of sickening bigotry hit me deeply. It is antithetical to everything that this country stands for. And I waited to see the response of the communities where the attacks occurred. I expected that there would be interfaith vigils, that families attending worship services would be escorted inside by members of the community from all faiths, arms linked. So I was surprised by how muted the community response was in most locations, at least as reported by the press.

The conversation was one I had with an Arab American law enforcement official. He told me that at least in some areas, the American Muslim community felt increasingly isolated, and that in those communities, people were turning inward, rather than engaging with the larger community. He wanted to see more Muslim American kids in Boys and Girls Clubs, Scouting, and the Y. He feared that if kids felt isolated from the mainstream it would make it easier for militant elements to recruit in these communities, and equally important, we would lose those kids from vibrant participation in the fabric of American life. Integration is the crown jewel of the American experiment, and it would be a tragedy to lose it.

This is a problem we all share. As Americans, we dishonor our collective heritage if we fail to integrate any group into our mainstream. As Americans, we may

from time to time fall prey to religious intolerance, but in each case, we always return to our better angels. Right now, it seems to me, we are in a negative cycle.

The narrative of conflict has been pushed by some in the media, and it has resonated with a segment of the U.S. population. In a recent CNN poll, 69% of those polled say they would be “OK” with a mosque in their community. Forty-six percent of people polled have a favorable view of Muslims; only 26% have an unfavorable view. Attitudes were far more favorable in parts of the country where there are sizable populations of all kinds of religious minorities.

This paints a mixed picture. The statistics mean that 31% of the respondents would not want a mosque in their neighborhood—a statistic that would horrify Jews and Christians here if applied to synagogues and churches. So I won’t minimize the challenges. But it also suggests that there is no pervasive Islamophobia in this country. I would argue that what it says is that while Americans are by disposition and practice given to pluralism, isolated acts may be contributing to an “image” problem. What this means is that U.S. Muslims, Jews, and Christians need to interact more together, to alleviate the perception of “otherization” that seems to take hold in the absence of such contact. We need to be together in school, on the playground, on the basketball court, at camp. It means that religious minority youth need to be equipped with the tools that will enable them to resist bullying and to be resilient. The media needs to balance the narrative of conflict it presents with equally valid and powerful stories of interfaith cooperation and personal and institutional alliance-building. The government needs to play its role to vigorously defend civil liberties, and to monitor the work of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors to ensure that justice is administered in a manner that respects the dignity and integrity of individuals and communities.

Eboo’s group does great work, but if young people feel like outsiders, they will already feel that way by the time they reach college. They need to develop the skills they need while they are young. And we need also to help their parents make the right connections to help their kids in this process.

The tremendous protection afforded to religious institutions under the First Amendment is a foundational part of our great nation, and it is increasingly clear that there is a new mandate for our collective homeland security. This new mandate requires religious leaders to remain vigilant and on guard against those who trawl for the uneducated with a perverse and violent version of religious instruction. It must be the job of the community itself to self-police and to confront the few radicals, repudiating their preaching.



Just as I must confront my rabbi, if he uses the pulpit to preach a message of hate, and my Christian friends must confront the minister or priest who does the same, the most effective antidote to those who would sully the name of Islam is the active engagement of the community. It is far preferable to the alternative—our young people, our next generation of leaders, being misled by predators whose intentions and actions are deplorable by every measure regardless of faith.

The members of a religious minority are most hurt when an act of violence is committed by someone associated with it—for then the larger community becomes suspicious and wary of the innocent.

The books of all faiths contain within them messages of reconciliation and love, and messages of revenge and violence. As Eboo said in his beautiful memoir, what we read depends on the heart that we bring to the reading. I would add that I hope when each of you opens your Good Book, you will turn to the page that contains the message of reconciliation. A wise man, my father, said to me when I was young that all men of good faith are brothers. Today, more than ever, I hope that my father is right.



“America’s Sacred Ground”

Eboo Patel

Founder and President, Interfaith Youth Core

In 1630, John Winthrop sailed across the Atlantic Ocean seeking sacred ground. Hounded in England, the Puritans would be free to worship as they wished in the New World. Subject to the whims of kings in Europe, they could govern themselves in what would come to be called America. A footnote in someone else’s story over there, they could be authors of their own destiny over here.

Winthrop did not expect the soil on this side to contain special sacraments. The land would not magically reach up and sanctify his compatriots. The blessing was in what they would build.

In a sermon on the ship, Winthrop prepared his people: “We must delight in each other, make others’ conditions our own, rejoice together, mourn, labor and suffer together … for we must consider that we shall be a city upon a hill, the eyes of all the people upon us.”

I’ve thought about John Winthrop a lot these last few months, in light of the controversies ranging from Cordoba House to the Peter King hearings to the movement to ban Shariah. I’ve thought about the discussion about Ground Zero being sacred ground—what that means, how far it extends, who it encircles, who it excludes. Polls show that those who regard Ground Zero as sacred oppose the idea of Muslims building an interfaith center there. Those who support Cordoba House have taken to calling the site just another city block. The framing puzzles me.

I believe Ground Zero is sacred. I believe every inch of America is sacred. I believe it is a sacred duty to shape a society where people from all nations and tribes can come to know one another. I believe America is humanity’s best chance in history to realize that. I believe that is an achievement worthy of the efforts of every American, and the eyes of all. I believe, in an era when more and more people are convinced that those of different faiths are fated to fight, our model in America is nothing short of a mercy upon all the worlds. And I believe that even though the headlines these days scream “Muslim,” the heart of the matter is really about America.

In *What it Means to be an American*, Michael Walzer points out that political theorists since the Greeks believed that participatory politics—democracy—could only exist in ethnically or religiously homogenous nations. “One religious communion, it was argued, made one political community … One people made

one state.” The section ends with this line: “Pluralism in the strong sense—*One state, many peoples*—is possible only under tyrannical regimes.”

The next section begins with this: “Except in the United States.”

America ushered in a very new idea—a place where people from the four corners of the earth could gather together to build a nation. Barack Obama spoke of it in his inaugural: “Our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth.”

We are a nation that allows its citizens to participate in its progress, to play a part in its possibility, to carve a place in its promise.

It was an ethic that our first President, George Washington, embraced as well: “The bosom of America is open to receive … the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations and Religions; whom we shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and privileges.”

America’s poets knew this. Herman Melville wrote: “You can not spill a drop of American blood without spilling the blood of the whole world. On this Western Hemisphere, all tribes and people are forming into one federal whole.”

Walt Whitman wrote:

Within me latitude widens, longitude lengthens, ...

I hear the Arab muezzin calling from the top of the mosque,

I hear the Christian priests at the altars of their churches, ...

I hear the Hebrew reading his records and psalms, ...

I hear the Hindoo teaching his favorite pupil ...

When Woody Guthrie sang “This Land is Your Land,” playing a guitar that had the words “This Machine Kills Fascists” scrawled across it, he meant every inch of this country, and every one of its people.

Even in the early days, America was (comparatively speaking) a diverse nation. By 1776, there were thriving communities of Congregationalists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Quakers and Catholics in the colonies. There were even a handful of Jewish synagogues, and a notable percentage of the slaves from Africa were Muslim. Today, some scholars say we are the most religiously diverse society in human history.

But diversity in and of itself is neither new nor necessarily good. Baghdad is diverse. At certain points in recent years its various communities have fought

a religious civil war. Similar things can be said of Belfast, Bombay, and the Balkans. Diaspora groups of just about every religious conflict on the planet reside here in the United States, often cheek by jowl. They play football together in high school, study together for calculus exams on college campuses, program together at Google, stand in line next to one another at Starbucks. It's one of the most remarkable and unacknowledged achievements of our nation, and one of the most fragile.

How a society engages its diversity is one of the most important questions of the 21st century. Are some groups free or favored and others not? Are the different communities at each other's throats? Do a small number do the work that carries the rest?

"How are we," asks Michael Walzer, "to embrace our differences and maintain a common life?" It was a challenge that our Founders understood well. For James Madison, securing freedom was first and foremost a realization that arose while observing America's early diversity. He wrote: "Freedom arises from the multiplicity of sects, which pervades America and which is the best and only security for religious liberty in any society. For where there is a variety of sects, there cannot be any one to oppress and persecute the rest."

In 1790, Madison's Founding Brother, George Washington, received a letter from Moses Seixas, of Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island. Seixas was worried about the fate of Jews in the new nation. Would they be harassed and hated as they had been for so many centuries in Europe?

President Washington replied to his countryman:

"the Government of the United States ... gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens ... May the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants—while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid."

Those lines contain, still, the best definition of American religious pluralism. In America, people will have their identities respected, their freedoms protected, and their safety secured. They will be encouraged to cultivate good relationships with fellow Americans from other backgrounds, no matter the tensions and conflicts in the lands from which they came. And they will be invited—and expected—to contribute to the common good of their country. Respect, relationships, and commitment to the common good—those are the three pillars of pluralism in a diverse democracy. The alternative is what we see on the evening news.

