

Center for American Progress



SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

“CLIMATE AND CULTURE: RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP.”

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MR. JOHN PODESTA: I'm John Podesta and on behalf of the Center for American Progress I want to thank you for joining us today. I'm going to introduce our panel in just a moment, but first I want to talk for just a couple minutes and frame why we're here today.

We're here to talk about climate change, which is usually thought of, I suppose, as a scientific issue or an economic issue or sometimes a national security question where you think about it with respect to its impact on our energy policy. It is of course all those things, but sitting beside me are four religious leaders with expertise in climate change and the global warming pollution that causes it, who see this issue at its core as an ethical, as a moral, and as a religious issue. It's a matter of protecting God's creation and protecting God's people in the face of mounting scientific evidence that tells us that they are in peril.

Consider some evidence: in the past few years extreme heat waves have killed tens of thousands of people across Europe and South Asia, rising sea levels more than doubled, and weather-related natural disasters last year shattering all records for the number and the intensity of deadly storms and hurricanes. Scientists predict that if global warming is not slowed, as many as 25 percent of species on the planet today could be extinct by the end of the century. And this past year, as you all know, was the warmest year on record.

But beyond the scientific evidence, it's important to recognize that the world's poorest people, those least responsible for the pollution fueling climate change, are most prone to suffer from its effects. Consider that 14 countries in Africa are already subject to water stress, and within the next 25 years that number will double. Climate change-induced famine may displace more than 250 million people worldwide by 2050. And as has been seen in Bangladesh and in the Philippines in the past year, the increased frequency and intensity of storms means that poverty-ridden communities in remote areas will not receive advanced warning, will not have immediate access to relief services, and will not have adequate resources to recover from disasters, leaving hundreds of thousands of people to perish.

These are just some of the facts, and scientists have warned that we may soon reach the tipping point where we will be powerless to reverse the catastrophic consequences of climate change and its impact on the most vulnerable people on the planet. While science tells us, then, that we are polluting and possibly destroying our environment, while science tells us that our pollution is worsening the plight of people in the poorest countries on earth, faith tells us that it's simply a matter of fairness and morality that we devise solutions to these problems we have created. Whether you're Jewish or Muslim, Buddhist or Christian, our common ground is love for thy neighbor and a profound belief in our moral obligation to community, to country, and to the world.

People of all faiths and of all political persuasions are joining together to try to slow the advance of climate change and global warming. Together, the faith community is reaching people that politicians and policymakers in Washington are not. Quite frankly, they are inspiring a people's movement to influence policy, to take action in their own lives and in their places of worship, and make good on our moral obligation.

For example, the Religious Action Center for Reformed Judaism organized a march on Washington to muster support for the fight against global warming. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued an important statement on global climate change which reminded us that Catholic social teaching calls for bold and generous actions on behalf of the common good. And 86 evangelical leaders signed onto the Evangelical Climate Initiative to raise awareness and inspire action.

History has shown us that the most effective and lasting movements for change are not born out of scientific studies or out of backroom briefings on Capitol Hill or even out of the backrooms of think tanks. They're born from moral awareness and a sense of duty. Today, the religious community is contributing to and sustaining a broad-based movement to protect our environment, to protect God's earth, and to protect his most vulnerable people. And here at the Center for American Progress we're committed to partnering with them in that effort.

Since our founding, the Center has taken action to raise the progressive religious voice within the public square, not by teaching politicians how to quote scripture, but by crafting public policies that reflect our values – fairness, equality, justice, and compassion – and bringing our values to bear on public policy discussions. And this morning that's exactly what we hope to do in the discussion about climate change and global warming.

We're pleased to be joined by such a distinguished panel, which it's my pleasure now to introduce. John Carr serves as secretary of the Department of Social Development and World Peace for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. In that position, he brings a moral dimension to bear on key domestic and international issues and helps build the Catholic community's capacity to act on its social mission. For the past 25 years, John has been a powerful advocate for a variety of social development issues from both the religious and governmental perspectives. He has served in the White House as the executive director of the Conference on Families, and as secretary of social concerns in Washington, D.C. for Cardinal Hickey, as well as the legislative coordinator for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Rabbi Daniel Swartz is the coordinator for Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light, a new project of the Church's Center on Theology and Public Policy, and the Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington. He works with congregations and other religious institutions in the Washington area to address moral and practical dimensions to energy use, including how to save energy and money, how to buy clean renewable energy, and how to educate congregates about climate change, social justice, and religious ethics. He holds degrees from Brown University. He's a geological

scientist, so he's our resident scientific expert on (inaudible) and environmental policy, and is a former associate director of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment.

Reverend Richard Cizik serves as vice president for governmental affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals. In that position, he sets the NAE policy direction on issues before Congress and acts as a national spokesperson for many issues of concern to the evangelicals. He was ordained in 1992 to a specific ministry calling in public affairs with the National Association of Evangelicals by the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science, a master's in public affairs, a master's of divinity, and an honorary doctorate in Christian leadership. He has authored over 100 published articles and editorials, including "For the Health of the Nation: An Evangelical Call to Civic Engagement."

And last, but certainly not least, Sister Patricia Daly is the executive director of the Tri-State Coalition for Responsible Investment and a Dominican Sister of Caldwell, New Jersey. She has worked in the field of corporate responsibility and socially responsible investing for more than 25 years. She's lectured internationally on issues of human rights, labor, ecological concerns, equality, and international debt, and she's been featured on CNN, on *60 Minutes*, on NPR and the *New York Times*. She's also founder of Campaign Exxon Mobile, a campaign to hold big oil accountable for their role in climate change.

I'm going to ask – I'm going to start off by asking each of our panelists a question which they will respond to. Then we might get into it a little bit up here amongst each other, and then I'm going to open it up for questions from the audience. And I want to begin – counting myself, we're overabundant in Catholics on this panel (laughter), so I'm going to begin with –

MR. : What's wrong with that? (Laughter.)

MR. PODESTA: There's nothing wrong with that. I'm going to begin with John Carr. And I'm going to ask him – I think I might start off by asking a personal question to begin with, to John, and then picking it up to the other panelists. You've said, John, that you've been a convert to the cause of the environment in some of your past statements that – maybe I'm putting words in your mouth and maybe it was a – that the environmental issues were secondary in their importance to questions of global poverty, of war and peace, et cetera, but you now believe that climate change, I think, in particular is an extension of the work that you've done on these questions that face the human condition and human people around the world. And I wonder if – what motivated you in getting so deeply involved in this question, what motivated the U.S. Catholic Conference in issuing the strong statement that they issued, and how does social teaching apply to this question of climate change?

MR. JOHN CARR: I don't know who your sources are, but they're pretty good. (Laughter.) Convert would be a state of my current – current state of my soul. Sceptic

was – and my skepticism was not adversarial. I supported a lot of the positions my friends in the environmental movement had. I just had no passion for that agenda. I was sympathetic, but not engaged. And to be honest, there were sort of two reasons for that. One, as John suggested, imagine you were secretary of social development and world peace for the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference. Think about that: social development and world peace and Catholic bishops. What you've been reading about the Catholic bishops is not about our climate change statement.

