

SPEAKER: Good morning, everyone. I'm sure everyone this morning was energized from yesterday, saw the snow on the ground, maybe even slept in a little bit and then found themselves rushing to get here. We anticipated that. So as a result, we thought to start off today, day 2 of DemocracyXchange summit, we would bring a Christian minister and a mindfulness practitioner to open up our day.

SPEAKER: Good morning. My name is Jason McKenney. I'm an Anglican minister and - check. The ministry that I do is community-based ministry and the ministry I'm based in is (inaudible). It's an interesting place because of the increasing pressures of gentrification but also because of the extraordinary experiments in radical democracy and post capitalist practices.

In my business as an Anglican priest I'm often asked to give sermons on a Sunday morning. It's slightly less common to be asked to be a sermon in a context like this. But that's what I've been asked to do.

I suspect that there could be some misgivings in the room about that happening and I get that. There are reasons that you are all gathered here on a Sunday morning and not somewhere else. So I have no illusions about persuading you to get to church or to mosque or to synagogue, to a sweat lodge or to a temple, but what I would like to do in just the next couple of minutes is to commend to you a practice, a practice that is cultivated in different ways in all spiritual communities because I think as engaged citizens, as innovators and change maker, as organizers, activists and intellectuals, as people with a deep commitment to democratic transformation, what we need and what spiritual communities have is a grammar of the spiritual, a grammar of the spiritual.

Put another way, I simply mean that this is a way of speaking about spirituality without necessarily dictating its content. Now when I say spirituality, I don't mean the opposite of materiality, I mean instead the more than material. That excess that adheres to our material practices and especially to our collective material practices. So it's this intensity, it's this meaning that is sometimes luminous, this experience or this quality, that we have all experienced at some point, even if it has flashed up only momentarily, perhaps during an intense conversation over several drinks, perhaps in an erotica encounter, perhaps in collective political action, perhaps in aesthetic experience.

Without a grammar, without a way of speaking about such intensities they either dissipate or become a kind of dragon that we chase. What religious communities have figured out is that it is with the intensive quality of collective experience that durable community can be formed and that people can be transformed. So even though you may be put off by traditional religion, it may be the case that you don't learn what to say about spirituality from these traditions but you might learn how to speak of the spiritual.

Movements of democratic change can benefit from the participation of religious and spiritual communities, not simply as representatives in a coalition but as communities, who at their best, have learned to reach solidarity and transformative practices in the abiding intensity of the more than material. And that thickened quality of the spiritual.

So I will conclude by offering one simple but important rule for any spiritual grammar, it's a rule that almost any traditional religion will recognize in some way or another, that is to say that sometimes the spiritual is best articulated not in speech, but in silence. And so it's on that note that I hand things over

to my friend and spiritual comrade Cheetah Anunko to share with us a practice of mindfulness.

SPEAKER: Good morning. I'm going to lead you through a very simple meditation practice. It's called the three-minute breathing space. Three minutes is notional. They say I can only have one. But it's a great little practice. It's something that you can do anywhere, any time throughout the day when you just need a little bit of a check in and a little bit of quiet.

So I'm going to struggle with my bell and then we will start, OK?

(Bell rings)

SPEAKER: In preparing for this practice, let's all try to sit comfortably with both feet planted on the floor and spines erect but relaxed. Close the eyes, if that is OK with you, but keep your eyes half shut and half open lowering and softening the gaze.

Bring your awareness to your inner experience and asking what is my experience right now? What thoughts, feelings and body sensations are here? Then redirecting your attention to focus on the physical sensations of breathing, following the breath all the way in and all the way out. Using the breathing itself to anchor you in the present moment.

Breathing in, I know that I am breathing in. Breathing out, I know that I am breathing out. And now expanding the field of your awareness around the breathing so that it includes a sense of the body as a whole. Whole body breathing.

Continuing this practice until the bell rings. As best as you can, bring this expanded awareness to the rest of your day.

(Bell rings)

SPEAKER: Good morning, everybody. We had a great day yesterday and thanks again to all the people who have been involved in this effort, from the sponsors, the volunteers, the production team, the speakers, the program advisory committee members, and all of you for being part of this today.

(Applause)

SPEAKER: I think we need a special shout out to all the wonderful volunteers who took time to spend, you know, more than just a weekend but almost a whole week with us doing various tasks and these volunteers span the gamut from a whole bunch of wonderful Ryerson students to people who are retirees and do this as their core kind of investment in communities, to various folks involved in all of our various organizations of the Canadian Film Centre's media lab and library and so on. Thank you very much to all the volunteers and please, give them a hug when you see them today..

(Applause)

SPEAKER: A survey about day one of the conference, please fill that out. It will help us be informed about how to improve offerings in the future. We're going to, at 5:00, after all the activities, we're going to come back here for those who are interested, and frankly speak. Obviously there's been a lot of points of connection, a lot of inspiration, a lot of challenging activity and people are going to go off and do work, hopefully in a different or more enhanced way, based on this conference, in all kinds of partnerships and all kinds of intersections and collisions.

What we'd like to do, for those who are interested in building the democracy community, we want to come back together at 5:00 and kind of review the conference but also have a bit of a discussion about

where to go in this realm of democracy Xchange acknowledging people are going to be doing most of the work in other venues as well.

We wanted to do also a special shout out to the young people who have come here from outside Toronto. All of you who have come from outside Toronto. This is approaching a national conference in terms of scope and reach. So we have a number of young people, an international conference, we have a number of young people from Logan Square Neighbourhood Association in Chicago.

(Applause)

A number of under graduates, so you will see them around.

(Applause)

And Simon Fraser University, again, thanks to our sponsors who are from those institutions. Very pleased to have them here and we have speakers from a whole bunch of places. Part of the Chicago connection is through Ryerson Leadership Lab and DemocraticXchange that we did in October and so we're reaching back to make those connections. Just to show you how this conference came together, it was through some of those relationships that the cochairs, the program advisory committee and others had with folks in North America and beyond.

Maybe on that theme, then, we'll get going with the very timely conversation, I'm really excited about having people who have been very close to power and are now a bit removed from power watching what's happening in the United States and Canada and around the world with respect to some of the populist forces that are at play and some of the both the positive and negative aspect of those populist forces that are affecting our democracies and what we can do about that.

So we've got a progressive voice and a conservative voice to offer. They will each give talks and then we'll move to the couches and have a bit of a debate and discussion and Q&A. So I will introduce Sarada Peri first. Sarada is a writer and communication strategist. She's a former speechwriter to President Barack Obama. She's a fellow with the Ryerson Leadership Lab here for four days in Toronto and Ottawa. She's an old friend. Give it up for Sarada Peri.

(Applause)

But because I have my speaking order wrong, I now have the privilege of also introducing (Laughter) Our first speaker who is not Sarada because she is going to respond to a great friend who is a former senior policy adviser to the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, from Thunder Bay, Ontario, someone who is doing great work at the intersection of conservative thinking and serious outreach to communities broadly, ran a fantastic panel on conservatism in the modern age yesterday, very happy to have with us Sean Speer.

(Applause)

SEAN SPEER: That I'm from Thunder Bay is the most important thing you need to know about me.

I want to thank the organizers for inviting me and for those of you who have woken up to join us this morning. It's a bit intimidating to go first, given that I'm following a presidential speechwriter - pardon me, I'm preceding a presidential speechwriter. You will have to grade me on a forgiven curve.

I will speak to you this morning about some of the most important questions facing societies. Why are populations turning to new and disrupted political vehicles. What does it say about our current political

and policy frameworks and what can we and should we do about it?

The questions are bigger than the tensions between efficiency and equity, freedom and equality, liberal and conservative or Democrat and Republican that we're accustomed too. We're not merely talking about competing preferences between the 40-yard lines of public debate. There's something more profound going on.

Some of these disruptive public sentiments are no doubt unjustified. They reflect the forces of ignorance and possibly worse. But the idea that the present populist moment can be principally explained by a combination of crudeness and racism is, in my view, a cop out.

To dodge by intellectual leader, it's an attempt to persuade ourselves that our basic assumptions are right and the public is wrong. A mix of redistribution and better communications isn't an adequate answer to what ails our politics, no matter how much we tell ourselves.

Those of us who believe in liberal democracy on the left and right to think more fundamentally how to make our communities and politics more inclusive and responsive. As I'll argue this morning, this ought to be a shared project. Too much is at stake.

I just refer to our different fires. Let me start with mine. I think it's useful for the purposes of being transparent and recognizing blind spots. I have a technocratic mind. I'm predisposed about thinking about these issues through a lens of government and public policy. In so doing, I can neglect the role of norms, institutions and other social factors.

I grew up in an entrepreneurial household and can tend to think about these issues through the lens of economic totalitarianism. I can, as a result, over emphasize the role of personal responsibility and under emphasize the existence of barriers in our society.

I believe in the efficacy of markets, the role of incentives but I can also underestimate the threat of corporate concentration, the community downsize of .

I'm a temperament ap conservative. Economic, social and political progress generally come s in the form of incrementalism rather than a big bang which will lead to inadvertent consequences. The risk, of course, is that my resistance to change can cause me to fall victim to a status quo bias.

I'm a pretty orthodox conservative thinker. Or at least I was. The past 36 months have caused me under go an ongoing process of introspection. I'm still a conservative. In fact, I've become more conservative but in other ways I've started to think more fundamentally about what the rise of populism tells us about con servetism. It's been a complicated journey, it has led me in new and different direction s. This exercise of self-analysis is now guiding my thinking about policy and politics.

I'm grateful for the chance to reason through the expressions with you for the next several minutes.

I start by asking why populism? I recognize that will are competing interpretations of contemporary populism. Some argue that it's principally a manifestation of economic anxieties. Others argue that it's driven primarily by cultural anxieties including status led. This is a nuance question. An economist Dan Roderick spoke at the University of Toronto last year and argued the two are inextricable. He's of course right but I only have is a 15 minutes, so I tend to err on the side of the former explanation.

Remember, educational attainment is the best determinant of Trump voters. That is to say the single best predictor of Trump voters is that they didn't go to college. The same goes for voters in the United

Kingdom. This is consistent about research between the research between education and labour market outcomes.

It's intuitive, we just have to look around us. General Motors is an example. We're going through a process of skills bias change whereby developed economies are paying larger returns for skills and educational credentials and have less demand for basic skills. The result is that they're increasingly few industries or professions with those without post secondary education can earn a good living and have economic security.

The rising age gap between those with post secondary education and those without is evidence of this trend. It's no surprise, therefore, that two thirds of the top 1% of earners have a university degree versus about 20% of those without post-secondary.

This is hardly unique to Canada. Research by the Hamilton project finds that workers with a college education are a majority in the time percren tiles. It has increasingly come to trump more conventional opportunity such as family structure.

The upshot is that we will have an economy that will continue to pay high returns with certain cre credentials or skills but under values traditional aptitudes such as physical strength and hard work.

The winners in this new economy fall into the former camp, the losers into the latter.

The trends of globalization and technology have disrupted or threatened traditional sources of middle class opportunity including many factory employment. One proof point. A recent study found had US manufacturing sector kept 2,000 levels of productivity and 2010 levels of production it would have required 20.9 million manufacturing workers rather than 12.1 million. That's nearly the equivalent of the productivity driven destruction of every job in New York City.

That scale of disruption has manifested itself not just in our economy but also in our culture and politics should hardly be surprising. The consequences have been well documented on the left and the right. We have observed growing evidence of financial insecurity and place-based dislocation and wage stagnation and we've observed increasingly disruptive behaviour amongst working class populations and a return to non-conventional politics.

These trends are, in my view, on the centre right, including Charles Murray, inextricably linked. The key here is the following. Economic opportunities increasingly bifurcated on one's education levels and geography. It's important to emphasize this is unique in modern history. The economics of geography have never been stronger. It of course leads to the question what can we do about it?

I've moved quickly through my presentation to get to this point. It's here where I think I have the most to offer the audience. Not in the form of answers but perhaps in the form of questions to try to guide this conversation across the political spectrum. The progressive predisposition to rediction - redistribution may be well intended but it's an incomplete agenda. Not only will it fail to fully address populist demands, it can come at the harm of the economic dynamism at the heart of society. It can't be overemphasized.

Analysis defending the proposal for 70% tax rate for high income earners in my view fails to address this tension, these trade-offs between efficiency and equity. The analysis is pre -- predominant concerned with revenue intake. The result may be higher levels of equality but the cost may come in

the form of less dynamism.

At its core, this morning's discussion, in fact, is about the question of tensions. It's where economic security, economic dynamism, efficiency and equity and so on. How we respond to these questions will, in my view, determine our politics for the years to come.

There are - I would just add, there are empirical considerations to bring to bear in tackling these questions but fundamentally they're at the nature, the left and right both have something to offer in how we respond to them. A proportion of political and policy response will require that we drop both sides of the ideological spectrum. The left's emphasis on institutional bears and social mobility and the role of public policy to break them down will be an essential component. The right's thinking about the role of families, the dignity of work and limits of state action will also play a key role. This is not be an all or nothing proposition.

Let me spend the last few minute it is talking about my own personal journey, what insights it may offer you as policymakers, scholars and social activists as you grapple with these questions.

The question, of course, in front of us is what can we do as those committed to democracy to arrest this trend towards populism on the left and right. My comments aren't about tinkering on the margins, they reflect a growing view that we require more fundamental changes to our economy, society and politics which is an odd conclusion for a conservative.

But as I mentioned in my introduction, my thinking is still being refined and have benefitted greatly from this weekend's exchange. I'm afraid you have to settle with a series of questions rather than a series of answers.

One, the current episode of globalization, what Roderick has called hyper globalization, has disproportionately harmed certain industries, regions and people in Western countries yet has also contributed to the most recent reduction in poverty. How can we judge a framework that increases domestic in equality but lowers global inequality. How do we think about that tension?

Two, can help to distribute welfare gains stemming from globalization from the winners to the losers in the form of higher taxes. Is this a sustainability strategy? How can we properly measure the efficiency and equity trade-offs? Are higher tax s on higher income earners justified as merely a political initiative? And for how long will the losers be prepared to accept a policy that is focused on buttressing the consumption but not focused on their inherent needs to be productive?

Three, inequality seems to be a motivating force in our politics. How do we define in equality? Should we care about it? Why? Does it even respond to public demands or are people asking for something else? People want - rightly want fairness but I'm not sure that's the same as equality and this is a tension that I think we're going to continue to have to grapple with on the left and right. There are ultimately big trade-offs between dynamism and security that I think are at the core of this ongoing effort.

Four, Canada has achieved world-leading rates for educational attainment. Now 50% of those between the ages of 25 and 64 have a post-secondary degree. This amount will grow even higher due to demographics, improved post-secondary access and the possibility for further nudges to target low income and other marginalised voices but recognizing the considerable population will never attend

post-secondary what should policymakers do to respond to their needs and interests? What does a pathway to a non-post-secondary future look like? How do we support the two thirds who go to university or college and the 35% who don't?

My fellow panellists yesterday observed would help conceptually at least to expand political responsive and and accountability. Yet some organizations are skeptical of localism due to bad experiences and concerns that certain communities and groups will be excluded. Advancing inclusion collusive vision, and lastly, if you accept the premise that redistribution of welfare gains resulting from a dynamic economy are necessary yet insufficient response to growing public sentiments to economic security, what more structural changes are we prepared to accept? Are we going to absorb welfare losses to provide more employment security for certain workers? What are the policy implications and will the public actually support an agenda that over time produces less dynamism and higher prices?

These are my view of the fundamental questions that we must confront as a society on both the left and the right. Especially the final one.. I'm afraid, as I say, I don't have answers. I'll still on a journey but I'm grateful for the chance to reason through them with you.

Thanks again to the organizers for inviting me. I really think we're at a cross roads and we shouldn't flinch from it. These conversations are dynamic, serious and unsure. The best we can do is be in the arena. And I'm grateful for the chance to join this morning. Thank you so much.

(Applause)

SARADA PERI: Sean's taller than I am. Can you guys hear me? OK.

Good morning. I want to thank the organizers for inviting me to be here today and Sean and Karim. It's a real privilege to be with you all and there's actually a brief moment about a month where it wasn't clear that I would make it to your lovely city. You may have heard we've had some trouble across your southern border. Our government shut down, the United States Federal Government actually shut down for more than a month. Thousands of government 'em plea -- employs were furloughed. And La Guardia airport in New York were grounding flights due to a lack of air traffic control staff who you definitely need to operate aeroplanes. So my flight was scheduled for last night so I wasn't sure whether the shutdown would affect airports in Washington, which is the centre of my country's dysfunction and also, as it happens, my home, and so it wasn't until Friday that President Trump relented, for now, in his pointless fight to build a wall on our southern border so the Government was reopened for at least another three weeks and so here I am.

All of this is to say, for any of you who are mesmerized by a populist politician, please be ware.

So I'm thrilled to be with you, and, you know, you all seem to have a functioning democracy and I may or may not apply for asylum while I'm here. And I also really enjoyed listening to Sean and found it really instructive to listen to a Canadian conservative, or what we in the States call a Liberal.

(Laughter)

(Applause)

So you might be unsurprised to find out that I really do agree with Sean on a lot of what he said and I will kind of - recap his assessment some of -- of some of our ills and his a cessment of the economic anxiety.

This is a giant subject so I'm just going to touch on the tiniest slice of it and I will offer thoughts as to what I see is the nature of the populism we see today and like your typical American, I'm going to do that by focussing on America because we can't be bothered to learn about any other country.

I also want to echo what Sean said, the challenges that we're talking about today really do transcend political ideology and I agree that we can't just tinker at the margins. We need a fundamental shift in our politics to address what are clearly trends that are alarming people on both sides.

The primary argument I will make is this: The populism we see in my country is inextricably linked with racial resentment and this is also true in other places where populism is on the rise, though to varying degrees and with varying reasons which I hope we'll get into in our discussion.

But in America, there's no question that populism and racial resentment are linked, as personified in the modern era by the rise of Donald Trump and I would argue that to overstate the role of economic anxiety, or rather, to speak of it in isolation outside of the context of social and cultural factors, and to therefore minimize the role of racism and racial resentment will only exacerbate what I believe is a crisis in our democracy. We have to face the truth if we're going to overcome. It.

The idea to come to and speak to you about populism, especially after Sean, was daunting. I'm not a political scientist, not an economist, or historian, I'm a speechwriter. On further consideration, it occurred to me that populism fundamentally is more about rhetoric than ideology. Put another way, populism is a thin ideology in the words of an actual expert, the political scientist, who argues that unlike fascism, populism is a narrow stance. It's a against the establishment however you define the establishment. It comes down to us versus them, the people versus the elite, a throw out the bums whoever they are perspective on everything.

It doesn't suggest who to replace. Like a fine wine, it needs to be paired with a more robust ideology and this is where we end up with the right wing authoritarian populism of Victor Orban and Donald Trump. It's how we end up with the left wing populism of say Bernie Sanders. That left-wing populism pits us, the ordinary people against the elite.

But the populism of Donald Trump is a narrowly defined us against not simply the elite at the top but a third group he accuses elites of favouring, the other - immigrants, racial minorities, even women. The right and left here have something important in common, though. The populist leader decides who gets to be a part of us. This is certainly true of Bernie Sanders who spent a lot of time in the election deciding. The kind of populism we're talking about today is the right-wing version and what is alarming is too many countries are seeing populist demagogues taking power but who consolidate power in undemocratic ways inching ever closer to authoritarianism.

Around the world free press, democratic organization, and in America, we can't understate the role that race plays in this and the specific role it played in the rise of Donald Trump. To understand why, it's worth briefly revisiting the history of populism in the United States. So late 19th century, after a severe economic recession a group of farmers in the south and west of the country faced mounting debt and rising prices because of monopolies that were benefitting from giant government contracts.

Think of the railroad and rail barons of the time. So in response we saw the rise of activists fighting against this trend forming economic cooperatives and starting self-help organizations. They went

onto form the People's Party. What they wanted was real structural reform.

This populist movement became dominant in the Democratic Party at the time leading to the presidential nomination three times of William Jennings Bryan, the guy who said you should not crucify mankind on a gold crosses. Bryan was a religious conservative Christian. One of his causes was fighting the teaching of evolution in schools but his populism type, economic reform with the social gospel, the role of religious values in America which was an interesting combination. However, there were still racial tensions even within the populism of old. This is after the civil war with newly freed slaves.

While some populists wanted to unite farmers and workers of all backgrounds, others were in staunch opposition making many African-Americans feel safer in the Republican Party at the time. Take the Georgian populist Tom Watson who became a dem demagogue in 1910 s and 20s. Now what I want to import through this rapid run through American populist history is from the beginning there was a tension between economic justice for some of the people and economic justice for all the of the people. There was a debate about who counted as us and who will be demonized by them.

We come to Trump whose slogan vehemently opposed entry into World War II. America first is a dog whistle. After the 2016 election, and I think this debate continues today, there was a lot of debate about what led to Trump's catastrophic win. Why did he make such gains with white voters without a college degree? And we're talking about white voters without a college degree. Much was made about a white working class out in the middle of the country that felt ignored by the Democrats and specifically by President Obama and Hillary Clinton. Ignored by an economy that had left them behind due to globalization and technology.

Reporters went out - went out of their way to report on these left behind Americans meeting them across the midwest and south trying to understand why they pulled the lever. Initially, the argument was that they felt ignored, as we talk about, and a lot of the reasons that Sean gave are valid but for decades, manufacturing jobs going offshore, hollowing out their communities with nothing to replace them they were fed up. The economy had left them behind so they voted based on their economic anxiety. How else could one explain the puzzling Trump voters, the millions of people who voted for the first black president, once, even twice, and then switched over to vote for the white nationalist in 2016? It must be economic anxiety. Surely they couldn't be racist because they voted for Obama.

Subsequent research has proven this theory wrong. Study after study has found that racial resentment was a far bigger driver than economic anxiety in the 2016 election. As the authors of a study released this fall wrote white voters with anti-immigration attitudes switched to Trump at a higher rate. We found little evidence that economic dislocation and marginality were related to vote switching in 2016.

In fact, researchers found racial resentment, in a sense, drove economic anxiety. And by the way, these studies have also uncovered another unsurprising factor in Trump voter motivation - sexism. That's not to say that economic anxiety and in particular the growing inequality we see in countries like mine and yours, doesn't have political consequences. But the nature of that anxiety is complex. Interwoven with racial anxiety as well and here again I have to separate my country from yours. We have a unique, particularly dark racial history, obviously rooted in the scourge of slavery that we've

never overcome and that's different from other countries but that's what I'm getting at here.

