

Panel 5 - Discussion

MR. CURTIS: Thank you, Reverend Gaddy. I wish I had been at the Baton Rouge conference. I'm sure it was really inspirational.

We now have time for 20 to 30 minutes of give-and-take questions with the audience, among the panelists, discussion as you would like it. Let's start over here.

VOICE: My name is Gene Taylor. (Unintelligible) Safe Haven. To you, Mr. McDonald: you put the question out there about Carter and the lust, but you didn't answer it. Do you remember what he said?

REV. MCDONALD: "In my heart."

VOICE: Yeah, that's what he said.

To you, Mr. Gaddy: seems to me when I was in elementary school and we were studying the Constitution, the framers: Jefferson, Franklin, and Adams, they said there was supposed to be a separation of church and state. Was I taught wrong again? I don't understand how this happened. If the church and the state are supposed to be separate, why is all this hullabaloo about it coming together now?

REV. GADDY: The hullabaloo is because it is coming together, in direct contradiction to the dictates of the Constitution.

VOICE: (Gene Taylor) Okay, that's all I needed to know.

MR. TUTTLE: Wait, wait, wait, wait. I mean, I don't want to get too much into the details but this is a complicated story, that Jefferson wasn't the only one of the founders. Jefferson didn't draft the First Amendment to the Constitution. The idea of a "wall of separation" doesn't enter into the Constitution at all. The Constitution forbids an establishment of religion: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion," which means at a minimum that the government cannot set up a single national church.

Once we move from there, we're getting into interpretation. So we got to figure, what more than that is an establishment? I think people pretty much agree now that funding multiple churches directly would be an establishment. Okay, well what about funding multiple social service ministries run by churches? Is that an establishment? Maybe. What about funding multiple schools that are run by churches? Maybe.

Like many things, the difficulty is in administering the details of this one. And I think there was a time when the law was much clearer than it is now: one dime of money going to a religious organization was an establishment of religion. A lot of folks thought that was too sharp; that excluded too much, the part of religion from government's activities. Some people thought it was appropriate. These are matters about which people debate. But it's hard to say, looking back at the time of the drafting, that one of those two is the only correct reading of the Constitution.

MR. CURTIS: Response to that from the panel? Anybody?

MR. WINEBURG: Constitutionally, I think he's right. But if you read the "Federalist Papers," there are only 13 exclamation points in the entire "Federalist Papers." And one of them, I don't have the direct quote in front of me, but Hamilton said that the president should not have "a particle of spiritual jurisdiction" where the king -- and he's making a comparison between the king -- should not have "a particle of spiritual jurisdiction," where the king is the head of the national church.

Now, constitutionally I think you're right. But politically, establishing the office of faith-based and community initiatives inside the White House would have Hamilton turning over in his grave.

MR. TUTTLE: But that doesn't mean it's unconstitutional.

MR. WINEBURG: Did I say that? I said it's not --

VOICE: (John Carr) Can I take a shot at this?

Geno headed the first faith-based office inside the federal government. When he was appointed assistant secretary of HUD, he was to build connections to community groups and religious groups.

I admire the eloquence, the passion, and the volume. I think this is why we lose. We've had a presentation, totally one-sided, frankly, distorted. I've been working on the faith-based initiative for two years. I support some of it, I opposed some of it.

There is nothing in the faith-based initiative that allows you to proselytize; it's illegal. There is nothing in the faith-based initiative that allows you to commingle funds; you'll go to jail.

Geno Baroni spent his entire life trying to build partnerships between government and community institutions, including churches. And in his name, in his legacy, to have a totally one-sided, simplistic ideological discussion does not do justice to his memory.

There is no theocracy. Despite all these efforts, there are a million abortions a year, gay rights are advancing, human rights for gays should advance. One of the problems with progressives is they use the courts to impose their solutions. Roe v. Wade, whatever you think of it, took this out of the democratic process. When the Massachusetts Supreme Court legalized gay marriage, that was not the religious right that picked this fight. That was the gay rights lobby.

I think this does a disservice to this legacy. There is a Baptist way of doing this, there may be a Catholic way. We have been taking government money for decades, and it hasn't corrupted us. The Bush administration would tell you it hasn't reduced our voice. We oppose him as much as anybody at the table does here.