I always tell the story of getting in an elevator with one of these big nametags that said I worked for the bishops and what my name and my title was. And a couple got on with me, and the gentleman first looked at me sort of strangely and said, you're not a bishop. And I don't know whether it was the way I was dressed or my wedding ring that gave me away, but (laughter), I said, "No, I'm not a bishop. I work for the bishops." And I could see he was reading the rest of this name card, and he turned to his spouse and said, he's in charge of social development and world peace. (Laughter.) And she seemed a little underwhelmed by this. She looked at me and said, "You need to do a better job." (Laughter.)

So when I came to environment, I thought we had a lot of work to do. I mean, Daniel, as I walked in, said immigration must be a little hot right now. (Laughter.) We've got two wars going on. Candidly, if this were a panel on religious perspectives on poverty, how many of us would be here? So one sense was that there are a lot of things that touch human life and dignity – a lot of things that affect the planet. And in my experience, environment was getting a lot of attention, and this is unfair in some ways. I saw the environmental movement as well-organized, well-funded, mostly white, and rather successful. They had changed the way we think, the way we live. They had changed the country – one of, I think, the most successful and powerful movements in our time. And so I sort of contrasted what we were doing in some areas to what we might do in other areas, and I said, "Frankly, they don't need our help. We need their help."

But then a couple things happened. One, John Paul II said the environment was a fundamental moral and religious challenge. That added steps. It was an ethical issue and a spiritual priority. The cardinal who's chairing my committee, Cardinal Mahoney, who now is very public in the immigration battle, shared that view. And when the pope says something is a priority and the cardinal who chairs the committee says we're going to do something, you do something in my church. (Laughter.)

And it also came when our interfaith partners, represented at this table, were also getting involved. And the National Religious Partnership, Paul Goram (sp), who some of you know, gave us a way to be ourselves: to develop a distinctive, authentically Catholic approach the environment. My worry was that it was sort of – we were going to have to invent a new religion in order to be active on this. And I frankly came to believe that the religion we had, Genesis, the Psalms – St. Francis was ours before he belonged to environmental movement – that we in fact had something to contribute and we could do it being ourselves. We didn't have to be the Sierra Club at prayer or the religious caucus of the environmental movement; that there was in the religious community generally and

in my own faith community – Catholic Church – a way of thinking about this that could make a contribution.

So what we bring, I think, is some experience, some presence, some structures, a lot of people. Three Catholics here; not a bad start. (Laughter.) But I think more importantly than anything else, we bring a set of ideas and I'd like to use climate change as sort of an example of that. The approach the bishops took – and I have one of these for people back there – is a very traditional approach to a very – some would say a very trendy issue. The Catholic Church has been called a lot of things. It has never been called trendy. I don't think that's our temptation. (Laughter.) And what the bishops did was to say that there is a very old-fashioned virtue, the virtue of prudence, which ought to govern how we approach this.

You don't have to know everything to know that harm is being done. You can have debates about how much and what its causes are, but everything we know tells us that human beings are having an impact and it's not a good impact. And prudence usually is used as a way to keep people from doing things. Don't do something risky. Don't do something unwise. There's another side of prudence which says, when things are getting worse, you ought to do something now to stop it from getting even worse and worse. And so prudence requires that we take what we know and begin to act on it.

Secondly, the bishops said that the traditional sort of biblical view of the world is how does this touch the weakest and most vulnerable in our midst – the widows and orphans in the Hebrew Scriptures, the least of these in the gospels? And frankly, as John said, the poor and the vulnerable are the people who pay the price for environmental neglect. They're the ones who will bear the burdens as we try and remedy some of this. It's going to be their jobs that are affected, their water, their air. And frankly, their voices are missing. They're not at these tables as we negotiate and debate these things. There are no PACs for poor children of the future. K Street – not interested.

So one of the things I think we bring, and I think it's true of all of us, is we look at environment, we look at climate change from the bottom up. We think the big boys will be able to take care of themselves. In fact, some of the paralysis we've got is a result of that. But the people who are most affected and will pay the greatest price are missing in the discussion and so we would like to empower them to be there and to be there with them.

And then finally, there's the old tradition shared by many of us of the common good. And if there were anything – any issue that needed to focus on the common good, it's climate change. The polarization that we've experienced I think has paralyzed the debate. Both sides have enough oomph, enough power, mojo I guess your successors say –

MR. : Yeah, exactly.

MR. CARR: – to keep the other side from prevailing. And as long as we think of

this as two sides battling it out, I think we will be paralyzed. Right now the advocates of doing something are having an easier time than others, but we're still not close to doing anything. And so we need a different kind of dialogue that gets beyond the polarization of the moment. I do not think we will have action – significant action – until we build up the common ground to pursue the common good. One side is not going to be able to win this fight, in my experience. And so I think the religious community can be a part of building up that common ground.

And the reason I think this – this will be my last point – I'm basically selfish. Solving this problem or addressing this problem or mitigating this problem is going to require sacrifice, and I don't do sacrifice very well. My children do sacrifice even less well. That's my experience. Where do you go to persuade people to restrain their appetites, to moderate their behavior; in fact, to sacrifice for future generations? For me the only place I can go that works is my faith. It brings out the best in me instead of the worst in me. And there are people who don't rely on the call of the gospel or the scriptures to live a more restrained, more virtuous life, and I admire them, but I'm not one of them.

And so I think when you think about where do we find the resources to discuss this issue in a way that leads to action and to act in a way that leads to progress, the religious community can play a distinctive role not just as an advocate, but as a way of – source of ideas, a source of dialogue, and an institution that looks beyond the upcoming congressional elections. Thank you.

MR. PODESTA: But, I do – I commend you for raising that at the end. Rabbi, to stick with the personal for a second, you sort of come from the opposite direction, which is that you've – as I noted in your education background, you studied the planet and things happening on the planet. You came to faith as an environmentalist. I think that you've been with it and I think you've noted that your faith has been deepened by (coming?) to the environment. And I wonder if you could talk a little bit about your journey and where you've come to, and broaden the discussion, talk about the Jewish tradition and its approach to just questions of protecting the planet.

RABBI DANIEL SWARTZ: Sure. Thanks. Some of my earliest memories as a young boy growing up in Silver Spring are walking in Rock Creek Park and finding in the woods not an escape, but a sense of peace and discovering a place where I really felt at home. And this wasn't just an attraction to the pretty things in the world. I also had a desire to protect and heal the world around me. My very first chemistry set was an environmental science kit, and so as a six and seven-year-old boy I would go around testing streams and looking at air, and it still sticks with me.

Now, how did that feeling of connection to the world around me lead me to become an active Jew and eventually a rabbi? Well, let me take you through a quick exercise to help show how that happened. I want everybody to close their eyes for a moment. Picture in your mind the first image that comes to your thinking when you hear the word environment. Now open your eyes. Hopefully you didn't go to sleep just yet.

(Laughter.) And raise your hand if there were any people in that picture. This is a problem. (Laughter.) We have a severe disconnect between ourselves and the environment. We think of it as whales and wilderness or parks and pandas – something out there separate from us.