Washington came to his views through both principle and practical experience. As the leader of the Continental Army, the first truly national institution, Washington recognized he was going to need the contributions of all willing groups in America. The rampant anti-Catholic bigotry at that time was disrespectful to Catholic identity, a divisive force within the Continental Army, and a threat to the success of the American Revolution. Washington banned insults to Catholics like burning effigies of the Pope, told his officers to make sure Catholics were welcomed, and scolded those who disobeyed with words like: “At such a juncture, and in such circumstances, to be insulting their Religion, is so monstrous, as not to be suffered or excused.”

It was the same in Washington’s private life. When seeking a carpenter and a bricklayer for his Mount Vernon estate, he remarked: “If they are good workmen, they may be of Asia, Africa, or Europe. They may be Mohometans, Jews or Christians of any Sect, or they may be Atheists.” What mattered is what they could build.

Washington, it is well known, owned slaves. It is the great contradiction in the vision of our Founding Fathers. Remarkably, it was those slaves, and their children and grandchildren, the people that Plymouth Rock landed on, who are most responsible for the continuity of the American project, whose work and words responded to America’s original sin with a magnanimous blessing. They insisted America was not a lie, but a broken promise—a broken promise that successive generations were called to fix.



James Baldwin, who said: “I am not a ward of America, I am one of the first Americans to arrive on these shores.”

Langston Hughes, who wrote:

*O yes, I say it plain
America never was America to me
And yet I swear this oath
America will be*

And most importantly, Martin Luther King, Jr., who amidst the death threats, jail cells, fire bombings, and police truncheons of racism continued to speak of his “abiding faith in America” and “audacious faith in the future of mankind,” linking nation and world in ways reminiscent of Winthrop.

King insisted on America, sermonized our nation as “essentially a dream, a dream as yet unfulfilled … a dream of a land where men of all races, of all nationalities and of all creeds can live together as brothers.”

He sought the “alike liberty” that George Washington promised Moses Seixas, and reminded America that our founding belief, from the days of Winthrop, was that a free people would bless the land by what they built. For evidence, just look at what African Americans had done while still in chains:

“From the poverty-stricken areas of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Marian Anderson rose up to be the world’s greatest contralto … From humble, crippling circumstances, George Washington Carver rose up and carved for himself an imperishable niche in the annals of science. There was … Joe Louis with his educated fists, Jesse Owens with his fleet and dashing feet, Jackie Robinson with his powerful bat and calm spirit.”

When King spoke of rights for his community, he also spoke of contributions. His message was clear: it is not for ourselves alone that we seek our freedoms, it is so that we may cultivate our talents more fully, offer our gifts more freely to our nation.

We have long faced movements that have sought to deny, divide, and exclude. In the 1850s, the Know-Nothing party elected dozens of members to the United States Congress, and held large numbers of seats in state legislatures. Abraham Lincoln noted at the time: “Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring that ‘all men are created equal.’ We now practically read it ‘all men are created equal, except negroes.’ When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read, ‘all men are created equal, except negroes, and foreigners, and catholics.’”

Formally, the Know-Nothings were titled “the American Party.” The irony is not only in how they sought to deny respect, freedom, and safety to an American community, but in how they hoped to exclude the contributions of that community to American society in the name of patriotism.

There are 573 Catholic hospitals in the United States, treating collectively over 85 million patients a year. There are 231 Catholic colleges and universities, and nearly seven thousand Catholic elementary and high schools, educating over 2 million students a year. A third of those students are racial and ethnic minorities, and a significant percentage are non-Catholic. Catholic social service agencies aid over 8.5 million people per year. Rarely, if ever, do any of these institutions turn non-Catholics away. It is simply not how they understand their Catholic faith.

If it wasn’t for these hospitals, colleges, schools—countless kids would not get educated, countless addicts would not get clean, countless hungry people would not get fed, countless sick folks would not get healthy, countless refugees would not get settled, and in the rain, many more homeless people would get drenched. American civil society would be simply unimaginable without the very concrete contributions of Catholics. A similar story can be told of other American communities, from Jews to African Americans, Latinos to gays and lesbians.

In his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance address, Martin Luther King, Jr. described himself as a “trustee.” It is a word that resonates with every Muslim in America. In Sura Two of the Holy Qur'an, we are told that we were created with the breath of God and appointed His trustee, His steward on His blessed creation. We are enjoined to advance the right to the protection of life, family, dignity, education, religion, and property. These sound remarkably like the privileges enumerated in America’s founding documents. In the Islamic tradition, they are known as the six fundamentals of Shariah. Muslims are commanded to secure these for ourselves, and for others. As the famous Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad goes, “No one of you truly believes until he wants for his brother what he wants for himself.”

For centuries, Muslims have contributed to their brothers and sisters in America. An American Muslim, Muhammad Ali, is one of our nation’s favorite sons, and one of our most celebrated sports icons. Fazlur Rahman Khan helped design the Sears Tower and the John Hancock Building in Chicago. Lupe Fiasco has one of the smartest and hottest-selling albums on iTunes. As our community grows in size and confidence, as a new generation inspired by Muslim ethics and familiar with American ways comes of age, we seek to make more institutional contributions. It is a requirement of both faith and nation.

Cordoba House was one such effort. It was never meant to be a private space for Muslims, but a public space for community gathering—which is one of the reasons that the local board in Lower Manhattan voted overwhelmingly in its favor. Like Catholic universities, Jewish philanthropies, and African American civil rights organizations, this was a community finding inspiration in its particular heritage and expressing that in an institution that served the broader public. In the furor over Cordoba House, it wasn't just Muslims that lost a place to pray, it was a neighborhood that lost a swimming pool, a theater, and an art gallery. Some might say, it was a nation that, for a moment, forgot its bearings and lost its way.

A few years ago, I saw Colin Powell at an event in Washington, DC. I thanked him for his historic appearance on *Meet the Press* during the election of 2008, when he reprimanded the forces whispering that Barack Obama was secretly a Muslim and declared America a nation where all seven year-old citizens, including ones who pray in Arabic, could dream of being President.

“Those were risky words—what made you say them?”

“I was remembering the Muslims I served with,” was his simple reply.

Remembering is a sacred act. Naming is a sacred act. As we reflect on the mercy that is the American project, on the blessings we bestow upon this land by what we build, let us take a moment to remember Abdoul-Kareem Traore, who came from the Ivory Coast to America seeking sacred ground. Every morning, he woke early to say his prayers, left for his first job delivering newspapers before his wife and kids opened their eyes, and continued on to his second job as a cook at Windows on the World. He rented an apartment in Parkchester, the Bronx, and was eyeing a home in Hunts Point.

As Hadidjatou Karamoko Traore rushed to leave for her English class on the morning of September 11, 2001, she got a phone call from her husband's brother. Had Abdoul-Kareem gone to work that day? He had. Turn on the television, he told her.

She could not understand what was happening. Relatives had to come to translate the horror unfolding on TV. She kept calling his phone. It kept ringing and ringing. The children started asking. “He’s coming,” she told them, “he’s coming.”

He never came.

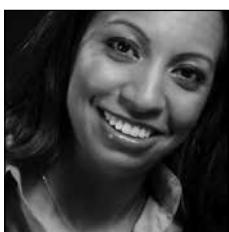
They did not find his body. Souleymane, Abdoul-Kareem’s three year old son, would not sleep on sheets that were anything but pure, perfect white, did not have the language to say why—perhaps he was imagining where his father had gone.

"I like to go down there and pray and see the place and remember," said Mrs. Traore. "When I go there, I feel closer to him. And him to me. I pray for him, too."

On the anniversary of his death, the family makes a pilgrimage to the hole where the buildings once were, where the blood of the world was spilled, where Abdoul-Kareem's bones are mixed and buried with the bones of three thousand of his compatriots, on the lower tip of the island that many people consider a city on a hill.

There are others who visit that day. Others praying, and weeping, and remembering.

The Traore family prays in Arabic, to the one God whom Muslims insist is the all-Merciful, even during moments that are unfathomable, in a country they are proud to call home, blessing by their loss and their presence a place that everyone agrees is sacred ground.



Maria Ebrahimji

Director and Executive Editorial Producer
for Network Booking, CNN Worldwide

In an age when information is literally at our fingertips, journalism is needed more than ever. Journalism organizations shape opinion, stimulate thought processes, inform, and educate. We have a hold on humanity and more importantly a very big role to play in thought leadership. And with that role comes a lot of responsibility: responsibility to uncover truths, go beyond conventional thought, and bring new ideas and voices to the table, which is a lot of what I focus on at CNN as the head of our interview department. All of these things are examples of journalistic pluralism.

Pluralism in the media is about engaging in storytelling about diversity or diverse issues. At CNN, I serve as Vice Chair of the Diversity Council, which was created to ensure that our people and our programming reflect our motto: *We are what we air—We air what we are*. The CNN *In America* unit is another example of our effort to engage with diversity by focusing an entire reporting unit on under-reported and under-covered populations and issues across the country.

Pluralism in the media and in society as a whole is about seeking understanding across lines of difference. There is a huge difference between tolerance and understanding.

