

Mitigating Religious and Ethnic Conflict 2006 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting September 21, 2006

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[START RECORDING - PART 1]

[Music plays]

ANNOUNCER: Good morning and welcome. At this time, we will begin our workshop. Please welcome our panelists for this morning. Please welcome our panelists for this morning, starting with His Highness Shaikh Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalif, Crown Prince and Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defense Force; Richard Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals; Vartan Gregorian of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Please welcome this morning's moderator, Zain Verjee of CNN.

[Applause]

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Good morning everyone, again, there's plenty of empty tables, two, one over there. Please just move in. Good morning. This is going to be another very interesting, exciting day. It's a long day, so be ready for it. One reminder, if you have questions as it goes along, just write them down, pass them to your table facilitators and that will help us for this second half. Thank you.

ZAIN VERJEE: Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests. It's lovely to see everyone here this morning. Welcome to our panel today on Mitigating Religious and Ethnic Conflict. My name, as you heard, is Zain Verjee. It's an absolute pleasure to be here with such a distinguished group of

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panelists also.

You know, we're told by many pundits and commentators that what we're witnessing is a term of Samuel Huntington, a phrase that he coined, a clash of civilizations. But the question I want to pose to all of us here today: Is that what we are really seeing? How much of this so-called clash is fueled by religion, by ethnicity, by ignorance? Is it also fueled by territory over resources, is it fueled by perceived national interests, over confusions essentially about culture and about identity and essentially how we see each other? Those are some of the things I want to discuss with our panelists today and I would love for any input that we have from the audience as well.

I wanted to start by discussing how we can have a dialogue of civilizations. There have been times in history when people have been able to live side by side in a way that is peaceful and that has promoted security in their regions. I want to start by introducing Reverend Richard Cizik, as we did a moment ago. I'd like to start by asking you, how do you see the East-West divide? How do you explain the massive gap that exists between the Islamic world and the West?

RICHARD CIZIK: I get asked this question a lot. I once confronted Samuel Huntington himself and had said that a panel ought to be organized. This was now 10 years ago on the

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subject of religion and foreign policy. It was picked up by a man by the name of Elliott Abrams, who, at the time - you'll know that name - was at the Ethics and the Public Policy Center and he invited Huntington. I'm getting there to answer that question, Zain. By saying that, amazing. Here we were just 10 years, if I had my dates correct and the very first conference being held on the subject of religion and foreign policy.

Isn't that amazing? And I would say that we are like Robert Whitnall described once at an American Academy of Religion meeting. He said - and he was speaking in this case just of Americans - he said we are standing in an elevator, Christians, Jews, Muslims and others, pretending as if somebody else isn't there, even though we know they are and not having the slightest idea how to talk to them. That's how he described it just for Americans.

Now, I would say, imagine the task internationally because religion formed in this country, as it does elsewhere, our politics, our policy, our identity, and our culture, and that's how important it is. And unless we get beyond these perceptions and misperceptions, beyond the history, beyond the ideologies that separate us, then we're in trouble.

ZAIN VERJEE: Vartan Gregorian, what about that? How do we get beyond that?

VARTAN GREGORIAN: Well, I am the living proof of fusion

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of civilizations and not conflict of it. I'm the living embodiment or fusion of civilizations rather than clash of civilizations. I was born in Tabriz and of Armenian background, so my first encounter was Azares. Therefore, I had to learn Turkish. The second encounter was Iranian official schools. I had to learn Persian. Then the Soviets came, I had to learn Russian. Then Soviets left, we had to go back to Persian school. But one thing dominated. I saw everything from below. I met Jews, I met Persians, I met Kurds, I met Azares, I met Russians, and then I met American missionaries, and I met American soldiers, British missionaries, Soviet soldiers.

What I'm trying to say, I have the microcosm of humanity as I grew up. So, to me, clash of civilizations with cultural values and ought to accommodate each other. During Ramadan we, as Christians, did not eat in the street. We had the right to eat, but we did not eat as a kind of respect for the Muslims. Muslims, when there were Christian funerals, took their hats off in honor of the dead. But at the same time, I also saw, we count everything in terms of Muslim and Christian. The black ants were Muslim ants, yellow ants were small, helpless Christian ants, and so forth. So that is the kind of background I came from and I was 15 when I went to Lebanon, so I had to learn French and encounter French culture.

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But I'm saying all of this to come to answer your questions. When I grew up, there was no clash of civilization. Because there were no civilization. There was only one civilization and Persians and Arabs and the Turks with [inaudible] civilization. Each nation, each one brought their gift to the table of civilization. Each culture was a contributing stream to the civilization. It is later that I found out that there was discussion by Oswald Spangler, civilizations rise and die, 26 civilizations and then to Huntington, clash of civilizations. And I published a book, *Islam: A Mosaic, Not A Monolith* and Mr. Huntington objected to that, that he had never used the term monolith. But that's a fact that we cannot categorize because since we have Reverend here, I'll cite Bishop Pike.