Now, scientists have helped us understand intellectually how we're connected to the world around us, how what we put out into the environment from toxics to greenhouse gases never really gets buried in the earth when we think it does, that the psalmist was in fact scientifically correct when talking about how truth rises from the earth, and I would add, and tends to bite us in the tush. (Laughter.)

But I'm talking about a deeper connection here. I'm connected to all of you and to every being on this world through God. Now, I don't mean by this that God's world is only filled with gentle herbivores who never encroach on each other's territories. Rather, it means that despite the fact that nature is truly red in tooth and claw; that Isaiah – to the contrary, the lion doesn't tend to lie down with the lamb except to eat the lamb. And more importantly, despite the human history of injustices perpetuated by our species to our fellow human beings and to all our fellow creatures, despite genocides on the one hand and driving countless species to extinction on the other, that this planet should be home to us all – everyone. Every creature inherently deserves home. And God referred to by the ancient rabbinic sages as *homacome* (ph), the place of the world, wants us, demands from us, to provide a place in the world for all.

And that's where I came to learn Judaism had something to offer me, and I believe the world, all who join in *tikkun alum*, the healing of our planet. Now, some of that is poetic, so when I would say evening prayers on an Alpine meadow in Alaska, I could take with me the words of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, sort of our Saint Francis. He wrote, "If you could only be worthy to hear the songs of the grass, each blade sings out to God without any ulterior motive, not expecting any reward. It is most wonderful to hear their song and serve God in their midst. Grant me the ability, Master of the universe, to go out amongst them each day and enter into prayer so that their songs might join with mine and lift my prayer up to the One to whom we belong." Or when I was in Big Bend in Texas doing morning prayers and seeing the desert bloom after a rain, to read in the song of Psalms, "For now the winter has passed. The rains are over and gone. The blossoms have appeared in the land. The time of the songbird has come." And I could be inspired by ancient words proclaiming environmental justice, not a new thing. Ezekiel already in Chapter 34 talked about it. "As for you my sheep," Ezekiel wrote, "this is what the sovereign lord says. 'Look, I am about to judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats. Is it not enough for you to feed on good pasture, that you must trample the rest of the pastures with your feet? When you drink clean water, must you muddy the rest of the water by trampling it with your feet? I will judge between the fat and the lean sheep'" – and you have to guess which is which in this world, you know – 'because you push with your side and your shoulder and thrust with your hoards at the weak sheep until you scatter them abroad, I will save my sheep.'"

We have muddied lots of water. But most essentially of all, if we really want to

provide a place for all, we need some pretty good rules about how to behave in this home of ours. And that I think is really the specialty of my tradition. Let me give a couple quick examples of it. The first from Deuteronomy, and this is on some level tied with the virtue of prudence. It's a principle called *maake (ph)* from Deuteronomy 22. It says that when you build a house you shall put a parapet around the roof so that there won't be blood guilt on you. Now, it didn't say if thou happens to be on the roof, be careful that thou doesn't fall. It doesn't say to pick up somebody after they've fallen and take care of them. It says to prevent them in the first place, to stop it, because once you've fallen off that roof, frankly, it's too late. And indeed it was considered a basic part of rabbinic training back when Jews could still fix things (laughter) to be able to inspect that *maake*; that that was part of your job to be a good rabbi you had to make sure that that was safe.

A second example that takes us a little even closer I think to climate changes comes from the *shul kanaruf (ph)*, the most authoritative of Jewish law codes. And it has a whole section on laws regulating an enclosed alleyway. You come to a dead end and there's houses around a courtyard. And it says that, for example, in terms of business competition, that if there's already, say, a vendor of food in that courtyard, that you can't – that the residents can't stop another vendor from coming there just because of competitive reasons and the fact that there'll be some competition between the two.

On the other hand, if there's a business that's been long-established in that courtyard and finally later somebody finds out that there is a health problem arising from that business, especially in terms of – it specifically mentions air emissions – that that alleyway has the authority to shut down that business for the sake of people's health, even if that's been the common standard operating procedure for generations. Once you find out that something is harmful, that comes before. I'm reminded in the bishop's pastoral letter on the economy that the economy is for the sake of the people and not the other way around.

So in a time when my use of energy can change the life for better or worse of people from the fisher folk of the Aleutians to the farmers in Zimbabwe, it's time we see the entire world as a little enclosed alleyway, and it's time we start loving and stop hurting our neighbors.

Thank you.

MR. PODESTA: I think I'm going to stick with the converted here and turn next to Rick, who said that he's had a conversion experience with regard to climate change. And I'd like to ask him, how did that happen? What's been its effect on you? And I think that you in particular, Rick, have been called out as someone who was somewhat unexpected in this debate, and what's been your reaction from both the evangelical community and the political community to your engagement in this question?

REV. RICHARD CIZIK: Oh, John, you're a man after my own heart and you used the words, John, called out. How interesting. This is an evangelical admiring a Catholic's language. (Laughter.) Actually, evangelicals use that kind of language. We

use calling. And I feel like I've indeed been called out by God to do something on this issue. And I use the word, yes, a convert. I suppose –

MR. PODESTA: It wasn't even in my notepad.

REV. CIZIK: It wasn't – ah, we stumble into the truth. (Laughter.) Look, yeah, I have – yes, John, I use the word conversion because I was neither – as you said, John, you weren't sympathetic, nor engaged – oh, you were sympathetic but not engaged. I would say I was neither sympathetic nor engaged, and so maybe that truly makes a convert.

Now, I went to Oxford to a conference on climate with scientists – the most prestigious scientists in the world, some of the people of faith, such as Sir John Hoden (sp), and told my friends, look, don't expect anything from me. I'm not going to sign any statement. I'm not likely to be convinced of the science of climate change, and so just don't be holding your breath for anything for anything from me. And I spent three days listening and I think over the course of the last four years I've had a change. And what I say is people do need to be converted. They do need to change their entire way of thinking.

And I get faulted – people have looked at *Vanity Fair* and they say, “Oh, that's just an awful picture, Richard. You're standing in a – it would seem to be a swamp, some kind of a swamp at least, and you've got this 18 century garb on – I guess it's actually Armani.” (Laughter.) He went back to the 18th century for his designs. “And you've got this owl there, and this is just terrible.” (Inaudible) another people, I got one from a friend of mine, an email just about five minutes ago, he said, “Oh, I just got off the plane from (my honeymoon?).” He said, “That's just perfect because it says you're right out of the 18th century.” Well, look, maybe I've been converted as Jonathan Edwards, one of our great sinners in the hands of a neighbor got, you know, his sermon, who was also a peacemaker with the Indians and the environmentalists. Maybe I've been converted back to what I should have been, but as the director of the Washington office for lo those many years, I was in political terms a mugwump. That means a mug on one side, a wump on the other. Look, there are scientists on both sides. I don't need to make a decision on this issue.