Finally, pluralism is about dialogue, and in an increasingly social-media driven world, we journalists have a real opportunity to not just drop in on dialogue happening all around us, but to capitalize on it by reaching into such spaces for ideas. In our programming at CNN we are always finding ways to create an audience “experience” for our viewers and readers—and this is a key component in media pluralism.

Below are several things we in the media can do better when it comes to covering religion:

- 1. We must equate good journalism with religion reporting.** There has always been an assumed “wall” between religious identity and secular journalistic inquiry. It seems the two cannot exist together. Because of this, most mainstream journalism organizations have not thought to cover religion as a “beat,” much less to hire staff with religious expertise. We must do this. (Earlier this year, CNN changed its thinking on the coverage of religion, recognizing that it is an important thread in our reporting and that our audiences care about religious angles to stories. As a result, CNN now has a Religion Editor.)
- 2. The ranks of journalism need to better represent the diversity of our cultures and our faiths.** The diversity of our newsrooms is a continued work in progress.
- 3. We must look for organic storytellers and storytelling.** While the media does shoulder some responsibility for inclusiveness, given its reach, I believe that organic self-storytelling can do so much more to foster dialogue and counter negative narratives. The media’s responsibility here is to look for these organic sources of storytelling and engage with them as diverse content opportunities. This goes back to the idea that there is so much available to us at our fingertips now; the “what” can be found anywhere, it’s the “why” that matters most to our storytelling. I think there are some great examples of self-storytelling within the Muslim American community that should be embraced and covered by all media outlets, not just niche ones:
 - Unity Productions recently embarked on a viral video campaign to ask Americans of all walks to talk about Muslims they may know.
 - A group of twenty- and thirty-somethings in America and Canada have started a group called Everyday Muslims, which aims to do community service and show their commitment to their country through volunteer work.

- An American Muslim sports marketing consultant, inspired by the faith and perseverance of the Fordson Football team in Dearborn, Michigan, directed and co-produced a documentary about them which premiered at the sidelines of the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year.
- And in my own case, in addition to being committed to my work as a professional journalist, I have sought to contribute to a much needed conversation about my faith through my recently published book, *I Speak for Myself*. In it, forty women write their own narratives rather than allowing a journalist like me to interpret their lives.

While these examples may not necessarily be a better alternative to journalism in terms of reach, they do provide useful inspiration for journalists for further storytelling.



Paul Raushenbush

Religion Section Editor, *The Huffington Post*

The media has a central role in helping America build robust communities in which interfaith cooperation and respect are key civic values. Much has been said about how the media fans religious and political conflict. However, in some areas the media is making progress in bringing out positive religious stories about Muslims and other religious traditions.

As cases in point, *The Huffington Post's Religion*, *Washington Post's On Faith*, CNN's Belief Blog and others are lifting up voices from within religious communities to share the richness of their traditions with our audiences. HuffPost Religion, for instance, is focused on how religions are lived and how the sacred is experienced. We ask practitioners to acquaint readers with beliefs and religious customs of prayer, dress, and rites of passage. The site observes holy days from many faith traditions, among them Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Our hope is that people visiting the site will learn more about their own faith while recognizing their commonality with people who adhere to other traditions.

When we launched the religion section of *The Huffington Post*, I wrote a piece titled "Dear Religious (and Sane) America." Our belief is that America needs more sane, healthy, and productive voices that can speak about the subtle, beautiful, conflicted and, yes, sometimes dangerous ways that religion is expressed in the world. Media outlets should seek to highlight good people from within faith communities,

finding those who are best qualified to explain the aspirations and nuances of their religion rather than those who are loudest and most inflammatory.

Part of building an inclusive America involves a serious reflection upon what is meant by a “balanced” approach to the coverage of religion. Should we really be giving equal time to points of view that denigrate people of other faith traditions? For instance, I will not publish pure attacks on any one religious tradition, but I will encourage a serious dialogue on the differences between and within religious traditions. The vision of HuffPost Religion is to be a welcoming place for people of all religious backgrounds that celebrates religious expression while also encouraging self-reflection.

As we all know, people’s distrust and fear are easily fed, and stories of conflict are often the most popular. More traffic equals more money, and media companies are for profit. But we should not just point the finger at others. We should monitor our own media consumption. What are we attracted to, and what do we pass along via Twitter or Facebook? Is it a moving and instructive tale of interfaith cooperation, or a story of religious conflict that outrages us? If we only click on religious controversy then we are part of the problem.

The way to help the media to do a better job is for religious communities to do important sacred work of beauty and compassion in the world and to give us great stories that connect to a wide audience on an emotional level. It is easy to get people angry—it is harder to get people to love. But stories grounded in love are what will help us create a more inclusive America.



“Familiarity Breeds Understanding”

Charles C. Haynes

Director, Religious Freedom Education Project, Newseum

People who know a Muslim personally are less likely to see Islam as encouraging violence, according to a survey conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life in 2009.

The survey also reports that people with some knowledge of Islam are more likely to express favorable views of Muslims and to see similarities between Islam and their own religion.¹

¹ 2009 Annual Religion and Public Life Survey issued by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

Familiarity, it turns out, breeds understanding.

Unfortunately, many Americans have few meaningful opportunities for personal contact and dialogue with Muslims. Moreover, religious illiteracy—including misconceptions and distortions about Islam—is widespread in the United States.² This ignorance, I would argue, is a root cause of the growing intolerance in America toward Islam and Muslims and contributes to religious hate crimes, discrimination, anti-mosque protests, and other manifestations of Islamophobia.

That's why the work of the Islamic Networks Group (ING) is vitally important. Founded in 1993 by Maha Elgenaidi, a visionary Egyptian American, ING (www.ing.org) sends Muslim American volunteers into schools, businesses, law enforcement agencies, health care facilities and other venues across the nation to educate people about Islam and Muslims. Through ten regional affiliates, ING also provides diversity training and operates a speakers bureau with presentations about five major religious traditions.

What is powerful about ING's work is not only the high quality of the education about Islam (based on sound scholarship), but also the personal contact it affords with American citizens who practice Islam.

“While there are numerous avenues one can take towards creating positive change in society,” explains Maha Elgenaidi, “at ING we believe that education and interfaith engagement are two of the most effective means towards promoting long term change because education and dialogue address the underlying beliefs that lead to bias and discrimination.”

Another compelling initiative that promotes interfaith engagement is *Face to Faith*, an educational program now being introduced in American schools by the Tony Blair Faith Foundation (www.tonyblairfaithfoundation.org). Active in over 250 schools in seventeen countries, *Face to Faith* is built on a simple but profound idea: provide young people of different faiths and beliefs around the world with opportunities to learn directly with, from, and about each other. By means of video-conferencing and an online community, students investigate global issues of common concern and explore how their beliefs and values shape their understanding of those issues.

Face to Faith was formally launched in the U.S. as part of the “Partners for a New Beginning” commitment at a meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative in 2010. Responding to President Barack Obama’s call in Cairo, Egypt for “a

² U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey, Sept. 2010, and Public Remains Conflicted over Islam, August 2010, surveys conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. In the latter survey, 55% of Americans say they do not know very much or nothing at all about Islam.

new beginning” between the U.S. and the Muslim world, the Tony Blair Faith Foundation promised to expand the program to at least 120 American schools over the next two years, placing special emphasis on linking young people in this country with their peers in Muslim-majority countries, including Jordan, Pakistan, Lebanon, the Palestinian Territories, and Indonesia.

In the first American schools to use *Face to Faith*, students are enthusiastic about the opportunity to learn directly about faith and belief from students across the globe. “*Face to Faith* has been an incredible experience for me,” writes a Utah high school student. “It has blown all of the misconceptions I had out of the water and caused me to try harder to understand people from all places and circumstances.”

While constitutional guarantees of religious liberty are essential in a pluralistic democracy, laws and courts alone cannot ensure freedom from fear and discrimination—especially for people of minority faiths. We must also change minds and hearts through inter-religious dialogue, civic engagement, and education about religions.

In the well-known words of Judge Learned Hand, “liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it. While it lies there it needs no constitution, no law, no court to save it.”



Michael Lieberman

Washington Counsel, Anti-Defamation League

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) is one of the nation’s oldest human relations organizations, dedicated to promoting understanding among all Americans, defending religious liberty, and combatting extremism and violent bigotry in the United States and abroad. The League was founded in 1913 at a time of rampant anti-Semitism in America. It soon became clear that the security of the Jewish community was directly related to the strength of our democratic values, commitment to pluralism, and respect for differences.

The League’s long experience in confronting anti-Semitism, racism, and hatred leads us to underscore the essential importance of civic and religious leaders speaking out to condemn scapegoating and all forms of bigotry—and using their bully pulpits to promote better intergroup relations. Strong leadership is necessary to create a climate and a culture in which other members of the community are willing to condemn bigotry and combat hate and harassment.

The League's strength is its ability to craft innovative national programming and policy initiatives and then, working with community coalitions, to refine and implement them through its network of thirty regional offices. Over the past thirty years, ADL has emerged as a national resource in creating education and advocacy tools to address prejudice, stereotyping, and violent bigotry. ADL's A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute has comprehensive programs and curricula for students, teachers, and community members. ADL has crafted a variety of training activities, resources, and lesson plans that are focused on addressing bias against a variety of particular religions—many of which are available free of charge on our website, www.adl.org. The League also closely tracks a broad range of domestic and international extremist organizations, exposing their bigotry and reporting on their websites and activities.