Trump capitalized on the economic fears of the white working class within narrative of existing racial and ethnic prejudices. This was not subtle. Trump explicitly played to those fears. This is the person who came to political prominence by crushing questioning the birth right of the President. He demonized immigrants and called on a ban of Muslims entering the US. His bigless campaign promise to build a wall on the southern border was the cause of this recent shutdown.

He hasn't actually implemented what one might call a populist agenda. His biggest legislative accomplishment was giving a tax cut to billionaires. His cabinet is chock-full of the most corrupt and those that hold his political fund-raisers he's literally making money off this presidency.

Moreover, while the stock market is doing well and Trump has benefitted from the growing economy President Obama left him, there are fears of what may lie ahead.

At the same time he has done nothing to address the very real economic concerns of the white working class voters who have elected him and of the nonwhite working class voters who didn't elect him but also face a lot of the economic anxiety that Sean outlined so well.

The coal mining jobs aren't coming back and his solution is to rail against clean energy. Republicans have not been serious about helping workers figure out how to make it in today's economy, especially those workers without a post-secondary education. They just keep promising them a return to some mythical past.

In fact, Trump is exacerbating fears about rising economic equality and feeding this notion that governments, business, media, all the institutions that help make society work, are just there to benefit the rich. As President Obama said when he spoke in Montreal last year, this increasing concentration of wealth we're seeing just makes people even more cynical and polarised and less trusting of each other. What he said was it's part of what leads people to turn to populist alternatives that may not actually deliver.

If you look around the world we see signs of what this could look like. There are sign of the status quo isn't working for large swathes of humanity and the billionaires at Davos aren't doing anything to fix it. I'm disturbed to hear the reports coming out of that ridiculous conference where Davos participants continue to maximize their personal gains while accommodating nationalist populism. It's split the baby approach and it's problematic.

So what should we, people who care about democracy and democratic values do about this? And like Sean, I don't have answers, maybe just more questions. I'm not saying that economic anxiety isn't a very real part of the growth in populism generally. In my home country and around the world. It's fuelling the left-wing populism people like Senator Ortiz.

We need to address both the economic anxiety and the racial anxiety. We need to grapple with rising inequality that's contributing to economic anxiety and find ways to help people deal with the new and changing economy, especially in the face of a future economy where AI might wipe out more jobs than we care to admit. At the same time we need to face head on the racial tensions that my country, for one, has never worked out. If we don't do both, we're bound to be ruled by these demagogue authoritarians like Trump who promise a sub set of the population in the mood.

For too long, neither major political party in my country has done these two things. Democrats talk about issues related to race and ethnic differences but it often feels transactional, kind of as a foil to Trump. But I don't think they have done much to move us as a country toward any real reconciliation with our past. Republicans are wholesale ignoring everyone who isn't white and pretending that race doesn't matter. Perhaps more surprisingly, neither party has come up with a robust economic vision for the new economy toward which we are rapidly converging, one that will lead the private and public sector to work together.

It's no longer enough to talk about job training programs, we need to totally rethink our economy to match the rapid rise of work force disrupting technology. My hope is at the next election the Democrats put forth a meaningful, inclusive vision of an economy where everyone has the opportunity to work and make a decent living. I believe part of this economic vision involves regulating the economies that have made an awful lot of money off the backs of working people while making it harder for people to make a living. We're talking about companies for Facebook and Google to make the economy function.

We need to restore sanity to America and means getting money out of politics and gerrymandering. For the populist strong man, who has demonized every institution that makes society work. When the political system is no longer an option, you think the strong man can bring salvation. I alone can fix it, Trump told America in his speech in 2016. But if you don't fix it, then what happens? Well, Trump's approval ratings, for one, which are in the toilet. He has the lowest 2-year average approval of any president in polls dating back 70 years. I also take heart in the results in the most recent election of 2018 where Democrats took over one house of Congress. Did it not by focus on Trump's failures but what they can do for the American people. It's a start. I'm feeling more hopeful than I felt since November 2016.

I know I've spent all this time mostly talking about America and I hope we get to a lot more during the discussion because I think what I'm seeing at home is what I'm seeing frankly in India where Modi is stoking anti-Muslim anxiety and peering that with economic society.

I want to close by saying the dangers of authoritarian populism that's taking hold across the globe has more room to manoeuvre when we are silent and we don't offer the kind of proactive, really bold solutions that Sean was starting to talk about. My country's leaders no longer speak of democratic values. The strength of our alliances and human rights when they go around the world and when they do they lack credibility because my government is kidnapping people's children at the border. But Canada can and it's more important than ever for Canada and your leaders to be a voice for democratic values and to speak forcefully against antidemocratic trends and to stand up for the freedom we believe in.

Thank you for having me. I'm really looking forward to our discussion. I've learned a lot by listening to Sean. So I look forward to talking.

(Applause)

KARIM BARDEESY: Thanks. We'll have about 15 minutes. I'll put a few questions and then we'll go quickly to the audience. The themes I want to touch on are identity, economy and the relationship

between public policy and communications which are, I think, things that you captured.

It's not that there's a dearth of good public economic ideas. On the left and right we have seen some interesting growth orientated ideas, it just seems there's no market for those ideas right now and that rhetoric, to your point about rhetoric versus ideology, is trumping a more comprehensive growth agenda. How do you make that the ideas that are out there around college access around the job training issues, around the economics solutions, the economic ideals out there, how do you make those imaginative, to capture the imagination so that it's not a border wall or 70% income tax rate that are the ideas that are going to capture the imagination?

SEAN SPEER: I don't mean to be disagreeable but I'm afraid I don't agree with the premise. I think what you're describing is basically more of the same. I think the left and the right, the least the mainstream left and the right, have both - are both committed to the idea that the right premise underpinning economic policy is about growing economic pie as large as we can and then redistributing the gains of that pie to those who are - to the losers of that exercise of kind of hyper efficiency. Many of us have done pretty well in that environment. But I think - of course the types of policy that you're describing ought to be part of the debate but I think, in a lot of ways I talked earlier about how kind of radicalized I'd been by the past 36 months. I think we need to have a more fundamental discussion about whether we ought to be committed to the idea that growing the economic pie as large as we can is the right policy objective.

Maybe we need to be prepared to accept a slightly smaller pie if that means people have more opportunity. But then we need to reconcile ourselves with some of the costs of a smaller pie, including, as I mentioned earlier, that it will have implications, not just for our own societies but for others around the world who have benefitted from this commitment to hyperefficiency and globalization.

So I think the type of policy debate that is occurring on the left and the right outside of the politics is interesting and important and all of these things will help on the margins, I don't diminish them, but I think - I've come to think, in recent months, that - I think they're more fundamental discussions to be had and I think those are discussions that have been excluded from our politics.

SARADA PERI: I think Sean's idea s of having to reduce the pie generally is a really compelling one and I'm really interested to sort of learn more because I think that might be right.

I will say that one reason that I might disagree with your premise, it's weird to be agreeing this much with a conservative, I really don't know what to do with myself! In America, at least, and I think this may not be true in a lot of places but in America, in part, because of the rise of a left in opposition to Donald Trump and people like Ortez being in Congress and being such an effective communicator through social media, she has jump started policy debates that on issues, in the US at least, which is far less redistributive country than Canada, are pretty radical for us. They're not radical enough, I think, for a lot of reasons but the fact that she has gotten economists to debate on Twitter the 70% marginal tax is a really big deal for us, that a brand new deal is even object table and just that people are having these conversations is pretty remarkable.

I will just say the direction in which I have been radicalized of late is that I think the economy that we're talking about now is just not going to exist, you know, in - I have a toddler, in her working lifetime. I

think that we need to be really serious about the fact that the robots are going to start making themselves at some point, and I know it sounds like I'm crazy, but I really think we have to take technology seriously and be totally radical in our thinking about the economy of the future.

KARIM BARDEESY: It seems to me that there's one - pulling on that conversation, there seems to be two spaces where the left and the right who are concerned about populism can align and you're seeing a bit in the States, maybe not so much in Canada. The first is around corporate concentration and aggressively tackling that. The second is around a real aggressive reformist education agenda that serves all. I'm not sure if those are the only ones. I'm not sure if we can build a policy consensus around that. I'm not sure if you can make those imaginative to cut through the rhetoric. Do you see any potential to build something based on maybe some of those ideas?

SEAN SPEER: I think so. People may know if you're prepared to look beyond Twitter and the 24-hour news cycle, I think there is - the one upside of the Trump residency is it's starting to canalize some of the dynamic thinking.

The Bookings Institute published a paper on working opportunity. Each of the recommendations were supported in full. That is to say it wasn't a negotiation of we want this recommendation, you want that recommendation. The authors across spectrum were committed to each of the recommendation and they centred on education reform. I spent a bit of time this week with Tyler Cowan, who is a centre right or pretty classical economic thinker, and he's bullish on education reform. He thinks there is an opening across the spectrum to fix broken American education system.

But not to sound like a broken record, but I do think it's important to emphasize that even though Cortez is talking about a 70% marginal tax rate, I mean it's still basically accepting the premise that the goal is what is called economic piety. That is we grow the economic pie as much as we can and we tax the gains of those who succeed in that market structure by some magnitude, maybe it's as high as 70% and we redistrict it to those who haven't performed well.

I think it misreads what people are asking for. I suspect I'm less concerned about economic equality than most people in this room. But I think where we can agree that I think the demands of people are greater than simply greater economic equality and maintaining high levels of consumption, I think people are seeking more than that. I think they're seeking real opportunity in an economy that is becoming increasingly bifurcated and, as I say, I think that requires more than tinkering on the margins of the tax system. I think it means reconceptualizing how we think about our economic objectives.

SARADA PERI: I think that's largely right. The challenge is that - so the incentives for the people who are enjoying large segments of the pie are to basically maintain the status quo and so when you have those interested in economic inequality proposing say high marginal tax rates, if that is tinkering at the margins and working with an assistant is they're trying to get any of the crumbs at the table. And in America, at least, money is inextricably tied to political power so it's really hard to make inroads and to - I mean they're already calling her all kinds of names just for suggesting that so you can imagine if you suggest more and if you suggest the bill - billionaires just make less that's not going to go over well either.

I think the challenge also, by the way, is income inequality in America, is tied with education. So your

parents' income, which translates to your zip code because of America's screwed up housing policies, translates to whether or not you will get a decent education and until we repair that, which unfortunately, or fortunately, has something to do with redistribution, we're not going to get to where Professor Calum wants us to go. At least I don't see how we will because the money in federal education is not, at this point, working in streams that make sense.

KARIM BARDEESY: I would make an observation about the growing the pie question and one way we haven't thought about this in Canada is in Canada we're more challenged than you are in the United States and that's the cost of living crisis that we have in our major cities in Canada. And a growing the pie model and we have a cost of living crisis and an indebtedness crisis which is worse in the United States for larger numbers of people in Toronto, the greater Toronto area and Vancouver in the lower mainland than you would have in comparable American cities. So a growing the pie, just the pure economic groeted growth in redistribution agenda doesn't take into account the fact that you're still falling behind with respect to the really night marish cost of living people are facing. That's something I think people of different perspectives of Canada need to take into account.

One question about identity and I want to come to the audience, because we haven't talked about that yet in these chairs. So first, Sean, how to get conservatives or conservatively-orientated people more accepting of others to be in the us.

SEAN SPEER: I've been thinking about this a lot lately. I think there are reasonable debates to be had about immigration policy. I think there are reasonable debates to be had about integration, the role of public policy and supporting integration, not just economic integration but social and cultural integration. I think those conversations need to be part of our politics.

I think it's problematic that we've seen several polls in the past six months in Canada show that a fairly significant share of the population has misgivings with our immigration system and yet our mainstream politics is basically precluded that conversation. I think that's - not only is it undemocratic, I think it's ultimately unhealthy and it will produce problems down the road where we are seeing, of course, the efforts with the People Party.

That said, I think conservatives cannot - if conservative s lose from our DNA, from our perspective the immigrant story, I think it is - I think that's the moment I kind of exit the door.

I live a pretty selfish life. I you don't owe much to a lot of people. I basically do whatever I want. And the selfishness - the selflessness, rather, of the immigrant story is so compelling. It is so connected to my - the way I think about the world, that if we cease seeing a voice for that kind of selfless commitment to bettering one's life and bettering the lives of people's children, as I say, I think that's the kind of moment I exit the door.

So one of the things that I've been working hard to it achieve within conservative circles is distinguishing between reasonable policy conversations about the number of immigrants we permit each year, the composition of the number of immigrants we admit each year, the programming or legal framework around integration and so on but separating that from the fundamental, a fundamental recognition of the inherent good of the immigration story.

KARIM BARDEESY: And Sarada, a version of the same question to you, after the presidential election

a number of sociatologists went down to rural parts of America trying to learn about a constituency that they didn't realize existed in America for decades or centuries. And in Canada we have, I think, some aspects of the populist left looking to similarly include certain people and with a very explicit rectification agenda where there have been excluded people who now need to be included and it's possible that some people who are in the majority identity or have other identities that are not racialized, not gendered, not Indigenous, not in the same way, are feeling excluded from a populist left conversation. Can you speak to that and whether to and how to include those voices?

SARADA PERI: Yeah, I think it was such a tricky moment in the post election when sociatologists went to so-called forgotten America. The nature around all of that is really complex and, by the way, nobody was going down to, you know, working class African-American communities in Mississippi and asking those folks why they're struggling? The 'New York Times' is not interested in that. But I think, you know, just to sort of touch a little bit on what your question to Sean, because I think it's relevant, America has actually always - has done - does immigration integration actually pretty well. We are not Europe. We don't have those issues, which is why the sort of backlash against immigration has been so interesting, to me at least, to watch when generally speaking, you know, there's a reason that no border State federal representative is for Trump's wall, including Republicans.

It's a much more complicated picture. So I think this is such a complex question that you ask and I think, again, I have a hard time separating economic anxiety from racial anxiety in those communities but I also feel like Democrats, for a long time, have not done a good enough job because the conversation has been about redistribution, done a good enough job of explaining that the Government is not just taking money from you and giving it to somebody who doesn't look like you. In part, this is because our safety net is kind of broken, has a lot of holes in it, that the federal system of support doesn't make a ton of sense and all of this time that manufacturing jobs have been leaving these communities, politicians on the left and the right, but mostly and frankly on the right have been promising those communities the jobs will come back if you elect us and decade after decade that has not happened and those communities have been hollowed out.

I think part of this comes down to telling a truer story. But it also comes down to, from my perspective on the left, offering a more unified vision of workers, right? Bringing together people from all political sides but also all races who are all struggling to make it in this economy and painting a new picture of coming together and finding a way forward and I think that President Obama was able to do that in 2008 and a little bit in 2012 but in part because of the racial backlash, we lost that in 2016 and I'm just sort of hoping that there's a way to sort of crystallise that again. But I think it's going to be an enormous challenge.

KARIM BARDEESY: Can we collect one or two questions or comments and we'll have to get them down.

QUESTION FROM FLOOR: After 44 years as a disability rights activist, it is my view that both the left and the right have failed the disabled community when it comes to the need to bring more of us out of the margins into the mainstream. I think that's particularly true with the notion of trickle-down economics which I think is one of the greatest big lies that's ever been concocted in human history. If

there are any benefits, the trickle doesn't seem to have a clue where my community lives.

So my question to both of you is should the disabled community have any hope for the future or is the next group - or is the Nextgen ration of folks with disabilities going to be consigned to the scrap heap in history like many of us feel we have been in the past?

QUESTION FROM FLOOR: This is a question for Mr Speer, in the '60s Canada had a good economy. You could go to university without student debt. You could make enough money in summer to go to university. But there was one thing at that time, the the President of the company made about 20 times what the worker made and we realize that the prosperity between the rich and the poor is totally out of control. So maybe 90% might be excessive, but we don't need to lower the taxes of the rich.

QUESTION FROM FLOOR: A question for Sean. You stated your thinking started to change 36 months ago and that predates Trump's election. So I'm wondering what's happened in Canada over the last 36 months that may have been changing your thinking because I know a lot of the discussion has been about the US?

SPEAKER: I'll do one more, because you will forget.

QUESTION FROM FLOOR: This is sort of just a question in regards to how we're sort of viewing populism now and the way that you have been explaining it is sort of trying to fight it in the sense of how can we make it so that people are less in the fringes, so to speak. But we're living in a world where these things, there's constant change and, Mr Speaker, you said that change comes incremental and you believe change comes incrementally and that may have been true early on but we're seeing that not just in the States but everywhere else in the world that these changes are happening constantly and we're where focussing on one group, we're disenfranchising another. Are we moving towards a world where more of this is going to be - populism is going to be mainstream and if that's the case, is it going to be a downwards spiral of this is the establishment now and in the next four years a new guy is going to be anti- establishment. Is that something we should be concerned about or is it something that we have to sort of embrace and make sure that we can control?

KARIM BARDEESY: Do you want to start with John's question?

SEAN SPEER: I completely accept the premise and this gets at the heart, in a way, of why these questions have a technocratic element to them. How do we design a disability support system that enables those with disabilities to have opportunity to live with dignity and so on? I think as a conservative, for what it's worth, it seems to me that is one of the first orders of government. But there are, as we think about how to design that system, we have to - we also have to think about how other priorities interact. So let me be concrete. I happen to be opposed to the idea of a universal basic income in large part because I think it dedicates scarce resources to able-bodied people, in part, at the expense of those with disabilities and so, as I say, as we think about how to have a robust and generous regime for those with dissents -- disabilities I think we need to think about how it reacts with other s.

To the 1950s and '60s, point taken. I think the nature of the economy was remarkably different, . In the 1950s and '60s there was tremendous opportunity for those without post-secondary education to participate fully in the economy. I think, as you looked across the economic landscape now, those

opportunities are increasingly diminished and so I think, as I say, I think one of the risks of nostalgia, which is common on the right these days, is it precludes us to look forward at the opportunities and challenges in the current - in our current economy.

On the question of the Canadian political landscape, and my thinking, I think Canadian conservatives, one of the things I regret is the conservative Party is called the Conservative Party and I self-identity as a small c conservative. I think Canadian big C conservative politics has become too oppositional and not no focused enough on a positive vision for government.

It's not to say that I believe in big government effect. I wouldn't be surprised if I believe in a small government more than most even here. But I do think we need to talk about what we think government is for and I think conservatism has increasingly lost that.

On the question of trying to push become against the forces of populism and whether there's a risk that populism becomes mainstream, I would say becoming President of the United States is pretty mainstream. And it seems to me the lesson for Canadians is trying to proactively address some of these pressure points, whether it's economic anxiety or cultural anxiety or other forces that seem to be drawing people out of mainstream politics and into these un conventional political vehicles.

We can learn the lessons of the United States and the UK and elsewhere and I think if we fail to do so, we will risk ending up where they are. And I would just say it was an important point made earlier which is a failure of mainstream politics to respond to these questions, I think, is the principal reason the US finds itself in its current political turmoil. I think it behooves all of us across the political spectrum to rededicate ourselves to a constructive politics that is proactively trying to get at these issues.

SARADA PERI: Can I add two things. I wanted to respond to John's important question. I think both of our countries are probably ahead of many countries in terms of, you know, we past the Americans with Disability Act in the '90s which have made accommodations for differently abled people but it is true that it's not about accommodation, I think at least. I feel like what we're actually doing is just leaving opportunity on the table when people of, you know, who are definitely abled don't have opportunity to participate in our economy and it starts at the level of education.

To me, if we are sort of moving into a more radical space where we can rethink our economy, especially with the insight of fearing technology, which I sort of do, as a Luddite. But thinking about the ways in which the economy is going to change for everybody, how can we reimagine it to make sure that all people, regardless of ability, are able to participate actively and contribute to our economy and to our societies and, you know, whether it's more inclusive educational opportunities where we're starting to see some interesting things happening at home in the States, to, you know, workplace opportunities and the way that technology can enable people to participate in robust ways. We should be optimistic about the opportunity ahead.

Then I just wanted to respond to your point about populism, because obviously I agree that marginal tax rates should be higher. What I think - what I fear right now about populism on the left and the right and the most mainstream populism in the world, in my country, is just the fundamental collapse of trust in the institutions that have always made our societies work, whether it's our free press, whether it's

government from the local level all the way to the national level, all of these institutions that have always kind of helped people believe in us in something, and that have been part of our social contracts, as sort of small c community has shrunk with loss of associations and all those reasons, and you see a lack of trust in those institutions, you're going to see a rise of populism, both on the left and the right and that concerns me.

I think that we actually ought to be working towards rebuilding trust in those institutions by making them more representative and by making them more responsive to all people's needs and making people feel like they're a part of something again. Both at the community association level all the way to, you know, our national newspapers and our press. As we think about what lies ahead, and again, not to sort of keep crapping on Davos, but that's exactly the kind of thing that makes people cynical and we ought to be sort of moving away from that and into something that's, I think, far more inclusive and representative.

KARIM BARDEESY: Maybe we'll get a teaser from Davos about Maria, our 2:00 keynote. Thank you for giving energy and nuance to this conversation.

(Applause)

SPEAKER: And if I may also say thank you, Karim, than fastic work moderating this panel as well. So next up, as you can see, we are running late. So we're going to figure out how we're going to catch up. So just trust us to help you.

So for those who are interested, we have had a slight - we haven't had a room change, for those interested in climate stay here. For the ones going to divisiveness, that's in room B and how room C is the democracy. So see you soon.

BREAK

SPEAKER: Really excited about this panel. One of top election issues in Canada, becoming divisive in ways we couldn't predict, a while ago in Canada and increasingly around the world. What can we do about it and what we can do about climate change, and so I will just introduce the moderator of this panel, a long-time roller blader, runner, and activist in the space between capital and the climate business and the environment be the editor-in-chief and publisher of Corporate Knights and the CEO of Corporate Knights Inc Tony Heaps who is just huddling to brief his panellists

(Applause)

TOBY HEAPS: Thanks, Karim. Hello, everyone. We have a pretty good panel, 45 minutes and then we're going to do 5 minutes of Q&A. I'm not going to say too much at the outset. For the first question we're going to go through about four questions and then we will have some time for the Q&A and the audience. So we will work our way from that end over to here on the first question.

The first question, to give everybody a sense of flavour for who's here is if you could first introduce yourself and your organization and how are you taking the fight against climate change, what do you do?

JASKIRAN DHILLON: Thank you for joining us. I'm an social Professor of global studies and anthropology at it new School.. I will just give you a really brief sense of how I think about and frame issues of climate change and environmental justice.

So my work has been centred on developing an anticolonial critique of the movement through my research of advocacy and I'm arguing an accurate examination of political and social causes of climate change requires looking closely at the history of genocide, land dispossession and the destruction of Indigenous societies and cultural practices that accompanies the irreversible damage brought by environmental destruction and I'm just going to share with you a really important question captured by scholars who asks what does it mean to have a reciprocal discourse on catastrophic ends times and apocalyptic environmental change in a place where over the last 500 years Indigenous peoples faced the end of the worlds and the violent incursion of colonial 'dologist 'dologists and actions.