And I came away – yes, the preponderance of the evidence does in fact lean on one side. That was four years ago. I'm even convinced today. I think you have said it elsewhere, John, that we don't need modeling anymore to tell us the data is lining up on one side. So yes, I have been – now, a convert. I was just with my friends at Focus on the Family, and they so, “Oh, Richard, really, a convert in the same sense as you were quoted in the *New York Times*, to this cause as to Christ?” No, not on the same par. But is it significant in my life? Do I look at things differently? Absolutely.

And I tell other people they have to think totally different, especially my evangelical friends, about this issue. Why? Because, one, I think God calls us to be stewards. It's clearly in the scriptures. We don't have our pastors preach it. They don't

teach it. The focus groups say, well, we're still waiting for the first person – I'm sorry to say, the very first person in the focus group who will say they've had a pastor even preach on the subject of stewardship.

And so a convert, yes, to God's demand of us that we be stewards of his earth. He owns it. We don't own it. And when I die, he's not going to ask me, "Rich, were you a six-day creationist, were you a day-age theorist, or what?" And no, he'll say, not how did I do it; God will say, what did you do with what I gave you? And I don't think we've been as a nation, nor as an evangelical community very good stewards. So I think we're called, first of all, to be stewards.

Second of all, I think that we have to, like Abraham, be called out of the Ur of the Caldese. He says, "I'm going to bless you. You have to share the blessing." If you don't share the blessing, in Genesis 12, he's going to take it away. And I happen to think that we have an incredible blessing in our natural resources here, and if we don't share them, if we don't use it wisely, he'll take it away. I think that when you have 4 percent of the world emitting 25 percent of the world's greenhouse gases, you're not being a blessing to the rest of the world as we're called to be. We're entirely something different and He may take away some of those blessings if we don't act accordingly.

A strategy – does that mean my time is up? (Laughter.) Just briefly – that unintentional gong. Secondly, look, there is a strategy in part. I am sorry, I use this on all the other issues of human rights, religious freedom, the sanctity of human life, all those we've been engaged in, passed eight major bills on these issues in the last ten years, beginning with the International Religious Freedom Act and ending with the (inaudible) Act on domestic trafficking, and so – but the strategy is to hold political leaders accountable. Now, that's not all that revolutionary, or is it?

Jesus, in that famous conversation with Pilot said – when Pilot said, "Ah, I can release you and crucify you," Jesus responded in a way I would suggest you put down in your notes and remember, especially in this town. He said, "You have no authority except that be given you from above." What he's saying is that we, political leaders particularly, are held to a higher authority. They will be judged. They will be held responsible in ways, having been given that public authority to use it wisely. That doesn't dictate a common necessary response to climate change, but it does mean we've got to examine the evidence, act on it with as much degree of prudence and care. John, prudence doesn't given us an option not to do something. I think prudence demands action of an appropriate sort given the risk and the threat, and that is great.

Not all evangelicals agree that the threat is great. They don't agree that the – cause, they don't – as I do as clear. They don't believe so. They don't believe the severity is clear. They don't believe even the solutions are clear. Well, they're entitled to their opinion, and the NAE has not taken an official position on this issue, but I think that the 86 leaders who signed the document are challenging them to do so. So we hold our leaders accountable – state, federal, local, all I think have to be held to a very high standard. It's a biblical standard. It's not a political standard.

Lastly, by way of tactics, vision, strategy – you know about these things, John. Vision, strategy, tactics. Look, the tactic is simply an evangelical tactic. It goes all the way back to the founding of the republic. The Presbyterians, as you may recall, were the black robes of the revolution. They challenged our nation to freedom. They called their followers to act accordingly. They were willing to, you see, invest their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honors on behalf of something very important. And I happen to believe that the natural resources of this country are very important. I believe that I am the conservative. The people who fault me for wanting to conserve our natural resources, frankly, I would say their inattention to these issues are really the liberal.

So have I changed? Yes. I've changed enormously. Do I have a voice? I try to use it wisely. I'm going to use it to try and, yes, change Republicans. We already see conservative Republicans on the House side coming out, even for mandatory caps – amazing. This is in the last year.

And lastly, look, you weigh principles. Look, Darius, my third narrative here – people understand narratives better than they do atmospheric science. The narrative here even between Darius and the 6th Century B.C. and his servant, Daniel, was Daniel called and stayed to prayer. He was a spiritual and a moral leader. That got him into trouble. Darius had to choose his friend or the empire. Ah, he chose wisely. Given the choice, you see, he saved his friend, Daniel, and sacrificed the empire, because you know, he said, don't pray. He'd issued a decree. The coup had been laid. He issued a decree: pray to no one except to the king. He defied the prayer. He was sent to the den. This is Daniel. He survived the den. But Daniel, the political leader, you see, had to make, as Debra John Parnell (sp) has said, a tragic moral choice between two difficult options. Politicians have to do that today.

We are called to pray, to begin a movement, I believe, that is about moral and spiritual truth. It's not a blue issue or a political liberal issue. It's not a red, a political conservative or Republican issue. It's not even a green issue. It's fundamentally – it's about being faithful to what God has called us all to do.

And so that's my conversion. It hopefully will challenge you to do likewise. I believe everybody – evangelicals first and foremost – who say they are people of the book who are called out to – I'll finish with what you start with, John: called out. They have to be converted truly to a new way of thinking with new eyes. That doesn't mean they'll all line up politically the same, but it does mean they've got to examine their presuppositions and throw some out the window if they're flawed. That's it.

Thank you.

MR. PODESTA: Thank you.

I want to turn to Sister Pat. I don't know whether you've been converted to this particular cause, but you've chosen a different venue to work in. And Pat, you've gone

where the money changers are – at least you’ve gone to Wall Street – to try to change the behavior of the way businesses do business and respond to this problem. And I wonder whether the spiritual impulse took you there, that was just where you thought you could be effective, and what’s been the reaction, and do you press a particularly moral case in these business settings?

SISTER PATRICIA DALY: Thank you, John. Good morning, all. I think when I look back about – since I’ve been working on this issue since the late ‘80s, I probably couldn’t be considered a convert, but I’ll tell you some of the source of where that has come from. I was really privileged in the late ‘60s to be in grade school – a Catholic grade school in New York where religion was taught in the context of the times. Our religion class dealt with the Vietnam War. Our responsibility to – and how to deal with the poverty of the world. We called things pollution back then. And so over the years, I really struggled with the balance of charity and justice.

I ended up landing in the Dominicans of Caldwell, and this year we celebrate the 800th anniversary of the founding of the Dominican Order. Dominic de Guzmán was a Spaniard, and in the south of France in response to the Albigensian Heresy founded the Dominicans. And the priority there was truth – preaching of the truth in the context of the untruth. And I think we can certainly see, or one of my experiences, that the first truth of the holy – the first revelation of our God is the planet, is all of creation. And certainly our tradition also comes out of such a sense of a preferential option for the poor. The prophetic tradition, the tradition of Jesus. These teachings and the energy all had political and economic ramifications.