And to go after people by individuals, and say they have been bought and sold; I've worked with Gene Rivers on AIDS. I worked with Gene Rivers on Africa. And for you, frankly, to stand up there and to say that he's been bought and sold, frankly, is not at all in the tradition of Geno, who was building bridges, civil dialogue, and respecting differences. So I think this does a great disservice. There are lots of things to be critical of this administration, and of this 0210program. I was critical of it this morning.

But let's be clear: Geno was the first faith-based leader. Joe Hackela (phonetic) was in HUD, continuing his legacy. It should not only be religious, but it shouldn't exclude religious. In most of the communities on most of the toughest problems, the only ones left are religious groups. As I said this morning, People for the American Way is not in Anacostia working on drug abuse and teenage pregnancy. Every 12-step program in America has something about a higher power, and I don't know if Hamilton would like that. But they are meeting, and they are meeting in church groups, and they're meeting in government groups. And Geno wanted a more sane, sensible, pragmatic, creative partnership between faith and public policy. Our faith is what caused us to work for civil rights, oppose the war. We need more faith, more morality.

I think the biggest problem people on the panel have is they're winning and we're losing. And I think part of the reason we're losing --

REV. MCDONALD: Depends on how you define winning and losing. By definition, Jesus lost.

VOICE: (John Carr) You were talking about politics. The president's popularity with black voters is two percent, plus or minus three. The idea that the faith-based initiative is this grand, political, successful program -- they ought to abandon it not because the reasons you did it, but because it isn't working on that.

Who do think is gonna rebuild New Orleans and Biloxi? HUD? We've got to have people on the ground. And when people got in trouble, where did they turn? Not to the bureaucracy, they turned to faith-based.

And you better believe we're taking money for feeding and clothing and providing medical care, to tens of thousands of people. I don't know about your church, but we can't afford to take care of tens of thousands of people.

I actually make the other case. If I were in a different room, I would tell you all the problems with the faith-based initiative, beginning with there are no resources, that it's mostly rhetoric. But it does not serve the memory of this man to have a totally one-sided, partisan diatribe, that does not reflect the variety of experiences and the needs of our country. And I hate to be so straightforward, but I thought, as I said, you were very eloquent --

REV. MCDONALD: I'm a preacher, I can take it.

VOICE: (John Carr) -- and I don't agree.

MR. CURTIS: So thank you. We're letting you have your opinion, and that is in the bipartisan spirit of these meetings. Time for a response.

REV. GADDY: Go ahead. I'd like to say something too, but go ahead.

REV. MCDONALD: Some of us were member on other government program called CETA, the Comprehensive Employment Training Act; particularly where pastors and most especially, African-American pastors -- and I can tell you some friends right now who went to jail, who spent time, because they commingled funds -- you can believe me when I say -- because I know -- they don't have the capacity -- but what we are talking about, that there are pastors and churches who are fighting tooth and nail to get funds. A few have gotten as little as \$25,000, and have not figured out how to handle it.

I'm not talking about the million dollars that our brother in Wisconsin got, or the million dollars that Eddie Long got, or the million dollars that Jesse Louis Peterson got, and others. I'm talking about the average black church being 150 members. And whether or not they have the capacity, and how they're going to be locked out.

I don't mind you coming at me -- I've been dealing with that all my life, it doesn't frighten me at all. But I know what I see, and I know the black experience, and I will not allow you to tell me the black experience.

MR. CURTIS: Reverend Gaddy.

REV. GADDY: Yes, John. Let me just respond two or three ways. One, first on the partisanship thing. The Interfaith Alliance was very critical of Bill Clinton when he signed John Ashcroft's amendment on Charitable Choice legislation, because we saw the opening of a door for something that we thought was dangerous.

We were critical in 2000 of both Senator Gore, Vice President Gore, as well as Governor Bush. I'm not sure whether you're using "ideological" to mean ideological in terms of political partisanship. If so, that doesn't fit. If you mean "ideological" in terms of a view of the Constitution aimed at trying to protect the integrity of religion in this nation and government's intrusion in it, then I would plead guilty to being an ideologue in that way.