There are three things I want to mention quickly that become clear to me as I do this work. You can see this in Canada unfolding right now with the struggle against pipelines. The Indigenous sovereignty is essential to environmental justice in the tackling of climate change. This is a critique of capitalism, but it's also a critique of something that we should rightly understand as racial capitalism.

The second thing I want to mention is that when you centre questions of Indigenous sovereignty in the broader politics of lie chat -- climate change you can't disconnect climate change from other issues. Health impacts, pover, and violence against native women and girls is part of the way we have to think about what it means to engage in politics of climate justice.

Third, environmental justice that is centred on Indigenous sovereignty, once we think about centring it, we also see that this is not a localized analysis. You can look at almost any corner of the world and see how Indigenous and native communities that are living with the legacies and contemporary instances of colonial violence are pushing back against the logics of racial capitalism, global racial capitalism that have impacted their communities through long-standing histories of clon - colonization and imperial ism. Thanks.

(Applause)

AMBER BENNETT: My name is Amber Ben it and I'm I'm with Climate Outreach. It's a group of social science researchers. It focuses on social science, how we communicate about climate change and their key, you know, key pieces of work are how do we engage beyond the usual suspects. So working with other kind of less engaged groups around climate change, I just finished up a project in Alberta. It's one of the largest pieces of engagement, public engagement around climate change and so it was a citizen social research science project. We trained up about 65 individuals who joined us from a broad spectrum of organizations. But it involved faith groups, youth, and environmentalists, energy companies, farmers, ranchers, you know, business leaders, etc. So we hosted around 55 groups around Alberta and we talked specifically about what people care about and talked about issues of climate change and energy transition. The goal of that project was less about, you know, exactly, you know, about convincing people or manipulating people or , but rather opening up a conversation around where maybe some common ground in which we could have this conversation. So Alberta is one of the most polarised places, arguably in the world around these issues for obvious reasons. It's a fossil fuel economy and so really the nugget of that particular project was where may be some common ground or a bridge to a conversation around these important issues of our time.

So I think that through this I will be drawing quite a bit on that particular project but also on the psycho

psychology of climate change and climate change communications and the importance of identity in these particular times of polarisation and of pitting of groups against each other, how groups see themselves as different from each other and how those interests are being defined by, you know, larger forces. So that's me and that's what I do.

LARA ELLIS: My name is Lara Ellis. I work for an organization called ALUS Canada. Probably the best conservation organization no-one has heard of. It stands for alternative land use services. We work with farmers and ranchers. We pay them, we don't pay them very much because if we paid them more than we do we couldn't be a charitable organization. We pay them to do environmental restoration on their farms and ranches.

I come to ALUS after having worked in the environmental sector for over 20 years. I'm not going to say how old I am. ALUS is probably the best example I've seen of an organization that enables and supports community members in our instances, primarily farmers and ranchers to be part of making solutions and really resourcing them to be part of larger solutions around a whole bunch of different issues.

In terms of climate, the issue has become so polarised that I don't talk a lot about climate with the people that are part of the program. I'm also not a farmer so I don't actually - I'm not allowed to talk to the farmers too much because the whole - one of the reasons ALUS works is that it's really peer-to-peer, neighbour-to-neighbour. We have people working in each of the communities that runs the program so it's not seen as a program that's resourced externally. The farmers actually have skin in the game. They often share costs for the projects. But the communities do fund-raising as well as the farmers putting money in and we don't come in with - we don't come in with sort of an ethics around environment, so it's very transactional.

We support farmers and ranchers to do projects that they're interested in doing and it's voluntary. So I think that in erm it -- terms of climate, almost all of our projects sequester carbon. We also mitigate the effects of climate change. When we talk about what the intersects are, it's mainly around resiliency, around water, biodiversity and all the things that are impacted by what's happening with the climate and what's happening now.

So just in terms of how real this is for our farmers, some of our communities no longer want to plant trees because they're not sure that they will survive the season that they're planted. So we know about the impacts, these obviously affect all of us in terms of food security and our economy, but it's really important that we support people to be part of building solutions at the community level and I think that's the only way that we're going to - I don't know if it's the right term - de polarise, protecting the environment as part of our value systems. I think I will end there.

GRAHAM SAUL: My name is Graham Saul. I want to acknowledge that we're on the territory of Indigenous peoples. I want to acknowledge that since I'm from Ottawa, I know that the list is longer in Toronto and I have not memorized it and so I apologize for that.

I come here through a couple of different channels. One is this notion that I have that you should ask yourself what you want to be when you grow up at least every five years. So I started five year are - five years in Africa working with Oxfam, in Mozambique, where I figured out climate change is the

latest way where a privileged and disproportionate part of humanity is systematically going to screw over Africa in terms of a long tradition of doing that.

And then from there I went to Washington DC where I worked for five years for a small environmental organization that was lobbying the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund during the heyday of the corporate globalization movement just after Seattle, which was an interesting education and a discussion around corporate globalization and the World Bank was beginning to reassess its role in oil and gas financing and we managed to get a committee to recommend the World Bank phase-out financing for oil and gas. And 20 years later it made that decision to do so.

Then came back to Canada and spent most of the next 15 years working on international energy and climate change issues, both with international organizations like Oil Change International where we were fighting the expansion of the oil industry as well as with Climate Action Network, a coalition of about 100 Canadian organizations that were working to push for action on climate change in the run up to Copenhagen, which essentially meant bludgeoning my head on the wall of the Harper administration for a number of years. I then went to grass roots and founded an organization and now I've decided to be the executive director, I've been offered the position and have been for a year, as the executive director of Nature Canada which raises a whole other set of interesting issues because how nature groups relate to climate change is very different and there's a base there that is aging and overly obviously very white is much more conservative than many other constituency s. So there's a challenge there about how we bring that community in to having a conversation about climate change. So that's sort of one of the journeys. The other one is a paper that I recently wrote with the help of the Metcalfe Foundation, where they provide support to folks like me halfway through their career, to reflect on some of the things they've been thinking about over the years. Throughout that journey one of the things I've tried to do is learn about past social movements because I very much believe that the environmental movement is and will be seen increasingly as one of the great defining social movements of human history.

So I tried systematically throughout my life to look back at past social movements and learn lessons from them and there's lots to learn but one that I got sort of latched onto was this notion that past social movements had powerful words that they used to sum up their ultimate goal. Words like equality, freedom and independence and these words provided a variety of functions and I asked myself so what are environmentalists fighting for? And I didn't - I couldn't come up with that clear and concise answer to that question so I started asking my friends and I wasn't satisfied with their answers so with the help of the Metcalfe Foundation I took the time to interview 116 of Canada's leading environmentalists, pollsters, journalists, activists, academics and I asked them this question, and so the paper recently came out called Environmentalist: What Are We Fighting For? I think that's another one of the reasons why I've wound up here today.

(Applause)

TOBY HEAPS: What is that word?

GRAHAM SAUL: You won't be surprised to hear that there isn't one. The environmental - the people that I interviewed overwhelmingly agreed that words like equality, freedom and independence were

important in past social movements, that they had -- played a variety of different functions and that they were used by those movements to help orientate people in the movement itself to, among other things, help connect dispersed kind of actions. They agreed that there was value in the environmental movement being able to articulate a vision that contextualised the variety of different pieces that an individual struggles that we're involved in and they agreed that word didn't exist.

Interestingly enough, and this is only one of the things that's examined in the paper. Interestingly enough, the number one word that emerged, even though it was used only by 25% of the people was survival. Which, for me, fundamentally raises a question about the existential threat that many environmentalists believe we're facing right now, the raises the question that we're in a fundamentally new era in human history in terms of humanity's relationship to the rest of the planet and it raises questions about the fact that this relationship, and the relationship that humanity has for the natural world, is not a technical, scientific or economic issue. It obviously is that but it's fundamentally a moral issue. Fundamentally an ethical issue and we need to be able to shift our discourse to talk more about those values and also would it be so bad if there were just a tiny bit of hope? Like there's so much despair out there, can we find a way to have this conversation articulate an overarching concept and still inject a little bit of hope into it at the same time?

(Applause)

TOBY HEAPS: Thank you. Sometimes these conversations, I've noticed, I think to chart the consumption of antidepressants in an environmental community over the last couple of years, you would see an upwards sloping curve. I actually - I hope I'm not delusional. I feel like I have - I like to acknowledge facts and I'm really optimistic, in spite of reality. Let's acknowledge what the reality is. We've got the guy in the White House whose best friend is coal. In Brazil they're pretty keen on chopping down swathes of the Amazon. We've seen a round of studies come out before the new year showing that if we could hold global temperatures to 1.5-degree increases instead of 2 degrees, that would be really good news because it would mean about 150 million people less a year would die. It would mean that we would cause species to go extinct at only half the rate and all sorts of other bad things happening at roughly half the rate.

So the idea was if we can get it from 2 degrees to 1.5, we are going to do a lot less damage. Problem is, we're heading for a 3-degree increase. That's a hot house situation where survival becomes from 25% to probably 75% to 80% and we're looking at population decreases from 1 to 3 billion living on the planet instead of 10 billion plus. So that's a bad scenario. That's where this sound of minds that observed this are right now with the best data that we have. If we extrapolate from the past going forward.

The reason I'm optimistic is extrapolating from the past is irrelevant. We're living in an age of dynamic change, unlike any time in the history of our civilization. The number of innovations that are happening, I was never an optimist thinking technology was going to save us. Consider this, Donald Trump is one of coal's best friends. Last year, more coal power plants were shut down in the United States than any other year in the history of that country. That's not because Donald Trump is not their friend, that's because economics is not their friend. That's because coal is no longer competitive with things like

renewables.

The reason that the power-generation equation has changed so fundamentally is renewables are so cheap. And we're going to defeat this climate change spectre there's a lot of things we have to do but it come down to three Cs. Coal, cars and cows. Cars, combustion engine and cows, mostly beef.

Adding in deforestation as a meaningful one. We had solution to all those things. Look at the new cars coming onboard, no car company is doing R&D in internal combustion engine. Coal power is not economic anymore in almost every major market in the world.

We finally have gotten to a point where in spite of the political chaos and lack of leadership in many respects, the economics are powerful enough to take us through this. The trouble is, or we don't have a ton of time. Time is not on our side and so we really have to, now the economics add up, we have to make sure that the people that are not recognizing the real economic voices get out of the way or we push them out of the way and we let this economic train run its course and speed it up.

I think there's a real danger in how we frame this conversation. I think most people, even though we talked about the environment and the economy winning together, I don't think there's a still a lot of people who are in positions of power that don't really believe that when it comes time to allocate their money. I had a discussion with the vice chair of the largest investor in the world over breakfast a few days ago and she was saying, yeah, we're looking at, you know, climate-focused funds but at the end of the day we have a fiduciary responsibility. We have to take care of our client's interests, we can't be willy-nilly putting money into climate change solutions. That gives you a lot of perspective about where some of the world is if you have one of the smartest, sophisticated largest ambassador in the world think there's a trade-off in investing in climate collusion -- solutions and making money.

Just before I say the narrative, I spent a good portion of the last 15 years of my life with Corporate Knights, normally it's \$6.95 a copy but we have free copies on the table. Thinking that our best way of focussing energies is a price on carbon. Lobbied governments, financial institutions around the world and spent a lot of time on it and we saw some good progress and this become sort of a mainstream issue.

Let's go back and just consider how this happened. 1987 Montreal protocol, amazing treaty. Global community comes together, decides they're going to do something about it. The solution is not to put a price on carbons, the solution is to ban CFCs. Largely works. The hole in the ozone layer has shrunk. Fast forward acid range, George Bush, Ronald Regan before him people are choking, forests and lakes are dying and the politicians get together, industry gets together and environmental community organizers with a textbook campaign and we get a policy to defeat acid rain.

The way that happened, there's different stories how it happened but a lot of people tell a story it was through a cap and trade market and it was a political compromise where the big emitters were allowed to do a lot of technological upgrade without getting political, you know, upheaval and make some investments in upgrade and the markets helped a little bit but they got glorified as being a be all and end all solution and it was really a trade-off there between being allowed to cut your work force and then becoming environmental friendly. The companies came out ahead and we are quite happy with the solution.

But that created, that planted a seed that markets can be the solution and my first course in McGill in economics and I thought this is amazing, economics 101. Just put a price on something bad and less of it will happen. I think economics 101 is the most dangerous course that's ever been taught in the history of humanity because it fails to take into context all the different complexities that actually happen in the real world and all the unintended consequences and the decisions and time scales they're made and decisions of people being price takers or makers and we just have to take what is there. Got to get to work, you're driving a combustion engine truck, whether there's an extra 10 cents a litre fee on that.

We all brought into that. Big oil even showed up. ExxonMobile is a big proponent of price on carbon. The environment community we're so happy to finally have some of the powers onboard supporting - we were so convinced pricing carbon was the way to go we welcomed all these folks and we didn't ask any questions like why are they here? Why is ExxonMobile on our side? We just welcomed them into the room.

There's some people who advise association of petroleum producers, environmental groups and the Prime Minister's office in Canada. I'm not saying who the people are but there's a couple of people who I'm thinking of but at the end of the day what we see happen is we have a narrative in Canada which is the environment and the economy can win together. Everybody loves that narrative. That narrative is dangerously, dangerously - it's the most dangerous narrative I can possibly imagine at this point in time because the environment and the economy don't always go together. The environment and economy could go together if we make some radical adaptations to the structure of our economy and if we just go business as usual, there's a lot of places where they don't go together.

QUESTION FROM FLOOR: Where do you think those radical solutions can come from and we ask our panellists to share with us some of those solutions. Certainly the Indigenous community, there must be some interesting sort of ways in which that particular narrative is being addressed, right? And I'd love to hear more from the farmers and ranchers who are trying to kind of address that issue. I was curious to hear that, you know, you don't even talk about climate change, Lara, because those particular communities need to be sort of taken along through using a different narrative.

So can we get some sense of what some of these radical solutions could be?

JASKIRAN DHILLON: Sure. I mean I'm not going to attempt to represent all new communities. I can say something based on the work that I've done in alliance with Indigenous communities over the last 20 years. So when you're speaking about the environmental, who environmentalists are, I have to ask myself, who sits at the table around the majority of discussions around environmental politics. If you look at the composition of this panel, that gives you a window in who sits at the table around questions of environmental justice in Canada and the United States and many other places that are colonies or existing under conditions of imperialism and occupation.

I would say the question of whether or not the economy and environmental justice or climate change or a sustainability environmental movement can go hand in hand is not even a question if you ask Indigenous -- Indigenous communities. The creation of the countries that made Canada and the United States possible are carbon intensive economies. The way this particular part of the world lives

is reliant on a kind of capitalism that has wreaked havoc on the planet and decimated communities and continues to decimate communities. If you look at the the military response to standing lock in South Dakota that challenge the construction of those economies because the political systems move hand in hand with the corporations, right? This is a well-developed argument by frontline organizers, by scholars, by people working in community organizations. It's not a new argument but it's an argument that requires us to step back and ask the question about how we think the - how we think about the way that we want to live.

So these are big questions. So when I'm talking to my daughters about sustainability, about the future of the world, I'm asking them to read native scholars, native organizers, native philosophers who have different philosophy s about land and water and air, who think about our relationships as human beings with other than human things, right, that also exist on the planet and also have a right to be here. So I think there are - there is much wisdom and knowledge in Indigenous communities who are leading these struggles across the globe on so many different - in so many different scales and in so many different places about what it means to live in good relation to the land and the water and the air and all of the other sort of components of the ecosystem that we're part of.

So, I mean, I feel like I would argue that Indigenous leadership is actually central to organizing around climate change and there's not one native person on this panel.

(Applause)

SPEAKER: Lara, can you speak to that because certainly your conversations with farmers and ranchers - sorry, sorry, we can do it together. No, no, seriously, it's fine. Perhaps you can speak about the farmers and ranchers and whether or not there's sort of some, you know, whether there's any potential for including Indigenous voices in the work that you're doing? Are you guys working with that or is that impossible right now?

LARA ELLIS: We do work with Indigenous - some Indigenous land owners. I think, you know, to really deal with climate change we do need to change what we do as individuals, what we do as a society and so I think it comes down to being pragmatic, right?

If you think about who used to recycle 25 years ago, my mother used to clean out all her cans and crush them and drive halfway across the city to a recycling depot. When we got blue bins it became easy for us to do the right thing.

If we're looking at land use, what happens in terms of land use in Canada, particularly southern Canada where there's been so much change, if we want people to change what they're doing then incenting them, providing solutions is the way to go.

Same in terms of transportation. I think a lot of the policies and solutions have been very urban focused so Ontario Government shut down the Northlander, look what happened with Greyhound busses. If we want people to drive electric cars we need to have cheap car priced electric cars. It providing ways to let people be part of the solution.

What ALUS does is we are making environmental protection part of the economy of farming. So we pay - we incent farmers to change their practices. So we're not coming in saying if you don't change your practices you're a bad farmer, we're saying we'll help support certain outcomes. And I think that's

really important in this initiative, all the programs that we're trying to have people change their behaviour. We can't come at this from a moralistic - or it's not particularly helpful with some parts of society to come in on a moralistic framing of the issue because to get to where we need to be, we all need to be changing what we're doing and I think that being - letting people be part of the solutions and providing ways of making it easier is something we need to do and the way this has been framed politically has been the opposite of that, saying that people are right or wrong and that's not helpful moving forward.

TOBY HEAPS: We have an election coming up, what do you think could be a real and winning message politically for the climate in the upcoming election? It will be interesting to get your perspective on this too, Graham.

AMBER BENNETT: Well, I mean I would agree, I think the economy and the environment goes together just really doesn't sit well with a lot of people. I think one of the things that came up in the Alberta project, you know, from the get go was this sense of realism and authenticity. We tested certain narratives with people around climate change and one of the questions that they asked first was who is telling me this? Whose message is this?

So one of the problems is that the conversation around climate change has been owned by politicians, it has been owned by scientists, it has been owned by a lot of people where economists, increasingly, and people feel excluded from it. They don't feel these are conversations in either which they can participate in, that there's space for them to make mistakes, that there's a space for them to not know. So I think that part of the narrative - and there's no silver bullet in any of this. I think that it is urgent and we need all solutions and we need all ways of having this conversation. But a part of this, I believe, is around enabling peer-to-peer conversations and so what happens is, and what we found in the project, is that when you open up conversations within communities in which people are very similar to each other, it actually allows for a lot of diversity and opinions so people spent less time defending against each other. I'm an environmentalist and you're an oil executive, but rather allowing oil executives to have a conversation around climate change or allowing farmers or allowing people to have those conversations amongst themselves, allow for them to disagree with each other and to have a debate and to have more diversity in their opinions.

So I would say that one of the leading narratives within the upcoming election is around the need for strong political leadership and that this is a nonpartisan issue, this is - we are in a time in any political history in which climate change cannot be, not be a part of a political platform.

So any politician, whether you're a conservative or you are a progressive or wherever you fall in that, you know, spectrum, you absolutely have to be addressing this.

So in an ideal world, conservatives would be talking to conservatives about what their policy options are. So this isn't just about carbon pricing, this could be a suite of - we are debating on merits of what solutions are and inviting people within all communities to be a part of that and I think that goes back to Graham's point around what provides people hope, what provides me hope is I get to wake up every day and work on this issue.

If people feel there's no hope, they're not part of the conversation and people are shaming them ask --

and blaming them it becomes difficult to have a conversation. I think urgently in this country, more than anything we need to break the climate silence and this needs to be a fundamental part of the election in the upcoming year.

(Applause)

GRAHAM SAUL: On the one hand I'm critical of the cognitive distance - dissidence that you can reduce climate change and improve the oil industry at the same time. And how we let them, I'm not clear on. But I do want to acknowledge they're sticking to their guns in terms of importance of action of climate change and they're prepared to make that an issue that is important to them and a message that is important to them.

I think there's a question that we all have about how we're going to mobilize our respective constituencies for whatever party we think is most appropriate. And obviously the 905 and southwestern Ontario is that. Quebec is less Quebec, there's only so many seats they can lose or win. Alberta and Saskatchewan aren't going to fluctuate too much. So mobilising our constituencies within the 905 in the south-west to vote is critical.

From the election perspective, the thing that I'm really struggling with right now is no matter what happens, the conservatives are going to get elected every 4 to 12 years, right? It's just going to happen. And if we have a conservative party that fundamentally comes in and just rips apart everything that is half decent that any other government's done around this issue, then we are going to be caught in a cycle that will never allow us to create the kind of momentum and make the kind of change that we need to make.

So I'm really struggling with this question of how do we get to conservatives and I kopt -- don't know the answer to it but I know you had Michael Chong here earlier and he's an interesting country but he's been the one member of parliament that everybody invites to absolutely every session for 15 years because he was the only one with the spine willing to get up and do it which means the other 100-odd MPs don't. So having Michael Chong here is nice but the Conservative Party as long as it fundamentally believes in coming in and tearing down things, every time it gets elected, we have a serious problem.

TOBY HEAPS: I think we have time for two more quick questions for the panel and then we can take it to the audience. So the first question will be for Jaskiran and Lara. Who is missing in the room where these decisions are being made and who is in those rooms, if you want to comment, who we could do without having them in those rooms? Just to get you guys thinking on it, Amber and Graham, national unity is becoming an issue in Canada over this debate and do you have any ideas, how concerned are you about that and do you have any ideas for how climate can be something instead of potentially ripping us apart like the United States, it can be something that brings us together as a nation. So maybe Jaskiran?

JASKIRAN DHILLON: I've already answered that question in part in terms of who is not, you know - the question is about who was sitting in the room and wasn't are questions about power. I would argue that we live in a country that is mediated by colonial relations of domination where there are huge inequities around access to power and privilege and native people are part of a political system that

they have not authorized and do not have effective participation in.

So we're asking questions about authority and jurisdiction and I would argue that, you know, native people don't have the authority and jurisdiction over their own ancestral territories and are largely missing from erased, missing, deliberately missed out around the majority of conversations around climate change because the way they think about our relationship as humans to the planet vastly differs from what is actually required by settler colonies to be able to maintain themselves.

(Applause)

LARA ELLIS: I think the hallway that political power has become divided has really created some false dichotomies around the environment and economy. And I think that, you know, growing up in Toronto there would always be high profile conservative candidates running within the city and you just don't see that anymore, right? So they don't want to put people's potential election at risk by conservatives running in urban centres or Liberals or NDP outside in rural Ontario or Canada.