The involvement of the Aspen Institute Justice & Society Program in this important engagement and outreach program comes at a critical time. ADL has documented a significant level of anti-Muslim bigotry, in a variety of public forums, over the past year. And now, as the nation commemorates the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, we have a chance to assess the impact of terrorism on our free society and address how we can effectively promote respectful, inclusive, and cohesive communities.

In the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, our nation witnessed a notable increase in profiling, discrimination, and violence directed against Muslims, Sikhs, and Arabs—including a disturbing rash of irrational attacks against Americans and others who appeared to be Muslim, Middle Eastern, or South Asian. In 2001, the FBI documented a 1600% increase in hate crimes over the prior year. The perpetrators of these crimes lashed out at innocent people because of their personal characteristics—their race, religion, or ethnicity. Importantly, a number of key government officials spoke out against these hate crimes, reached out to affected communities, and successfully prosecuted several high-profile hate crime cases. Though the number of bias crimes directed at Muslim Americans remains unacceptably high, they have diminished significantly since 2001.

While some of the recent anti-Muslim sentiment the League has documented has fed on growing community concerns about Islamic extremism, much of it has focused on various plans to relocate or expand mosques around the country. Many of those debates have been characterized by unfair stereotyping and prejudices that have singled out the Muslim American community for special scrutiny and suspicion.

ADL has responded in a number of different ways:

- We have exposed the activities of several individuals and organizations with extreme anti-Muslim agendas.
- We have led a coalition effort to strengthen federal and state hate crime laws and have helped train law enforcement officials across the country to address hate groups and bias-motivated criminal activity.
- The League helped to create the Interfaith Coalition on Mosques (ICOM). In several circumstances when prejudice, unfounded fears, and hostility has blocked Muslim communities from exercising the worship and religious observance freedoms all Americans should enjoy, ICOM has participated in legal action to vindicate these rights.
- On the legislative front, the League submitted a statement for the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings in March 2011 on anti-Muslim bigotry. The League's statement examined a range of indicators of the nature and magnitude of anti-Muslim discrimination and bigotry in the United States.
- ADL has also opposed offensive and unwarranted legislative initiatives targeting a phantom threat—the infiltration of Shari'a (Islamic) law into America's judicial system.



Rami Nashashibi

Executive Director, Inner-City Muslim Action Network

Recently, an imam, a rabbi, and a priest stood in front of an abandoned building, located on the block we at the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) share with a Catholic church, and prayed. The organizers, activists, community leaders, politicians, parents, and school children present that day had reclaimed this building as their own: had painted over the gang graffiti with colorful murals of hope, had cleaned the backyard of its broken glass, soiled clothes, and rusting needles and prepared it for a community garden, and had declared to the city and the world that, arm-in-arm, faiths in hand, the people of their community would reclaim a sense of peace and dignified quality of life for their families on that block.

American exceptionalism is occasionally associated with an arrogant set of claims to position America and Americans as somehow more important and superior than others around the globe. Many of us take great exception to that interpretation and suggest other ways of thinking about the excep-



tional circumstances and historical developments that led to the formation and development of America. One of those ways is to posit the social and civic space that American society has provided to activists, organizers, and leaders across all racial, ethnic, and religious lines as an ongoing part of what indeed makes America exceptional. Through the foresight of the founding framers and through the demands of citizens for the nation to live up to its lofty and often unrealized ideals and principles, the idea that America still is indeed a city on a hill isn't about a set of arrogant proclamations as much as it is about a humble recognition that admits to imperfection and provides the public space for profound challenge and contestation.

That spirit of the American experience animates everything from the early twentieth-century community outreach and advocacy efforts of Jane Addams to the work of modern social entrepreneurs and activists throughout the country who have, in many cases, committed their lives to the process of bettering America and challenging it to be a truer reflection of its higher values.

The efforts of different faith communities and leaders have been at the center of this important and indeed sacred project, forging a space that is unique in world history. I believe the road to true respect and mutual understanding between American Muslims and their neighbors is through that process of locking arms across faith communities, thereby allowing our collective commitment toward realizing our spiritual principles drive us and the country ever closer to that dream of a more perfect union.

II. Combating the Perils



“America the Inclusive: The Path to a Stronger America”

Michael E. Leiter

Former Director of the National Counterterrorism Center

For more than four years as the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), I watched the threat of terrorism evolve in the United States and abroad. Although the threat the U.S. faces today is in many ways less than it was in 2001, in one respect our challenges have grown: over the past two years we have seen more al Qa’ida inspired, “homegrown” terrorists than in previous periods. This is not an accident, as al Qa’ida and its affiliates have increased their efforts to radicalize and recruit Americans—particularly youth—within our borders by attempting to drive a wedge between Muslims and the rest of society.

In such an environment, our nation’s efforts to combat terrorism cannot simply focus on distant countries, intelligence operations, or law enforcement investigations. We must have equally robust programs to undermine and discredit al Qa’ida’s message of divisiveness. Today stopping terrorism is not only about disrupting attacks but also about empowering communities to create a strong and resilient America, one where communities actively work against the alienation that can contribute to violent extremism.

Al Qaida’s Narrative: Us Versus Them

Al Qa’ida’s narrative divides the world into two groups: “us” and “them.” The simplest form of its argument says that Muslims who practice al Qa’ida’s narrow interpretation of Islam are “us” and everyone else is “them.” The goal is to engender isolation and alienation and to denounce any identity that competes with their narrow religious interpretation. Speaking even more directly to American Muslims, Anwar al Awlaki and other English-speaking ideologues declare that being a good Muslim and being American are mutually exclusive. From this starting point al Qa’ida continues on to conclude that the U.S. is at war with Islam, and thus Muslims must defend themselves from Western aggression through violence. In their view, the acts of Faisal Shahzad, the attempted Times Square bomber, and Nadal Hasan, the alleged Fort Hood shooter, exemplify the righteous path that Muslims should take in al Qa’ida’s name.

American Values: Undermining al Qa'ida's Narrative

There is, in my view, no better way to undermine this destructive narrative than promoting integrated communities—a quintessential American tradition—and highlighting how such communities serve a critical national security goal. We must be clear at every opportunity that every ethnic and religious community, in this case most especially American Muslims, is part of America's fabric. As President Obama said, "We don't differentiate between them and us. It's just us."

Contrary to what has sadly and mistakenly become conventional wisdom to some, it is my experience that Muslim communities strongly and unequivocally condemn terrorism, cooperate with law enforcement, and take steps to prevent terrorist recruitment in their communities. For example, after Faisal Shahzad attempted to detonate a bomb in Times Square, members of the Pakistani-American community in Connecticut organized a day-long conference to discuss the threat of radicalization and possible efforts to counter it. Such self-initiated community efforts epitomize the best of American traditions, and we—communities and government alike—must do all we can to encourage and expand these programs.

However, if government expects communities to accept a leadership role in countering al Qa'ida's ideology and narrative, we must continue to convey the nature of the threat and empower members of the public from all backgrounds to foster resilience in their own communities. This administration has embraced a "whole of government" approach to building resilience against violent extremism. This means that security, law enforcement, and non-security programs all play an important role.

I have a thesis: when communities increase civic engagement, they undermine the very core of al Qa'ida's narrative and damage their ability to recruit and radicalize. When we encourage and support nonviolent means to address grievances and injustices—voting, community town halls, marches, and other forms of participation—we demonstrate that there is more than one choice, despite what al Qa'ida says.

All Americans must feel that they are a part of an integrated whole, and we must be aware of the effects of potentially divisive language and sweeping statements about religious or ethnic communities. Al Qa'ida is trying to tell American Muslims that they are strangers who are isolated, separated, and segregated in a hostile environment, and that there is a tension between being a good Muslim and a good American. Promoting civic engagement of all com-

munities—regardless of ethnic background or religion—is a strong counter to al Qa’ida’s message of divisiveness. It makes our communities safer and stronger. As I step down from NCTC I am convinced that it is in both our national interest and our national character to follow this path.



“Winning the Wars against Violent Religious Extremism and Ignorance”

Suhail A. Khan

Senior Fellow for Christian-Muslim Understanding,
Institute for Global Engagement

There’s little doubt that, in the long term, the most effective way to challenge violent religious extremism is with authentic voices of faith. Whether in Iraq, Afghanistan, Europe or the United States, mainstream religious leaders must redouble their efforts to reclaim faith from those who seek to exploit political and economic grievances for violent ends. Increasingly, faith leaders are standing up to the extremists, and where possible, governments are partnering with such brave voices as part of a comprehensive effort to defeat violent extremism.

However, these crucial efforts are jeopardized by the increasing suspicion directed by many at an entire faith group. And this is increasingly the case in the United States. The 2010 debate over building a Muslim community center and mosque in lower Manhattan erupted into a firestorm of anger and anti-Muslim sentiment. Things seemed to grow worse in part due to the proposed project leadership’s inability to convince the vast majority of otherwise fair-minded Americans of the project’s merits and their motives and sincerity.