So coming out of some of those early years, I was very, very frustrated with – you can have all the wonderful energy in the world and try to give as much as you can in response to poor people, sick people, et cetera, but unless the systems were addressed, unless people asked why are people – why do people continue to be poor, why do people continue to be so sick from reasons that they shouldn’t be, why does homelessness continue, unless those systems are addressed, then I believe we are not being faithful.

Back when I was a novice, I was sitting – I heard about that we had had J.P. Stevens, a textile firm, in our portfolio and so the next morning I saw with the treasurer and I said, what do you think? She’s a Yugoslavian woman with a Wall Street background. She said, “Darling, if you want to go to the meeting, go to the meeting.” So I ended up at their shareholder meeting and realized that there was this movement that’s been going on for, today, 35 years – the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility: 275 Jewish, Protestant, and Roman Catholic institutional investors, and we hold assets of approximately \$120 billion. Our first resolution – our first initiative was 35 years ago this month with General Motors asking the company to lead South Africa. Today we work – ICCI.org – we work in nine working groups, everything from human rights, corporate governance, environmental justice. Global warming is obviously one of our initiatives and has been for almost 20 years.

Essentially what we are doing is using the power and the mission of our

investment portfolios. These are portfolios that are needed for the future needs of our retired people, but also the future needs of our mission. And so what we have been doing is attempting to engage corporations over the years. We've been doing that on global warming issues since 1990, asking companies and various industries – primarily in the '90s it was the utilities, the auto industry, and oil and gas industries. And those companies – during the '90s, we basically struggled with the science, and those were shareholders resolutions and meetings really dealing with what do we know, what do we don't know?

And then they were also for the most part very involved in the Global Climate Coalition. Remember that lobbying group here? Very, very well funded by corporations and different industries. And I think that group was very, very successful in numbing the people in the United States. We believed that this was really not a problem; that this was really some kind of possible environmental issue way off, if it even happens, but it's mostly a hoax, was what the initiative was.

By the year 2000, corporations started to realize that they were already moving on a precautionary principle initiative: What if? And I think we were able – the shareholders – the religious shareholders were able to corporations – many significant corporations, that the association with the Global Climate Coalition was no longer something that actually represented them truthfully. And by the year 2000 then, as corporations left the GCC, we were able to really get down to work with companies. And what were the new technologies that different industries and different corporations needed to work on and really start investing in so that they would be profitable in the long term?

And over the years – in the last few years, we've also now understood the economics of climate risk, and so corporations in a variety of industries have really been pushed, and I think in some ways really happy to be pushed, to really see, to open up, you know, what is the climate risk, what is their level of risk in their own corporation in terms of their future viability when we look at what could be coming down the pike.

I think today – well, first off, today we're also, besides utilities, auto, oil and gas, we're working with the manufacturing industry, the building sector, as well as the financial sector. And I would also just like to preface some of this. Some of the work over the years, I think it appears that some of the faith communities have attempted to demonize some of the corporations. I think especially on this issue, and in many other issues, in the human rights work and others – the contract supplier work, it is truly – once we get beyond the – and actually get in the door, all right, it's truly an honor to work with people who come at these concerns not just for the business health of that company, but are really driven by many, many other values and are committed to working within the corporation to bring about a really new day that this company will be responsible and will contribute to a sustainability as we look at development in the future.

I think I'll leave it at that. I would have to say some of – when you talk about Exxon Mobile, though, we still are working on demonizing them (inaudible). (Laughter.)

MR. PODESTA: I'm glad that Sister ended that responsible business –

SISTER DALY: If you want to be truthful.

MR. PODESTA: Because I think I saw a couple eyes darting back there when you mentioned the \$120 billion and said, ah-ha, that's why they're really listening to you.

MR. PODESTA: I am going to get to questions, but I'm going to ask just a couple myself to begin with. And the first question, I guess as I was listening to all of you, I reflect on the fact that I've been in the political game, if you will, policy game, in Washington for 30 years. And I think over that period of time this is the most divided, most mistrustful, most partisan time at least in the time that I've worked here. And we could go back a couple hundred years and maybe find similar points, but (laughter) it really is – the level of distrust is really, I think, extreme.

And Rich, I think I'm going to start by asking you, but then I'd like all the panelists to reflect on this, you talk about creation care. I think environment itself maybe is even a loaded word.

REV. CIZIK: Yeah.

MR. PODESTA: But how do we begin to break down those barriers, build trust, and build common cause when there's so much mistrust in the system? And does the religious community have a special responsibility to kind of think about that question, really, to try to break down that division that we have in Washington (inaudible).

REV. CIZIK: I think our biblical duty, frankly, as Christians is to be reconcilers. We are called agents of reconciliation and, thus, it seems unfortunate at times that religion is used to divide people. I know that there are divisions between the sheeps and the goats in a spiritual sense, but that doesn't mean you can bring that kind of certitude to politics. People do. They have a certainty about these things I would think on climate that's hard to believe. You've had that happen. It began, some would say, when – pardon me, John – but I think even the vice president has said when he attempted to raise the issue – that's Vice President Gore – it was turned into a political issue back in the early '90s. The opinion-makers have told us that. And it wasn't intended to become that way. I think people responded as politicians –

MR. PODESTA: Ozone man. Ozone man was I think the – (laughter).

REV. CIZIK: I don't think today George Herbert Walker Bush will use that terminology of the former vice president. Why? Because, well, it was a term of derision. And one of the commonest strategies in this town – believe me, I've experienced it, I know exactly what it's about – if you don't agree with someone or their policy positions, call them a name. I'm called, wow, one of those people who've become eco-freaks or whatever. This is unfortunate. It's not what I think I'm called as a Christian to be. I've

never practiced that in 25, now I've started my 26th year in this town. Even during the Clinton administration I don't think the NAE played that kind of a role.

MR. PODESTA: Right.

REV. CIZIK: Always a bridge-builder trying to find some common ground. That is what we as a panel I think are going to do here. I don't castigate those who disagree with me as hopeless troglodytes or whatever. Why? Because I was a hopeless troglodyte a few years. No. (Laughter.) I'm just kidding. Just kidding. No, I didn't believe the science a few years ago. I believe that a lot has happened in the scientific community, and recently, as I said, you don't need as many models anymore. The data is assembling. And thus, I challenge people who aren't where I'm at today to come consider the evidence. I think as they do, they'll be more accepting of those they disagree with.

MR. PODESTA: Don't?

MR. CARR: I think what's going on in Washington is part of a much larger failure of our institutions. You look at Republicans, you look at Democrats, you look at business. Enron is on trial. The labor movement is divided. No one is going to Hollywood's movies. Journalism has been through its scandals. And you all know what we've been going through in the church. And I think part of it is what Rich is talking about, which is a little more modesty, frankly. My sense is this city is demoralized in a couple of senses. Maybe Democrats aren't demoralized, but I think they maybe should be. Demoralized in the sense that we've lost our way.

MR. CIZIK (?): It's also amoral in a lot of ways.

MR. CARR: Well, that's the point I'm getting at.

MR. CIZIK (?): It's not demoral, it's amoral.