So I think that ways around that are engaging, I think, with municipalities. I think a lot of the stuff makes economic sense and I think, you know, I am always amazed when I'm trying to influence governments. Advocating for different positions, who has access to the top decision-makers in Canada, either provincially or federally? Like ten people, right? For each party. Like it's a a very, very small country so we have to be strategic. I think also trying to build our base as much as we can, our base, which is not political but in terms of areas that we're working in, and I think particularly at the municipal level.

GRAHAM SAUL: National unity, so I'm a little bit conflicted on this subject because I actually believe in conflict, not violent conflict but I think, for instance, conflict is a core underlying premise of nonviolence of civil disobedience. They're a real complex in our society and we need to do what we can to expose them. So I'm not entirely sure that trying to placate people is necessarily the best way to go.

We're obviously all, in our own ways, complicit and all of our governments are in their own ways failing but we do have to acknowledge that we live in a world where there's a climate emergency and we have a province with a climate plan and their plan is to increase emissions which is absolute insane. Even if you take the excellent work the NDP has done with shifting the environment around renewable energy, which I think is ground breaking. The overall strategy is absolutely insane.

So how do you have a national unity conversation in the context of a province that is behaving so clearly recklessly? I'm not entirely sure -- entirely sure of the answer to the question.

One thing I think about a lot is President Johnson sitting behind his desk just having signed the voting rights act, one of the important pieces of legislation in American history, right? Right on the heels of the Civil Rights Act. He's sitting behind his desk and he's looking really depressed, and as aid comes in and President Johnson, why are you looking so depressed? You've just signed one of the most important pieces of legislation in American history and he looks up and says "We just signed away the south for the next two generations." That's what then happened, right? Places throughout the south that had been Dixie-crut States were places like Martin Luther King aes father would have voted Republic but now it's all red.

At some stage we need to put enough pressure on the Government that they're prepared to do the

right thing because it's the right thing to do and I'm not sure we can expect the kind of leadership we need around oil issues from Alberta and so we may need to actually have a conflict around it that's not going to be easy for national unity, and I think to some degree we have to be having that conversation as well.

AMBER BENNETT: Being from Alberta, or living there anyhow, I think it's important to note that more than 50% of the people who call Alberta home are not actually from Alberta. They have come from other countries or they come from other parts of Canada and so in the Alberta project we ask specifically what makes you proud to be Albertan and people did not identify as Albertan at all. They specifically said, "I consider myself Canadian."

We hosted a number of groups with Indigenous communities and what I would say is that it is difficult to have a conversation about climate change without - within about 30 seconds, getting into issues of land use, treaty, missing and murdered Indigenous women, these are very difficult conversations in which I will come back to my point, you know, when we hosted the group with ranchers and farmers, it is urban versus rural, when you host the group with environmentalists it's environmental ists against oil people. So the kind of split and the othering of the conversation is what we're spending a lot of our effort on so we're not actually getting to the conversation around what are we going to do about it and where the solutions because we're burning out around the us and them conversation.

So I will come back to my point where I feel that these conversations have to happen within our in groups and so we must be having conversations around what are farmers going to do? What are environmentalists going to do? What are oil companies going to do? And so in terms of national unity, I think that if we continuously pit each other, ourselves against each other, and people feel excluded from the conversation, not invited into the solution space, we're going to keep --

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--So I don't know what more to say about it than that.

SPEAKER: We have a few minutes for questions.

SPEAKER: We've talked a lot about national and local environmentalism. I'm wondering when it comes to the international global conversation, what Canada brings specifically and the key things we can bring to the international conversation.

SPEAKER: So Canada has about 24 per cent of the world's wet wetlands. It has about 25 per cent of the world's fresh water resources. It has about 25 per cent of the world's temperate rainforests. It has 33 per cent of the world's remaining boreal forest. If there is one country in the world or 37 million people in the world that have more responsibility for taking care of the planet's life systems, I don't know who they are. I think we have a responsibility to think hard about what our role in protecting those ecosystems is, and I also think that we have to begin a conversation about the fact that the world is fundamentally changed in terms of our ability to understand the planet functioning as a truly independent systems with life systems and right now humanity is destroying the life systems of the plan planet. So we can have a conversation about that global frameworks which I discuss more in the

paper. And I would encourage people to please take a look at and read and get in touch with me if you want to have a conversation, because I'd be very interested in talking about how some of those concepts can be taken forward and hearing your criticisms. Once again, environmental environmentalists, what are we fighting for?

SPEAKER: Hi. I have a question for Amber. Toby pretty much said, and I kind of agree when environmental and economic goals align, it's very easy. It's very straightforward. To give the example of the automotive sector, he said there's no R'd D in the internal combustion engine, which is not entirely true. R and D is slowing down in light vehicles, stronger anywhere else. Lara said she's pretty much working with people, giving them an economic incentive to try to turn environment attitudes. So for people in as will, and people are practisingmatic. They care about their living, right, they care about their income, like you're saying most of the jobs in as will have to do with oil, right? So they will care about making a living. The question is: How do you target that? What buttons do you push? Graham said, for example, you have to work with the government to try to pass laws to incentivize them, right?

SPEAKER: I think there's a lot going on with that question. I guess what comes to mind is fundamentally this is -- you know, there is a desire for people to feel secure, have a certain amount of security and stability. And so the entry into a conversation may be around the oil and gas economy is fundamentally changing entire world economies are moving away from fossil fuels and into renewables. This is a time, as a province, that we need to be looking at how are we going to transition? And so I think that people are willing to have a conversation because they have a very personal experience. It is very much in terms of their minds of how they're going to support their families. Fundamentally, people go to work not because they feel like they're bad people working for an oil and gas company. They go to work so they can support their family and do the things that they love, which includes going to the mountains or those things. So people I think when you're entering into the conversation with them, you start first with what they care about and empathizing and appreciating who they are. What we found through the as will narratives project is there's a sense of instability that people want to have a conversation about how we're going to create more balance, what are the foundations of our society, how are we going to take care of each other, how are we going to take care of this place. That is an entry into a conversation, and maybe that looks at talking about natural infrastructure for farmers, maybe that looks like diversifying the economy. Maybe this is about renewable tech. Maybe this is about innovation, et cetera. But I think it's starting first with who are you, and you're not a bad person, and what do you care about, and let's have a conversation and start there, rather than: You're different than me. I'm better than you. You need to be more like me, and then the world will be more like the place I want it to be.

Does that make sense?

SPEAKER: So I'm thinking -- my question is related to the question that the panel is posed with, why we disagree about climate change. I'm thinking about the debate from a Canadian context, and particularly thinking about it that one of the major parties, even though they're not as explicit, maybe, as maybe the Republican Party down to the south, they don't offer substantive solutions to climate change. They agree climate change is happening, but their solutions or lack thereof show that they

disagree with the premise, a certain level of human activity contributes to that. So how do you tackle that if one of the major parties isn't there yet?

SPEAKER: My question is for Graham. Premier Ford earlier this week said that you are either for manufacturing jobs or for the climate. You can't be for both. As we head into the 2019 election and given the importance of the GTA and southwest Ontario in the election, how do you actually galvanize constituencies that voted in the provincial election to actually endorse a party that is for climate progress?

SPEAKER: My question is about faith. So I'm wondering -- we saw this a bit on the weekend with Cortez and she started quoting the Bible in relation to climate change change. Do you see potentially with the right and Conservatives as that's a way to maybe engage that community?

SPEAKER: Can I just jump in and say yes. I think that climate outreach has done a lot of work with faith, and for so many reasons. It's a very powerful entry into a conversation in which there is shared values and existing community and a moral and ethical basis in which to be having a conversation about our relationship to the land and to other people. So if you're interested, there are some really good resources on climate Outreach's website around talking within the five major global faiths and what are some powerful common narratives between faiths, as well as where are some differences in how to engage in those conversation conversations based on how people are identifying. I would encourage you to look at that.

SPEAKER: You also take a stab that question, how do you talk about people about climate change?

SPEAKER: Yeah.

SPEAKER: I'm looking for the answer, so hopefully you've got it, right?

SPEAKER: I mean, I think that, again, within the Conservative movement, there are people who both believe in climate change, as well as define themselves as Conservatives. They cannot stomach the idea of voting for a Liberal because they don't identify that way, but they do believe that climate change is a problem and it's something that needs to be addressed. So, again, I would go back to the point of the people who -- we or I'm assuming we -- I don't know -- the people who are progressive need to be demanding for better action from their political parties. The people who don't Conservative need to be demanding of their Conservatives leaders to have climate solutions embed embedded within their platforms. The election is to debate on the merits of those solutions rather than whether or not we should have them. That is where this had conversation needs to go. I think that there are very powerful, well-established narratives that are within -- that are around carbon pricing, whether it is effective or whether it's not effective, et cetera. So there's a lot of work being done on how to address those things. I'm not sure if that answers it or not, but I think that the real piece here is moving past the debate around if -- you know, yes or no and rather what is it?

SPEAKER: If I could step in. I think the one framing that really works for all political parties is around resiliency. So we know that flood is costing Canadian communities a lot right now, and it's obviously part of climate change. So if we sort of concentrate on resiliency rather than climate change and all of that remaining of it, the messages are quite palatable.

So for me I think the three most interesting things about Canada are its fabulous wilderness, its

Indigenous heritage, and its incredible multicultural diversity. What is it right now? Fifty per cent of people living in Toronto were not born in Canada? And that's pretty much one of the best and most amazing things about Canada.

But when you look at the Canadian environmental community, it's a very, very white community, middle class, well-educated, relatively older. The places where you see that diversity shifting a little bit is in some of the more engaging struggles that are occurring in Canada right now around, for instance, oil infrastructure, where Indigenous peoples are playing a more active role and young people are getting more involved.

I think that the question of the 905 is really a question of how you have a conversation with people about their values. So I know someone who is trying to think about the United States they've done some interesting things about mothers and climate change, and linking to student strikes and trying to have a conversation to within the Conservative value set. But then, more importantly, we have to find a way to more systematically engage the broader range of Canada's ethnocultural communities. It's a question that everyone in the environmental community, in terms of professional opposition organizations knows, and it's a question that no-one has really solved. Until we do, I think we're not the right people to ask in terms of the answer to that question..

I'd like to thank everybody for staying with this session and join me in thanking our panellists. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: Next keynote is coming in this room. a little later later.

if we can have everyone seated, please, because we're going to get started. So sometimes we don't really know exactly how our planning will work out, so it's always iterative and emergent and things like that that. We couldn't have anticipated that having Sarah and Shawn speak about -- from their political organizations on populism, which led into, for some of you, a conversation around divisiveness and for others a conversation around climate changes also sort of around this notion of how do we bring people together to talk about coming together from either a shared value sort of set, whether that's climate related or not, then to lead into this next talk. I can't imagine a more perfect kind of pairing of talks. So we're really, really excited to have Jonathan Smucker here. I first heard him speak at the personal democracy forum in New York and then subsequently read his book *Hegemony How-To: A Roadmap for Radicals*, which I think is a must read for all the self-described radicals in the room. He's the co-founder of Beyond the Choir. I'm just going to get him up here.

[APPLAUSE]

JONATHAN SMUCKER: Thank you. Thanks to everybody who has been organizing this conference. I've really been enjoying my time here. It's been great learning more about some of the efforts that are like ours that happen in Canada Canada. I'm also excited to follow Sarah and Shawn's discussion on populism. I'm actually really going to be talking quite a bit about populism as well. But from the perspective of a grassroots organizer in Pennsylvania who is also a nerdy sociologist statement. So I want to introduce myself for a minute. I am from Lancaster county in Pennsylvania, which is where I live once again, but I was gone for about 20 years. I was raised rural, living on a farm, working

class, very Conservative, very religious. We went to church many times a week and I went to Mennonite school. So I'm kind of an unlikely, not a usual suspect in terms of my upbringing, to be in a space like this. By the time I was 17 I was hitchhiking across the country and by the time I was 18 I was headlong in radical activist spaces and people have often asked me: How did that happen? It's kind of difficult to say, to be honest, because it's kind of random. It's just a series of accidents. That has always sat with me, because being in major metropolitan areas for most of my adult life, being in Liberal and left spaces, I noticed a way that a lot of people around me would talk about the areas like the one where I'm from. And I also just knew that there are a lot more people like me who had progressive dispositions but were not being engaged, and didn't have the series of accidents that kind of led me into progressive politics.

So I started to become a business disillusioned with the activist spaces that I had found such a home and community in. This is in the late 1990s, early 2000s. I was part of a lot of community organizing on criminal justice reform. I was involved with campaign with the American Indian movement and earth first and neighbourhood coalitions. And something started to bother me over time, and it was this feeling like we were too small and like we were talking to ourselves, this feeling of insularity. I don't know if anyone else in this room has ever felt that. But that's what kind of led me to eventually start the organization that I now direct, Beyond the Choir. It started as a project and inquiry into this insularity, trying to understand why were progressive circles that I was part of, why were activist circles so insular. Were they always this way or was this a new thing historically, and what was about it?

So that led to an analysis about the emergence of activism. I talk about this in the first chapter of my book. We often take for granted this term, activism, activist, but it's actually a term that people didn't use 50 years ago. They only started using it about 50 years ago, and it really came into the lexicon in the 1970s and 1980s. We project backward on the history, we'll call the abolitionist activists or suffragist act activists, but they literally didn't have this word. Did they have other words to describe the same thing? I make the case in my research that, no, there is something different about this concept of activism that has emerged over the past 50 years and something detrimental to the goals of the people in those spaces. The thing that's detrimental is these spaces have become class insular. So this isn't just a problem of the left; this is a problem of how neo-Liberal society has structured people generally. There's a class-based insularity where the top 10 to 20 per cent, there's a chasm between them and the bottom 80 to 90 per cent. This is different than the 1 per cent problem and the .1 per cent problem. A researcher Richard reebs wrote a book called dream hoarders that gets at this best, an article in the Atlantic about this problem. But long and short is that the leadership, the political leadership, in the United States, anyway; I don't want to project on to Canada, because I don't know enough -- but in the United States anyway the political leadership of the country has -- is predominantly, over overwhelmingly from this top 20 per cent, which tends to have educational privilege and over the past 50 years has become much more insulated from the bottom # 0 per cent. And that's the leadership of the democratic Party and the Republican Party. That's had the leadership of labour unions and it's the leadership even of a lot of radical social movements. And there's this chasm between this political class and educated class and everyday working people. And it's not just a White problem; it's not just a

people of colour problem problem; it's across the colour line, this class-based insularity.

So that's what we have researched and developed trainings that we partner with social movement organizations to understand this insularity and to equip leaders in how to navigate it and how to break out of it, and to understand the narratives that keep us in it and the class dispositions that keep us in it.

So what this kind of looks like in a state like Pennsylvania is you've got Philadelphia on the one side side, you've got Pittsburgh on the other side, and then you have this area in between that James Carville called Pensylvania and a lot of Liberals call it that, but decades ago many of these areas were organized across progressive lines. The populist and then the labour movement, and not problem free and not unconflicted, but the areas that we have conceded and that common sense says those are Conservative areas, they've gotten more Conservative. They were not always Conservative. And they're still getting more Conservative with every election cycle. So it's not a static situation, and we're trying to intervene in that.

So I decided to move back to Pennsylvania, and that is some of where this starts. So I click -- point here? That works. Brief so I want to talk a little bit about -- I moved back to Pennsylvania a little over three years ago, after living in major cities like the Bay Area New York and Minneapolis, in order to organize organize. I understood that most people like me who were raised Conservative and raised working class and find ourselves in more affluent and cosmopolitan and Liberal areas, we tend never to come back. To me that is part of the explanation of how Trump wins in 2016. I moved back before Trump won, and with the goal of starting to organize.

So listen Lancaster stands up started a week and a half after the election when 300 residents came together for a town hall meeting. We were reeling from this experience, what's going on, and we turned to each other, 400 people came two weeks later, 500 people came a month after that.

Lancaster Stands up has revolutionized grassroots organizing in Pennsylvania. This is a Conservative area. It's a Conservative area with a city in the middle of it that has a slight majority of people of colour and a sea of white but with a lot of working-class people in the county, that has always -- has gone Conservative for decades and decades. And so this level of mobilization, where we turned out 2,000 people when the Muslim ban happened, 3,000 people after the mass shooting in Florida, 1,000 people with 18 hours' notice after what happened in Charlotte, north Carolina, these are unheard-of numbers numbers. So I want to brag a bit, not just brag, though, because I think there's something to be learned with how we achieved this. It wasn't magical, so I want to demystify it.

By the way, that photo is for the thousand people who came after Charlottesville. There's an Amish man in that photo. I don't know if you can spot that. That's Lancaster county.

We have over 1,000 dues paying members, 11 locals across our county, each of which was running an independent canvas out of their Hub during this last midterm election. My organization, Beyond the Choir, played a role in supporting Lancaster stands up in being a fiscal sponsor for the organization.

Here are some of the key stories of Lancaster stand us up success. This is just the outline. I'm not going to go through the outline. I'm going to go right into it.

A place for everyday people. So what we're building is a place for everyday people to get involved

involved. From the start of Lancaster county stands up up, we've been attuned to people coming in the door for the first time, not to any pre-existing left. It kind of hurts my heart to say it, having spent two decades really deep in the US left, but I think one of the big reasons we were successful is because there wasn't a left there before we started. It's painful to say that that, but with all its baggage, with all its special specialized very vocabulary and we didn't have that. So we were able to make a big explanconsolidate the momentum quickly and not have to deal with that.

So we have a question conscious narrative strategy strategy. What I mean by narrative strategy is we - well, we have a narrative that tries to articulate the struggle and articulate the kind of who are the culprits, who is the "we"? And there's a lot of words that we avoid using. We avoid words like "activist" and "activism." We usually don't use words like "resist." Not because we're trying to avoid fights. We're picking fights all the time. But because these words don't have much of a history in our area, and the only introduction that a lot of people have had to some of these words is few Fox News and the dominant narr narrative. So we communicate our values in different ways. One of our big frames -- we're intentional about calling it Lancaster stand us up with the name of the city and town in it, and we use the word Lancaster county values a lot. Lancaster values are immigrant sisters and brothers. So we're contesting what Lancaster values are. We could say, well, Lancaster doesn't value that, it has a history of X, Y and Z and is this screwed up place, and kind of place ourselves outside Lancaster, but instead we're contesting what Lancaster means. We're reserving city council chambers for our town hall meetings. We're having meetings in the public square and basically giving people who are unfamiliar with protests and maybe a little frightened of those spaces and also unfamiliar with electoral politics, we're kind of giving them permission and framing this as a main extreme thing that they can be part of and we're disciplined about that narrative.

We do a lot of training in leadership development. I won't say very much about this, but it's just central centrally important. We see that Trump getting elected has provided the biggest opportunity in my lifetime for just my whole lifetime of organizeing, it's like pulling teeth to get people involved and suddenly the floodgates are open. However, we're at a historically weak period where after 40 years of progressive infrastructure has been weakening, we have a weak bench of who knows how to organize and mobilize, run for office, and basic skills of how to facilitate a meeting meeting, how to do promotion. So we embed training and leadership development into everything we do. We're building leaders as part of our work.

One of the trainings we do is a piece that I'm going to show you and spend a good portion of my time on, and it is understanding the populist moment we're in. We don't just do skills training. We also do a lot of orientation about this political moment and how to understand it. We're finding that things that I might have considered inside baseball a couple of years ago, people are really hungry. Everyday working people are really hungry to understand how we got here. So we're providing some of that as training.

We're moving from resistance to politics. A lot of -- from my lifetime, I've spent my life as a social movement organizeer in a lot of outside spaces and there's been a chasm between capital P politics and movement politics and community organizeing. And our analysis in Lancaster stand us up is that

that chasm has only benefitted the very powerful. And what's great is that after Trump was elected, that chasm has kind of intuitively disappeared for the base that we're organizing. They just understand intuitively that, yeah, we have to stand against what Trump is doing and that the right wing populism that's emerging and the policies of the GOP, we have to protest, we have to do these things, but we also have to contest who is in power. Of course, we have to be legally compliant in our vehicles that we use, but other than that, we've been bridging this chasm and saying that it's in nobody nobody's interest except the powerful to have this chasm.

And specifically, I think one of the reasons Lancaster Stands Up has continued to grow where a lot of indivisible groups, not to pick out it's an incredible project, a lot of groups have had a hard time keeping up the momentum is by April 2017 our leadership team realized that the 2018 elections were going to be a major centre of gravity and we started structuring our organization to get ready for that. We started membership so we could have votes on who to endorse and started staffing up and things like that.

Inclusionary populism. I'm going to say more about this, but -- and more about why I embrace it. I think we need a populist strategy, and it should be an inclusionary populist strategy. I'll expand on what I mean by that, and related to some of the other speakers' remarks. But what we mean is we need to pick economic populist fights about how the very powerful and the very wealthy have consolidated control of our economy and our political system and how political class has left everyday working people behind. And this is not the populism of your grandfather. We live in 2019, and I agree with the previous speaker that race and racial prejudice is central to understanding how right wing populism is working and a progressive inclusionary populist strategy has to understand how race is a major structuring force in society, in American society. I don't know to project on to Canada, but you all can take what you want.

So what does this look like? This isn't about downloading this kind of fully intersectional deep analysis into our base or making it so anybody who walks in the door already has to get it. It's not that at all. It's about having an analysis of social justice, racial justice, gender justice, economic justice, inform the strategies and the approach of how we go about things. So it informs what issue fights we pick and whose leadership we invest in building the most, which doors we're knocking, and how we articulate the struggle. And so that's a long game and an important approach. Just to paint a picture, in the midst of our electoral campaign to try to elect King for congress in the height of it in the summer we kind of dropped everything we were doing for a little bit in order to fight and win the campaign which was trying to privatize the prison re-entry program trying to draw attention to a police brutality. Those choices matter and signal different things to different communities, and that is part of -- I think part of this is everything we're doing, we see as a pedagogical process with our base. You can't download an analysis into a base and having a radical analysis is all for not if you're just trying to say it and have people understand it intellectually. It's a process and how we relate to unfolding events and what our intervention interventions are.

So we say it's up to us, and this is the kind of independent political power piece. So what I mean by that is our training has reoriented our base to realize that -- OK, so the modal response we get when

we knock doors is: I don't want to have anything to do with politics, some kind of disenfranchisement, people not liking either party. That is a major response we get. When we first started sending out volunteers canvassing they said: They asked if they we were Democrats and they said how they hated the party and they were knocking the doors of registered Democrats. So we had to reorient people to take that resistance to politics and that disenfranchisement from politics as an opening, as the beginning of a conversation, not the end of a conversation. And so you couldn't be a cheerleader for the democratic Party when you meet that energy. You have to say something like: Yeah, don't get we started about the Democratic Party. I would often say that. I know people important to me in my life who lost everything from the financial meltdown. No-one was held accountable. I was registered as an independent because I was disgusted with all of them. I realized they're not going to change unless people like you and me get organized. King is a working mom, and that kind of conversation moved a lot of people. So we also say that's what I mean by it's up to us. We say nobody is going to fix this for us. It's up to us everyday people to get ourselves involved and to take our democracy.