Second thing is, you are exactly right, that there have been initiatives in government for a long time to foster a partnership between religion and government. It was absolutely necessary because -- and I can tell you as a former Southern Baptist, one of my early jobs was trying to convince Southern Baptists that they could trust government enough even to talk to them. They would never take government money, at that point. But there were offices there to foster that kind of relationship.

However, there was always a sensitivity to the boundaries between religion and government. Right now, those boundaries are blurred, since day one, when John DiIulio went to that office the first day. And I know you were in tune with this. There was a concern -- it was mentioned at the National Press Club, I guess, in one of his first public appearances: "If you're going to do this program, why don't you require and also help organizations establish 501(c)3's, so that there is a firewall between the office of Government and the office of religion?"

And when that recommendation kept being made over and over and over, and there was resistance to it, there were indeed many of us, including DiIulio in the faith-based office, who began to suspicion that something was up here rather than just about religion and the advancement of faith.

You know that Catholic charities is a model for how you can take government money, retain religious integrity, but also be committed to the basic civil rights that government ought to support. About two months ago, I did testimony before a congressional committee in a hearing on whether or not this legislation should pass that would establish the White House office on faith-based and community initiatives in perpetuity, so it would continue after this particular president leaves.

In that room were kind of the "galaxy of stars" of the faith-based initiative. Not one of them was pleased with the way the program has been run. One reason, because of what you

said: the former deputy director of the faith-based office, David Cho (phonetic), said it's a shell game, it's all about rhetoric. We have not had the money to do what we have wanted to do. The black social activist, Mr. Woodward, who works so effectively with (unintelligible), said "I never wanted government money. What I was promised was that the president would use the bully pulpit of the White House to help us get more money through corporate structures in this nation, and through charitable giving. That has not worked." The man that ran Bush one's office on "A Thousand Points of Light" and community initiatives said, "it is imperative that we get rid of any kind of faith-based office in this nation, and if we have any office akin to it, name it a 'community initiative office,' or a 'neighborhood development office.'"

I want to be very, very clear. I am not against a partnership between religion and government. But I am against a relationship that allows either one to intrude inappropriately on the other.

MR. CURTIS: Thank you. Representative Kaptur, and then Dr. Cnaan.

VOICE: (Marcy Kaptur) Yes, I just wanted to make a clarification very quickly. Maybe someone has done this this morning and I wasn't here -- I wasn't able to be here for the earlier session. A clarification first and then a question.

The clarification is, there has been a statement made about Roe v. Wade, and that Democrats are of a certain point of view on the abortion issue. I would like to state for the record that the Roe v. Wade decision was made by a Republican court, appointed by Republican presidents. The vast majority of the members of that court that upheld Roe v. Wade were Republicans. What continues to be a conundrum to me is how Democrats ended up getting labeled with that. It is a mystery of our time.

And as one Democrat in the Congress of the United States, I support alternatives to abortion. There are some of us who are on a bill to reduce abortions by 95 percent within 10 years, and to give families, if they're willing, the support to do that, with health insurance, with day care, whatever is needed. And I don't really understand politically how this happened. Maybe someone here is wiser and could put it on the record, but how Democrats ever got the rap for what Republicans did is one of the mysteries of the twentieth century. So that's one thing.

The second thing I wanted to ask is this: Representative Uvjagi mentioned a term in Ohio, "Patriot Pastors," which you might want to elaborate a little bit on.

I wanted to ask Reverend McDonald, is there a religious alternative -- I'm not quite sure all what "Patriot Pastors" is, but is there something that is an alternative to it that exists, or could be formed? It sounds kind of suspicious, we're all patriotic. But what is this group? It's the language. Could someone talk a little bit more about that?

REV. MCDONALD: To my knowledge, no, there is not a counterpart to it, though there are attempts to try to formulate that. I mean, there have been alliances with the interfaith alliance, with the group that we work with, the African-American Ministers In Action. We're in 20 states. We had counter-kind of -- when they had their wonderful telecommunication nights on the Supreme Court justice Sunday, and then everybody who disagreed with them were not patriotic.

There are attempts to create voices for the, particularly, progressive religious community. But we need more support, we need more funding, we need more resources. We need to develop what they did, but a 10-year plan.