As opposition to the so-called “Ground Zero” or “Victory” mosque mounted, similar conflicts emerged over other proposed mosques and centers in Staten Island, California, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. A fringe pastor at a Gainesville, Florida, church declared “Koran-burning Day,” and by November Oklahomans voted by a 3-1 margin to ban “shariah law.” A *Time* magazine cover story some months ago provocatively asked the question “Is America Islamophobic?” For many the answer appears to be a resounding yes.

This belief goes beyond anecdotal hostility or isolated clashes in sensitive places such as lower Manhattan or Gainesville, Florida. Indeed, survey after survey illustrates a distressing and chilling fact: popular attitudes are growing increasingly hostile to Islam and Muslims.

Take for example the Public Religion Research Institute's comprehensive study conducted on the heels of the NYC mosque debate which found that a majority of Americans (56%) say that the former site of the World Trade Center is "sacred ground," and 57% are opposed to allowing the proposed Islamic community center and mosque to be built two blocks away. Only about one-third (31%) favor it. The strongest opposition comes from key demographic groups. Religious groups most opposed include white evangelical Protestants (75%) and Catholics (63%). Republicans (85%), Americans age 65 or older (67%), and those with a high school education or less (64%) are also solidly opposed.

The strongest support is found with liberals/progressives and those not affiliated with faith groups: a plurality (46%) of Democrats, 43% of the religiously unaffiliated, and 42% of Americans who do not believe the former World Trade Center site is sacred support building the mosque.

Among religious groups, white evangelical Protestants are most opposed, with nearly 1-in-4 (24%) opposing the construction of a mosque or Islamic center in their own community, even if Muslims follow all the same rules and regulations required of other religious groups.

A majority of Americans (56%) consider the World Trade Center site to be sacred. Nearly 4-in-10 (38%) disagree. Among religious groups, Catholics—a group known for having a strong sense of sacred space—are most likely to view the World Trade Center site as sacred (68%). Seven-in-ten Americans who believe the former World Trade Center site is sacred oppose building an Islamic center and mosque two blocks from the site.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of Americans are following the story very or somewhat closely in the media. There are significant differences by party identification, with nearly 74% of Republicans following the story very or somewhat closely, compared to 66% of Independents and 61% of Democrats.

Not surprisingly, the partisan divide on attitudes regarding Islam and Muslims is reflected in other popular opinion polls. In a recent Zogby survey of American attitudes on a broad array of issues, stark differences emerged between Democrats and Republicans in their respective views on Arabs and Muslims. When asked, for example, about their attitudes towards Arabs, Democrats were 57% favorable, 30% unfavorable, while Republicans were 28% favorable, 66% unfavorable. When asked about their attitudes towards Muslims, Democrats were 54% favorable, 34% unfavorable, and Republicans 12% favorable, 85% unfavorable. The poll's other findings were just as troubling. When asked

“Is Islam a religion of peace?” 62% of Democrats say that it is, while 79% of Republicans say it is not.

When Americans were asked whether they “know enough about Islam and Muslims (or Arab countries and people) or need to know more,” among Democrats, 68% say they would “like to know more” about Islam, with 80% wanting “to know more” about the Arab World. In answering the same question, 71% and 58% of Republicans say they “know enough” and “don’t want to learn more.”

There is, however, a glimmer of hope. In the Public Religion Research Institute study, 76% of Americans—including majorities of religious groups across the spectrum—say they would support the building of a mosque in their own local community. “Despite recent stories that seemed to indicate widespread opposition to mosques around the country, our survey shows Americans are making a distinction between the proposed Islamic community center and mosque in New York City and mosques in their local communities,” said Dr. Robert P. Jones, CEO of the Public Religion Research Institute. “While a majority oppose the building in Manhattan, three-in-four Americans say they would support Muslims in their local communities building a mosque.”

Indeed, most of those opposed to the presence of Muslim Americans in Lower Manhattan are not racists or bigots. Rather, many are members of the public who’ve been subject to misinformation and often vitriolic commentary on cable news shows, talk radio, and blogs. And the painful fact is that Muslim Americans—as individuals and as local and national organizations—have utterly failed in communicating with major demographic groups of the American public. It’s no wonder that those in support of fairness are losing the conversation. Indeed, if the struggle against ignorance and hate is to be won, the campaign must be taken to the major segments of our fellow Americans who have the biggest doubts about Islam and Muslims, namely the country’s 44-75 million Evangelical Christians, conservative Catholics, and conservative Jews. These groups don’t hate Muslims, but they do have important questions. And no amount of traditional “interfaith dialogue” with progressive friends from the Christian and Jewish communities will do a thing to address the questions and concerns many conservatives have regarding the tough issues of extremism, violence, terrorism, apostasy laws, sharia law, and the role of women in Islam. Meaningfully engaging with Evangelical Christian, conservative Catholic, and conservative Jewish Americans will demonstrate the sincerity of Muslims as Americans of faith, and their reciprocal desire to understand.

Historically, most Americans years ago didn’t hate Catholics, Jews, or



Mormons. But many of these communities were subject to discrimination and often horrendous violence by a hateful few because the majority remained silent. Samuel Adams said, “It does not take a majority to prevail . . . but rather an irate, tireless minority, keen on setting brush fires of freedom in the minds of men.”

No doubt, both violent extremism and hateful ignorance must be defeated. Now more than ever, it is crucial that political leaders, regardless of the current polls, vocal popular sentiment, and shameless political partisanship, make every effort to stand up for freedom, justice, and the liberties enshrined in the American Constitution.



“Integration as a National Security Asset”

Azeem Ibrahim

Fellow and Member of the Board of Directors,
Institute for Social Policy and Understanding

Only a small handful of American Muslims are a threat to national security. Radicalized Muslims are to Islam what Terry Jones, the pastor who threatened to burn the Koran last year, is to Christianity. And we now know much more about the most effective way to prevent someone from radicalizing.

The place to start is with a study from a few years ago. Marc Sageman, a former CIA operations officer, conducted the largest ever survey of radical Muslims,

in order to try to find out why people radicalize. He analyzed over 500 profiles, and he came to the conclusion that radicalization normally occurs in four distinct stages. The first is when the individual reacts with moral outrage to stories of Muslim suffering around the world. Some Muslims then proceed to the second stage—constructing an interpretation that explains such suffering in the context of a wider war between Islam and the West. Some proceed to the third, in which resentment is fuelled by negative personal experiences in western countries (e.g., discrimination, inequality, or just an inability to succeed despite good qualifications), and some to the fourth, in which the individual joins a terrorist network that becomes like a second family, albeit one closed to the outside world. This situation stokes the radical worldview and prepares the initiate for action and, in some cases, martyrdom. The point is that if we can intervene at any point and prevent any of these stages from being reached, we can prevent radicalization.

There are two instances where intervention is going to be particularly effective.

The first is before a young Muslim begins to believe that Islam justifies violence and closes his or her mind to other viewpoints. If you can prevent would-be radicals from going into an intellectually closed bubble of self-reinforcing belief, you can still influence them. And that's where integration is crucial. Integration prevents that closing up process from happening. If young would-be radicals have non-Muslim friends with whom they can talk things over, who can challenge the Manichaean “West vs. Islam” narrative, then they are unlikely to progress to the final stage. That is one sense in which integration makes an essential contribution to national security.

The second instance where one can intervene is before the second stage—before they construct an interpretation which legitimizes violence. And here we come to the heart of these insights: mainstream Muslim teachings themselves delegitimize violence. Throughout history all major Muslim scholars have agreed that to kill a person unlawfully is a major sin.

The clearest sign that an authentic Islamic education prevents violence is the tiny percentage of violent Islamists who have actually received it. Reza Aslan, a research associate at the University of Southern California’s Center on Public Diplomacy, notes that almost 90% of violent Islamists have had no religious education at all. For example, none of those who carried out the 9/11 or the 7/7 attacks had received such an education. Even Osama Bin Laden never attended a religious seminary and had no formal religious training.

In this way, integration into both the Muslim mainstream and wider society has an important role to play in the future of American national security.

**Farhana Khera**

President and Executive Director, Muslim Advocates

As a civil rights lawyer, I view the topic of integration as a national security asset through the lens of the rights and protections guaranteed to us all by the U.S. Constitution.

The values enshrined in the Constitution, however, are not self-executing; it has taken the tireless work of generation after generation of Americans to ensure that our nation lives up to its ideals. With this in mind, I will focus my remarks on the intersections between the national security narrative and the civil rights challenges faced by American Muslims today. Specifically, when I think about integration and the greatest challenge to the integration of American Muslims, I think about the forces at play that are tearing us apart as a country and driving a sense of alienation among Muslims who now question their future and role in our society.

