

VT-884 Transcription

NBC Today Show, WNBC News regarding Kurt Waldheim's Vatican visit, David Dinkins' visit to Israel, and Making a Difference program. 1987-1991.

BRYANT GUMBEL: [00:00:00] On *After 8* this morning, Kurt

Waldheim's papal visit. As we've been reporting, Pope John Paul II will receive the controversial Austrian leader this Thursday, and that meeting is sparking outrage from Jewish leaders. Mr. Waldheim's visit to the Vatican will be his first trip abroad as Austria's president. Now today, in other Western countries, bowing to pressure, have refused to welcome Waldheim, who's been accused of aiding in the deportation of Jews during World War II, Jews who later died in death camps. While those accusations remain unproven, Waldheim, since his election, has been barred from entering the United States. Still, the Vatican is granting him an audience, a move Jewish leaders claim will threaten their relationship with Catholics. Among those who have expressed outrage over the Waldheim-Vatican meeting is Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee. Good morning.

MARC TANENBAUM: Good morning, Bryant.

GUMBEL: [00:01:00] The pope is welcoming a head of state.

What's wrong with that? A duly elected head of state.

TANENBAUM: Well, the question is whether the pope would have welcomed Adolf Hitler, given the record of the massacre of human beings. I think two things need to be said at the outset. Indeed, Jews are outraged, as I think many other people, including many Catholics, are. But first, Jews are not angry at the pope himself. There is enormous respect for this pope in the Jewish community and among Jewish leaders. Secondly, Jews believe that Waldheim is not Austria, and Austria is not Waldheim. But having said that, the issue is that here is a man whom the Yugoslav War Crime Commission labeled a war criminal. It's still to be proved, the evidence is still to come in. The American government has regarded, after looking at the evidence, that this man participated in actions in Greece and Yugoslavia that led to the destruction of thousands of lives. And therefore, the American government has refused to allow him to enter this country. On what basis, what moral basis then, is it possible to receive a man and allow him [00:02:00] to have the moral sanction of an association with the very high moral authority of the pope, which he will exploit to his benefit?

GUMBEL: Is that what you're afraid of with this meeting?

TANENBAUM: Oh, I think that's one of the consequences.

GUMBEL: Also with us this morning is Dr. Malachi Martin, an author and former Jesuit priest who is familiar with the inner workings of the Vatican. It's always good to have you back. Thank you, Mr. Martin.

MALACHI MARTIN: Thank you very much, Mr. [Gumbel?].

GUMBEL: Should the pope care, in this instance, what Jewish leaders think?

MARTIN: Oh yes, the pope does care very much. But unfortunately, this is a situation of potential disaster. The impression is being given that what he is doing is an affront to -- in fact, some people have said it was a calculated affront to the Jewish people -- and the impression Catholics are getting is that not only must the pope always consult the Jewish organizations, in particular in the Jewish government in Israel about what he does. But it must be up to them to decide what is morally right and morally right for the pope to do. Now, let it be quite clear the pope obeys nobody on the moral plane. There is a Catholic conscience, which is different from the Jewish conscience.

GUMBEL: How so?

MARTIN: [00:03:00] Because our conscience is built on the idea of forgiveness, and the idea of non-ostracism. We don't believe in ostracism, or the scapegoat. We believe in

reconciliation. Now who knows? And it would be just what this man, this magnificent leader, Pope John Paul II could have in mind and could affect -- wait a minute, let me finish this --

GUMBEL: Go ahead.

MARTIN: -- that in seeing him after the repeated insistence of Kurt Waldheim that he be received that he [effect?] exactly what is needed: repentance, and admission of guilt, if guilt there is. Now this is the aim of the pope. You must remember that he is the universal pastor. This is a Catholic. Kurt Waldheim has rights as a Catholic, by the way. No matter what his sins are. And Austria has rights, as symbolized by Kurt Waldheim. The pope cannot be restricted in this [manner/matter?]. Now I said in the begging, Bryant, this is a potentially disastrous situation, because we Catholics and the pope and the Vatican are now forced to reassess our relationship. [00:04:00] If we cannot act with freedom according to the Universal Pastoral Solitude of the pope, without consulting and obeying what Jewish organizations and the Israeli Jewish government laid out, then this will force an assessment on us all.

GUMBEL: Let me let Rabbi Tanenbaum respond.