The Patriot Pastors, in my opinion are extremely dangerous.

REV. GADDY: Say what they are.

REV. MCDONALD: The Patriot Pastors are coming out of Ohio -- in fact, they have documents upon documents -- and it is a theocracy, I don't care what my brother over here says. It is a theocracy. They are people who believe in manifest destiny, and they are people who believe that their way is God's way and they're gonna impose it upon you come hell or high water. And the patriot pastors are of that ilk. And they are dangerous and they are doing it in the name of God. They have financial backing to the hilt.

And unless we create an alternative voice and get progressive religious voices on television, radio, print, and journalism, that voice is going to emerge as the dominant voice, and we're really going to be in trouble.

VOICE: (Marcy Kaptur) well, if there's nothing else that I've learned here today, I will offer Ohio as a test tube. And I will work with my colleague from the Ohio House. But Geno always taught us, "if you don't like the church you're in, found a new one." Or synagogue, or temple, or whatever. We know what the idea is.

But Ohio is not an intolerant state, it has never been one. And we have always been interfaith, and we appreciate the seculars among us who keep us all honest.

And we'd best create an alternative structure, and Reverend, I'd be more than happy to work with you and others in our state, because we cannot allow that to happen to Ohio.

MR. UJVAGI: My apologies, but if I can add: basically, what Patriot Pastors is becoming is the moral majority concept on double steroids.

(Laughter.)

I'm serious. There was a meeting about two weeks ago, 400 pastors met in Columbus, and I know this is a nonpartisan, bipartisan -- all of those kinds of things -- discussion. But it is a clearly articulated goal of the Patriot Pastors in Ohio to recruit 5000 churches and 5000 pastors between now and 2006, and to assure -- I'm sorry, just the way it is -- to assure the election of Republican candidates who meet their standards of what should be in public policy. It's kind of, they are one of the major supporters of Secretary of State Blackwell. And if anybody here knows anything about Secretary of State Blackwell, I'd be more than happy to add to it. But it is very serious. They are very well organized. They are very well funded. And it is coming out of Ohio.

VOICE: Who funds them?

REV. MCDONALD: The same folk who are funding everything else. Really, and again, you can say what you want to say about People For. There is a book that we put out on who is funding the religious right which goes through foundations, individuals, and the like. And it's the same thing for the campaigns. Campaign public documents, campaign disclosures. And you can see who's funding. And the same people who are funding the campaigns are the same people who are funding the Patriot Pastors.

MR. UJVAGI: And let me if I may -- I just need to add a comment to it, what John said. John, you're absolutely right. Geno was the first faith-based -- his office was a faith-based office. But there is a critical difference. And it may sound technical to talk about 501(c)3's, et cetera, but I do not believe that Geno would have ever funded a pastor, a church -- what I remember from Geno, sitting around with a loaf of bread and a jug of wine, his sense of the church hierarchy wasn't exactly warm and fuzzy, okay. I mean, what he was about, I can't think of one organization that the national center tried to develop that didn't have a faith component in it, that didn't have the churches and the community as part of it all.

But there's a world of difference between that and between what this strategy is. I think, as I said before, I think Geno would try to change it, okay, he'd try to find the best in it and deal with that. But I don't think Geno would ever approve of what the concept of the faith-based office is today.

MR. CURTIS: Dr. Cnaan.

MR. CNAAN: A few comments about the discussion in the last few minutes. There is one, one example nationally of any organization to get money on a faith-based initiative that is not 501(c)3. And if you find another one, I'll pay you lots of money, because we research and pay people a lot of money because we wanted to study them.

Congregations are not stupid, clergy are not stupid; they go and create 501(c)3's. There's one congregation in Philadelphia that the pastor didn't know better, so she went on her own, so she's a national case study. 17 researchers wrote about this congregation because they couldn't find another one.

(Laughter.)

So what are we talking about? Let's be realistic about the issue. Now, this is a ploy of the Republican Party -- not just the Republican Party, but extremes in the Republican Party -- and by the way, I never in my life voted Republican even once for any office, okay, so I want to make it clear.

(Laughter.)