When I was at Stanford, I heard the most moving speech by Episcopal bishop of California, he said categorization is sin. The moment you categorize, you're able to dehumanize. And the moment that you categorize, you are able to stereotype people, and as a result, I've been always conscious and always sensitive not to categorize. It's out of categorization that's helped come Islam phobia. It's out of categorization that's come anti-Semitism. It's out of categorization that's come anti-Christian or anti-Buddhists or anti any kind of thing.

So when we say clash of civilizations or East-West,

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I always see variations of it, because last time when East-West existed, the Byzantine Empire, Roman Empire East-West.

Also, I have to mention, this other sensitive issue. Whenever we try to form a struggle or fight among kids, a policeman came because whenever our being won a football game in Tabriz we had to run. But we tried to inject religion into it, that he offended Prophet Muhammad. And we said no, he offended Prophet Jesus Christ. Policeman slapped both of us, said get the hell out of it. Because nobody wanted to deal with that issue. That was such a sensitive issue that everyone from teacher to others wanted to teach you, that these are not easy things, insults you can hurl against Christians, against Jews, and not without consequences. That's what I want to say about that.

[Applause]

ZAIN VERJEE: Well, let's bring that today, just over the past few weeks. Your Highness, I'd like you to address this. When we look at the words that the pope said recently, for example, in Germany, quoting the Byzantine Emperor, the 14th Century Byzantine Empire and his remarks on Islam and the prophet. Even the cartoon controversy that happened earlier this year, and the kind of reaction that it fermented in the Arab and Muslim world. How do you explain that, about how it's perceived and why it's reacted to that way?

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SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: Well,
good morning everyone. As you can I drew the short straw in
the green room. No, I can explain it as well as -

RICHARD CIZIK: It's because you're a tall man.

[Laughter]

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: Obviously,
I think those remarks were not intended to cause the reaction
that they did. Now, the Holy See as a policy of not being
quite as open as say, or, as malleable as a regular politician.
So, the apology that was issued was I think unprecedented in
papal history. This should be accepted by most people as a
very generous and decent thing to do, and I certainly do.

Why the reaction? Well, I think it was insensitive and
I think that the way that the pope had addressed the issue of
the prophet [inaudible] Mohammed really offended quite a lot of
people. I mean, there are issues central in any culture to the
identity of - or the soul, if you will - of any one group. It
could be iconography, it could a person, it could a name, it
could a historical event. And if we are to understand one
another, I think we really need to understand each other's
symbols and understand each other's issues in a way that
transcends our own.

Because certainly, in any dialogue between any group of
people, the first thing that needs to be understood is that we

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are all equals. There are no better or worse people in any respectable dialogue. Really, there are very few right and wrong answers. There are compromises that are reached in agreement with two different views.

So, I, of course, am appalled by some of the reaction that you see from some small individuals, some very angry individuals. Of course, there have been some very unfortunate events and I, actually, am very sorry that those have occurred in the name of Islam, because they certainly don't represent the Islam that I believe.

And as far as the cartoons, or the Danish cartoons, again, I think that comes from a real lack of understanding of the significance of some of the main symbols that are important to a Muslim. So, again, this in no way excuses any of the awful or atrocious or evil things that were done in response to those things, and I think really what we must do when we see things like this is double our efforts to try and explain to the world what is important to us, but yet, at the same time, recognize what is important to the world and respect that in return.

ZAIN VERJEE: And often doing it through direct dialogue. Reverend, I know that you've been involved in some of your own work, personally speaking to extremists on the other side, dialoging with them directly. Can you give us a sense of

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your experiences and what we can draw from that?

RICHARD CIZIK: Yes, let me answer that by asking the Crown Prince, Your Highness, this question. It was raised in *Time Magazine* the pontiff has a point. Let me ask you the question that Jeff Israeli asks. He says, "The essential question," referring now to the pope, he said was this, "is this conviction that acting unreasonably contradicts God's nature always and intrinsically true." And this is question you see not reserved only for the Islamic world, it's for we as Christians as well.

So I think that the reason, Zain, I got into the challenge of this interfaith dialogue is because I was willing to challenge myself and challenge my community and that is not always easy, and yet I apparently have a flaw in my character, which means that I go for the difficult ones.

ZAIN VERJEE: So tell us about that.

RICHARD CIZIK: And somebody said, Richard you could be on that climate change panel, but let's not go there. The point is this. I want to challenge my community, you see, not just to tolerance, which is an acceptance and a respect for the other, for you and others. It's not just tolerance, it's to go beyond tolerance, to principle pluralism in this country, which, for my definition, means no religion has a privileged place. And I guess for an evangelical to say that is

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controversial in my community, but I believe it. I believe in principle pluralism. And from there, I would say one step even further, which is to say partnership, partnership which acknowledges that God can actually work through other people and other faiths to accomplish his purposes in the world, and that that is intentional on his part and that I don't need to be threatened by that.