Recently, I testified before Congress on steps that can be taken to better protect the civil rights of American Muslims. In a hearing before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on the Constitution, Muslim Advocates submitted written testimony in which we documented a disturbing pattern of hate crimes, discrimination, and the extreme bullying and harassment of children in schools. I was born and raised in a small town in upstate New York; few of my neighbors were probably even aware that I was Muslim. Yet today, Muslim children are facing harassment, bullying, and brutal attacks motivated by anti-Muslim bigotry on a daily basis. The children responsible for these acts are clearly learning that hatred against Muslims is acceptable. In addition, according to data from government agencies, hate crimes and employment discrimination motivated by anti-Muslim bias have also risen since 9/11. The increased hate crimes, harassment, and discrimination pose a significant threat to the acceptance and integration of Muslims in our country.

So what can we do about this disturbing trend? Significant responsibility lies with civil society and government. We have seen Americans from all walks of life stepping up to face this challenge. In the aftermath of the Muslim community center controversy in lower Manhattan and the proposed Quran burnings in Florida last summer, Americans from different backgrounds—Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Hindus—came together to reject anti-Muslim hate, harassment, and discrimination. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the former Archbishop of Washington, DC and currently the head of the U.S. Conference of Catholic

Bishops, gave a powerful statement rejecting religious bigotry again during the Senate hearing. The Anti-Defamation League submitted an extremely strong written statement for the record, and other faith leaders such as The Interfaith Alliance and the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty have also spoken out against anti-Muslim hate.

In addition to civil society efforts, we need federal agencies like the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education to aggressively enforce our civil rights laws. I commend Attorney General Eric Holder for his commitment to what he called “the civil rights issue of our time,” and the Civil Rights Division’s attention to these issues. Still, there is more work to be done. The Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Tom Perez noted yesterday that the number of complaints in the Department’s education sector has spiked. The FBI hate crimes data show that crimes motivated by anti-Muslim hate continue to be higher than pre-9/11 levels. The Department of Education faces legal constraints that prevent it from being able to ensure that educational institutions are not furthering hostile environments in which students feel unsafe.

To conclude, Americans of faith and goodwill have taken some positive steps forward, but we must continue to stand together as Americans. I am heartened by a comment made by Senator Lindsey Graham, the ranking Republican on the Senate Subcommittee on the Constitution. He characterized anti-Muslim sentiment as un-American. He said that this is not who we are as Americans, and that we are all in this together and we need to stand together as Americans. In terms of national security and integration, I think that says it all.

Conference Schedule

America the Inclusive: Building Robust Community and Interfaith Partnerships

March 30, 2011

Welcoming remarks by Meryl Chertoff, Director, Justice & Society Program

Opening remarks by Eboo Patel: "America, Sacred Ground"

Panel 1: Telling the Story of Religious Pluralism: The Media's Role

- Maria Ebrahimji, Director/Executive Editorial Producer, Network Booking, CNN
- Zarqa Nawaz, Creator, *Little Mosque on the Prairie*
- Sally Quinn, Founder and Moderator, "On Faith," *The Washington Post*
- Paul Raushenbush, Religion Editor, *Huffington Post*

Moderator: Walter Isaacson, President & CEO, The Aspen Institute

Remarks by Honorable Michael E. Leiter, Former Director, National Counterterrorism Center

Remarks by Honorable Jane Harman, Director, President and CEO, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Panel 2: Integration as a National Security Asset

- Azeem Ibrahim, Fellow and Member of the Board of Directors, Institute of Social Policy and Understanding
- Suhail Khan, Senior Fellow for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Institute for Global Engagement
- Farhana Khera, Executive Director, Muslim Advocates
- Dan Sutherland, Chief, Countering Violent Extremism Group, National Counterterrorism Center

Moderator: Catherine Herridge, National Correspondent, Fox News Channel

Panel 3: The Role of Civil Society

- Deborah Batiste, Project Director, *Echoes and Reflections*, Anti-Defamation League
- Sunil Mansukhani, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education
- Rami Nashashibi, Executive Director, Inner-City Muslim Action Network
- Saafir Rabb II, President and CEO, InterCulture
- Pandit Wright, President and CEO, Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington

Moderator: Charles Haynes, Director, Religious Freedom Education Project, Newseum

Participant Biographies

Deborah A. Batiste began her career in education in 1975 as a teacher in Maryland. In 1991, she joined the Anti-Defamation League where for nine years she served as Associate Director of Training and Curriculum for the A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute, an international anti-bias/diversity awareness program. She authored a comprehensive K-12 anti-bias curriculum that is used by teachers across the U.S. and that has been adapted for use in Austria, Germany, Israel, Japan, Belgium, France, Italy, and the Netherlands. In addition, she was the lead content author for ADL's *Making Diversity Count*®—a fifteen-hour online professional development course for middle and high school educators. Ms. Batiste was the recipient of the National Association of Multicultural Education's Multicultural Educator of the Year award in 1999, and ADL's Senn/Greenberg Award for Professional Excellence in 2007.

Ms. Batiste was project director for a unique government-NGO joint initiative working with educators, law enforcement officials, parents, and community leaders on effective hate crime prevention and response techniques. Through this initiative—*Partners Against Hate*—blueprints, curricula, and Web-based tools were developed to help adults teach children not to hate and to safely navigate the Internet.

Today, Ms. Batiste serves as the Project Director for *Echoes and Reflections*—A Multimedia Curriculum on The Holocaust, for which she was also one of the lead writers, working collaboratively with staff at Yad Vashem and the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education.



Meryl Justin Chertoff is Director of The Aspen Institute's Justice and Society Program. She is an Adjunct Professor of Law at Georgetown Law. From 2006-2009, Ms. Chertoff was Director of the Sandra Day O'Connor Project on the State of the Judiciary at Georgetown Law, studying and educating the public about federal and state courts. She served in the Office of Legislative Affairs at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), participating in the

agency's transition into the Department of Homeland Security in 2003. Ms. Chertoff has also been a legislative relations professional, Director of New Jersey's Washington, DC Office under two governors, and legislative counsel to the Chair of the New Jersey State Assembly Appropriations Committee. She served on the Board of the Anti-Defamation League of New Jersey, and chaired its civil rights committee. For her work, she received its award for Distinguished Service in Civil Rights in 2000. She earned both her B.A. and her J.D. from Harvard University.



Maria Ebrahimji is the Director and Executive Editorial Producer for Network Booking at CNN Worldwide. In this position, she leads a team of editorial producers in guest coverage, newsgathering, and story planning for CNN's special events, breaking news, and multi-platform programming. She is based at CNN's global headquarters in Atlanta.

In her twelve years at CNN, she has been an integral part of CNN's award-winning programming. Her work on CNN Connects: The New South Africa garnered a 2007 NABJ Award of Excellence in the Television-Public Affairs Program. She is also the recipient of a 2006 Myers Media Innovation and Creativity Award for CNN's *Inspire Summit*, a George Foster Peabody Award for CNN's coverage of Hurricane Katrina, and an Alfred Dupont-Columbia Award for CNN's coverage of the Asian Tsunami.

In her community, Ebrahimji is on the Board of Directors of the Atlanta Press Club and the Atlanta chapter of the Asian American Journalists Association. She serves as an advisor to Tau Chapter, Alpha Chi Omega, Inc. and is on the Advisory Board for the Emory Development Institute and Southern Proper, Inc. She is a former Manfred Woerner, BMW Transatlantic, and Knight Digital fellow, and a former Aspen Young Professionals program graduate. Ebrahimji has also participated in the East-West Center's Sr. Journalism Seminar in Southeast Asia. She is the co-editor of *I Speak for Myself* (White Cloud Press, May 2011), a collection of essays written by forty American-born Muslim women. Ebrahimji received a B.A. degree in Mass Communications from Brenau Women's College and a Master's of Arts degree in International Affairs from Georgia State University.

Jane Harman is Director, President, and CEO of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Representing the aerospace center of California during nine terms in Congress, she served on all the major security committees: six years on Armed Services, eight years on Intelligence, and four on Homeland Security. She has made numerous Congressional fact-finding missions to hotspots around the world including North Korea, Syria, Libya, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Guantanamo Bay to assess threats against the U.S.

During her long public career, she has been recognized as a national expert at the nexus of security and public policy issues. Harman received the Defense Department Medal for Distinguished Service in 1998, the CIA Seal Medal in 2007, and the National Intelligence Distinguished Public Service Medal in March 2011.

A product of Los Angeles public schools, Harman is a magna cum laude graduate of Smith College, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and Harvard Law School. Prior to serving in Congress, she was a top aide in the United States Senate, Deputy Cabinet Secretary to President Jimmy Carter, Special Counsel to the Department of Defense, and in private law practice.



Charles C. Haynes is senior scholar at the First Amendment Center and director of the Religious Freedom Education Project at the Newseum in Washington, DC. He writes and speaks extensively on religious liberty and religion in American public life. Over the past two decades, Dr. Haynes has been the principal organizer and drafter of consensus guidelines on religious liberty in schools, endorsed by a broad range of religious, civil liberties, and educational organizations. He is author or co-author of six books, including *First Freedoms: A Documentary History of First Amendment Rights in America* and *Finding Common Ground: A First Amendment Guide to Religion and Public Schools*. His column, “Inside the First Amendment,” appears in more than 200 newspapers nationwide. Widely quoted in news magazines and major newspapers, Dr. Haynes is also a frequent guest on television and radio. He is the recipient of numerous honors, including the Emory University Medal in 2005 and the First Freedom Award from the Council for America’s First Freedom in 2008. Dr. Haynes holds a master’s degree from Harvard Divinity School and a doctorate from Emory University.