But President Clinton, in 1992, four years before Charitable Choice, goes to American Baptist convention and said, "Do welfare reform, take it. Welfare case, we'll give you the money." Okay, that's long before the Republicans were in office.

Henry Cisneros, long before charitable choice, wrote a brochure, public policy of HUD, congregation going to the estate, "help us take us those projects, we need you. You are our only saviors, because everyone else failed."

Hilary Rodham Clinton goes all over New York State and says, "My husband was so smart, he envisioned Charitable Choice, and it's our policy."

Okay, so where is the Republican ploy in this? But they're smart, and you're right. They learn to reap the benefits of faith. They get the money and try to lure the people that they want. Because if they weren't, they'd be bad politicians.

As for the organizing tactics, they learned the things of the sixties. We, the Liberals, forgot about it. We sat down and we said, "Wow, we were so successful. America is different."

Then they started organizing, used the exact same tactics, and we don't do it anymore. So what is the surprise that they have 400 pastors in Ohio, and many other things in other places? We got lazy, excuse me for saying so. We lost focus, and we're not doing it.

And why is it a bright policy? Because 50 percent of Americans are church -- and I say "church" in the global sense, includes synagogues and mosques, et cetera -- 50 percent of Americans go at least once a month, and they pay money to those places, so they have ownership in it. 86 percent of Americans believe in God. So how can you say we separate it from our life? It has to be constitutional, and I'm sorry, Bob -- the other Bob left us.

But the essence is, how do we make an institution that is the most prevalent in our community -- 300 to 400,000 places of worship across the country. That means, like, 500,000 clergy in our country, so 400 is an easy number to get. It's very easy. There is another over quarter of a million clergy who are not part of it. It's our task to organize them, to make another point of this.

But in this country, to think that we can have government that will be totally devoid of religion is not to understand who we are as people.

MR. CURTIS: Dr. Wineburg?

MR. WINEBURG: First of all, Professor Tuttle had to go teach school.

(Laughter.)

So I am relaying that message, so I hope that none of you are irritated that our constitutional scholar left, 'cause he has to teach school. Otherwise there won't be anybody left to interpret.

I'm sorry that Mr. Carr left. I don't think that it was fair to make a grand sweep that we are all ideologues up here. I don't know, for those of you who heard my presentation today, I worked very hard to outdo the Conservatives in putting forth a conservative formula for how to solve community problems. In the best spirit of American pragmatism and I -- because I invoked Alexander Hamilton, I hope that I wasn't branded an ideologue.

MR. CNAAN: Too late.

MR. WINEBURG: Too late?

(Laughter.)

The other point about language is that as he spoke this morning, I thought that we ought to invoke my term for Democrats because I feel abandoned by them to. I call them "Dumocrats." Because they really and truly have not used the power of religion and the prophetic voice in religion, the prophetic voice that we heard in the last two speakers to shape policies around that prophetic voice.

They ran with tails under their tush -- excuse me for invoking a little yiddish there -- because they were afraid of people who are wrong. And I don't get it, I really don't get it.

And I think it's time that compassionate conservatism -- they're like left-handed scissors; they're out there, but try to find a pair.

(Laughter.)

And we really and truly have the hone the language, take the language of truth back. They've stolen it from us, we're gone. So that's my two cents. I'm just sorry that Mr. Carr is gone.

MR. CURTIS: I am, too. Okay, John and then Ramón.

VOICE: (John Kromkowski) Just a point on the argument about the constitutionalism and politics, and the use of constitutional matters in a political forum. Look, one of the conflicts that we can get ourselves into is the very vigorous use of the court to resolve questions that are really not clear in society. And when they're not clear in the society, then you become susceptible to the kinds of arguments that the new Chief Justice specialized in what he was with the Reagan administration. Try to strip the court of its capacity to do things that people don't like, whether they're fair or just or whatever.

I mean, the question of these narratives that we've been talking about, there are some really strong narratives about justice always being related to law. Well, I'd just like to take a few steps back and suggest that justice also comes out of the ways in which communities and politically organized themselves so that they can come as close to justice as possible without having the law clobber them into being just.