So I want to spend the rest of my time before we go into questions talking about what we call top polar polarization. This is more of a theoretical dive and this really informs our thinking about how we landed in this populist moment and thousand navigate it and how to understand the difference between what we call progressive populism and reactionary populism.

So this is how we're told polarization works in American society, right? There's the left, there's the right and then there's these people who call themselves centrists and we don't really know what that is. But this is what we're told, right? This is the discourse of the pundit and political parties. In this, you have the left and the right. You have the corresponding corresponding labels, Liberal and Conservative. In the United States we're told we have the corresponding parties, democrat and Republican. Lancaster stand us up and in the Congress campaign which emerged, we would take pains to avoid invoking this polarization. So we wouldn't use these words, but also catchphrases like gun control. It didn't mean we were avoiding fights on issues. It meant we were presenting them in new ways. The reason we would avoid these frameworks like the plague is because once this is invoked, people tend to be in one of four positions, and it's a fixed position. Those four positions are they either identify on the one side side, they identify on the other side, they proudly pro proclaim themselves a moderate centrist, again whatever that means, or a lot of the people we're encountering, allied from the whole thing. So when you invoke this this, people know where they stand and they don't want to move. But when you talk about values, when you tell your story, when you talk about specific issues through a values lens, people are kind of all over the place. That's one of the biggest lessons for me from the past two years, is that most people's politics are a lot more complex than we give them credit for, and a lot of people are movable. Not all, but a lot of people are. The other reason we don't like to use this is because it makes the centre seem so reasonable, middle, balance balanced, moderate, even popular. This is hosen trysts frame themselves and their interests. We actually know that on economic policy the most vocal, self-identified centrist tend to be defending the neoliberal status quo, which is not a popular position at all. It's an extreme position. By avoiding this framework, we get to kind of pull that rug out from under that.

So what do we do instead? You could take this and say so you don't polarize. No. We think polarization is critically important in political mobilization and not something to be avoided but something to think about strategically. How do you want to polarize? It comes down to the question of who is the we and what are the threats and culprits?

So this is what we call the rhetorical structure of populism, the very basic. It's the establishment versus the people. That's basically populism as a nonideological -- because this could be left wing, right wing -- a structure where you say: We the people against that corrupt establishment, right? Watch Trump Trump's final campaign ad. It's some of the most incredibly effective use of this rhetoric available.

So what we do in our analysis is we complicate this a little bit to understand the very important moral and strategic differences between reactionary populism of Trump and the progressive inclusionary populism of, say, Cortez. So we introduce a third layer. We have the tippy top. These are not precise sociological categories. They do correspond with some more intricate categories, but we're talking about the .1 per cent, the billionaires, Wall Street, people with incredible economic power which has translated into in incredible political power.

But then we have under this what we're calling the political class. Here we're talking economically the top 10 to 20 per cent, people with educational privilege. This has -- this polarization is resonant within this class of people. They think everybody is still attached to these terms, but they're not, because there is the rest of us and there is this rapture, this chasm, that has emerged as neoliberalism has developed, as Wall Street and big corporations in the United States -- I don't want to speak for Canada -- have really captured the political class and picture the top two pieces there taking off like a rocket ship from the rest of everyday working people. They're all drinking their own Kool-Aid. I don't know what the expression is. And what this has done is it's made it right for somebody to come by and say: They've left us behind. Because they have. And to articulate a new premise, a new narrative for a we the people and the culprits, and there's a Donald Trump version of this and an Ocasio version of this. Trump ran as a populist. I'm running out of time before questions, so I'll breeze through. Reactionary populism. Here's how it works. It obfuscates the economic power at the very top. It taps into economic anxiety but channels it into anger at scapegoats, usually racialized scapegoats.

So it pretends to punch up by pointing at the social upper strat, Trump's targets the media, Hollywood. This works well for two reasons. One, economic power feels abstract. It's like the weather. People are resigned to it. Whereas social condescension has a human face and there's a visceral reaction.

The other reason is that when you're at the bottom relative to your position, that looks a lot like the top, even though it's not the very for the purpose, it's not where economic power really lies, it looks like the top.

This is really important too. It gains outsideer C Cred --. So we often think of Trump and the tea Party as Conservatives. It's very imprecise. They were an extreme faction to came to power partly by opening and insurgency against the party leadership and that was absolutely essential to their rise to power, absolutely essential. There's a lesson in that for us.

Then we know it really punches down at the most vulnerable by strategically fomenting prejudice, so Trump's favourite scapegoats are Muslim misand immigrants, but there are others as well. In so doing,

it cements a "we" that is exclusionary. There's a deep solidarity felt, but there are people outside of that "we," who are otherized. Ocasio also ran as a populist populist. One of my favourite tweets of %. I'm running in fierce advocacy of working-class Americans. How does populism work, inclusionary populism? It punches up by pointing at the economic power at the very top, a big reason we have not been able to organize working people in this framework is because we've had a political party that is unwilling to pick these fights, because it has been effectively captured by big money. So we call out, just like Trump called out the establishment leadership of the Republican Party, but not for substantive reasons but empty reasons. We're calling out the establishment leadership of the Democratic Party but for substantive reasons, especially the way big corporations and Wall Street have taken over and how the Democratic Party has failed to find its voice in advocating for working people.

And I don't mean working people as a euphemism for white working people. I mean all working people in the United States, just to be clear.

So we also call and divide and conquer strategies of the republican party. I don't have time to say more more, but at the door in Lancaster city, large majority white, we engage in talking about race. The research is worth looking at about how to do this in a way that is effective, when you're talking about economics and race at the same time. So inoculate people essentially against their own prejudices.

Then we articulate a we the people that includes all of us, regardless of racer of ethnicity, country of origin. There's a tacky rainbow graphic there to capture that.

Last thing, in sum, it's a them and a multiracial working class us and we also say it's Bernie's them and Obama us. Obama was better than may be anyone in our country's history of articulating a we the people, told from the point of view of those who fought to become part of we the people, abolitionists, people at stone wall, but he was always not very good at picking a fight with culprits and that I would argue is the weak weakness of his presidency. He didn't want to name a villain. Bernie is very good at naming villains and did a lot better than anybody thought he would do because that was his trick. He kept naming the 1 per cent, billionaires. But he was actually pretty bad, would tack it on the end, we're all going to get along. It's great. So we feel like we need a hybrid and that's what we've done.

So that's the end. This closes on a photo of 500 people coming out a week after we lost our congressional race in a district that got changed from in the middle of the race. 5000 people came out and we're still at it and working to build in Lancaster. I want to open it up to questions.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: OK. We're going to try to make this at least a good 12 minutes of questions so that we get some of you out there. Jonathan, you want me to pick two or three at a times, right?

JONATHAN SMUCKER: Maybe three at a time.

SPEAKER: Jonathan, maybe you could go back to the first triangle, Bernie and Obama, and explain a bit about that. I found some of that fascinating. Earlier than that.

SPEAKER: OK. Another question.

SPEAKER: I'm wondering if you could say a little bit more about the conversations you have with people to invite them into the space, so if they are worried about being activists or don't see

themselves, how you have the conversation about what you do and why you do it.

SPEAKER: Oh, gosh. Jim, can you walk up there? Do you have a mic? Is there a question? We'll get more questions. Anyone here?

SPEAKER: I just wanted to say that it's hard to give an old man hope about where democracy is going, but I think you've given me a bit of hope. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: Thanks for the talk. Really great stuff. I was hoping you could say a little more about the kind of last sentence you said about the congressional race and the shifts there and what you learned from that..

JONATHAN SMUCKER: Should I take those? Can I clarify the first person? Which triangle was it you were referring to? That was the same one I showed at the end. That was foreshadowing, so I'll talk about that. This slide was just foreshadowing what we got do eventually, which is what I said about Bernie's them, naming a culprit. I do believe we need to name culprits. However, one important moral answer to the difference between how progressives can do this and how reactionary forces do this is we don't have to make it about intrinsic qualities about people, culprits. That's what the right does, country of origin, colour of skin, religion religion, right? Our culprits tend to be structural, the consolidation of wealth and power, which makes it harder often to name resonant culprits. But that's part of the work that we have to do. And we need a lead that people see themselves in, that people see themselves part of, that everybody sees themselves as part of. So that's a big piece of what we do.

So actually all these questions will bridge together. To me, the biggest piece is getting people to feel like part of a "we." So there's a lot of techniques we've developed and I'd be happy to talk with you afterwards about this. But a lot of this is putting something of your own story and motivation out there that people can connect with, something that's familiar, like either a struggle you've had with child care costs and it can also be -- we've had some canvasser from more affluent upbringings and it would be weird for them to do that, but they could talk about someone they know struggling with health care. We train people on that and it opens the door for people to connect. So that connection, that interpersonal connection is the most important thing and that gets people feeling like they're part of a "we." Then we articulate the culprits. Then fundamentally we have to have people feel like they can do something about it. And having said this is what we've been able to do, coming together, and nothing like this has happened before, because everyday people like you and me are getting together and doing this. The activism thing, mostly what we do is we just make these spaces feel as familiar as possible. And we're oriented toward the people at the door. I think the one big important thing about that insularity, what we found the most -- the best way to break out of that insularity that I talked about at the beginning of the talk is canvassing is kind of like a magical trick, a magical tactic with that, because we train our emerged leaders to be oriented toward the periphery of the group instead of elbowing their way into the centre, which is one of the social psychological mechanisms that causes groups to become insular. So thanks about the hope thing. I'm going to use that to talk about the congressional race. Yeah, it was a real bummer. Pennsylvania got re redistricted, questions good for demorats across the

district, except for ourselves, which went from Republican advantage 6 to 14. We would have won our own district are the numbers we turned out. Instead we lost our district, by quite a bit. But we made up in every single precinct. We made up significant ground. Some precincts we went from 15 per cent of the vote to 40 per cent, 25 share to 50 per cent. And it was all through a candidate, King, who was picking a fight with the current party, who was calling for medicare for all all, doing things we were told we can't do because we'll lose the middle but actually appeals to everyday working people. We made up a lot of ground. It's too bad about the redistricting because we've had a lot more room to brag had we won. So what we're building from our, our district is not very easy to win in 2020, so we're going to school board races, commissioner races. We're training and recruiting candidates all across our county from our base, and allies and we are also running issue campaigns that polarize people around the issues and around values in a strategic way. And that's kind of where we're moving 37 and we're also building this across the state of Pennsylvania. That's the exciting thing that I forgot to mention. We're building a state-wide organization that is playing in these areas in between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia to build up a similar -- similar types of operations as Lancaster Stands Up. We'll do another round.

SPEAKER: Hello. Thank you so much for presenting this analysis. I have a twofold question. The first being is that the characteristics of AOC and Trump are both insurgent campaigns. So how do you kind of apply this reactionary populism where is inclusionary populism to an entire party structure as opposed to the individual.

Second, my other question is because our political spectrum differs a little bit, differs slightly here within the Canadian context, where is there room for populism within centrist politics, for example, if we were to apply power parties politically aligned here in Canada, with our left, right being a little different, where does centrist lie when it comes to populism?

SPEAKER: Thank you for your presentation. It was lovely. I really enjoyed that. It was one of the few that gave substance to the question of what actually is populism and what's the difference between reactionary and inclusive populism. My question is similar to the previous speaker but what is the constructive outlet for inclusive populism? In Canada our political parties have a great deal more power in the hands of party leaders. One cannot seek a nomination without the permission of the party leader and that limits the openings for people who want to run as insurgent candidates.

In that context, what do you think an inclusive populist movement would look like in Canada if it can't look like choosing and building up candidates in our federal parties?

SPEAKER: Great question.

SPEAKER: I have a question down here.

SPEAKER: Hi. I always support movements that are able to bring in as many people as possible, and a question that I have, that immediately extends from that, is how do we make sure that our organizing circles don't reflect the most powerful people in our circles and make sure that people who aren't safe in traditional main extreme spaces of organizing are included?

SPEAKER: Those three.

JONATHAN SMUCKER: Fantastic. Those a great questions. Some of them relate to each other. The

party structure thing, so I don't know enough about the details of the Canadian structure to be prescriptive about it. I can reflect on our situation and maybe some of it is applicable.

So I think -- honestly I think the tea Party and Trump are very instructive in certain ways and not other ways. And what is instructive is they won an una unabashed insurgency in relation to the party. That is something we have done in Lancaster county and it was quite difficult. The local Democratic Party and the DC DCCC hated us and until we won. And that's what you have to do. You have to fight them and win and become hegemonic. It's not easy, but it's really hard, actually. But I think you need -- there's a danger of Ocasio becoming the only one, right? Like, no dis disrespect, but I don't want Ocasio to become the Dennis of the generation. So in my mind -- in the 2020 cycle, we need 30 to 40 Ocasio-type candidates in house races across the country. Obviously the presidential race will matter quite a bit. It's not just about the individual candidates. We need the movements behind the candidates. That's the kind of wave and the scale of wave. It's not just a matter of taking over the whole Democratic Party. It's about shifting the direction of the Democratic Party, shifting how people are competing with each other to be more progressive on taxation, et cetera. It's getting away from the old window piece. Populism within centrism, I don't know how to answer that, because I think it's kind of the opposite. The thing about this is it's outsider candidates and it's uncomfortable because they're literally trying to topple the current leadership of the party. There's no way to play nice in it. I think this is part of the class-based insularity of progress progressive movements. Dispositionally we're conflict averse, but it is a necessary fight and we won't gain credibility with working-class people in this country if we're not willing to take on the party leadership that has betrayed the trust of working people. I just think that's a necessary fight.

And so the structural outlet, I think we need to build our own independent organizations. So Lancaster Stands Up was our solution at the county level, and a county in Pennsylvania. We have a constraining two- two-party system, so we're not running a third party in the United States, but we're organizeing basically a faction and treating the Democratic Party as a terrain of contestation and building our own independent organization that is not beholden to that infrastructure in order to make waves and to press demands, to build trust with social bases who the Democratic Party is not going to win over, and to have infrastructure ahead. I don't know what it is in Canada. I don't know what it is in relationship to whether it's having a political party or whether it's having a party-like organization that can have the kind of discipline of a party, work on multiple issues and then push and -- maybe a factional organization within a political party. But I do think those organizations are absolutely centrally necessary.

The final question, I think -- this is a perpetual question within movements, is how do you make organizations welcoming to everyone and not just welcoming but have groups that are often marginalized in society, not marginalized within these spaces? To add a last flavour to it, in an area like Lancaster county, the version of this that is really challenging for us and that we're I think making strides on, but it's complicated is if we're doing our job right building a political organization for the whole county, it's going to be majority white because the county is overwhelmingly majority white, but it will have a significant number of people of colour in it because the city is and the organization is like

that. The struggle how do you have the participation of communities of colour be real and have power within that organization as an organized constituency within that organization and not just be tokenistic people of colour within a white organization?

So I pose it back more as a question because I don't think there are easy answers to that. I think the key is to really engage explicitly as an organization how you're going to do that, and that is something we work on and struggle with. I think that's it, right?

SPEAKER:

Yes. Thank you very much, Jonathan.

[APPLAUSE]

JONATHAN SMUCKER: Thank you so much.

So we have three more sessions before lunch. I know we can power through it, because we've just been reinvigorated by that talk. If you're into spiritual comments, it's here. Arthur, if you wouldn't mind pulling it up on the screen so we can see. Spillerrity comments is here. Uphill climb is in B, and competing visions of democracy is in C.

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SPEAKER: There's been a lot of face talk today and it's not going to end. We're really excited to bring together the spiritual comments conversations, and without further ado, I'm going to hand it over to John Milloy former MPP, current with the Centre for Public Ethics at Wilfrid Laurier University. Over to you, John.

JOHN MILLOY: Great. Thank you very much, Anna. Good morning, everyone, or good afternoon. I guess we're just on the cusp of it. As you heard, my name is Jonathan Smucker. As the old joke goes I'm a recovering politician who led elected life, I ran three times and left elected life in 2014. I didn't run again provincially. I instead came to Waterloo Lutheran, which is now Martin Luther University College, affiliated with Wilfrid Laurier University. There I had the opportunity to teach and explore the intersection between faith and politics and the contribution that faith and religion can make to our public life.

I begin by acknowledging what many people think when they hear this, faith and politics, it sounds like a punchline to a joke or those two topics that your mother told you never to raise in public along with sex. We take a different view at the centre and certainly see a positive contribution for faith, as I think my fellow panellists do as well today.

We're going to open it up and hopefully do things slightly differently from some of the other packages and hopefully have more of an organic conversation around some of the themes and hear from you in the audience. I'm going to briefly tell you who is here with me today and then when I turn it over to them with a question, ask them to tell us a little more about their background and how they came to this panel here this morning.

I begin with Azeezah Kanji immediately to my left, a legal academic and writer. Beside her we have Tita Angangco, from the Centre for Mindfulness Studies. Beside her is Jason McKinney, who is from the trinity college school of divinity. You and then our final wrap-up anchor is David Pfrimmer, who is actually with me at the Centre for Public Ethics at Martin Luther University College.

Thank you all for coming out. As I said, a quick introduction because I want to turn it over to you to really address the basic question: What does faith and spirituality bring to public purpose, particularly in the current polarized society that's been such a theme over the weekend?

I'll start with you, Azeezah Kanji. If you can tell us more about yourself and we'll go down the row.

AZEEZAH KANJI: Thank you very much, John, for cure eight this conversations. Thousand all of you in the audience here today. I'm looking forward to learning from you and engaging with your wisdom and experience. I want to begin by greeting you all with greetings of peace, as Muslims we begin every interaction with a greeting or with a wish for peace.

John wanted us to talk a bit about the work we do. John mend that I'm a legal academic and writer focusing particularly on issues of Islamic law and I'm also the director of programming at the cultural centre, a religious educational cultural centre in Toronto and a lot of the work we do is related toe exploring the relevance of Islamic intellectual legal and ethical solutions to racial, gender, economic, environmental justice. Areas of the tradition that are often obscured or eraseed in much of the public discourse we have about Islam and Muslims in this country in which Muslims are hypothesized to have an exceptional relationship with violence that is attributed to the Islamic tradition in a way that obscures the way that Islam is something that can be integrated or assimi assimilated into Canada but also a resource to draw upon as we seek to transform of Canadian structures of injustice that we are currently dealing with, including the deeply colonial foundations of the Canadian state.

When we talk about the relationship between religion and the public sphere, I think we often start with an assumption that religion is something that properly and usually belongs exclusively in the private sphere, and so its presence in the public sphere is thought of as an intrusion. But I think this is actually a fallacious starting point. Religion, and religious ideas already deeply structure our public sphere in Canada, including in creating and structuring some of the problems that we're dealing with, the idea of the doctrine of discovery, for example, which treated the entire territory which we now call Canada as land that was free from people who were capable in civilized -- deeply rooted in religious doctrines and it continues to structure the problems not only of race racism that we are dealing with in Canada today but also of environmental devastation, the idea that all of the land is simply a resource for people to exploit.

And so inasmuch as religious right side are part of the problems that we are faceing in Canada, I think religion also needs to be a fundamental part of the solution. As a Muslim, I know that when people talk about Islam and politics, that often evokes a certain amount of panic, and partially because of events that have happened in the world but also very importantly because of the way those events are portrayed in our public discourse. As I said, to suggest that there is some inherent and intrinsic relationship between Islam and violence that is not similarly projected on to other communities that commit violence. I regular draw on ideas that are foundational to my tradition in thinking about problems of justice, the idea of the absolute supremacy of God, which means that all of our relationships with each other as creative means between humans and non-human animals, humans and the environment, all of those must be held in a relationship of equality because God alone is supreme, the idea of peace, which I greeted you in the beginning beginning, which includes not only

the idea of what current peace studies philosophers would call the absence of conflict but also includes an idea of positive peace, the presence of justice and well-being and equality. And the principles of non-violent transformative action that I see rooted in the example of the prophet.

SPEAKER: These are just some ways, drawing on my religious tradition that we can see these ideas, that we can draw on our traditions to work towards collective action coming from all of our different starting points. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Hi. I'm Tita Angangco and I co-founded the Centre for Mindfulness Studies in Canada about seven years ago. I really come to this panel as a secular voice for spirituality. Let me tell you a little bit about the work we do, because it's kind of odd, right? Essentially our agency is a mental health agency. What we do is we provide services and education for professionals on what's now called mindfulness-based therapies. This is a part of what we call structured psychotherapies that are currently -- that are quite new and have tremendous promise for being mental health services, of being a lot more access to mental health services than we currently have.

The thing about our services as well is that we actually have very important focus on serving the marginalized populations and underserved. As a matter of fact, we do a lot of work in the Parkdale and regent Park area in Toronto, which are kind of high-priority neighbourhoods. We also do quite a lot of work in the Philippines.

You might very well ask: What am I doing on this panel? And I'll talk a little bit about mindfulness, the basis for mindfulness, to explain that link.

Essentially, mindfulness principles and practices are really derived from Buddhist psychology. But it's been heavily secularized leaving Buddhist theology behind. What has happened is that this particular use, secularization of mindfulness, has been used in health care settings successfully and the evidence base for the success of these intervention and treatment options is really quite promising, and it's become part of the lexicon of health and mental health care.

But the thing is that -- the thing about mindfulness is let me just tell you what we do. One of the core practices of mindfulness is really meditation. And meditation is one of the core practices that we use to teach people a number of abilities, and these abilities are really important faculties that they can use to kind of help themselves overcome the effects of rumination, the effects of distortions in thinking, the effects of anger and resistance, by teaching them a number of things.

The first is the ability to direct their attention. This is really important.

The second the ability to be really aware of what's happening within ourselves and around us, by showing up really present in the present moment.

And the third thing is really to view all of our experience with acceptance, with openness and with just a real curiosity about that experience.

The thing is, these abilities are really abilities of consciousness and they have the power to transform our consciousness from one that might be quite kind of blind at the beginning to something that sees more clearly as one progresses through the journey.

The interesting thing about mindfulness is that it is in some way a spiritual practice. If I look at spirituality from a secular perspective, I can describe spirituality as a process of personal

transformation and growth, which is oriented to subjective experience. So spirituality in a way is mindfulness, and mindfulness is a practice to spirituality.