ZAIN VERJEE: So when you're meeting and dialoging face-to-face with people that one may refer to as extremists, take us into the room with you. Tell us, like, the conversations with you.

RICHARD CIZIK: Here is an example. We had begun a dialogue and in Morocco, and I had made a number of visits. In the meantime, prior to going over with an anticipated delegation. An American Evangelist goes to Morocco and he had asked me, should I go? I said, only if you go quietly and it's for the purpose of service, humanitarian service, and do not call the press, please, and to leave quietly. But, if you're interested in service and not evangelism, then go. Well, one of his well-intentioned friends alerted him to the press, there were big articles, evangelicals were now coming into Morocco and you can imagine the reaction.

So I went over, Zain, I went over to meet. Here's what happened. I met the PJD Party. Now these are my co-

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religionists in a sense, these are the quote-unquote "conservatism Islamists," if you want to use that term. Not really Islamists, but they are the strongest willed and rising political party in Morocco. In meeting with them across the table, there was a common sense if American Evangelicals can dialogue with the PJD Party, Ischicom and other parties in Morocco, then truly we can have a dialogue. But in the meantime, you see, what had happened was, the press had gotten this story that, well, the evangelicals were coming to Morocco. Well, you can imagine that. But in face-to-face dialogue then and subsequently, I truly believe that we have a meeting of the minds. A meeting of the minds, at least to say that we need that partnership that I've described, to go beyond tolerance, to go beyond even this principle pluralism, which we accept in this country, which I would frankly like to teach overseas, to a partnership that says there is something so much at stake here that if we do not engage with one another, face-to-face, so that I am seeing you in ways I didn't see you and you are seeing me in ways you didn't see me. That if we do that as a poet by the name of William Stafford said, not only will the prevailing other models prevail. Not only will these outside models of violence prevail, you see - we will have a meeting of the minds.

ZAIN VERJEE: I'd like Vartan to weigh on this. I mean,

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are we talking about a partnership, a pluralism, tolerance of the successful projects that you've been engaged with? But the reality to today, Vartan, on the ground is that the majority of people in this world, particularly as we see it becoming more and more polarized of a politics and ideology and religion don't see each other that way. It's more a clash of ignorance of anything and a fear of the other and the unknown. How do you transcend that and bring it down to the reality on the ground today?

VARTAN GREGORIAN: What surprises me that in all of this discussion about the pope, there was no mention of Vatican to what John Paul II did. The fact that there had been so much mileage covered in terms of including Muslim community around the world, after all this century of casting them aside, including inhuman race and not only here, but in afterlife as well, and so forth. It may be small to some of you, but for the big deal, but hard time met with Vatican with Pope John Paul II, there were many manifestos issued and so forth. Not a single newspaper provides context.

Second, the clash exists now is division and misconceptions because we have lots of ignorance about history. Even in our United States. We live in a historical age. Lots of ignorance about history, lots of ignorance about religions, including among Christians. Once I asked eight denominations,

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all of them believe in Christ. Well, what does separate you? They could not say it. We are Methodist, you are Lutheran, but we don't know separate us Presbyterian, Evangelical, they could not. What surprises me during Renaissance and Reformation, Luther was sponsored, for example, by German princes and others were sponsored by the Emperor. Politicians use religion to advance secular goals. Now, all over the world, religious establishments are using secular power to advance religious goals. That's fine, it's their right to. But there is no theological debate. Theologians of all sort, including insignificant ones who have no standing, issue a factoid, a legal opinion, and all of a sudden everybody thinks Islam thinks that way.

What has surprised me, is not politicians and others who engage in this, but why theologians are not involved in discussion. Muslim theologians amongst themselves, Christian theologians among themselves to try to reduce division. That's one of the key issues. If you want something constructive, the first thing I would do is introduce cultural geography, cultural anthropology, people to know where people live, what they believe, what they have in common with us. Not too many people know that Abraham is the founder of three faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. That the reason Muslims cannot make fun of Jews and founder of Christian patriarchs,

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because all of them are their prophets. They cannot make fun of Moses, they cannot make fun of Abraham, Isaiah, and so on, or Jesus either. But people don't know, including Muslims, don't know their history. They may know their Koran, but they don't know their history. They don't know that the entire history of Islam and, forgive me for saying this, there has not been single act of unity. Three successful prophets, Mohammed was assassinated. There are many centers, divisions of Islam, from Agdodaba to Bagdad, to Damascus, to Delhi, to Isfaron [misspelled?] later. To Cairo, so we don't know their differences. It's too lump, it's easy together, it's easy to generalize, it's easy to condemn, but not know.