MR. CARR: Yeah, it's demoralized in the sense that nobody knows what to do about Iraq. Nobody knows what to do about the budget. Nobody knows what to do about a lot of these things. And then the partisan games make it impossible to pass a budget and all this other stuff. The competence question. How do you fight a war that we got into? Katrina left everybody thinking we're completely incapable of doing anything right. Then there's Rich's point, which is we're demoralized in the sense that politics is not about fundamentalists, it's not about caring for the earth, it's not about caring for the poor; it's about winning the next election. And you know something about that.

Somebody said no focus groups where people – the polls and focus groups are a big part of the problem. The vice president, for all his leadership – in this case, we're talking about Gore – was told, "For God's sakes, don't talk about that," and sadly he didn't, and now he is. So there is a lot of talk about moral values. The pollsters were flabbergasted and some people were discouraged that voters seemed to say they want to

vote their moral values.

Well, in our tradition, care for the earth is moral value, as well as care for the unborn and care for the poor. And I think if we began to say together that politics has to be about more than money, more than ego, has to be about fundamentals, and then you start trying to build up and work with those who are willing to work with you – I'll be honest, Rich and the evangelicals had the good fortune when they put out their statement to have a couple evangelicals attack them and a senator attack them. That was the story. Not that evangelicals had come together to do this. If we would call the president names, we'd be in the paper. Say that his climate change policies are immoral, that would be in the paper. But to say the old-fashioned virtue of prudence and the pursuit of the common good, and the poor are missing in this debate, people say, "What's the story?" Well, the story is that we've missed the story.

So I think there is a need, and there are people in both parties that I think are beginning to understand that even though it's not popular in the short term, in the long term we'll be judged on how we respond to this. And if you want to talk about moral values in politics, what we need in future generations is a pretty good moral value.

MR. PODESTA: Sister?

SISTER DALY: Thank you. In terms of building trust, one of the abilities that we have as faith-based investors is that we need for the corporations to be profitable. We're not on the attack. We need the economies of the world to be stable and to really attend to the foundational sense of development within different regions of the world. And so I also believe that the companies know we also need it. It's not just – none of us are day traders here. We need this company to be profitable for the long term, which also necessitates – which is better for the economy – much better for the economy. So it's a sense of how do we get there.

In terms of this issue of global warming and I think it's important in this city, as well as around the country, to follow the money of who's supporting the naysayers, and Exxon Mobile continues to do that and really be prime in that. They continue to state they're an oil company. They'll always be an oil company. We know how to do oil; we're not going to invest in renewables.

I was at the General Electric meeting last week, the annual meeting, and there was a shareholder submitted by a couple of people who were funded by Exxon Mobile and questioning GE's investment in renewables and "ecomagination." And afterwards we were chatting with them and they said, "Suppose you're wrong." And I said, "All right, suppose I'm wrong. We're ahead of the game in dealing with peak oil, all right. We have cleaner air. We have jobs. I mean thousands of people now just working on trading emissions internationally, all right. We've got new jobs in the financial sector, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera." I said, "What if you're wrong?" And then when my colleague, Father Mike Cosby (sp) asked could – because one of them refused to tell us how much he got from Exxon Mobile this year. He says, "That's none of your business." I said,

“Can we quote you at the Exxon Mobile annual meeting?” He says, “No, no. This is off the record.” I said, “No, it’s not.” (Laughter.)

But I do have to say I think because corporations understand this as a very critical issue for them, they are primed right now to be engaged in a policy debate because the companies need to know that they’ll have a level playing field in this country. They already have had to deal with international policy if they’re working internationally. So yesterday’s news of another eight or ten states suing for emissions, et cetera, I mean that’s a disaster for a utility to have different regulations in different states. The different policies for the auto industry, that’s a disaster for them if they have to come out with different cars in different states. They’re primed. And I don’t work in this city, but we’re trying to get them here into the debate.

MR. PODESTA: I’m going to open it up to the audience, but I’m going to take John’s bait and ask Daniel one final question from the table, which is, that the pollsters tell us (laughter) that people have come to appreciate the fact that the globe is warming, that it means something for the long-term future, but it’s not a salient voting issue. We had a panel last week about the role of the media and cultural voices have on people’s understanding about climate. And the vice president – Vice President Gore has been mentioned several times here today. He’s got his movie coming out on climate change. HBO just had a special. We’ve talked a lot about that. But at least in my tradition, our faith leader gets about five or seven minutes a week to instruct the people whose butts are stuck in the pews.

And Daniel, you’ve been working all over the city, not just in synagogues; in churches and mosques and other places trying to get those institutions to conform their own energy behaviors. And I wonder whether people resonate to it, and what the reaction is to the people in those congregations.

RABBI SWARTZ: First of all, it is a lot easier to get in the door to talk about climate change when you say, I can save you money on your electricity, especially when D.C. has gone up 20 percent in the past year and Maryland may go up 80 percent. All of a sudden you get very focused on it. I said to people, you might know that Pepco is an evangelical company, but it’s evangelizing because when people get their power bill and open it up they say, “Oh, God!” (Laughter.) So that has really helped. (Laughter.) But I also –

MR. : They probably say something else.

(Cross talk.)

RABBI SWARTZ: Well, I’m trying to be positive. (Laughter.) But it really is easier than it was ten years ago. That doesn’t mean it’s easy. But when I say that I talk about environment and religion today, I don’t get quite as many blank stares. People have started to hear about this, to think about this. And the fact that there are 30 congregations in a year in the D.C. area that have made a commitment and started doing

things – concrete things from buying all of their energy from landfill gas to doing retrofits and cleaning up their own act – says something.

MR. PODESTA: Okay. I will take questions from the audience. And we've got a mike. If you could please – I've got one in the back. And let's start back there and then I'll come up to the front. If you could, please identify yourself. And questions, no speeches.

Q: My name is Nelson Harvey from the *American Prospect*. Mr. Carr, you talked about the importance of thinking about these issues beyond the next election cycle, but the panelists have also talked about the importance of holding politicians accountable, and I wonder if the panelists could talk a bit about any plans or any sort of action plans in place in your faiths around the upcoming elections. How are people mobilizing? How are people acting on these issues in the context of politics – electoral politics?

MR. PODESTA: Rich, do you want to start?

REV. CIZIK: I was the one who describe the conversation with Jesus and Pilot: a higher accountability. And I don't think my duty here is to necessarily – because the NAE doesn't have a policy position per se, I don't think my duty is to force somebody into – shoehorn them into one prescription, but I do think my biblical duty is to call them to discuss all the issues.

And frankly, this has been – because of the longstanding debate between religion and science, climate change has been, I say, the third rail: touch it, you die. Well, I've touched it and I'm still alive. (Laughter.) I mean, there are people who'd rather I not be. (Laughter.) But I'm still alive. Look, Republicans don't like to use the term global warming. I say, "Look, you can talk about it, you should be talking about it," and in terms of accountability, what do I mean by that? Well, we showed – the evangelicals showed up at Messiah College recently, the movie *The Great Warming*. You can read about it. It's also out there, www.thegreatwarming.com. And we invited both Senator Santorum and Bob Casey, Jr., to come. Casey came. Senator Santorum sent a video. They both talked about the issue more directly, or indirectly as it turned out. But in any case, they were both inclined to participate, and that's not always been the case. It never even entered into the campaign. I've heard people hold John Kerry accountable. Well, I gave a speech. Well, okay.