Let me quote some words from our study on spirituality and mindfulness, which says spirituality is an experience of mindfulness, while mindfulness is a practice of the spiritual. I just said that. Spiritual growth is a pattern for believing, and mindfulness practice is a way for us to be aware of that belief, to give some embodied aspect to that belief. And the reason embodied aspect is really important, because the practice of mindfulness and the practice of meditation brings body, feelings and mind together. And it really brings you into a sense not just of a rational insight, but a real sense of the visceral and a sense of the connection between our physical bodies and our rational minds. And this embodied sense of wisdom and insight is very important. It's a very important part of the learning process in mindfulness.

Now, you might very well ask me: What's my interest in mindfulness, since really the work we do with our clients is basically secular?

The interesting thing about working with clients in this way is that they take you to different places. You have to go to places where the work takes you. Over the last seven years that we have been working in this area, there are two things that have kind of -- I've experienced working with people. One is that there is a transcendence that happens in some of this group work that we do that kind of pushes people into a place which I think Jason calls the more than material, when you talk about the community feeling that arises. And that really brings up in people this sense of what's next. What are we going to do next? And this is really what invokes that spiritual transcendent sense in people where they're looking beyond my own personal well-being and growth.

The second thing is that we only teach one ethical value in the work that we do, and that is compassion. The interesting thing about compassion, and we focus on self-compassion and self-care because that is so important to the well-being of people. But there is also a beyond self-compassion and self-care, and that is other compassion and other care, which brings us to the sense of interdependence, the sense of being one all together, of a shared humanity and so forth. This, again, is kind of a spiritual experience.

And the third thing that I've noticed is in working with religious groups, there is a sense in which we can find some affinity, and working in the Philippines, for example, which is a Catholic country, I've been able to work particularly with those Catholics who kind of learned how to do centreing prayer and have been drawn into that contemplative practice, which has been recently growing in the Christian movement right now. And there's been an incredible kind of symbiosis, and synergies that arise from that. One of the things I think about these days is that as we need to build more community, we need to really come together in spaces that can actually result in this more than material sense of experience and spirituality. The churches always provided that in the past, and what happens with our programs is that you come to our program, it's a very individual program. You come to our programs and then you leave. And I always wonder: Where can they go next? Where are those places where people can gather together in practice?

One of the obvious places to do that is really in contemplative practices within the churches, be it in

the Catholic church, in the Presbyterian churches and I am sure in the Muslim churches you do the same thing. So there is some kind of affinity between that.

So that's essentially where we're coming from, from our interest in spirituality, from purely a secular, mindfulness and mental health perspective.

Lastly, I'd like to really answer the question that John brought up: What has this got to do with the public space?

It's very interesting listening to the presentations yesterday, and really listening to some of the core ideas that came up -- core ideas like love, like learning to listen, like working with discomfort, like being open to ambiguity, to the unknown, to the emergent. But these are all qualities that we need to have if we are going to do this work with some grace and success.

The interesting thing about these qualities is they're really qualities of being and consciousness, and these qualities are uncommon and I would say undervalued in our highly individualized Western society.

I have a quote here from Einstein, which I think David, you used as well in your paper. Einstein said that we cannot solve the problems of the world from the level of thinking that we were at when we created them. The world will not change until we change.

You know, stillth and mindfulness as a spiritual practice really has the potential for allowing us to change because these are transformative personal practices. They really have the potential of changing the world one individual at a time. This is the difficulty, right? It seems incredibly impractical to think in that sense.

However, I thought about this problem for a long time and this is one of the reasons why I took up mindfulness. I thought about: So what is the alternative? if not this? The alternative seems to be random and by chance and muddling through. But there is a way to actually develop these qualities of consciousness and being through a more intentional path path. So I will leave that question with you.

JOHN MILLOY: Thank you, Tita and John and my co-panellists -- I'm grateful to be here and to be sort of thinking out loud about these things and for your willingness to hear myself and others work through what are for me some fairly inchoate ideas about what this could be. When I was doing my Ph.D. I did some study in sort of discourses of secularism, secularization. But that's not actually where I find the most -- it's not the most useful place for me to go now. Now it's most useful to be situated in a particular place and wrestling with issues at that level and that's where this notion of spiritual has emerged out of. I'm affiliated with trinity college. I do teaching generally in the area of practical theology, which is sort of theological and critical reflection on the things that we encounter in the world. That's where we sort of get the matter that we explore is experience in the world. But I spend more of my time working as an Anglican priest. I stay connected to the Christian tradition because I remain convinced that within that tradition there is the possibility for transformation, for structural transformation towards justice and for kind of interior transformation of our lives to be people of compassion and people of justice.

But I find myself serving in the church in an interesting moment, where the church is in this position of

rapidly declining not only numbers but social power. And so how can an institution like the church be a force for social good and justice and a place that people can go to find interior -- the depth of their interior life and their connection with the divine?

And so the way that I've sort of -- what I'm in some ways helping the church to try to figure out how to do that, and the way we have worked that out within my denomination is that my role within the church is not, for the most part, which is partly what's allowed me to be here on a Sunday, is not doing liturgical duties on a Sunday morning but being more engaged in the community. So I live and work in Parkdale and that's where all of these connections have emerged for me. So my role has largely been trying to reconnect the church with the neighbourhood, but again from the perspective of an institution or organization that doesn't have a whole lot to offer materially speaking any longer. And so the first phase of that has been really just building partnerships, trying to be collaborative, releasing the assets that the church does have to the community, as much as that is possible possible, but realizing realizing that really where the momentum is, doesn't start in the church, but especially in a place like Parkdale, it's already in the community. There's already just a tremendous sense of community that Tita has experienced as well, and sense of -- in the face of some of these challenges and pressures that are bearing down on Parkdale, there's been just an incredible movement from below to ensure that the people of Parkdale retain a voice at the table in determining what change and development and all these things will look like. It's got me engaged in issues, post-capitalist economics and thinking about land and ownership and all of these kinds of things, which I've really been trying to follow and to learn from, and then only secondarily trying to realize what is it the church or spiritual communities can bring to this. That's where this notion of the spiritual commons began to emerge. What I began to see was what was happening in this work, what we might call commoning, creating commons, creating spaces that are open to everyone everyone, not limited by private or even public owner ownership. In Parkdale we have a little experiment in that. We have a commons. We have this little piece of land called the milky way garden, which is actually owned by the community, held by a local organization, democratically organized, and open to all residents of the neighbourhood. It's been an extraordinary experience to be a part of this work. What I came to realize or what I came to see is that there's more going on here than just sort of a transfer of ownership ownership. There's more going on here than just the sort of urgent political need to respond to issues of generalification. There's generalification gentrification. There's something that happens in this work, the sense of community that is created that again as Tita said is more than material. That's my kind of working definition of spiritual. The spiritual is the more than material. It's not that thing or that substance or that reality that is opposed to material life, but it's that which kind of adheres to, is embodied in and is carried by our material life. That experience of seeing that there was something else, something more, something deeper going on in these really incredible movements and initiatives in the neighbourhood. And then I began speaking with Tita and others, and I wasn't the only one perceiving this, not the only one interested in pursuing further what might be involved in this.

So the spiritual commons is an idea that moves in two directions. So the one is the one I've just been describing. It is the recognition of the more the material realities at work in collective practices of

commoning or of creating a neighbourhood commons.

But the other side is the commoning of the spiritual. And this will be the last thing I say for now. For me, another thing that I've been doing in the neighbourhood is working with some partners and doing some interfaith engagement kind of projects. And what we've been thinking about is interfaith, typically you have people from traditional religious communities, discrete religious identities coming together, talking about things, maybe collaborating on a project and then returning to their place of worship or the tradition they come from. But the question I have, and this is the question of the spiritual commons, is what is the emergent that happens in that moment. I don't have the words for it, but in terms of at least having a grammar for the spiritual, trying to capture this emergent spiritual that not only asks more of people from religious traditions but also opens a space for the growing demographic of the unaffiliated, of people who have a sense or an investment in the spiritual but are not connected to a religious tradition. I think there's lots of space to explore that reality.

DAVID PFRIMMER: Just a little bit about me. I am an academic of sorts. Autograph taught ethics at Waterloo in seminary and now Martin Luther college. For 25 years I did public policy work on behalf of the church which is done ecumenically. Many of the churches collaborate on it, have had a long history of collaboration. Some of you were in KAIROS on Friday. It is one of the organization. Project plow shares is another. For 25 years I did that work and worked at the UN, in Ottawa, at Queen's Park. Also I spent ten years on the governing council for Lutheran World Federation, one of the four conciliary groups, some of you may be more familiar with, the international rights and human affairs committee for that group. I thought what I might share with you is something from that experience, maybe two points. Before I do, one thing I'm not going to do, there are lots of critiques of what churches have done and I would agree about the doctrine of discovery and colonials, and I'm very aware of all those things. I think with the limited time I wanted to speak a little bit more about what were some of the positive contributions churches and faith groups offer in the public arena to public life and to our political process.

If somebody has a particular issue they want to pick up later, we can talk about that, but that's sort of my focus. I think we have to understand that in the context of what's faith's contribution to public life, the politics, there's another question too: What is the public's contribution to faith communities and churches? And this has been very important. The traffic has to go two ways. So holding religious communities accountable is really important.

I'm going to make two points, if I can. The first is what we need to remember, our history of churches as Canadians. I use that term specifically because at one time it was predominantly churches in Canada playing a public role. It's not to exclude anybody. I certainly am deeply committed and work with many multi-faith organizations and I'll say something about that in a minute. If we look at our history, we need to remember it, and Canadians often don't remember our history of what churches have contributed.

So let me briefly say I think there's been four waves. Actually, I think in contact with Indigenous communities, Indigenous spirituality is very important. There's an important contribution and discussion that needs to take place about that, but I want to speak about the other four waves that I think give us

some illustrations of what churches and subsequently faith communities more generally can contribute to the public public.

If you look at Canada, in the first period, when we were very much agricultural, rule-based country, many of these small communities, churches were one of the only institutions and they become the kind of institution that helps people articulate who they are together. They become kind of custodians of an identity of sorts, for better or worse, I might add, in all of these things I'm going to say. As a result, they played a significant role in the lives of people. That translated later on to seeing churches as kind of the moral advisors, the custodians of identity for the political institutions and the economic institutions and others, and most notably we see vestiges of this still in the big debate about whether there should be a *crus fix* in the national assembly in Quebec. This is a significant moment because in Quebec the Catholic church played a significant role in preserving the safely guarding the identity of francophones in Canada. So had whole idea of churches being kind of moral advisers in terms of governments, politicians and public life is significant.

By 1867 we started seeing a rise in industrialized industrialized and urbanization. Canadians were moving into cities. These were not particularly great times for people who were dislocated and put in cities. Many of the cities lacked the kinds of services that were needed. So churches started hospitals, schools, many of the universities that some of us are in began during this period. The churches were those who provided a lot of good approaches to dealing with some of the social ills that were facing an urban and increasingly industrial industrialized population. The role that churches played there was to come up with good ideas to kind of humanize the communities in which people lived. This was also not without its negative side, I might add, and some of the overreach, the social gospel movement was very much a part of this whole effort. But remember, we also got prohibition because of the social gospel movement as well, so it's a mixed bag.

But the second role for churches in the public life was around providing good ideas and thinking through those. By the way, these carry through. The Romano commission on health care, the first recommendation for a health care covenant which would determine what kind of reforms would be acceptable and preserve a universal, accessible program for people, the first recommendation was for a health covenant that came from the Canadian churches, through the Canadian council of churches's presentation.

The third time was after the war, for example, what happened was the welfare state was on the rise, many of these services were funded more publicly, and as a result churches became much more kind of conscience for the country, a conscience, not the conscience, I might add. You saw things like churches were very active in helping people who were avoiding the draft coming to Canada during the Vietnam war. You saw churches very active involved in the after par tied apartheid. The churches were one of the groups Mandela wanted to thank. Churches very much played a kind of role as a kind of conscientious presence, which was not always welcome.

As Jason alluded to, we've gone through a period of disestablishment and we've gone through a period when there's been a lot of immigration and other faiths are coming to Canada and we're seeing a move from what in those days might have been called now a more multi- multi-faith kinds of

involvement. We're in a hinge momentinal way to figure out what will be the role of religious institutions, not just churches but the multi-faith plethora of institutions. I would argue that one of the things as we see a fraying and fracturing of our public life and many of our institutions we have are atrophying and under duress. One of the roles is how do we reconvene publics that can in fact animate the public Commons, the public life and our political institutions. As a footnote, I mean something very specific by public. A public for me is a voluntary association of individuals that gather around an idea or cause and, in the process, as we heard in the owe previous presentation with community organization, people effect the change. If we are to recreate a public arena, we need to do that by we convening these publics and reanimating and looking at new movements to do that. I was intrigued by some of the previous presentations.

My second point is that Rabbi Jonathan Sacks said knowledge takes the world apart to understand how it works. Religion puts the world together to understand what it means. I think this is important because embed embedded in our public life already are deeply held religious convictions, faith convictions and values, and I think they're not always self-evident or transparent and they're not always questioned. For example, I think economists today are often the new dogmatic people in our midst who make assertions. I think one of the most dogmatic religious assertions to me for some people is when you say Ontario is open for business, right? It has a whole lot of freight attached to it, with the kind of world, the chive beliefs, the kind of values that we want to see employed for our future.

So I think one of the roles that in convening publics and creating publics is to disrupt the kind of ultimate assumptions and assertionss that are being made about where we need to go. I think religious communities can play that role, as Azeezah Kanji mentioned, some of the concepts from the Muslim and Buddhist traditions. These things can play an important role in disrupting our world view. Because the most important religious question -- this is my view -- that you're going to ever ask yourself is why did I change my mind about something that I really believed in, and why? I think churches, religions, faith communities at their best can play a helpful and constructive role. It's one thing to talk about democracy as a process, but if you don't have a destination of where you're headed, what kind of world you want to create, all worlds look the same.

JOHN MILLOY: I want to open it up for people to respond, but I thought I'd spice it up with a question in between. I'll play the devil's advocate, and say the biggest criticism I get for the work I do is people say: Look, we live in a secular society, we have a separation of church and state. It's fine what you want to do personally. We even will accept the fact -- I think every panellist has said that it could infuse some values that you may bring to the discussion, but it's a personal side of things, to try to bring your faith full force or just any reference to your faith in public debates and discussion has a tendency to offend people. As you've all acknowledged, faith has good and bad. It reminds people of some bad things. Why don't we keep this in the personal sphere, particularly from a in a world that has become secularized, when on Sunday mornings churches are empty? You can respond to anything I've said, but I'll spice it with that question, which I'm asked frequently. I don't know who wants to go first.

>>I think that the idea of public and private is itself something that we need to think about critically

critically. By critically, I don't mean negatively or in a condemning fashion. I mean we need to think about the histories and dynamics that lie behind the production of public sphere in contrast to the private sphere and think about how those themselves are the product of particular -- or oriented around particular ideas of what religion are. They emerge in Canada from a Judeo- -- or rather a Christian history of religion that's independent matily tied to histories of colonialism which represented some religionings or which prioritized a certain idea of religion around a Christian model of what religion looks like and that could be privateized in a certain way that doesn't necessarily map on to all different religious traditions. In Canada we see, for example, how these particular ideas of religion continues to disadvantage and lead to the suppression of colonization. The Supreme Court recently heard a case involving an Indigenous nation that made a claim that its freedom of religion was being fundamentally threatened by a development project on a piece of land that it considered to be part of its territory because it said that its object of worship, which was intimately related to that piece of land would be destroyed by the development project. But because this didn't fit into the Supreme Court's idea of what religion looked like, according to the Supreme Court, a religion couldn't be destroyed simply by destroying a physical piece of land land, in other words, it was thinking of religion as something tied to spirituality, that was separate from materiality. It rejected the claim to freedom of religion. The development project is going ahead. Something positive that I saw in that case was the fact that many different religious traditions -- I submitted a brief in support of the nation. I think Christian and Jewish and other groups also submitted claims supporting the Tunaha's case. Even though their con conceptionization of religion didn't conform to the way that, as Muslims you might think about religion or how Christians might think of the objects of worship, there was still a moment when different traditions could come together in a moment of pluralistic solidarity to support the claim of the Tunaha. I think that's a powerful example of how we need to question the way that the concept and category of religion itself has been constructed in a way that sustains certain dynamics of oppression and power and not just take for granted the separation between public and private that confines religion to a private sphere that is itself the product of colonial histories.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: Another piece of that accurate critique is there's also no such thing as this purified public sphere. It's also about the decisions that are made that draw that line between the so-called secular and religious is always a matter of making a decision about religion. It's about making a decision about what counts as religious headgear. These are decisions that people within the secular sphere are making about religion so the idea that there's a pure distinction between the two is kind of a fiction. I find that public-private distinction not the most helpful way of thinking about these issues, which are really important. I think a better one is the one that I mentioned before between structural realities and the interior life, which are intimately bound together. The way that we are -- we cultivate our interior life is going to affect the way we engage with others and in society in all of these things. If we're not working on this stuff on the inside, then it's going to spill out into these largeer structures. So I think it's really important. This has been a theme that's recurred in different ways throughout this conference as well, the one that I'm recalling now is the very first panel on women, power and intersectionality, where

there was the comment that the important work of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Canada, big R reconciliation, that work does need to continue, but some of the most important work is the small R reconciliation that most of the world will not see, but just the work that you have to do within yourself, so when you have those face-to-face encounters, that it's the good stuff, it's the compassion that comes forward and not these kind of unworked-through realities and residues of the colonial past.

TITA ANGANGCO: It's interesting that you ask that question, John, about what place does religion have to play in today's society? In some way, coming from a secular perspective is the question we ask ourselves. The reason this is such an important question for us to ask is because we really are at the intersection of the spiritual and the material in some ways, because the work we're doing is actually helping people regain their lives. But in helping them to regain their lives, as David said, meaning is important. It's helping them to create a new meaning for their lives so they can be well, they can be more successful in what they want to do, et cetera, right? But there has to be support for that continued meaning. And usually meaning has to do with values and beliefs and aspirations, which are really more than having a great job or making enough money. There's much more -- there are more elements in those -- in that meaning that's more than material.

So the question for us really is: Who should we partner with? As mental health agents. Putting together this idea of the spirituality as described from a secular sense and mental health are not separate separate. That spirituality is very important to maintaining one's mental health, if we see that as meaning making.

So who do we work with in the public space right now that can actually support the work we're doing and also that we can work with collaboratively so that we can bring our work to whatever work they're doing? It's looking for that symbiosis with potential partners in the public space that are really targeted at helping society change, targeted at helping individuals, having people have a good life through structural changes or whatever changes are needed in society.

SPEAKER: I had a couple quick things. Governments, business, everyone wants to domesticate the religious community. We could not want a religious community that's vibrant and alive. Governments want to domesticate the vitality of these communities. The clearest example is you have an evangelical community that overwhelmingly voted for Trump in the United States. It's apparent that he isn't always the best embodiment of what the evangelical community stands for. Some would say -- the reality is maybe it's the other way around. Maybe it's the political party that's domesticated the evangelical community in the United States from being more -- in Canada it's the same too. Putin does the same thing. . . The orthodox church is the national church. You see this throughout authoritarian governments. They want to domesticate faith groups because, one reason, which is in fact people will have a higher loyalty than the state. For democracies to function, in my view, citizens need to believe in something that's of a higher value or higher order of magnitude than merely the state itself or you're vulnerable to forms of tyranny.

Now, when it comes to the secular public-private, I agree with everyone else and I won't add to it except to say that we mean different things by secularism. I think Chomsky called an amoeba word. You can stick any meaning you want. If you talk about secular as a neutral public space, where no

group, labour unions, governments, NGOs, voluntary organizations, can use power to compel other people to be behind or support that kind of vision of the common good, then I'm in favour of a neutral public commons or whatever we're going to call it, public space. But so often secular secularism and in some countries we see this more pronounced than in others, and the state uses its power to enforce it on to marginalize various groups, whether it's Indigenous spirituality or religious groups of any stripe. That kind of secularism that's imposed on people is itself a form of religious belief which needs to be disrupted in my view.

SPEAKER: Can I add something? Jason mentioned headgear. You think Muslim. You might remember a few years ago the debate over the Charter values in Quebec which prescribed certain forms of religious expression that were permissible in accessing delivery of public services and certain that were inadmissible. What strikes me is the Hijab was deemed impermissible. As an alternative they said you can just wear a star and crescent necklace similar to a cross necklace that a Christian person might wear. Anyone who is at all familiar with Muslim women would know that was an utterly ridiculous suggestion. The Hijab isn't just a marker of religious identity. It's a practice. It's a way of being in the world that transcends public and private sphere. It's a way that you are in your life. It's no less a natural or organic way of being than the way of being that accompanies any kind of national identity walking in the world. Those forms of identity that we see as being secular are themselves produced. They're not natural. So I think we tend to take for granted as natural and as neutral a secular mode of being in the public sphere. But what we have to realize is that that mode of being is no more natural than a Muslim woman wearing a Hijab. They're just different ways of being in public.

SPEAKER: Maybe we won't have questions from the floor. But are you open to that?

SPEAKER: Yes. We have lots of hands going up. Do we have time?

SPEAKER: Oh, my gosh. I'm going to go --

SPEAKER: We're having fun. Maybe we can get two or three voices.

SPEAKER: I have a couple of questions over here.

SPEAKER: Hi. I have a question simple question which comes from my similar interaction with the world. What would you say to people who say that religion contributes to more harm in society than good? Case in point, terror terrorism, to which I think science too contributes to a lot of harm. We wouldn't be having the Hiroshima Nag Nagasaki case. Science plays a role in terrorism. What would you say to people who critique religion on the basis of terrorism?

SPEAKER: I'll keep it brief. I wanted to pick up on one of the things Tita said, there's a language around consciousness that can enrich our public sphere. I find sometimes when religious people talk about these questions we get defensive about the role that religion should or shouldn't play in the public sphere. But what concepts should or could religion offer our collective life that would help us to think differently about our politics?

SPEAKER: Great. Number 3. Sorry to do it this way.

SPEAKER: I've been seeing the projects play a role when the government was imposing or not doing their part. The homelessness, the government is supposed to be doing that. When it comes to immigration, we came together as a faith community. We put a lot of resources to sponsor a lot of

families. I see the faith groups could play a huge role because the 1 per cent could appeal to the religions that could see not looking down to the people who are poor but they could do their part and be accessible to faith groups as well.

You mentioned you have them in regent Park. Which organizations? I'm curious. I live and work there.