So lack of knowledge, you're actually right, is clash of ignorances because politicians pick up what theologians or religious leaders are saying and kept running, but religious leaders stayed behind the scenes. They are never challenged. So that's my point. There should be more theological dispute and against it in Renaissance time and for it now. If I would have a chance I would put all the most living Christian theologians as world's greatest figures on the *Time Magazine* cover and let them debate each other. Let them show their knowledge and ignorance. We don't know on what basis they make their pronouncements. The pope, we are going line-by-line analyzing it. I have not seen a similar analysis of Muslim or

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other theologian theological disputes. Which line was taken from Prophet Mohammed saying, which one was taken Al Birani, which one? They don't do it. If you don't do it then slow becomes the dominant theme and that's what we're doing. We issue slogans and people pick up and fight, but nobody questions the essence of it. So I'm welcome to question and go over the pope, but I like at the same time question all the other statements that are made with equal analysis, equal ferments if need be on the part of the same people if somebody distorted prophets saying or the spirits and Koran and so forth.

[Applause]

ZAIN VERJEE: And the media loves slogans and we pick up on that and lead with that all the time. Your Highness, I wonder if you can also add to that. Where are the Muslim theologians? Where are the Muslim moderates? Why is it in the Arab and Muslim world it's the extremist what once were the fringe appeared to be taking center stage and very little among the Muslim leadership is being said and done about it that's effective?

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: Are you sure?

ZAIN VERJEE: That's effective.

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: That's

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effective. Well, if you continue to focus on 10 guys with slogans that say death to American and all the rest of it gore, some extremist terrorist group like al-Qeada, which is much more serious than the 10 guys with the slogan. Then you will, of course, think that the whole Islamic world is just full of a bunch of maniacs.

But if you look to things like the Sadeed, Riyhad Declaration, or the Amaan Declaration, or the Grand Mufti of the capita, the Haran, speaking out racial intolerance, religious intolerance, when you look at the statements that we make all the time discussing this issue, then you can start to see that yes, there are.

What also must be noted is that the Islamic is not a monolith, it is a mosaic, and there are many nations in the Islamic world. There are 22 Arab nations in the Arab world alone. If you add in all the other Islamic countries, it's much greater than that.

So if you were to look in Malaysia, what they are doing to combat extremism or Indonesia, or as far away as Morocco, you would start to see that there are people engaged as in politics, which is all local, religion is all local. I mean, the relationship that a human being has with the spiritual world is delivered through a learned person and that learned person is either a priest or a mufti or a rabbi, at least in

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our parts of the world. And it is important to educate those people on the message that they deliver.

Let me just give you an example of an existing dialogue or a deepening of dialogue between civilizations. The relationship that my country has with the United States started in 1889 and it started with a group of missionaries, who are still there today. They started operating a hospital, it's called the American Mission Hospital. That's 100 years ago. That is one of the oldest foreign relations links this country, probably with the number of countries around the world. So they are free to practice their religion. They are free to discuss with local citizens the beliefs that they have. Some people have converted. We don't mind this. This is something that goes on in Bahrain. They have served a very important role in healing the sick. And, in fact, when the hospital ran into problems, the whole community gathered together in a fund charity drive to provide equipment and a new building.

So I don't believe that we can just reduce this whole debate to slogans or perceptions or media hype. I really think that you need to go to the community, you need to talk to the people, and it starts by winning people one by one. So, and not judge, really, that is the really important thing.

RICHARD CIZIK: Let me pick up on that and to say that when evangelical evangelists and, believe me, there's a

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difference between the two. Evangelical is the broad term for the movement, which for those outside America is by Gallop and others' estimation, 25-percent of the general public, could be as high by recent surveys just in the last *Washington Post*, 47-percent saying they are Bible-believing, but anyway, you're talking about a quarter of the public. When some of the evangelists in that broad community after 9/11, Your Highness, came out and described Islam in terms that were derogatory, the National Association of Evangelicals convened a meeting in Washington and a consultation on Islam, in which misseologists, pastors, scholars and others came forward with a statement that resonated when it was released around the world, which said we challenge our community not to talk this way.

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: Thank you.

RICHARD CIZIK: You're welcome. And it, in large measure, it stopped. Not always, but you have to confront, as you said, individuals face to face. Some of that continues and some of those who use that language, I would suggest unbeknownst to most of you here, are becoming pariahs in our own movement. Why? I say, Amen. Why? You see, because you can't talk that way. There is a private language of faith, there's a public language of citizenship.

A friend of mine, Abu Patel, says well, we need as well as public language of faith. Well, I say, we came out with a

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public language, a statement, you see, for civic engagement and surveys show that in those communities where there is violence that exists between faith groups, it's preceded by a lack, a dearth, an absence completely often of the links of engagement. Interfaith links of engagement that help alleviate, mitigate that.

So I think resolving this conflict. By the way, I told Samuel Huntington, you don't understand evangelicals. He said, you're right, I don't. I said you don't understand evangelicals and consequently, you pose a paradigm that operates inconsistently with what even our gospel teachers, namely that we are pessimists intent on a conflict that never ends with others in the Muslim world. I said, that's not evangelicalism.