And that's where this little discourse here on whether or not Jefferson or Hamilton, or ways in which the various uses of -- the prerogative of the president, or the role of the court in settling problems of constitutionality -- is very cute for law scholars, but believe me, law and politics are different worlds. And it's unfortunate, but when they get as messy as they do now, then Katie, bar the door. We'll have another religious war going on here, because we have courts that have in fact interjected items that have not moved through and percolated, and become ripe within the polity.

And I'll give you one that even makes the case even sharper. There are some questions about whether or not representation in America has been well served by the way in which the court has argued "one person-one vote." Perhaps communities are more important than persons. And that going to get us into a big, big argument about rights. And there are narratives within which responsibilities and communities are more important than rights. And that's an argument that will entirely tear the fabric of the Republic.

Now in this panel, there has been a lot of heat, and that's what politics is about. On the other hand, to think that there is a simple legal remedy that can get us out of this is really foolish on the part of lawyers who in fact don't know a good deal about political morality.

For example -- I see that father Drinan came in. You'll support me, I trust, on that question 95 from Aquinas' treatise on law. When you start making laws that try to make a community better than it is naturally or organically, you're going to run into people breaking laws, and also disrespecting laws, so that the question of law and morality has been discussed at least since Aquinas' time, and probably before that.

And I just take offense to lawyers coming in and saying they know exactly what the Constitution is, because politics is prior to the Constitution. In fact, politics framed the Constitution.

MR. CURTIS: Reverend Tune.

VOICE: (Reverend Tune) Thank you, Dr. Curtis. I guess my question has two parts. Several years ago I had the honor of being a student under Dr. Wineburg at Duke University Divinity school, and for the past two years worked for Reverend McDonald as Director of Ministers Programs. And so my questions come from much of what I've learned from the two of you and many others -- to include Dr. Gaddy, and my pastor sitting behind me.

Someone mentioned earlier on the first part of this panel, the cultural diversity and the number of congressional districts, and the implications that ethnicity and culture have on elections.

However, the political implications in regards to how it would be necessary for progressives to come together regardless of religion and ethnicity, to have some power on the grassroots level. That hasn't happened since the civil rights movement. And no one really addressed the intentional efforts that have taken place to keep the races separate, to keep the discrimination between blacks, Latinos, Asians and whites; and how do we circumvent that?

And then, as it relates to faith-based initiatives, when we get to alternatives, I would like to hear someone elaborate more on how we can provide an alternative to help churches build capacity, to write proposals, to receive grants. Many of them have 501(c)3 status, but that's usually the churches that are a little larger because they have the capacity in their congregations, and people who have been to college.

However, the smaller congregations -- and it's my understanding that most churches, average church size is a hundred members or less. So they lack the capacity. So who's helping them build the capacity so that they can have an infrastructure to write proposals, and receive the grants?

MR. CURTIS: Panel?

REV. MCDONALD: When Mr. DiIulio was head of the faith-based initiative, I remember several members of the black clergy met with him. He actually invited us to come, and we met. And one of the things that we asked for was the training, to help smaller congregations, medium-sized congregations, to build the capacity, to know the capacity, to know the rules. Because there's a whole lot of paperwork. And there's a whole lot of reporting. And anybody who's serious about ministry ain't got time for all that.

And so it could really be a trick, so you have to watch that as well.

They said they were going to do it, the White House office of faith-based said they were going to do it. Another has been a series of trainings that they have conducted around the country. There literally have been. I mean, almost in every urban center around the country, they have called, and I've been to a couple of them, and there have been hundreds of ministers who have gone to some of these trainings.

What is frustrating is out of those hundreds who have gone, you can't find one who got a grant. And so what we have done is we have a counter. We have a group in Atlanta called Nonprofits for Nonprofits. And we have, through that group, separate and apart from government, helped institutions to get the capacity.

The Interdenominational Theological Center, ITC, has also taken it upon itself to particularly train black pastors, because again, we know some black pastors who done gone to jail. And it is true, what was stated here about most institutions -- do have a 501(c)3, but let me tell you what happens.

They do receive the moneys through a 501(c)3. But you got your church account over here that has a zero balance, and you've got your grant over here with \$50,000 in it, and you've got some kids who need some lunches for the after school program. Now, what you gonna do? You gonna reach over here and get out \$150, to buy the lunches over here.