SPEAKER: Last one and then we'll get feedback.

i'll keep it brief. Yesterday someone was talking about her film, what love looks like in public. The title of this panel is toward a spiritual commons. It seems like what we're talking about is practices that are in some ways inherently private or within a specific community and then how those values come out into public. In light of the title, I guess I would just invite any of the panellists to talk about what would be the first step toward having a discussion about public love in a way that transcends those specific communities. And maybe you've already done it, but I'm curious to hear more thoughts on it.

SPEAKER: Why don't we go quickly -- I know this will be a task of a lifetime to weave together. They're all great questions. I think three of them are around next steps. One was about what about people who say: Yeah, but religion does so badly? If you can weave it all together.

AZEEZAH KANJI: Let's talk about terrorism. One of the problems with the way that the concept of terrorism has been interpreted and applied in Canada as well as the US and the UK is that it's been fundamentally racialized so that Justin Bourke who targeted and killed RCMP officers, the van attack in Toronto, they have not been charged as terrorists. It's people who are affiliated with Muslim ideology who are charged as terrorists. This in a circular fashion creates an association between Islam centrism in which when Muslims commit acts of violence attributed to their religious identity rather than all of the other political motives that we know often lie and social and psychological motives that often lie behind such acts, it's because of this peculiar structure of explanation that we have created to explain some forms of violence as different from other violence that occurs that we have this idea that terrorism is a phenomenon uniquely associated with religion and specific religions specifically. I think it's important to realize that the war on terror itself has killed many more times civilians than terrorism has since 9/11. It becomes very difficult to represent violence as a religious problem when a validly secular states are enacting far more violence in our world than particular religious groups are.

I love the quote that justice is what love looks like in public. For me, it's the way I understand. It's not that its messages of personal transformation are fundamentally also tied to projects of social transformation. The Koran says that God will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. We know theological concepts have tremendous implications, the idea of peace, prohibition of worshipping idles other than God, which means we don't wore shop traditional things but that we don't worship at altars of white supremacy or capitalism. Thank you for raising that quote. It captures in a nutshell what the relationship is between the personal spiritual transformation of religion and the way we live that out in public.

TITA ANGANGCO: There was a question about what does consciousness look like. When I was talking about the qualities that meditation practice and mindfulness practices can generate in a person, I really am talking about a contemplative kind of practice. This is the thing that we share, that mindfulness as we use it in the secular setting, actually we share this contemplative practice with a lot

of other religions. I'll speak about -- it's interesting to me that we talk about all these qualities like love and I mentioned this in kind of being able to listen and so forth and so on. And yet we don't talk really about how do we get there, how do we actually make that happen within ourselves? The whole process of that, the whole tradition of contemplative practice really has to do with getting to understand oneself intimately, being aware of how you show up in a moment and what are the triggers and bodily influences and sensations and thoughts that you come through, and being able to actually have some mastery over understanding oneself, because that also gives us the mastery for understanding who is in front of you and what is happening around you. This awareness itself is a transformative part of contemplation.

What's so interesting is that it's not easy to love in the way that we were talking about love yesterday, right, which it's almost you have to love everyone. It's not easy to get there and it's not easy for us to be open. It's not easy for us to listen, because we have so many conditional reactions and belief systems and assumptions that we don't even know is going on within us. This whole practice of contemplation is really a way of gaining that kind of mastery over ourselves so we can be what we want to be and we can show up in the world the way we want to show up. Does that answer your question?

We're in many places in regent Park. We're at 519. It's not regent Park.

SPEAKER: Why don't we connect you.

TITA ANGGANGCO: Why don't we get together and I will tell you the various places we're in.

SPEAKER: I'll respond briefly to a couple of points I heard heard. I gave this sermon this morning at the start of the day. What I was suggesting there is it's not that religious communities would have concepts or language in particular to offer to the wider conversation, but all spiritual communities have a grammar of spirituality. They have a way of capturing that more than material and forming community out of it. So I don't know exactly what it means, but I think that spiritual communities of all different kinds have different grammars of the spiritual and there's something about that that we need in our public conversations so that we don't miss out on that more than material, effective, whatever it is that actually holds us to the work. So that's my comment.

DAVID PFRIMMER: Three quick answers. One that religion is the source of all conflict and that kind of thing. Karen Armstrong has a wonderful book. She makes the case, and it's a very good read, about how religion is used by political classes to justify violence towards others others. So it may not be the source, but it's great cover if you're a king, monarch, despot or whatever. You can say it's religious. That's not to say there aren't religious differences and issues, but she documents this back going into antiquity, so it's a good source.

One thing we should remember about the home homelessness and poverty issues, since 1986 in Ontario the interfaith social assistance reform coalition has been working together. It involves Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, many churches who have been advocate advocating with queens Park and have had success. So that's a very interesting group. One of the important things there, that about building community, they held hearings on at least four occasions all across the province to allow low-income people to tell their story and be heard inner public. I think that's important, and it's a kind of

effort -- it created among those people a kind of public and community which is very important, and their voices were indeed heard. I think that's important. Which goes to say that faith communities know something about this.

Lastly, my view on -- this weekend we've talked a lot about power. The early question you alluded to about love is very important. I'm very interested in the idea of a politics of love. By love, I think we need to understand what we're talking about. It's not some sort of erotic, emotional thing. Love is about, in many religious traditions, this is the theological tradition of love. It's about reuniting that which has been separated. A politics of love is about reunited those things that have been pushed, pulled apart, particularly in some of the governments that have come to power and we heard earlier this morning when talking about populism. A politics of love is not about the process of how we employ power, which we talked considerably about this weekend. It's about something different. And churches and faith groups have a lot of experience on this and are actually doing a lot now that never -- this is the kind of thing Jason is doing in Parkdale in one sense with the work he's doing with the community there. So we need to hold those up and see what we can learn from them.

SPEAKER: Great. I think in the interests of time, I'm looking -- I'm getting the signal. A very quick thank you to our panellists for coming out. Thank you very much for sharing. I know they will be around for the afternoon. I know other people have questions and comments. The next thing is lunch, is it not?

SPEAKER: It is indeed. It will be short.

SPEAKER: I just have one comment. I have three letters I want you all to remember. CPJ and add to it.ca. Check it out. We use our faith to inspire the justice work we do. My name is Ren? and I'm on the board of CPJ. I'm based in Ottawa. We're currently looking for our next refugee rights policy analyst. If you're so inclined, please do apply. Perhaps you want to consider membership to the organization as well.

SPEAKER: Thanks for that. OK, everyone. Thank you.

JASON MCKINNEY

Keynote: The Existential Moment for Global Power Structures.

SPEAKER: Hi, everyone. Can I have your attention, please? Sorry for the very short lunch. You guys have been a really great audience, because you've been super generous with your patience and time and good humour and openness. So I think you deserve a big round of applause.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: I also want to give a shout-out to our production and marketing teams. We've been running late basically the whole weekend, and catching up and then running away and catching up, and that's a lot of running around for Arthur, Jacquie, Nelson, Jim, Lees, Natalie, and a whole host of other people. So let's give a round of applause to those guys.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: Now, it's my distinct pleasure to welcome our last keynote of Democracy XChange summit 2019, not because she is a formidable force, the David to the Goliath -- do I have that right? -- in the Philippines, fighting the fight, caught between the unstoppable forces of social media and a tyrannical president, not because she's an entrepreneur who started one of the first major digital news platforms

in the Philippines and brought the Filipinos to this new wave of digital journalism and not because she's an award-winning journalist herself, investigating all sorts of war-torn countries and stories across the world, but actually it's my distinct pleasure to welcome her because this woman is really, really lovely. It's hard to always -- you know, you never know who you're going to get when you decide to go for a ringer in these summits, right? And we've been really, really lucky that all of the keynoteers that we've invited, as well as all the other speakers, have been wonderful. But given the fact that she was running in minus 30-degree weather with billionaires in Switzerland and had to also bail out her potential legal battles in Manila and she's been honoured by Time she was always nice and she was always open to actually speaking to you people.

So let's give this woman, this lovely person, a round of applause and welcome her up on stage.

[APPLAUSE]

MARIA RESSA: Thank you. This title is actually not my title. Anna assigned it to me but then she reminded me that it came from my mouth. I need to show you that you should not be complacent in your democracy, that democracy is safe and that everything can turn like that. Because certainly we didn't think things were going to go wrong in the Philippines and surely the United States didn't think things would go wrong so quickly.

So I'm going to show you -- the reason why it's called The Existential Moment for Global Power Structures is because every democracy is based on information. Information is power. Really say that, right? Information is power. The first line of defence is journalism. When journalists are under attack, democracy is under attack. So keep in mind this part: When the information ecosystem is toxic, when it is manipulated, when it is full of toxic sludge sludge, it has an impact. And you guys are having your elections very soon, and you may think that you're immune to it. I did too. I thought the Philippines was immune. In fact, right before we had our May 2016 elections that -- where president Duterte was elected, someone asked me if dictatorship would ever come back to the Philippines. I laughed. The power of social media. I didn't realize it.

Let me start with a three-minute video, because I want to bring the Philippines to you. This is what we're living through. (Video played).

(Gunfire).

(music plays).

The securities and exchange commission has ordered the closure. The securities and exchange commission orders the relocation -- a certificate of incorporation of online news site Rappler.

We felt that going to get PVRs -- the ownership or goal would give us the ultimate independence.

(Bombing sounds).

(Foreign language).

In 2016, the president was elected, promising to wipe out drug-related crime. It will be bloody, he warned. The funeral parlours will be packed. He has kept his promise. Thousands have been killed, many among them the poorest in society. (inaudible).

The team is a shining example of resistance to the erosion of democratic norms. They have also

shown how a newsroom led and staffed by women can stand up to a misogynist president.

This is the time to fight. This is the time to tell people here is the line and ensure that our government doesn't cross it, because when it does, we're no longer a democracy.

We at Rappler decided that when we look back at this moment a decade from now, we will have done everything we could. We did not duck. We did not hide. We are Rappler and we will hold the line. [APPLAUSE]

MARIA RESSA: I will show you what we discovered because we already found a tentacle here in Canada. So I'll start where we began and end with you.

We're fighting impunity on two fronts. The first front you saw is the drug war. If you ever find out exactly how many people have been killed, you won't get an exact number. Because that's the first casualty in our war. The government has parseed the numbers so much and attacked those who keep track of the numbers that people are afraid to actually give it. But I'll give you a graphic that was on the Philippine national Facebook page December 27, 2017. The government claims claims, the police said that the people they killed here are separate from this. That's the way they made the number of casualties go down significantly. But they admitted as of December 27 that there are about 4,000 people that were killed by the police, where the police admitted that then, and there were about 16,300 killed -- well, they called them homicide cases under investigation. And they never put together, even though the government puts it under illegal drugs.

Where is this number today, in 2018, 2019? This number is now at 5,000 people. And this number is at 30,000-plus. That's a lot of people killed in a short period of time. It began July 2016. I remember it well because that was when my reporter would come home and they would have an average of dead bodies a night.

The second level of impunity is actually against an American social network platform, Facebook. Because it was through Facebook -- we're a Facebook country. You can call it social media, right? The social media platforms have fundamentally changed everything. We know the best and the worst of it because Rappler rap grew exponentially because of Facebook and Twitter. But in the end of 2015, when instant articles were introduced and then into 2016, the number the Philippines elected in May of 2016, a month later you had Brexit and by August of 2016 I went to Singapore to talk to Facebook with data showing them that there was something very bad going on. I waited a month or so before we came out with a series of stories because I naively wanted them to just fix it and give me a statement. But when I went to Singapore, I was like: Guys, please do something about this. You have elections coming up. Trump could win. We laughed, we really did, because August 2016, many thought Trump would win. And when he did win, Facebook came back and asked me for the data again.

In November of 2016. October of 2016, we published this series. Early October, October 1, 2, I wrote two of the three parts, propagandwar, how Facebook algorithms -- we literally counted how many 26 fake accounts on Facebook led to, how many do they influence. Twenty-six fake accounts influenced 3 million others. I didn't trust the machine yet, but we began a database and that's the sharp peg. When we came out with this series, overnight I began to get attacked in a way that I never thought was

possible. At the beginning I was responding, thinking that I understand everything we wrote. But they didn't really want to respond. The end goal of these attacks is to pound you to silence. And the attacks are vicious and very personal. I'll show you some of them. They came to a point that weekend that I just stopped responding and started counting. I came down to 90 hate messages per hour. That's new. I was like: OK. And this is a new tool, a new weapon against journalists. It's psychological warfare at a different time. The guys are shooting here in a war zone and you stay out of the line of fire. But what happens when it's exponential attacks, and these are all questions we had to deal with because we were a young team.

Why the Philippines? Because we're a really strange country. We're like a petri dish for social media. This is in January 2017. We were number one in the number of hours spent on the Internet. But look at January 2018 and we were number one time spent on social media, about four hours a day for Filipinos. Where are you? All the way here. An hour and 48 minutes. Each Filipino spent double the amount of time time. Twenty-nine numbers will be coming out soon. There's Canada.

So we're a petri dish, and almost everything that we've seen, things that you hear about from the United States, by the time Mark Zuckerberg was in Congress and they were finiding out the tactics, I thought if we had known that we'd survive it. I almost through threw a shoe at my computer because in the global everything isn't fixed when someone dies. It's not something we can let time pass.

Here's the global phenomenon we've seen. Something called patriotic patrolling. In November November 2016 we published a report along with 12 other researchers around the world. The phrase patriotic trolling, online hate and campaigns to silence and intimidate. The end goal here is not to sensor. It is to flood the market with so many lies that you can't tell what truth is. And if you cripple your faith in institutions, the pillars of what is democracy would normally have, the minute you begin to doubt, you've just gotten a crack in your democracy because the voice with the loudest megaphone wins. In my case, it's president Duterte. In the US, let's see. The jury is still out. Women, we found, were attacked far more than men. In 2014, there was a study in Western nations and they said women were attacked three times more than men on Twitter.

In the Philippines, we're up to over ten times more than men. Here are the three steps. We see this this -- if you know the senator who used to be the head of the commission on human rights, she ran after Duterte when he was still mayor, she's been in prison for about two years now. When I say "about," anyway, sorry. She has been in prison for two years. These three things happened to her, happened to me. I'll show you examples of it. I hope you don't get to see it.

The first is regardless of who it is, regardless of whether it's true lie, the first is alleged corruption repeated exponentially, a lie told a million times is the truth, right? You don't have to actually do anything more than that. And all of the statistical surveys that have been done later on show us that these attacks on lying leave a mark.

After that, it's sexual violence. Not only is she accused of corruption, of being a drug dealer, she was also -- the next step then came with these photos and videos of her having sex. It was very degrading, and it got to a point where it was even shown in our Congress. Male congressmen would laugh about it and I think the women just didn't know what to do. Misogyny, the minute that happened, no-one

could take her serious seriously. Degrade as a sexual object.

The third step came out two weeks before she was arrested. When she was arrested, not a surprise. In May 2017, I panicked a little bit because.

#arrest, I call it the propaganda machine, tried to trend it. It didn't go very far, which is probably why I'm still not in the U.S. Think about it like this this: Every case that has been filed against us first came out on social media. The allegations came out a year on social media anonymously before president Duterte actually announced it in his state of the nation address. That was weird because we're covering it but all of a sudden the president says American, and I tweeted right back: Mr. President, you're wrong.

So it's a strange time. Here's where the three steps happen, and I'll quickly show you.

#arrest. Rappler got the transcript of the conversation between Trump and Duterte. We published it. This blogger, pro-Duterte blogger wrote something that normally is laughable. It's funny. Not that many people were laughing. Rappler made the Philippines a legitimate target of north Korea nuclear missiles. From there, from there hashtag arrest, it then came down to this on Twitter on a campaign account. Have her called to the Senate. Then it jumped to someone in Singapore. I can smell arrest and possibly closure of Rappler.com. This is May 2017. Cases happened in January 2018, right? And then from there it jumped to a real person. This is where the attacks become personal. The dream is become the ultimate porn store in the gangbang scene. It's not.

[LAUGHTER]

And then it goes on Rappler's Facebook page, this gets posted: To the government, make sure she gets publicly raped to death. It would bring joy in my heart.

These last two are young men. And I know because after I posted it, so my best defence is a good offence offence. Stand quiet in times like this doesn't work. You know that phrase: Silence is consent. So I'm kind of vocal. These two, I posted them in my account. Within 12 hours, schools contacted me. I worry about these information wars, these -- the propaganda campaign, the impact it has on our values, especially by young men.

Here, this is the best evidence I can give you of how these exponential attacks work. In January of 2018, there were two surveys that were announced. The top (inaudible). They said that 86 per cent of Filipinos in the real world -- so they did a survey -- they believed traditional media. They say news reports are accurate. Actually, the phrase is "fair and accurate." But the same month this survey came out, this is the Philippine trust index, a group that works with the Edelman trust survey. They had the complete opposite results on social media. They asked people on social media what they thought of traditional media, and they said, 83 per cent, distrust. How is that possible that in the real world you trust, and on social media you distrust?

So we dug and we went through the data. Here's what the data showed. I know this is a little -- but look at it. This is the timeline of exponential attacks on social media, starting from January 2015 all the way here to April 2017. Our campaigns began here and president Duterte was elected here, and the drug war began here. I want you to focus on two words, corrupt and bias. You look at it, it's the same tactic used in the United States to take a fracture line of society. Any leader tries to hear these fracture

lines lines, but in this day and age, we pound those fracture lines so you manipulate people to anger and you open them up.

Here, the target of attack was journalists, news organizations. You can see how after elections, the attacks became perception; perception became reality. 50,000 posts in corrupt, 1.7 million comments. On bias bias, this last line, peaks at 30,000 comments a day, manufactured and dupeing, manipulating real people. Those are the targets. I've seen it first-hand.

So this turned that 86 to 83 per cent distrust. This is what our database looks like. Originally we built this because my poor social media team couldn't tell who they should respond or or who they should block, who is real and who is not. These are the URLs of sites spreading fake news. Here, these are the Facebook pages that are spreading these sites. And then I normally look at the average posting, because anything above ten gets a red line. The number we publish are a propaganda series in October 2016.

So I'm going to take you to October 2016. This is what our shark tank looked like in October 2016. We're going to go to the Facebook page of an account that was deleted by April of 2017. But you can see it's basically a cut and paste, right? Same message cut and pasted and posted repeatedly on websites. You can see sometimes posted 57 times in one day. These are the groups where they go viral, Duterte and Marcus campaign pages.

When my social media team sees this, this is a full-time job for somebody, right? That's our shark tank. These are the networks, kind of like -- I think about them like terrorist networks. And we track the networks.

Now, this is an attack. It looks -- you can't really tell what it looks like, but this was an attack on our vice-president in January of 2017. What's interesting is these numbers mean a lot if you're a social network analyst, but they look better than when you put it in a social network map. This is the network that attacks journalists, that attacks perceived critics of the administration of Duterte. It is so systematic that they're broken down by demo demographic. This account has a pseudo-intellectual -- the content it creates is pseudo-intellectual, targets that 1 per cent. This account targets that middle class with content. And then this account is a sexy danceerow campaigned for president Duterte and is the anchor account of the entire propaganda machine. This same network loves to attack Rappler, any journalist who tells you how many people have died, for example. This is the foundation of our information ecosystem in the Philippines.

Now, what happens when this account jumps to main extreme? Because they're able to get a column. Sop this account writes for this Manila Times and the guy who runs this, the head of public relations for President Duterte. International public relations. Then this connects to the state media, and the state media proudly has signed deals of cooperation with both China and Russia. When I think about this, Russia is is -- goes directly to the consumers. They just sold equipment for surveillance. These are skills they developed.

Finally, we close the loop by April of 2017, this anchor account was appointed to government office. She became -- she was in charge of social media for the government. She has since resigned because she's now running for Congress. Welcome to my world! don't want to be the one taking on

Duterte. I just want to be a journalist. Union what happens when the government uses Facebook as a weapon. Now the next part. That's just domestic political power, right? What about geopolitical? Well, I told you I know the best and worst of Facebook. One of the three fact checking partners with Facebook. We continue to work with Facebook and I'll tell you why. But let me tell you what else has happened there. So it's not just our government. It's also information warfare. Here's where we go to the link. Let me give you a little background on it.

What exactly do we mean by "information warfare"? Well, the chairman from 1967 to 1982, general secretariat of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. I love this quote particularly for the Philippines which has as drug war because they're somehow compared. This information works like cocaine. If you sniff once or twice, it may not change your life. If you use it every day, it will make you an addict, a different man.

That's what disinformation does, righted? Here's the funny thing. We learn to do the shark tank because I looked at Ukraine, which was the first time that we saw Russia. Russia first used information warfare against its own citizens, and the second country was the Ukraine. What I found was when they looked at the data, it is so much easier to fight when you know exactly what's being done to you, right? So how big is it? Well, in 2017, when we were in Washington, this was the -- we got an award for this information. This was the headline that day: Russia back-backed Facebook post reached 126 million Americans during the US election.

That was the beginning, right? As you know, December, Facebook, Google -- Facebook, alphabet and Twitter gave information to the US intelligence committee. We actually now have far more -- we know far more about the way this disinformation network works. What did we do with some of the data? We went back. This data we found because we were looking at the Catalan elections, strangely enough. This account told me about Brexit, told me about the US elections, then was tweeting exclusively about the Catalan elections until we found it again and it was tweeting exclusively about Philippines. When we did the story, Twitter took it down. His name is Ivan the Twitter account. Twitter took it down within 12 hours. It's so interesting that it was part of the network. We can talk more about the way that works, because it's extremely deceptive. But they also found that 87 per cent of the 65 accounts were automated. I never figured out whether this account was automated, but I thought it awfully strange that it was tweeting exclusively about the Philippines.

Let's go to Facebook. Alright. Let me show you Facebook. I want to just show you the map that we made. Sorry. Give me two seconds. I'll take you live live.

So this is the network map of the attacks against Rappler from November 7 to December 8. I chose that period because this was the time when we came under attack, when I came home to post bail to face the arrest warrant against me. You can see we had a community around us, certainly far more than these. Let me explain the size of the circle is commensurate to something called centrality. That means they're extremely powerful. What's interesting is you look at accounts here. This is the prop granda machine. The most interesting thing for me is not that they were trying to kill us -- you can kind of see it, right? It's all here. This little Rappler, without community around us, but would somehow we weren't being made powerful in the algorithms because it was quiet, while these -- I want you to look at

one, the -- didn't have Samoan supporters. The orange, these -- oops, sorry. I'll go back. So this meant most likely that these accounts were repeatedly posting, many times, in order to get this much power for the daily sentry. I ask you to look at the Daily Sentry because that was part of the takedown three weeks ago that Facebook did, because it was part of a network that was spreading lies. What Facebook will say is they took it counsel for in inauthentic coordinated behaviour. What they didn't announce is that the daily sentry.net often used an experts. They love using experts who aren't experts. And that expert was part of this -- his name is Adam -- popped up in the database of the US Senate intelligence committee. This is this guy here, Adam. So Adam is the main expert that's quoted by the daily sentry. Adam is also a writer for a Canadian website, global research.ca, here. This map was created from data that was given to the US Senate intelligence committee by a group called New Knowledge. They went top-down. We went bottom-up from the Philippines. What's interesting is Adam, this American, also writes for two other sites here, one from Russia, which have Russian IP addresses.