VARTAN GREGORIAN: His Highness made a very important point about diversity of Muslim world, if we can call it Muslim world, we don't call it Christian world, we call it Muslim world, Muslim countries, is my preference. But second would be that we always go after the loud noises rather than sane noises. Even the United States, Farrakhan dominated United States media because anti-Semitic rubbish statements and anti-Catholic and so forth. The sound of Elijah, Mohammed, but 500,000 followers in Chicago never makes the papers, the head of the Sunni group never makes the paper because he does not

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utter those things.

So we have to be able also to show the other face of Islam, Muslim communities around the world where people live together, where utterances are challenge. And as far as I'm concerned, it will be great if evangelical publish this in all Arab papers front page, full page. You'll see more propaganda that way for evangelicals than issuing for American audiences does not help. We has also to challenge the rest of the world to read where you stand because they don't understand the diversity of American evangelicals that categorize us by necessity or ignorance categorize them and us.

ZAIN VERJEE: We are going to take a short break for now. I'd like everyone here to jot down your questions if you haven't already, and when we come back we will pose them to our panelists.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: You know the drill, but you see the question that's on the screen. Let me just refine a little bit. I think this was a fantastic discussion. Now you should challenge the panelist of what you are going to be discussing to come up with really concrete steps that you think can be taken to address the problems that were identified and again take the opportunity you are at tables where you have a mixture of people. Be shameless. If there is somebody there who you think could support one of your programs and you have an idea

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that comes up, use this opportunity. That is what this is about. So the question is what different institutions can do, school, universities, religious institutions to bridge this divide.

Two technical comments. The first is there is still pretty empty tables. Let's try to consolidate the tables because otherwise here there is going to be a one person discussion down there and that may not be the best. The second thing, apparently we've added a category. I don't know what this means, but for the facilitators there's a category called Other, to put other comments. I'm sure that the facilitators understand that better than I do. Anyway, have a good discussion.

[END RECORDING - PART 1]

[START RECORDING - PART 2]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Thank you. May we have a round of applause, welcoming back our panel and our moderator, please?

[Applause]

ZAIN VERJEE: I think we're ready to start again. We got some excellent questions from everyone here in the audience. We only have about nine minutes, so I'll request our panelists to keep your answers short so my questions can go long.

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One question that we have here that, Your Highness, perhaps I'd like you to address. Why keep focusing only on Islam? After all, there's a clash of civilizations within all religions right now and that's something I think is important. Sort of the differences within Islam that you have addressed already, but how do you see that and how important is it to address the differences within?

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: While that's very true, I think we must always respect the fact that there is a lot of fear generated about Islam these days. So, the more we can do to dispel that fear about having that conversation with Muslims and Jews and Christians and Buddhists and Hindus and whoever, the better. I agree with you, I mean, there are lots of differences among many of the religions and many of the communities around the world. But I stand ready to discuss and to expose myself as a young Muslim who is internationally globalized, for lack of a better term, to the rest of you to show you that, you know, there are people on the other side trying to do the right thing.

ZAIN VERJEE: Reverend, can you weigh in on that too? What about the dialogue within the Christian evangelical movement as well, where one perhaps may consider examining their own differences?

RICHARD CIZIK: Oh, absolutely. The biggest change is

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a change in attitude that is occurring in the leadership of the evangelical movement away from, if you will, well, some call it the religious right or the right-wing, I prefer to call them corner dwellers. These are people who, in an echo chamber, talk to themselves and so the biggest change as a total change in attitude. Unfortunately, the reality is that by surveys, 37-percent admit a prejudice against Muslims. Thirty-seven-percent admitted and that is what we have to address in our movement and what we are aiming to do through lots of programs here and abroad and we can go there.

ZAIN VERJEE: Vartan, we talk about programs, but I also want to talk about policy. Even though there is the dialogue on the one hand, there is successful initiatives as we've talked about as well, but when you look at the Middle East, for example, and the region and U.S. policy in that region, when you talk to a lot of Arabs and Muslims, they say the center of the problem is U.S. policy and support for Israel. How do you view that in terms of the context of what you are trying to achieve, a dialogue of civilizations where policy in the region tends to create more of a divide?

VARTAN GREGORIAN: Unfortunately, the Arab-Israeli or Palestine-Israeli issue is one of the more vexing problems. In this country there's no clear dialogue, in a sense. There's statement because everybody is cautious. The best dialogue I

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have ever seen happening on this issue is in Israel and I would have loved to have this conference in Israel because I got many more diverse views than anywhere else, number one.

[Applause]

VARTAN GREGORIAN: Number two, I want to mention one thing that we are, last night I was with President [inaudible], Counselor of Foreign Relations and this again is a very polarized issue. Because the issue is not, I have to brief, the issue is not reality alone, but Israel's perception. Let me go back to one issue Iran, I'll take as an example, has one and one half, two centuries great relation with United States. The first station to be given out of Morocco most favorite nation treaty arrangement was Iran 1856. Missionaries there did not convert anyone, maybe one or two in one and one half century. But they educated lots of Iranians and established modern hospitals and so forth. And then, coming back, we have to accept that during the Mosaic period that's caused back in the case of Iran we made the mistake in cooperating with Altol Shirani, which religious leaders Iran don't want to mention him. Altol Shirani conspired to overthrow Bosidicks so that monarchy, so did we. Because we are worried about the Cold War communist takeover of Iran. The same way now we judge everything in terms of category and ideologically.