And then, when you disagree with a certain policy that's going down, and somebody decides that you're disagreeing too loudly, they're gonna come in and want to see the books. And when they come in and want to see the books, whether you get capacity or not, this 501(c)3 or not, and they see commingling, they want somebody to pay, or somebody to go to jail. And I don't plan to be one of them.

MR. CURTIS: Other responses from the panel?

MR. WINEBURG: Let me just -- since I had the honor of teaching Ramal (phonetic) a little bit about grant writing -- divinity students ought to have it all the time, don't you think?

I worked just this summer helping develop a new ministry, turning it into a 501(c)3 called Joseph's House. I do a lot of work with small faith-based organizations, particularly African-American or black church --

And what Joseph's House will need for three or four years, like many of the new ministries, they're going to need mentoring. They're not going to need a workshop on capacity building. They've got to build their Board of Directors. They had to teach their board of directors how to work the community, and at the same time do program planning, and set their meetings.

This is the dirt inside the fingernails of program development, which the theorists around the Beltway really don't understand, and they irritate me -- I'm sad to say that.

But that's really what needs to be done. So if you've got 19,000 cities in the country, and 3000 counties, and you're going to do an initiative; 300 pastors, training them, that doesn't mean diddly.

What you're really gonna have to do is develop a community policy. We don't have no urban policy. And then we're gonna have to get down to the details, and who's gonna run the meetings, and who's gonna keep the notes, and who's gonna pay for it? And we need a reconfiguration of the relationship between the religious community, and the not-for-profit, and the public community.

And until we do that -- if corporate America is spending gazillions on business coaches, what's wrong with coaches for nonprofits to participate in trying to solve, manage, or prevent some of the worst problems on the planet?

But it's all talk, it's all big talk. I mean, we really and truly have to become mentors. That means that foundations have to buy university time, and they have to buy it to solve local problems, not come up with another idea about what we need to study next.

And the structures are all in place, they just need to be reconfigured and rethought-through. And there aren't many people that understand community, except the practitioners. So who do they talk to? Each other? To get the technical skills to do the things they need to do? So, we need to rethink things.

MR. CURTIS: The structure is in place in many ways. I mean, Joe McNeely is the founder of DTI and it's the premier organization for providing technical assistance to CDCs. Eisenhower Foundation, you know, does technical assistance to develop boards, does technical assistance to teach management, does technical assistance to ensure staff leadership that doesn't burn out. I mean, that's not rocket science. It can be done.

MR. CNAAN: You know, you ask the question about training and knowing how to write grants. That's the wrong question, and I'll explain in a minute why.

About three years ago, I sent one flier to every place of worship in Philadelphia, and I invited them for Saturday, full day of lectures, on a variety of issues relating to the faith-based initiative, including half-day workshops on grant writing.

Usually, when I send fliers I get about 20 people coming. That day we got almost 700 clergy or clergy representatives coming. I mean, we had to call our vendors and triple the amount of food, the lunch, because we never expected so many to come -- we didn't ask for them to tell us because we expected a hundred, and we were generous and we ordered food for 200, not expecting that so many people would come. Of course, every session was standing room only, because no matter what you talked people entered. And of course, the most popular was the grant writing.

What you found is a majority of them, as you said, were a hundred member or lower congregation. And when you talk with them about the technicals of writing proposal, that was easy. I mean, it's technical. It's craft. You can learn it.

But then when you say to them that "You have to have somebody who will manage the books," and "You'll have somebody who will be the professional, who will have to run the project," and that the building has to have heating, a working boiler all winter long, suddenly many of them realize that it's much more than the technical craft of writing a proposal.

So basically, what we ended up -- and we were more successful than the faith-based initiative, with five of them getting grants as a consequence of this meeting. Which out of 700 is not a whole lot, but they were middle to large size congregation, that have the infrastructure.

You can't start off a small congregation, unless -- and we have one exception, a very charismatic leader, who will take everything, and will run everything. But those people you can train, you can create, they come on their own.

MR. CURTIS: We'll have to wrap up the session. Peter, if you want to respond to Ramal's questions?