What we want to do is simply say, because we believe – creation care, we use it because it's our terminology. It is an issue of importance. I was with my friends at Focus on the Family this morning and they say, "Well, Rich, are they all – are all of these principles in your document for the health of the nation equal?" Well, I said, "We don't say in the document that creation care is more important than religious freedom or the sanctity of the human life, but is it one of the principles in the scriptures? Absolutely. Should we at least grant some consideration to the issue? Of course." Every individual person will come to their own calculation on this political issue, and how much political salience climate has will depend on each individual believer. And yet it hasn't deserved

to be in the barren wastelands.

MR. PODESTA: John?

MR. CARR: My own conviction is that to the extent churches, synagogues, act like interest groups instead of communities of faith, they betray both their religious purpose and they become irrelevant to public discourse. We do not need additional interest groups. We do need institutions that stand for some values and encourage people to think beyond their own self-interest; to say it's not just the economy is stupid. It's not just are you better off than you were four years ago. It is, how are we going to live together on this planet?

For the Catholic community, there's a document called "Faithful Citizenship," which again gets very little coverage because we're not calling anybody names. But it said there are ten questions for the campaign, and one of those questions is, how are we to live together, and how does our care for the earth or neglect of the earth – what does that mean for future generations, and then shares some of these ideas.

I think for the religious community the challenges are several. How do be political without being partisan on this issue. How to say, this is a matter that's being decided by governments, by our leaders, and that if it becomes frankly a partisan issue, as we've found, it's hopeless, I think.

Secondly, we need to be principled without being ideological, and I think some of our panelists were talking about that. The principle is that we have a responsibility to future generations, to the poor, to address what we know is going on with the earth. How we do that doesn't have to fall under the same old traditional boxes. You talk about the role of the corporation. Technology in fact can be a solution here instead of the source of the problem. How do we share that? We need to be civil, but not soft. Name-calling, while it gets you in the newspaper, is not a very good way to persuade in my experience, whether it's on abortion or war or for that matter the environment.

And finally, we need to be engaged but not used. And I think what Rich talked about where you invite people in not for the photo op, but for a discussion, and part of the discussion is, what are we going to do about what are we doing to the earth? So I think we're probably the only folks in town not focused on the next election and that might be part of the problem.

RABBI SWARTZ (?): There's also a micro level to this as well as the national level, and that is that this can be talked about and do things at local levels, where often you're talking about a less partisan situation. And I know that a number of the congregations that I've talked with in D.C. are trying to get this raised in the mayoral election as an issue. I don't know if there's been any issues really raised in the mayor election yet.

MR. : Baseball.

RABBI SWARTZ (?): But even baseball, if we're going to have this stadium, why not make it a green, energy-efficient stadium and an example to the rest of the country?

MR. PODESTA: Let's come one, two, three.

Q: I'm Derek Lambertson (sp) with (inaudible). I'm wondering about, the perfect point for me, with the green stadium. I'm wondering, why don't synagogues and churches themselves lead by example and make themselves green first?

RABBI SWARTZ: They're starting to. I mean, I think part of it is the point I joked about with the parapet, that it is – there are very few clergy who know anything about energy and so there's sometimes a disconnect between the folks running the building and the moral reason to run that building, but that's starting to really change.

The Catholic facilities managers, for example, have started to look at how those facilities on a national level are taken care of. And locally here, I mean we've got everyone – the National Cathedral is doing energy audits, and buys wind for most of the days that it has big programs. The Islamic Society of Prince George's County, which is sort on the other end of the (inaudible) spectrum from the National Cathedral, has had a couple of programs on how they can save energy for their members. So it's starting, but I think it's a great point. We have to walk our talk.

REV. CIZIK: Yeah. And the administration has an energy star program, and we're promoting that. And evangelical churches have saved thousands and tens of thousands that they're committing to missions. Now, they can use that to green their buildings or they can use it to enhance their great commission. I think it's the cultural commission aspect that the Bible calls us to. And when the cultural commission, which is I think taking care of our earth, works together with the great commission, then you have synergy and people understand, well, hey, this makes sense and it saves dollars and it helps us do what we're supposed to.

MR. PODESTA: Pat?

SISTER DALY: Last week at our Mother House in Caldwell, New Jersey, also the site of Caldwell College and Mount Saint Dominic Academy, we turned on the largest – we actually dedicated and blessed the largest solar project in the state of New Jersey; at least it was last week – 648 panels. And because we're mostly an educational congregation, of course the education piece is right there on the ground, not on the roof, outside, so that people who are students, et cetera, can come, and then working – our women are then working with the state as well as people in parishes and others to help incentivize investment in not just solar but other renewable interests.

MR. PODESTA: Sister reminds me that our Campus Progress program also is working on the campus climate challenge in both religious and secular institutions to do

the same thing on campuses. I think if you think about that through NGOs' participation, et cetera, you could actually (inaudible). I think we had a question up here.

Q: Marty Corning (sp) with Platts (ph). This is for John Podesta and anyone else on the panel that wants to answer. There's not unanimity within the business community as to whether we should do something more aggressive on climate change, and there are some very influential Republicans that are still – particularly in the Senate that are still questioning the science. So I guess my question is, does there need to be unanimity in order for us to do something more meaningful in a policy or to get something through Congress?

MR. PODESTA: Well, since the question was directed at me, I guess I'll answer it. Which is I think that this has been a frustrating area of public policy. I think there's been movement. I think the movement is in the right direction. I think you see that. I think that Congress in particular is kind of stuck on this question. If you look at what's happening at the states, in the states – Daniel raised the cities, where if you look at what's happening amongst mayors around this country, I think you see quite a bit of movement in the body politic and in the political community towards real solutions and real changes of emphasis on energy use.

And I think even in Congress itself, I think you're – partly spurred by the security debate, I think you're seeing ideas coming forward. Barack Obama was here last night with Tom Daschle talking about climate change and the impact and effect of moving from fossil fuel-based liquid fuels towards using more bio-based liquid fuels and the impact that could have on the climate question itself. I think you see movement in both parties towards commonsense solutions, but I think obviously in my view, a whole lot more needs to be done, and we need to find some common ground to move forward at the national level. Without, I think, national signals, and particularly in my view without economy-wide signals that we're going to change our energy future, those efforts will amount to something, but not nearly enough to meet the problem.

John?

MR. CARR: Well, my experience is that to get action you need two things. You need a commitment to summon the will, and then a search for the ways to do it. My sense is we're still with the will question here. Whether it's in the Congress or the country, people have not decided that this is important enough that we're going to have to do something real about it which is going to require some sacrifice and some moderation.

And I think the religious community is frankly much better at fashioning the will than the ways. Catholic bishops – some of them are scientists. Our president currently is a scientist. But most wouldn't know a fluorocarbon from a greenhouse gas. And so they shouldn't design national energy policy, but they can in fact be a part of the discussion, dialogue, and pushing the issue forward that creates the will to do something.