So if we accept that we made a mistake - if we had not

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overthrown Mosaic, maybe Iran would be a nationalist and secular Iran and would have accomplished things they want. But we don't discuss this thing because it always come to issue of guilt, admitting mistake, apologizing and so forth rather than explaining.

In the case of other thing of imperceptions, I think one of the important things, how to bridge the gap between not politicians, but intellectual class of Arabs and Muslims and religious leaders of Muslims and Christians. Today I did not see a single Muslim theologian, maybe there are, theologian from old school to be here. Those are the people we need to engage.

ZAIN VERJEE: What needs to be done to bridge that gap, though?

VARTAN GREGORIAN: Well, very quiet diplomacy first, not public debate. Quiet discussion, one on one, with groups. Our corporation has track two with North Korea, track two with Iran, namely for 10 years we talk, we talk on every issue. If something comes up, you don't have to go to zero point.

In the same kind of track two that happened in South Africa, I was told by Brian Mocktary that it took five years of negotiations between Mandela in jail and the cleric on everything, the size of the flag, the national anthem, how would constitution, property rights, everything, before they

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concluded. But with impatient we would like everything to be so immediately to the satisfaction of all and that's not possible. So, therefore, I advocate dialogue between the Israelis and Arabs, between Israelis and Muslims, between Christians and Muslims, not in open, advertised, but quietly in order to find common ground.

ZAIN VERJEE: Reverend?

[Applause]

RICHARD CIZIK: The most, let me follow up. Walter Russell Meade, in a piece I would recommend this month called *God's Country* subtitled "The Evangelicals," says the most important dialogue that needs to occur is between evangelical Christians and Muslims. That's what he said. And he says it's not the fundamentalists, you see, who have a pessimistic, you ought to know the difference between the evangelicals and the fundamentals. The fundamentals have a pessimistic view of future and they have this perception, unlike evangelicals and liberal Christians, that there's an unbridgeable divide between the believer and the unbeliever. So you put together, you see, those two factors, no wonder the *Left Behind* series has the general secretary to the U.N. as the anti-Christ. That is really craziness, but you see that combination of pessimism and that unbridgeable divide between the fundamentalists is really what has disenfranchised, you see, evangelicals from the bigger

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conversation because people think we believe that.

We don't believe that. We believe, as Meade points out, there's a common ground that evangelicals have with the rest of the world, especially Muslims, that we need to take advantage of and yet we're excluded because well we're perceived well as those crazy's over there.

ZAIN VERJEE: Okay. Your Highness.

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: I could say the exact same thing about the fundamentalists in my religion. It's not us, it's them, let's keep those guys on the fringes, let's talk. [Laughter]

[Applause]

ZAIN VERJEE: A number of the questions from you all have been about the media. What kind of role can the media play in promoting dialogue and being a lot more responsible? I would like to hear very quickly one thought from each one of you, what the media can do better that it's not doing.

Reverend.

RICHARD CIZIK: Don't go to the voices who represent themselves. I'm absolutely convinced the media puts voices. I don't need to say their name on CNN or Fox News, because they want almost to pigeonhole us, to put us in a box. Oh well, they're entertaining. Well, I'm tired of that kind of entertainment. I would like serious discussion from real

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people who have real constituencies that must be engaged on this issue or we are in big trouble.

ZAIN VERJEE: Vartan.

RICHARD CIZIK: The media could help a lot.

ZAIN VERJEE: Vartan.

VARTAN GREGORIAN: I think what Bill Cosby to humanize African-Americans' middle class and so forth for the rest of America and the world, the same thing should be done maybe in a Muslim family in America or somewhere else, their values, how they interact, how they interact if they are in Brooklyn, how they interact with local Jewish grocer, how they interact with police, how they interact when their son is in the United States Army, how they interact with the Muslim chaplain, mainly to give face and content to this entire community, which is not a category, but has not become individualized.

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: I absolutely agree with those statements.

ZAIN VERJEE: As a member of the media and CNN, specifically, I take everybody's point here, but since I'm here, I think it's only fair if perhaps I can something very briefly. Well, sorry. It's true what you say. Our problem is that we have 15 seconds, one and a half minutes to report a story. You're not going to get depth and you're not going to get context. Is that right? No. But, that's the way that our

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news wheel turns.