MR. UJVAGI: Yeah, I just want to do this real quickly. I think we've obviously touched a real chord here, that I think is something that's important that needs to be followed up as well. I mean, again let me just say very quickly, I think Geno was about the role of faith-based organizations. He was about the role of the church. He was about the role of clergy and their leadership within a community.

But it's been turned on its head. And I think we need to take a look at this in a much more systematic way. For this whole weekend -- or these last two days -- we talked about coalitions. Well, the difference between a coalition that has the leadership of a church, and funding a particular denomination or a particular church, is totally different.

A quick Genoism again: I heard him say oftentimes to the Catholic clergy, "you have to be part of the community, you have to engage in a community, you have to invest in a community. If you don't, one day you're gonna wake up in an empty rectory next to an empty school, next to an empty church; that the churches can't just be dispensers of the sacraments. You have to be part of a community."

Monsignor Linder spent his life doing this. And doing it the right way, for goodness sakes.

So I would strongly suggest the foundation that it's not all one or the other. This really is something that needs to be explored much better, and we have to find a positive alternative, to where we go with this.

And let me just finish with this: Five years ago I was at a session that was called to celebrate Geno's life. Five years later, we've had another one of these sessions. For goodness sakes, I don't want to come five years later to one more. I don't know if I'm gonna be around. I don't want to come 15 years from now. I think we need to continue the discussion. I think we need to develop and figure out how to implement and develop Geno's vision, and others that he worked with, at a phenomenal time. And whether it becomes a Baroni Center or -- he's gonna get embarrassed if I say this -- it becomes a Baroni-Eisenberg center, there needs to be follow-through, follow-up, and I'm hoping that this time, the Eisenhower Foundation is going to be able to make that happen. I think it's gonna be very, very important to everybody.

MR. CURTIS: Peter has the last word. Thank you to our panel. It was an emotional session. Geno never shied away from emotion. He thought it was important, and so we want to respect everyone's opinion here, and I'd like to ask everyone to give a hand to the panel.

(Applause.)

We'll break until 3:30, and then we'll have our last session.

(Whereupon, there was a brief recess.)

MR. CURTIS: We're gonna start our final session of the day, if people could take their seats again. So this session is on final thoughts and last judgments, at least in the case of father Drinan and Reverend Franklin. We have four panelists today. First speaking will be Reverend Robert Michael Franklin Jr., who's Presidential Distinguished Professor of Social Ethics at the Candler school of theology at Emory University.

Then, Father Robert Drinan, who's Professor of Law at Georgetown University and of course former United States Representative.

Then, Pablo Eisenberg, Former Executive Director of the Center for Community Change, and now a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute at Georgetown University.

And then after those three presentations, Leila McDowell, who is director for capacity building of the foundation will facilitate a discussion about next steps, about how to move from ideas into advocacy and organization.

Before we start though, I'd like to -- I didn't see Joe McNeeley's hand until too late at the end of the last session. I promised Joe that he would have a word before we began this session and got too much into it.

VOICE: (Joe McNeeley) Thank you, Alan. I'm sorry that some of the principals in the last session left. I couldn't resist thinking that Geno would have stood up at the end of that last session and say what he said in other sessions: "we came here for a meal, and wound up fighting over the scraps." We took the bait and got sucker punched, and here we are fighting among ourselves about nuances of initiative, when the real issue is the budget doesn't have enough money for neighborhood groups, religious groups, agencies, local governments, to deal with the issues of the people who are most oppressed by the policies of this administration by our cutbacks in government everywhere, and by the way we've allowed our corporate structures to move.

And I have just as much concern for the small African-American and other congregations, be they conservative or liberal, who come to these training meetings and basically get sucker punched because they thought there was gonna be something here. We need them to be active. The fact that we are misleading everybody is I think criminal, and immoral.

And that's what we should be saying, instead of fighting over the nuances. I ran the programs for Geno at HUD, insofar as there was a faith-based office, and Alan was our protector on the tenth floor. I know how they operated. But it isn't the issue of the structure of the program, as much as it is the budget priorities, and lack of priorities on the right things. And we should be keeping our eye on the ball, instead of fighting over who missed the last defensive play. Thanks.