And then we have some thoughts about the ways. The poor should not be left

behind, among other things. The poorest nations in the world who are going to get creamed in this dialogue. Everybody is debating what's in it for me. Let's be clear. Who's not going to prevail in this? So there are some things in the religious community and how we think that can help with the ways, but I think we're still at how do we fashion enough common ground so there's a need to do something. And I think that's one where the religious community can play a very significant role. We're frankly better at shaping the debate, asking the questions, than we are at giving the solutions or providing the answers.

MR. PODESTA: Rich?

REV. CIZIK: Well, Republicans can't avoid the issue. Look, when you have a GOP conservative coalition that is 40 to 50 percent evangelical, and evangelicals are raising this issue – 33 college presidents signed the evangelical climate initiative. You have approximately 25 percent of our own board of the NAE that signed the statement. The others, they have hesitations. Not all pastors want to be identified with a political issue. That's their right. We don't encourage them if that's not what they want. But the fact of the matter is, you have a growing consensus that it is an important issue. I think that a healthy debate is occurring, and that's good. And what happens in Republican circles though, frankly, is that when evangelicals speak, the GOP listens.

MR. PODESTA: Maybe that was why that conservative member introduced –

REV. CIZIK: Yeah.

MR. PODESTA: – the resolution on a carbon cap.

We had one right up here.

Q: Thank you. (Unintelligible), European Commission Delegation here in Washington. I'm (inaudible) names, but I can give you a name. Peace. Target, also Senator Inhofe of the – chair of the Public Works Committee. He said in October that climate change is the greatest hoax ever exposed – the American population ever exposed to, so you have some work to do there.

I would like to ask especially Mr. Carr, you mentioned the word selfishness and that you have difficulties, and I, too, I admit, all of us, and our children even worse. How do you reach out then, and how churches will reach out to convert us that we should be less selfish? I'm struggling with that in my job and also in my personal life. We are taught from day one that we have to work hard to deserve and earn our place in Heaven, but I think there's something missing in this mileage program to get there. And I'm wrestling with that because we have no interest after our lives here on earth, contrary to another religion which isn't represented here, who believes in reincarnation. I think we have to find a way to get to the people to get the self-interest to come back on our behavior. Thank you.

MR. CARR (?): My doctor said to me the last time I was in, you need a very long lent. (Laughter.) And he was not referring to my soul, but my body. Our country needs a very long lent. That's very hard to talk about when my culture, our culture, the culture I'm vaguely a part of, and my kids are in the middle of, says you are what you have, not what you do. It's what you want and what label is on it and how much of it you have.

So where are the things that can push back? John and this institution are focusing seriously, and for a change the left and Democrats are taking this more seriously thanks to your leadership. But where do you go to find a way to push back against that? And I would suggest that religious communities are a place. You have to persuade – you said we want to get to Heaven. I'm Irish. I want to know what the question is. There's only one question it turns out – Rich talked about this – and that is, what did you do for the least of these? That's all we know about the last judgment. And frankly, writing a memo or a briefing paper probably is not going to be good enough for me. (Laughter.) And so the question of how I serve the poor and then how I act, how selfish I am, how I raise my kids, what I buy, how I vote.

And what we have to persuade people, that this has something to do with how we treat the least of these. That if we don't restrain our appetites, if we don't go on a long lent, people are going to be hurt, lives are going to be lost, the world is going to be diminished, and God's creation will be destroyed piece by piece. Not all of it, but chunks of it. And that without a sense of urgency and without a sense that we can do something, and for believers, people like me, without a sense that it really matters, I'm going to just keep going the way I am.

So as I said earlier, I think there are people who are wise enough and good enough that they can do that without the anchor or the push of religious faith. I'm just not one of them.

MR. PODESTA: Pat, you've got – oh, go ahead.

RABBI SWARTZ (?): The one image I would add to that is children. That not how our children necessarily behave, but that I think as a species we're not good at planning ahead. And one way to get some very concrete data on that is to go into a post office late at night on April 15th. We've known all year that April 15th happens to come on the 15th, and yet suddenly it surprises us. (Laughter.) But I think we're best at thinking about the future when we think about our children. And so to make that real, to make 30 years or 50 years real to me, it's much easier when I'm looking at the face of a child. And so to help bring that human face, and particularly the face of children helps us to at least some extent think more about the future.

MR. PODESTA: I was going to ask, Pat, you've got this conspicuous consumption think knocked, I think. Do you have any words of advice for the rest of us?

SISTER DALY: I'm –

MR. CARR: Vows of poverty – (inaudible).

SISTER DALY: That's right. I was reminded, one of our Christmas celebrations with friends we all had decided no presents this year; that we would give money to (mustard seed?) communities, profoundly developed family disadvantaged, abandoned, disabled children, children with HIV/AIDS. And so of course I'm not coming to the party with kids. And I was like, I'm on board as long as all the kids are on board and you've worked (inaudible).

So anyway, when we get there the littlest one, who's five years old, basically said, I don't know those kids, I don't care about those kids, I want a present. (Laughter.) And, you know, you just – these are parents who have given their lives to homelessness and addressing people. Appropriate for a five-year-old, a red flag for the parents. And that's just it, especially engaging family and friends. How do you raise children who don't feel entitled, who have a perspective that they don't live the way the rest of the world lives? It's an incredible challenge. Sometimes I'm grateful that I do it part time with little ones rather than full time.

MR. PODESTA: Well, I think the real test is checking in when that kid is 25, and I bet they'll be okay. Rich, you want a closing comment?

REV. CIZIK: I was just going to add – I don't mean to turn this into a theology class. But look, evangelicals have adopted within left-behind circles sort of, well, we're here to escape this earth and make it to heaven. And they cite as a verse which they actually have turned upside down, and the verse is Matthew 6:19, which goes like this: "Store up for yourself treasures not on Earth where moths and rust consume, but in heaven where neither moths nor rust consume, for where your treasures are there will your heart be also." Well, the best interpretation of this is not escapism, John, John, Rabbi, but the best is not escapism, but you see best interpretation is this: store up your treasures not on earth where moths and rust and consuming makes things go extinct, but in heaven where neither moths nor rust make things go extinct, for where your treasure is there will your heart be also. The great petition: Our Father, hallowed be they name. Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. The earthing (ph) of heaven, you see, is to bring heavenly values to this earth. And what is a heavenly value according to Matthew but to bring a place where things don't go extinct to earth? That is what we are to be about. And that is ultimately a conservation ethic that we could all adopt – Republicans, Democrats, Green Party or whatever.

MR. PODESTA: That's a wonderful final word. We've got a lot of questions and no time, so hopefully our panelists might stick around a little bit and take some questions individually.

Thank you all for really a wonderful panel. Thank you.

(Applause.)

Global Climate Change is in the back. I think there's some other information. And for the politics of common good, I recommend you to Mike Tomasky's piece in the *American Prospect* and the piece that's up by John Halpin and Ruy Teixeira from our own good institution.

(END)