I certainly think that there could be a lot more responsibility in the way we portray things. I think that's up to individual journalists. There's some very, very good journalists that do some excellent work and know these issues. It's not all of them that way. One thing, if I may say, sitting from where I am in terms of book guests and getting opinions and bringing out the moderate views that you keep raising, which are the majority, they are less prone to come forward. I mean, you'd be surprised to know how hard it is for me to find the moderate voice. In fact, I shouldn't be hunting for one, but it's very, very easy. [Laughter] Do you know how much a satellite cost? See, it's also about money. [Laughter] Anyway, that's the point. So if it's easier to access and you're in our faces all the time then it's easy.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: If I can just summarize the panel discussions, then we're going to come back. It's not over and I'm going to take what Zain just said as her commitment on behalf of CNN to do better. [Laughter]

[Applause]

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Well, I think today we really got down to business because we have some very concrete suggestions that were made. I'll read through them, they're going to be on the screens and, actually, I'll pass them to all of you. You could

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talk about them for the remaining five minutes or six minutes. The first recommendation, which is I think something that came out in the first question, is not just a focus on Islam. We always get criticized here at CGI that it's always Islam and the rest of the world, we're part of that same stereotype of thinking that the problem with Islam. I think we all have to do better. That could be our commitment.

A number of suggestions about education. Interfaith education at a young age in schools is another recommendation that comes a little bit later about perhaps engaging immigrant communities. Communities from other backgrounds, in developing curriculum and educational programs in specific countries.

Media, there was a recommendation about more media, good stories. Positive models of interfaith dialogue and also a role of the arts, music, movies, which is precisely what we're going to talk about in our next panel.

There also was - this is more of a policy issue - but easing up some of the visa restrictions, which in this country in particular have made it extremely hard to have the kind of cultural exchanges and dialogue at a time when all our political leaders are saying that it's needed, so they're going to have to face that contradiction.

And then, finally, one idea, which was to create a world religious organization modeled after the WTO to set terms

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for religious exchange, religious dialogue. That probably needs a little more digging to know exactly what it would mean, but that's what you could all talk about when you talk to each other.

We've got five minutes left, on to you.

ZAIN VERJEE: If there's one thing, Vartan, that you could leave people in this room with to action, to be effective in terms of promoting a greater understanding between cultures and religions and communities, what would it be?

VARTAN GREGORIAN: At Carnegie Corporation, we have started a reformation of schools of journalism. We have now 11 schools. We want content rather than technique. We want educated, cultured journalists because, in my opinion, they're the most, other than librarians and teachers, they are the most important ingredients to safeguard our democracy. We need educated, cultured, prominent journalists like 1950s, as when they speak they form public opinion, rather than give short-term messages, interrupted by all kind of diseases, all kinds of disasters and others, which does not allow people to have any continuity of paying attention to importance of it. So we are doing that. We already have five and we start another five and we hope to expand that two-year program in all our universities in order to bring arts and sciences and schools of journalists along with law, business and others to give

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journalists the best training and best culture that they can have.

ZAIN VERJEE: So the people in this room, though-
[Applause]

ZAIN VERJEE: If they want to go away and write a check or get involved in an organization in other than sending it to Carnegie, what-

VARTAN GREGORIAN: We don't accept money, we give money.
[Laughter] Other than that, I would say, again, I'm not advocating for everybody else, my view would be president of NYU is here, John Sexton, if he thinks journalists are most important he should emphasize that. And making that journalists are graduating at NYU if they have a journalist, which they don't, should be the best educated. The other thing would be to have our curriculum match, like No Child Left Behind does not have social studies. So we don't teach Americans their own constitution, not to mention the rest of the world. So we have to teach culture geography. There are actual people living behind this so we don't rely on airline schedules to know how we jump from one city to the other, but we know what kind of people live down there as we fly over their countries.

ZAIN VERJEE: Reverend.

RICHARD CIZIK: Fund youth programs and adult

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dialogue. I think between evangelical and Muslims, I think that is very important, number one. Madeleine Albright, at our table said, hey, let's get literature for kids younger than even ten. Because, in her observation, they're forming these attitudes really early. So organizations like Inner-Faith Youth Corps and others aiming at the young, cross culturally and younger than even college, even younger than high school is where I think we have to go, with this education this valid.

ZAIN VERJEE: Your Highness.

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: I would say start with yourselves, keep your minds open, talk to other people that you see around you and build networks. Because in this room, we see the elites of the society and for us, the conversation's relatively easy. We need to find a way to translate to a wider audience and that is the real goal. Education, I would stress, is probably the most effective tool of doing that, so I would back up everything that's been said right now.

ZAIN VERJEE: I would suggest everyone watch more CNN.

[Laughter]

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: Good one.

ZAIN VERJEE: With respect to education and using the media and to the journalistic comments that you made and the

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disaster video and the bombing videos. Unfortunately, it's television and we need pictures and as we say, you know, it's sexy to have that. Is it right, not all the time. It certainly needs the context and the background. There are many television news programs that are interested in doing more long form documentary type work and are always looking with other organizations where they can be effective and passing messages by that.

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: I'm sorry, you misunderstood me. I'm not against showing earthquakes, disasters and so forth.