The two other Canadian addresses -- I'll tweet this so you can pick them up, but you really can't tell, especially if you are a free speech advocate, which we all are, it's very easy to be manipulated. I would love to get your questions. What did we do? We continue to do investigations investigations. We put one foot in front of the other every day. The key things that all these legal cases, they want to shut us down. We're fighting it, and they tried to bankrupt us. I say Rappler from the beginning was about communities of action. Journalism is what we feed our communities. And our communities help us. How did we pay for our legal fees were insane, \$30,000 a month? We started with about a hundred people. All of a sudden our crowd-sourcing kicked in and our community helped pay our legal fees. I'm going to leave you with a short one-minute video to show you that we're just the most vocal of all of the Filipino journalists trying to do their jobs. It's a one-minute video of a journalist. She was the one that faced President Duterte, was banned from the palace and then you'll see a foreign journalist, you'll see a photographer.

(Video played).

Have you ever been harassed because of your work.

Yes.

Have you been threatened online having called biased.

Yes.

Have you been called spewed.

Yes, many times by idiots.

Have you been called ugly as a response to any story.

Yes.

Have you been called fake news.

Anything that critical is fake, right.

Have you been accused of being an imperialist spy.

Yes.

Have you been accused of being a communeist operative.

Yes.

Have you been accused of working for the CIA.

Why you.

Have you been sexually harassed as a journalist.

Has your family been harassed.

Yes, specifically my daughter. When she died there were a lot of people who made fun of that.

Have you been threatened with rape.

Yes.

No, not me, but my family.

Have you been threatened with violence.

Yes.

Have you been threatened with death.

Yes.

Have you been told how you're going to be killed.

Yes.

Has the violence been described to you.

Blow my head off.

What will stop you from reporting?

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Death.

You have to kill me.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: I know I don't come from a position of power when I want to sob my eyes out before I start talking to you you. That was such a powerful presentation, particularly that last minute. There is something comforting on some level to know that this is so global and that we are, no matter where we are reporting from, journalists are the target. But just through this presentation, it's so clear that we were ringing the bell long before the term "fake news" was popularized by Trump. He likes -- in fact it goes way back to the 1800s, so he doesn't get that one. But nobody was listening. Nobody was listening. As you say, we are in an election year. We are listening.

So these are the people being targeted. Their opinions need to be swayed. What is your best advice to the general public, who is the recipient of all of this propaganda masquerading as fact?

MARIA RESSA: We have to be vigilant. Don't be arrogant. Don't be complacent. The journalists should do their jobs. Part of our problem was we saw this stuff happening and I brought it to main extreme to our TV reporters, who thought they could weather it out because it's only social media. Guys, this is like the movie Inception. Rather Leonardo Di Caprio went into the dream world to change the real world? The power of social media is insane. I don't think we knew it or Facebook knew it. They're just

figureing it out.

First, Democracy XChange can change it. You're doing it. You're here. You're talking about it. You have to form communities that will prevent your worst selves from coming out. You will be manipulated to hate. You will be angered. From the little I've seen in Canada, you're so -- I love the things I've seen in the last few days, extremely inclusive societies. This could change so quickly, and it will play to the worst of your nature. So be aware of that.

LISA LAFLAMME: I would say it's lovely to hear that, but I don't think anyone here is under the misconception that this hate doesn't also exist in Canada against marginalized communities. I think that's the question I want to dig in a little deeper on, is eight months before an election, a ban on Twitter or a Twitter or Facebook strike is not the solution to this. How can people call it out?

MARIA RESSA: I think the first is we started trying to find these communities that would keep track of the sites that were spreading it and the Facebook accounts or Twitter accounts. And then we went to them. But that was two and a half years ago. They didn't take any action. The network they took down three weeks ago, we reported on that 13 months earlier. Imagine the damage that could have been prevented.

So how do you do it? You push Facebook, Twitter, YouTube. You push them to actually take on the roles that -- so what happened is news groups used to have created and distributed news. Then we gave up that power. The distribution went to Facebook, YouTube, Twitter. But along with distribution, we were the gatekeepers. When it went to the social media platforms, they refused the gate keeping powers. In fact, a lie, something that angers you, spreads faster than truth. And so the lie becomes truth because it spreads so much faster.

Sew that's part of it. In my case, I was thinking through: What are the solutions to this? There's short short, medium long-term. The long-term one is education. We need to understand this. The medium term is literacy. The short term is actually to put pressure on the social media platforms. Clean it up or we will call you out. That's worked this year for us.

LISA LAFLAMME: Although we saw when Mark Zuckerberg was in front of the committee in Washington, clearly they didn't know what to ask him. They were so behind the ball on the issues, and I think media literacy is the key to this. Just this week in the New York times they called Twitter I think the most dangerous social media platform in the world. What is your reaction to that.

MARIA RESSA: WhatsApp was extremely dangerous. You had ethnic violence, 200,000 people displaced. In Brazil, it's WhatsApp, another journalist, patrici, was clobbered on WhatsApp. An Indian journalist gets clobbered on Twitter.

LISA LAFLAMME: This week I think it was WhatsApp, which is owned by Facebook, has come up with a plan. They did it in India a year ago. They plan on doing it now, where they are limiting the number of

people -- do you think that's going to make a difference, though?

MARIA RESSA: I think it's hard to tell. So it's kind of like this, right? If you think about democracy as a human body, what courses through our veins is blood, with oxygen that gives us what we need. But imagine that that oxygen is being pumped full of -- instead of blood blood, it's toxic sludge because the gatekeepers aren't keeping it clean.

And so the more they do, the easier it is to get a temp on where exactly our democracy is. I sat in on several panels in the last two days. Some of the discussions we've had all stem from the information that we get, and if you're being manipulated and the information is inaccurate and you're being goaded, you get the results. It's hard to say be nice all the time time. It doesn't work! r me, the more they do, the better it will be, the more they do, the greater the chances that they won't be splintered by legislation, by Islamicors who know legislators who know very little.

LISA LAFLAMME: I'm guessing you didn't get a congratulatory note by Duterte. What was the reaction at home?

MARIA RESSA: Somebody did ask at a press conference and he said said -- he dismissed it and said: They can have it. Which is OK better than the alternative, we understand. Do you suppose that you've become safer as a result of that honour or more vulnerable?

MARIA RESSA: I found out about Time person of the year on Twitter, when they announced it.

LISA LAFLAMME: Did you think it was fake news.

MARIA RESSA: You know, I really did! I did! It was a very strange day. On that day I had filed -- I posted bail four times that day. And then in the afternoon -- so the morning I was in court. In the afternoon I was sitting down with our team to figure out if I needed to get security. We've increased security in the office because I have young reporters. It's hard to tell when these attacks move into the real world. But that night night, it was 6:30 and I was having dinner and the first thing I did when I saw it was: Can you please check? Then in capital gazette. Then I was like: Oh, my god. I'm the only one who is free and alive. Is this what our future is like and is this what I'm looking forward to? I thought: Well, no. We really had to do something about it. I think it's a good thing, because I'm holding my government responsible for my safety.

LISA LAFLAMME: That's a very good point. I noticed also on your grid that the attacks on the media started, again, almost a year and a half before Donald Trump stood up at a microphone and called the media the enemy of the people. However, he is still the occupant of the Oval Office. What do you see as the impact of that globally for the president to say that, and the message it sends to other looters like Duterte, or we call them the D 8 at work, the dictators we cover.

MARIA RESSA: It's like you declare it open season, right? I mean, the first report -- we felt this immediately. But the first report that verified it was Freedom House came out with a report in November 2017. They said it was rolling back democracy in 28 countries around the world. A year later that became 48 countries around the world. When President Trump -- where do I begin? Our reporter was kicked out of the palace a few months, ten months, before Jim accosta of CNN, before his accreditation was taken away. When President Trump called CNN and The New York Times fake news, a week later Duterte called Rappler fake news. That was a week after President Trump. So without guiding principles, without a moral beacon, without pressure from outside, it is open season on us, and we saw that. But strangely, the United States is moving the charge.

LISA LAFLAMME: He found a dictator he doesn't like. That was interesting.

MARIA RESSA: Again, looking at what's happening in Venezuela, hopefully -- of course, they're also at a make or break point. If they go back to where they were, it will get worse. It all depends now -- so they're now getting pressure from the woman, and global pressure. It depends on the military. These are the same elements President Duterte plays with. He doubled the salary of soldiers. He owns the police. So these are the same things.

LISA LAFLAMME: We saw the same thing the way the Taliban was built, because they weren't paying the military, so they look wherever they can.

But I want to get to your personal situation with your legal troubles. You've become the Al Capone of the Philippines with all these tax evasion charges. How do you even park this in your head? Where do you park it, when these are trumped up charges, they're looking for anything to tear you down? How do you personally manage that?

MARIA RESSA: We saw it coming. So every news sweep, in a country like mine, has to choose between good business and good journalism, because good journalism is bad business. The first battles we had were three years earlier because our businessmen on our board were essentially telling us: Are you going to survive this? And kind of hinting that we should kind of, union you know, chill. The journalists are the single largest group of shareholders in Rappler. We had 3 per cent more votes. So we went full steam ahead and, as expected, the charges came. So it wasn't a surprise. I knew they couldn't find any evidence of corruption, because we're not corrupt. We pay all of our taxes. So you know how they were able to make these charges up? They turned us from a news group, reclassified us to a stock brokerage agency. They said the last investment we got from the network, that we actually effectively sold it outside, so we should have paid taxes on that as income income, not as an investment. It's weird, but you know why I have hope? Because if they actually convict me on these charges, it will wreck the stock market. There are other companies with these investments, you know? But as long as -- I think they just wanted to intimidate us.

LISA LAFLAMME: How does that intimidation affect you personally? You're heading home in the next few days, and when you see the plane coming down over Manila and you think: Alright, I'm going to have to go to customs, what goes through your mind mechanically? What are the real things that affect

you on that front?

MARIA RESSA: It's actually so much easier now than at the beginning.

LISA LAFLAMME: Because they know you?

MARIA RESSA: Now it's the new normal. I've already posted bail bail. I no longer have an arrest warrant until the next one, right? It's not knowing whether they will break into your apartment and arrest you, because they don't have to tell you they have an arrest warrant. So that part was harder than now. I mean, I guess I laugh. I've run out of sin numbers for the word ridiculous for the charges. I also get a lot of energy from Rappler, from my team. It's a young team.

LISA LAFLAMME: She looks good. That is encouraging to hear.

MARIA RESSA: I'm optimistic. I think we can win this battle.

LISA LAFLAMME: I hope so.

[APPLAUSE]

LISA LAFLAMME: I know there are people who have questions, so I'm going to just ask one more before we open up to the floor. There's this perception that this comes from the right. What is your opinion on that, given the real work your team has done to really identify and call out these -- the Bots or the hateers so call them what you will?

MARIA RESSA: In the Philippines we have our representative. We're not set up -- we do have right and left, but the attacks are insanely personal. They're not political, because our political party system is very weak. In the Philippines we don't really need bots because labour is so cheap. Facebook knew that because they have a footnote that says the Philippines has higher than average number of fake accounts. Those fake accounts pretend to be real people. So the hardest thing is keeping your faith in real people, because the stupidity multi-applies and stupidity multiculturalism applies and I don't think Filipinos believe it is OK to kill. What's shocking is within six months of president Duterte coming into office there were so many Filipinos that came online to say they wanted to kill these drug user. It's what they were pounded, manipulated to say. So I don't know know. The jury is still out. In terms of political speak here and in the United States, the breakdown -- and I can tweet the knowledge report -- the breakdown, definitely you're seeing the far right in the US, coming together towards the IRA. That's why it's so interesting. If you think about it, social media is all a lawyer play and it is connected to geopolitical power. I don't think it's a mistake that in October October 2016 President Duterte, without telling the Foreign Affairs better, he went to Beijing and announced that the Philippines would be pivoting from the United States to China and Russia. He tagged in Russia, right? And here's the reason why:.

LISA LAFLAMME: I saw some hands up. Yes, right here. Wait, I think there's a microphone coming your way.

SPEAKER: Thank you so much. I was so moved. I just want to say that we are Ontario proud. Will you share your shark tank initiative so organizations can follow? What's happening right now, I don't know whether you know with Doug Ford is it's moving quickly, about 78 legal policy changes he's done that we haven't been able to counteract. Thank you for sharing your technology and research with us.

MARIA RESSA: Sure. I think the other part and I forgot to say this, I think the biggest thing media can do is to work together. It's been two and a half years that I've been saying this in the Philippines, but part of the problem is that we're all very competitive. In the Philippines if you look at the map I showed you, notice that the shark tank, the propaganda machine is the strongest because they work together; they coordinate together. While every news group is a disparate little dot, no matter how big they are, the largest television network is there. They're a little dot because they can't rise alone in the algorithms. I've always said we need to follow each other, we need to support each other, we need to let the facts rise. Facts are boring boring. That's fact too, right? So we need to help each other. The reason I started with the dropping of the ball in Times Square is it is the United States' effort to have all the news groups begin to collaborate, newing Fox News.

LISA LAFLAMME: I think everybody is feeling the fact that leaders leaders, whether it's in the provincial government or a US government, are bypassing traditional media. They're getting their message out their own way on social media and conventional media finds themselves covering what is happening on social media. There is that conflict all the time: Do we give oxygen to this or not? It's like a daily debate. I saw another question here.

SPEAKER: Hi. There are so many great things you said in your presentation. There is no space for complacency in democracy. If you say a lie enough times, it does become the truth. I think you were hinting just now. My question is why is that that we live in a democracy and free speech is one of the core components of democracy, then why is it that people spreading hate have a much louder voice than those spreading truth? And how do we get progressive people who are for free speech to come together and use this medium that is for power play to spread the truth? I wonder whether, if there was an equal match between those who want to spread truth and lies, whether we would even have to go to Facebook or Twitter to combat hate speech if there were enough people propagating the truth.

MARIA RESSA: Part of the reason I said yes was because I wanted to come Toronto was because the leader during APEC who actually called Duterte out for human rights violations was your Prime Minister. He was the only leader to actually say these killings are wrong. When the first arrest warrant came through, the only government official who publicly gave support was your foreign minister, who I later learned was also a former journalist, Chrstia freeland freeland. Your values are strong. Because anger and hate spreads faster than any other emotion. If you want to spread a lie, you anchor it on emotion, and that emotion is anger and hate. And the way it was positioned and the way

Silicon Valley thought about it was that they had no -- that they would not stop any kind of speech, right? But what they didn't realize is that free speech was being used to stifle free speech, right? And that was -- when they began to realize that, that's when you realize. For me, the fundamental thing they have to do is to go down to how the content is reached.

Somebody's mic. Anyway, so I was saying --

LISA LAFLAMME: I said there's a microphone here. Is there another microphone somewhere at the back there? Do you want to stand up?

SPEAKER: We are everywhere, U-Huh.

LISA LAFLAMME: A rap song. You've got a question over here.

SPEAKER: Thank you. I'm in digital innovation and also involved in politics. My family originally was compiled from Russia thanks to propagandathat it's almost impossible to believe it exists anywhere in the world and it's extremely hard to convince our representatives who have the fewer regulate and instill a fear of sorts on Facebook, Twitter and the other social media platforms that they should take notice of these networks and block them as soon as possible before the damage is done. It's almost impossible to undo these lies. You require thousands of hours of manpower to be able to fix one simple lie that's spread intensely. These politicians who are our representatives aren't necessarily as social media savvy, let alone to understand the implications of how it can be used to harm our democracy and institutions.

So based on your experience of having to communicate against this apathy, what can we do right now, especially to let them know that if they don't act right now, that they could lose their seats and also our entire system?

MARIA RESSA: I think awareness is slowly changing. It's funny; it all began because of all the hearings that are happening in different parts of the world. In Great Britain there's a little committee that came out with a great report that was a very good round-up of everything happening around the world. And now all of the data that is coming out from the United States intelligence committee, that data is there. We should look at it. You should talk. You should write about your experience. The funny thing is I used to have friends who worked in Russia. I used to think, gosh, I never would want to live under what they were going through. And now it's global. It's kind of scary. The fact that you're aware, right? It sounds so -- it's the first step to everything. And if you can get get -- form your communities, work together. The other part is I hope that the social media platforms -- and I think this is what I was trying to say. The fundamental problem is content moderation, right? We spend our lives learning how to live according to standards and ethics. Values and principles that you live under as a journalist, that's how we decide whether to publish something or not. It is not a list one to ten. It's not that. And yet content moderation for the social media platforms is a list. And the content moderators are paid just a little over minimum wage and they have seconds to either decide is to take down or leave it up. They have no context. They don't understand the culture. The man who took down the Napa Napalm

girl was a Filipino. Did you know that one of the largest -- the two largest centres where they did content moderation was in Manila and Warsaw? So this is a problem. Somehow Facebook -- the content moderation needs to move into the realm of values and principles. Maybe underneath the human rights.

LISA LAFLAMME: Certainly media literacy, as you say. Also, do you ever think that the rational mind has almost ceded ground by saying that's just a right-wing nutter? And they keep dismissing this hate online as saying: Just leave it. Let it go. And by doing that, so often we have now, as this young woman has said, the balance is completely out of whack?

MARIA RESSA: You can't ignore it, right? That's a lesson from us. The traditional news groups in the Philippines said: Ignore it, ignore it. When you ignore it, it becomes truth. When you see the hate begin to rise, call it out. Because if you don't call it out, ignoring it doesn't make it go away; it makes it get stronger.

SPEAKER:

I think we have time for just one more question from that young woman.

SPEAKER: OK. Thank you very much, Lisa and Maria, for a fascinating discussion. Maria, during your presentation you mentioned that you can't ignore the trolls. I'm just wondering if you could speak a little bit more about Rappler's kind of social media engagement strategy and how Rappler kind of engages with trolls who say horrible things to you.

MARIA RESSA: Engagement also means block. Block and report.

LISA LAFLAMME: That's power. Doesn't it feel good to block someone?

MARIA RESSA: Not to be flippant about it, but my social media team, we sent the entire team for counselling, because the period of time when I was getting 98 messages per hour, Rappler was getting more. Our reporter at the palace, was getting as many as I was. So, again, this plays with your mind. It is psychological warfare. We didn't even have counsellors to deal with that, so we had to get the guard centre to train the trainers. So how do you deal with it? One, you lay your policies out very clearly. We actually say at a certain point, if the hate is there, we will block. There are lots of studies now that show that news groups that allow comments to get overrun with all sorts of trash, that reflects on the news group itself.

LISA LAFLAMME: Do you support the news organizations and I should say CTV is one of them, where you do block comments now?

MARIA RESSA: Absolutely. Yeah. It's not free speech. This is meant to manipulate you. They Are there real people who are jerks? Yes, there are. But in journalism journalism, there were so many who

were fake. The first time I went to Facebookp I just said -- because they used to tell me, Maria, report it. And I counted how many I had. If I had to report it, it was more than there were hours in a day. So I said: No, that's not my job. That's supposed to be yours. I shouldn't be the one doing that. I think they're getting there. My hope is this: They've hired the right people. You know the guy who always comes out with quotes during your takedown is gnattannial Na Nathaniel. So I think we need to push back. Also, my gosh, even in your own communities in the real world, wouldn't you step in? That's part of it. How did behaviour in the virtual world get so toxic? How did we allow that, when we wouldn't toll late that in the real world.

LISA LAFLAMME: That an anymore knittity is knit anonymity is inspiring. Thank you. I could listen to you all day.

SPEAKER: And thank you so much, Lisa, for doing this. Fantastic.

[APPLAUSE] .

What I'd like to do now -- it would have been impossible to bring Maria here without the support of three organizations. I'd like to call them up to the stage so that they could thank Maria. Don't leave yet, Maria. I'd like to call up Rachel from the Journalists for Human Rights.

[APPLAUSE]

Toronto public library. Although they're not here here, I also want to thank UNIFOR for their tremendous and generous contribution.

SPEAKER: Thank you very much, everyone, for coming. Thank you so much, Maria for coming. At the library, the Toronto reference library we have two of Canada's premier journalists meeting with Maria. Thank you, everyone, for coming. The Toronto public library is very enthusiastic about this conference every year.

SPEAKER: Thank you, Gregory. I just want to also say my thanks on behalf of Journalists for Human Rights, Canada's leading media development organization. We work around the world to strengthen journalists' ability to fight misinformation with facts and truth. It's so incredibly powerful to see this issue laid out for us, mapped out for us, and showcaseed through your personal stories. So courageous and so powerful and so deeply optimistic that we can win this thing, and we will, and these social media companies, it's in their interest to clean this up for all of us. It's in our interest as citizens to educate ourselves so we can fight back, be critical condition not retweet the incendiary tweet, to show we want to engage in a civic way online as well as off and fight these trolls and get back to a true civic democracy through journalists like this incredible woman. Please give her another round of applause.

[APPLAUSE] Pop.

SPEAKER: I want to thank UNIFOR and give a special thousand Lisa LaFlamme, who as both the CTV National News Senior Editor and national news anchor really encapsulates what our journalism is about, what great Canadian journalism does every day, and I'm so proud because you're an ambassador. Thank you so much, Lisa.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: And my team. Thanking Anna and Karim.

[APPLAUSE]

SPEAKER: Who made this all happen.

SPEAKER: The day isn't over yet, people!

SPEAKER: Lots of thank you's, but democracy is about action too. We have a number of breakout panels, workshops, still to come. We really want to invite you to go and take those in. After those workshops, all kinds of issues on this floor. Those of you who are interested, we would like to bring you back here at around 5:00 to do a kind of closing reflection and also we'll be inviting our co-presenting partners up front with us. Because obviously again we're building a community here here. There's a community that's quite strong already and we want to get your very practical feedback. You will be able to give feedback through the online survey that went out yesterday and there will be another one today. We'll be wanting to talk about the kinds of things we need to do to keep this community going forward and this conference now in its second year, going forward.

SPEAKER: Bailey desperately needs to meet you at the corridor. The workshops will begin ten minutes later, so 3:40. How many of you know the workshop you will be attending? Almost all of you. Great. Fantastic. So thanks again. We'd love to thank everyone who has been participating among our sponsors, et cetera. We'll do more of that at 5:00.

(APPLAUSE)