Catherine Herridge is an award winning national correspondent for Fox News Channel. Based in Washington, DC, Catherine covers intelligence, the Justice Department, and the Department of Homeland Security.

Catherine and her investigative team travelled across the U.S. and to Yemen to complete a five month investigation into the American-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, who is linked to three of the 9/11 hijackers, the Fort Hood massacre, the attempted Christmas Day bombing, and the failed attack at Times Square. *The Washington Post* recently described the documentary as explosive and hard hitting. Catherine's investigation of al Qaeda 2.0 and the new American recruits forms the basis of her book *The Next Wave*, published by Crown in June 2011.

Catherine has also reported from Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar, Israel, the former Yugoslavia, Northern Ireland, and Guantanamo Bay, where she covered the 2008 arraignment of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and his four co-conspirators on military charges.



Dr. Azeem Ibrahim is a fellow and member of the Board of Directors at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, a former research fellow at the International Security Program at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, and a world fellow at Yale University.

He founded ECM Holdings, a conglomerate of six global finance companies that included a private online bank, and a global macro-hedge fund. In addition, he has won over half a dozen prestigious entrepreneur awards over the last decade, was the youngest person on both the *Sunday Times* Scottish Rich list (2006) and Carter Anderson's UK Power 100 list, and, in 2009, he was named as a Top 100 Global Thinker by the LSDP European Social Think Tank. He has over 100 publications to his name.

Over the last few years he has met with world leaders and governments to discuss a diverse range of issues ranging from financial investment and geopolitics to countering extremism. Most recently, the Government of Pakistan asked him to assume a key role in authoring a new National Economic Strategy. He founded and actively chairs a private grant-giving foundation (www.ibrahimfoundation.com) and a number of charities around the world.

Suhail Khan is a Senior Fellow for Christian-Muslim Understanding at the Institute for Global Engagement, an organization dedicated to promoting religious freedom.

Suhail served in both terms of the Bush Administration, serving in the White House Office of Public Liaison and at the U.S. Department of Transportation in various capacities. For his leadership in the passage of the Administration's \$284 billion Surface Reauthorization Legislation, Suhail was awarded the Secretary's Team Award in 2005. He was awarded the Secretary's Gold Medal for Outstanding Achievement in 2007. Suhail serves on the Board of the American Conservative Union, the Indian American Republican Council, the Muslim Public Service Network, and the Buxton (interfaith) Initiative.

In August 2010, Suhail led a delegation of major Muslim American faith and community leaders to Auschwitz and Dachau concentration camps. Upon returning to the U.S., the delegation issued a statement and testified before Congress condemning Holocaust-denial and anti-Semitism. The delegation included U.S. Special Envoy on Anti-Semitism Hannah Rosenthal, U.S. Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Conference and White House Counsel Rashad Hussain, and Rabbi Jack Bemporad of the Center for Interreligious Understanding of New Jersey. Suhail earned a BA in political science from the University of California at Berkeley and his JD from the University of Iowa.



Farhana Khera is the president and executive director of Muslim Advocates, a national legal advocacy and educational organization dedicated to promoting freedom, justice, and equality for all, regardless of faith. Prior to joining Muslim Advocates in 2005, Ms. Khera was counsel to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on the Constitution. She worked for six years for Senator Russell D. Feingold, the Chairman of the Constitution Subcommittee, where she advised the Senator on civil rights and civil liberties, including the USA PATRIOT Act, racial and religious profiling, and other issues raised by the government's anti-terrorism policies since September 11, 2001.

Prior to the Senate, Ms. Khera was an associate with the law firm of Hogan & Hartson, LLP, and the law firm of Ross, Dixon & Masback, LLP, where her work as the lead associate on several *pro bono* employment discrimination cases resulted in the firm being honored with the Outstanding Achievement Award by the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs.

Ms. Khera has been honored by the Auburn Theological Seminary with its Lives of Commitment Award, by the Minority Bar Coalition of San Francisco with its Unity Award, and by Women In Islam with its Dr. Betty Shabazz Recognition Award. She has also been recognized by *Islamica Magazine* as one of “10 Young Muslim Visionaries” for leadership, innovative approaches, and “a level of success that bodes well for America.” Ms. Khera received her B.A. from Wellesley College and her J.D. from Cornell Law School. In 2009, she completed the Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders at Stanford Graduate School of Business.



Michael E. Leiter recently stepped down as the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). He had been NCTC Director since June 2008, upon his confirmation by the U.S. Senate, and after serving as the Acting Director since November 2007.

NCTC has two core missions. The first is to serve as the primary organization in the U.S. government for analysis and integration of all terrorism intelligence. In this role Mr. Leiter reported to the Director of National Intelligence. The second mission is to conduct strategic operational planning for counter-terrorism activities integrating all elements of U.S. national power. In this role he reported to President Obama.

Mr. Leiter served as the Deputy General Counsel and Assistant Director of the President’s Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (the “Robb-Silberman Commission”). From 2002 until 2005 he served with the Department of Justice as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia. At the Justice Department Mr. Leiter prosecuted a variety of federal crimes, including narcotics offenses, organized crime and racketeering, capital murder, and money laundering.

Immediately prior to his Justice Department service, Mr. Leiter served as a law clerk to Associate Justice Stephen G. Breyer of the Supreme Court of the United States and to Chief Judge Michael Boudin of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. From 1991 until 1997 he served as a Naval Flight Officer flying EA-6B Prowlers in the U.S. Navy, participating in U.S., NATO, and UN operations in the former Yugoslavia and Iraq. Mr. Leiter also served as a Harvard Law School human rights fellow with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. Mr. Leiter received his

J.D. from Harvard Law School where he graduated *magna cum laude* and was President of the Harvard Law Review; his B.A. is from Columbia University.



Sunil H. Mansukhani is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy at the United States Department of Education’s (ED) Office for Civil Rights (OCR). In addition to being part of OCR’s senior management team, he leads the development of OCR’s policy initiatives. Prior to coming to ED, he was the first Executive Director of the District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission. Mr. Mansukhani previously held positions in the private sector, academia, and the federal government.

After graduating from Yale Law School, Mr. Mansukhani worked as an associate at Crowell & Moring, clerked for Chief Judge Edward Cahn in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and was a teaching fellow at Georgetown University Law Center’s Institute for Public Representation (IPR). At IPR, he litigated federal civil rights cases and supervised law students’ casework.

Following his fellowship, Mr. Mansukhani worked in the United States Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division, where he litigated education-related federal civil rights cases, supervised administrative investigations, and implemented the Division’s policy initiatives related to limited English proficiency. Mr. Mansukhani received his B.A. in Political Science and Economics, *summa cum laude*, from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, his J.D. from Yale Law School, and a LL.M in Advocacy from Georgetown University Law Center.



Rami Nashashibi has served as the Executive Director of the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN, a non-profit community organization that fights for social justice, delivers a range of direct services, and cultivates the arts in urban communities) since its incorporation as a nonprofit in January 1997. He has a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Chicago and has been an adjunct professor at various colleges and universities across the Chicagoland area, where he has taught a range of sociology, anthropology, and other social science courses.

He has worked with several leading scholars in the areas of globalization, African American studies, and urban sociology and has contributed chapters to edited volumes by Manning Marable and Saskia Sassen. Rami has lectured across the United States, Europe, and Middle East on a range of topics related to American Muslim identity, community activism, and social justice issues and is a recipient of several prestigious community service and organizing awards. Rami and his work with IMAN have been featured in many national and international media outlets including the BBC, PBS, *New York Times*, and Al Jazeera. In 2007, *Islamica Magazine* named Rami among the “10 Young Muslim Visionaries Shaping Islam in America,” and in 2010 Chicago Public Radio selected him as one of the city’s Top Ten Chicago Global Visionaries. Rami was also named one of the “500 Most Influential Muslims in the World” by The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center in concert with Georgetown’s Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding.



Zarqa Nawaz created the television series *Little Mosque on the Prairie* in 2006, which premiered to record viewership and ultimately became CBC’s highest rated sitcom. The success of her series ushered in a new era of television in Canada. The show airs in over sixty countries around the world and has garnered many national and international awards such as the Canada Award at the Geminis, Audience Award for Best Series at the Cinema Tout Ecran in Switzerland, and the Maximo Award for best screenplay at Italy’s Roma FictionFest. The show is currently producing its 6th season.

Zarqa has written four other comedy pilots. In 2007, Zarqa wrote *Mecca, Indiana* for ABC, in 2008, she wrote *George and Jamila* for NBC, in 2009, she wrote *When Harry Met Noora* for CBS, and in 2010, she wrote *My American Family* for Fox. She has written and directed four comedy short films—*BBQ MUSLIMS* (1996), *Death Threat* (1998), *Fred’s Burqa* (2004), and *Random Check* (2005)—which have aired on CBC as well. *Death Threat* and *BBQ MUSLIMS* both premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. Zarqa wrote and directed the award winning documentary *Me and the Mosque*, which explored encroaching conservatism in North American mosques and ultimately inspired the series *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. Zarqa has a B.Sc from the University of Toronto and a B.A.A in journalism from Ryerson University.