ZAIN VERJEE: [Inaudible]

SHAIKH SALMAN BIN HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA: Not even that. After showing your major news, people discuss about funeral costs of your home life, if you have insurance for funeral or whether you're using the right toothpaste and so forth. All the commercials that come after a serious discussion interrupt the seeking in one's consciousness the importance of news and that's what I was talking about.

[Laughter]

ZAIN VERJEE: Fair enough. Well, I'd like to thank our esteemed panelists here. They've been fantastic.

[Applause]

ZAIN VERJEE: Thank you. I'd like to invite Secretary

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Albright.

ANNOUNCER: Please stay in your seats our program continues. Please remain in your seats.

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT: Well, that was a terrific panel. Thank you very much, all of you. I'm now going to talk about the commitments from today. So could I ask Abu Patel and Omar Amanent to come on stage, please.

Very exciting to announce this project. The organizations that are involved in it are the Inner-Faith Youth Corps, IFYC, with the support of the James Jenson Genesis Group and the commitment is to create a professional video that documents IFYC's exemplary year long interfaith youth leadership exchange program and to really show the public the importance of interfaith youth programs around the world. The commitment is \$120,000 over fifteen months. They do need a little bit more, some \$40,000 to enable to fund more of the inner-faith youth exchange. The video is in good shape, but they really do need some more help. I think what's terrific about this is that the documentary will highlight the experiences of youth in the interfaith exchange program between Chicago's IFYC and Jordan Interfaith Action in Amman. IFYC will find the people to produce and direct the documentary and market it aggressively through media channels and broadband and it will use the documentary within the wide range of IFYC's

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training and presentations and speeches to promote the pursuit of peaceful interfaith communities worldwide.

I think in what we were talking about just now in the discussion groups, this is exactly the kind of a project that have legs, as we say. It will show the fact that the young people from Chicago and Amman doing service work in those cities as well as the exchanges that take place demonstrating really the power of youth as religious peace builders. I have to say I have a very special feeling about Abu. I met him here last summer, whenever, last fall, when we were doing this. I'm so impressed with the kind of work that they have done. I congratulate you for this and I look forward to talking and writing about you even more. Thank you very much. I will actually give you the certificate. Thank you very much.

The second project that I'd like to announce, and could I invite Don Storper, the CEO and founder of Putomia World Music and John Marks, president, Search for Common Ground to come up and join me? Well, what a pleasure it is. Great. And again this fits so well with the kinds of discussions that we were having. The organizations involved are the Putomia World Music and Search for Common Ground. And the commitment is to promote the use of music, film and other arts as tools to help resolve conflict around the world and the value is at least \$100,000 over three years. The Putomia World Music commits to

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giving Search for Common Ground \$1 million from every copy it sells of the CD One World. \$1, but you're going to sell at least a million. For every copy that you sell of One World many cultures a multicultural collaboration between some of the worlds leading musicians, Search for Common Ground will use this money to fund new programs that promote the arts, helping people from diverse backgrounds to build new relationships together.

In the past, Search for Common Ground has produced radio and TV dramas in a dozen countries, it holds Common Ground film festivals, it makes music videos of peace songs and has sponsored an art exchange between the U.S. and Iran. I think there is no question that artistic collaboration between people in conflict is a way to build respect and understanding and that both the CD and search for common grounds art based conflict resolution truly have a magical way of raising awareness about current ethnic and religious struggles. We at our discussion table, Susie was there, talked about the beginnings of what music and culture can do. It is the one thing that we really can find some commonality on. So congratulations. I think this is a terrific initiative.

I have to say I participated in a great event on Sunday when the Thelonious Monk Jazz Competition all got together and it's so evident what a difference music can make as good

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ambassadors.

Now, the last commitment for this session is, could I ask Mrs. Heidi Hatzill, president of the Hartford Seminary and Mr. Cornelius B. Pryor, philanthropist to come up, please? This is a very important activity in which Mr. Cornelius and Mrs. Gertrude Pryor are contributing and the commitment is to endow a Jewish professorship in interfaith relations at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut. The value is \$100,000 per year for five years. The endowment will fund the seminary's new Building Abraham Partnership's program a training program in Jewish and Christian Muslim relations.

It was first launched in 2004 and is developing a new kind of religious leadership. BAP, as it is called, prepares clergy for interfaith ministry and for addressing religious diversity. The endowment will secure a professorship and will maintain the current annual enrollment goals of thirty participants drawn equally from the three faith traditions. Again, this is a very exciting program that is growing. It grew from a simple pilot to a cutting-edge training program and has been recognized by other seminaries as a resource for their students. I think it is a very exciting project.

Hartford Seminary is the home to the oldest Christian-Muslim relations program in the United States, and it established a Jewish professorship in interfaith relations in

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2003 and, as I said, launched this BAP program in 2004. So, again, it fits in so well with the kind of suggestions that were made during our discussions. Congratulations and thank you very much for your work. Thank you.

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