Eboo Patel, named by *US News & World Report* as one of America's Best Leaders of 2009, is the Founder and President of Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), a Chicago-based organization building the global interfaith youth movement. Author of the award-winning book *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation*, Eboo is also a regular contributor to the *Washington Post*, *USA Today* and CNN. He served on President Obama's inaugural Advisory Council of the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships and holds a doctorate in the sociology of religion from Oxford University, where he studied on a Rhodes scholarship.



Sally Quinn, a *Washington Post* journalist, author, and Washington, DC insider, founded and co-moderates On Faith, an interactive feature on religion from *The Washington Post*. On Faith is hosted by a panel of renowned religious scholars of all denominations and is the first worldwide, interactive discussion about religion and its impact on global life.

While researching an article about religion in Washington prior to the 2000 presidential campaign, Quinn noticed that while religion had an enormous influence on worldwide politics, it was a taboo subject in our nation's capital. Following 9/11, Quinn's interest in religion grew and her passion to understand it from a personal and political perspective took on new urgency and focus.

Quinn has written four books: *We're Going to Make You a Star*, about her short-lived experience as a co-anchor for CBS Morning News; *Regrets Only*, her first novel; *Happy Endings*, its sequel; and *The Party*, in which Quinn offers an insider's look at Washington entertaining and a personal view of the value of friendship. She is currently working on a book about religion in Washington.



Saafir Rabb II is the founder and CEO of Managing Opportunity, Inc., a strategic planning and development consulting firm that operates in the U.S and internationally, providing business solutions to socially oriented organizations and enterprises. Prior to founding Managing Opportunity, Saafir served as COO of I Can't We Can (ICWC), a unique community development and drug-rehabilitation organization that has received hundreds of awards, citations, and recognitions from state, local, and national officials

and peer organizations. Internationally, Rabb has wide experience in various areas of international development. In addition to coordinating efforts at the World Summit for Information Society in Tunisia, Rabb has conducted SME Business training seminars throughout Nigeria, Arabic and Islamic Law training programs in Syria and Malaysia, education consultancy in the UAE, and philanthropic bed net distribution in sub-Saharan Africa. He also coordinated the program for the 2nd World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists in Abu Dhabi as a steering committee member.

Rabb has previously spoken on relations between global and local dynamics of Islam as invited participant in meetings at the Aspen Institute, various communities around the United States, the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, Fuller Evangelical Seminary, Arastirmalari Merkezi in Turkey, and various colleges and venues in the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

Rabb speaks Arabic, holds a BA in Political Science from the University of Maryland and an MBA from Johns Hopkins University, and is a Columbia University Ariane de Rothschild Fellow. Rabb serves as a President and CEO of InterCulture, a firm devoted to cross-cultural education, international business exchange, and capacity building. He is a senior advisor to the Dean of the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, a member of the Pacific Council, and board member for Educate Girls Globally.



Rev. Paul Brandeis Raushenbush launched and is the Editor of the Religion Section of the *Huffington Post*. He also serves as the Associate Dean of Religious Life and the Chapel at Princeton University, where his work includes strengthening the interfaith community on campus. He is the Co-Director of the Program on Religion, Diplomacy, and International Relations at The Liechtenstein Institute on Self Determination at Princeton University.

An ordained American Baptist minister, Rev. Raushenbush served at The Riverside Church in New York City and speaks and preaches at colleges, churches, and institutes around the country, including the College of Preachers at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, The Chautauqua Institute in upstate New York, the Center for American Progress, and the New America Foundation. He has appeared on ABC World News Tonight and is a repeated

guest on CNN and NPR. He has been quoted in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* and was a contributing editor for Beliefnet.com. His first book, *Teen Spirit: One World, Many Faiths* (HCI) was released in the fall of 2004. He is the editor of the 100th Anniversary edition of Walter Rauschenbusch's book, *Christianity and the Social Crisis—In the 21st Century* (HarperOne).



Dan Sutherland is Chief of the Counteracting Violent Extremism Group at the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). Prior to joining NCTC, he was the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties at the Department of Homeland Security. In that capacity, he provided legal and policy advice to the Secretary and the senior leadership of the department on a full range of issues at the intersection of homeland security and civil rights and civil liberties. He also led efforts to develop partnerships with Arab- and Muslim-American communities and chaired roundtable discussions between the government and these communities in several cities including Detroit, Houston, and Los Angeles. Dan has been a civil rights attorney throughout his legal career, serving fourteen years with the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and nearly two years with the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law and the University of Louisville.



Pandit Wright, President & CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, is an accomplished executive whose career has included positions in leading organizations such as Discovery Communications, the number one nonfiction company in the world; premiere investment banking firm Salomon Brothers; International Nickel Company; and Aetna.

At Discovery Communications, Ms. Wright was Senior Executive Vice President, Human Resources and Administration, where she was responsible for the company's nationally recognized LifeWorks@Discovery initiative. During her fourteen years with Salomon, Ms. Wright held roles of progressive responsibility that began in NYC, then moved to London, England for

four years as Vice President of Employment, and ended in 1995 as HR and Administration Team Coach in Tampa, Florida.

Ms. Wright is a graduate of the University of Connecticut and completed graduate coursework in Organizational Management at the New School in New York City. She currently resides in Washington, DC.

In 2010, Ms. Wright began a three-year appointment as Commissioner of the US National Commission for UNESCO, and in January 2011 was welcomed by the Department of the Air Force into the prestigious Honorary Commanders Program for the 11th Wing and Joint Base Andrews in Maryland.

Thomas Jefferson Notes on the State of Virginia, “Religion”

... What has been the effect of [state-sponsored religious] coercion? To make one half the world fools, and the other half hypocrites. To support roguery and error all over the earth. Let us reflect that it is inhabited by a thousand millions of people. That these profess probably a thousand different systems of religion. That ours is but one of that thousand. That if there be but one right, and ours that one, we should wish to see the 999 wandering sects gathered into the fold of truth. But against such a majority we cannot effect this by force. Reason and persuasion are the only practicable instruments. To make way for these, free enquiry must be indulged; and how can we wish others to indulge it while we refuse it ourselves. But every state, says an inquisitor, has established some religion. No two, say I, have established the same. Is this a proof of the infallibility of establishments? Our sister states of Pennsylvania and New York, however, have long subsisted without any establishment at all. The experiment was new and doubtful when they made it. It has answered beyond conception. They flourish infinitely. Religion is well supported; of various kinds, indeed, but all good enough; all sufficient to preserve peace and order: or if a sect arises, whose tenets would subvert morals, good sense has fair play, and reasons and laughs it out of doors, without suffering the state to be troubled with it. They do not hang more malefactors than we do. They are not more disturbed with religious dissensions. On the contrary, their harmony is unparalleled, and can be ascribed to nothing but their unbounded tolerance, because there is no other circumstance in which they differ from every nation on earth. They have made the happy discovery, that the way to silence religious disputes, is to take no notice of them. Let us too give this experiment fair play, and get rid, while we may, of those tyrannical laws. It is true, we are as yet secured against them by the spirit of the times. I doubt whether the people of this country would suffer an execution for heresy, or a three years imprisonment for not comprehending the mysteries of the Trinity. But is the spirit of the people an infallible, a permanent reliance? Is it government? Is this the kind of protection we receive in return for the rights we give up? Besides, the spirit of the times may alter, will alter. Our rulers will become corrupt, our people careless. A single zealot may commence persecutor, and better men be his victims. It can never be too often repeated, that the time for fixing every essential right on a legal basis is while our rulers are honest, and ourselves united. From the conclusion of this war we shall be going down hill. It will not then be necessary to resort every moment to the people for support. They will be forgotten, therefore, and their rights disregarded. They will forget themselves, but in the sole faculty of making money, and will never think of uniting to effect a due respect for their rights. The shackles, therefore, which shall not be knocked off at the conclusion of this war, will remain on us long, will be made heavier and heavier, till our rights shall revive or expire in a convulsion.

Letter from President George Washington to Moses Seixas, Warden of the Touro Synagogue, 1790

To the Hebrew Congregation in Newport Rhode Island.

Gentlemen,

While I receive, with much satisfaction, your Address replete with expressions of affection and esteem; I rejoice in the opportunity of assuring you, that I shall always retain a grateful remembrance of the cordial welcome I experienced in my visit to Newport, from all classes of Citizens.

The reflection on the days of difficulty and danger which are past is rendered the more sweet, from a consciousness that they are succeeded by days of uncommon prosperity and security. If we have wisdom to make the best use of the advantages with which we are now favored, we cannot fail, under the just administration of a good Government, to become a great and happy people.

The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.

It would be inconsistent with the frankness of my character not to avow that I am pleased with your favorable opinion of my Administration, and fervent wishes for my felicity. May the children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingily happy.

G. Washington