TANENBAUM: Well, you're dumping -- Malachi, you're dumping a lot of stuff on the table. First of all, if Kurt Waldheim were being received by the pope as an individual Catholic, and received him in a confessional booth, no Jewish leader would raise any question about that. On the contrary, it would be honored and admired. He's being received as the head of state, and a man who has, for 40 years, lied about his direct personal involvement in Nazi massacres of Christians as well as Jews in Greece and Yugoslavia. Secondly, I resent the slur that the Catholic Church is built on the doctrine of forgiveness, and somehow Judaism is based on the doctrine of vengeance, which is implied in what you're saying. You got the doctrine of forgiveness and reconciliation from Judaism, from our Bible. And I think that [00:05:00] they ought to stop that kind of [line?]. It really is not helpful.

GUMBEL: OK.

MARTIN: Well, you see, the point is this, that we believe the son of God dying on a cross obtained the forgiveness of all sins, and there is no intention of slurring Judaism. Jesus himself drew his concept of forgiveness --

TANENBAUM: The doctrine of repentance is a Jewish doctrine, except the Jews believe differently, apparently -- I don't want to tell, suggest the Catholics what they ought to

believe. To the Jewish tradition, repentance means that a man must confess his sins, must have a feeling of overwhelming shame for the evil that he has done, must make a determination to change his behavior. Waldheim has done none of these things.

MARTIN: It may well be --

TANENBAUM: In fact, he denies his involvement.

MARTIN: It may well be, Marc. It may --

TANENBAUM: And the deportation of thousands of Jews from Greece and partisans of Yugoslavia who were Christians.

MARTIN: It may well be, Marc, that that is exactly the aim this magnificent man, this world leader, the pope is going to effect. In the mean time, we must remain on the high moral ground and not on the high Madison Avenue ground. When Cardinal O'Connor of New York went to Israel there was a ruckus brought into public by the same Jewish organizations [00:06:00] instead of beforehand, through diplomatic channels, talking.

GUMBEL: Let me ask Rabbi Tanenbaum, why did you go public with this outrage? Why didn't you do it through public channels?

TANENBAUM: Because nobody knew about it. You mean the audience with Waldheim?

GUMBEL: Well, yeah, your complaints to the Vatican.

TANENBAUM: It was made public to the world without any  
[advance notice to anybody?].

GUMBEL: I understand that, but what about your complaints to  
the Vatican? Why didn't you make them privately rather than  
public?

TANENBAUM: Well, because the Vatican did not consult us in  
advance.

GUMBEL: Are they supposed to?

TANENBAUM: But it went public with the issue.

GUMBEL: Are they supposed to?

TANENBAUM: Well, we have an ongoing relationship now for 20  
years with the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish  
Relations. We consult on a great many other things. We have  
been consulting now for months about the pope's audience  
with the Jewish leaders when he comes to New York and the  
United States. I can tell you that Cardinal Willebrands  
didn't know about it, Cardinal Lustiger didn't know about  
it, Cardinal Etchegaray didn't know about it. It was simply  
dumped on the international stage.

MARTIN: None of those cardinals have a right to know what the  
pope decides. He is universally a monarch, and he can  
decides what he likes. Etchegaray and Willebrands and  
Lustiger have no right telling the pope what to do.

GUMBEL: I'm going to have to [00:07:00] stop you both there.

The meeting is scheduled for Thursday. Perhaps we'll talk afterwards. Rabbi Tanenbaum, Malachi Martin. Thank you.

MARTIN: Thank you very much.

GUMBEL: Eight twenty two, we're going to take a break here.

This is *Today* on NBC.

(break in recording)

CAROL: -- says it's a gesture of solidarity with the Jewish state, but many black New Yorkers are not happy about the trip. Roger Stern is here now with more.

ROGER STERN: Well, Carol, Ralph, probably Mayor Dinkins never expected an uproar when he announced his trip to Israel. After all, who would object to a show of support for people under attack trying to stay out of a war? But many in the black community do object, beyond those who protested this afternoon at Gracie Mansion. They feel that with the large number of blacks in the military, and with suffering elsewhere in the world, traveling to Israel is the wrong symbol now at the wrong time.

AL SHARPTON: Dave, since you're on the international circuit now, you should drive by Johannesburg on the way home. And drive by Angola on the way home. And drive by Dublin on

[00:08:00] the way home. And show the whole world we're against all aggression, not just Bush-mandated aggression.

TANENBAUM: The expressions of complaint against Mayor Dinkins are really unfortunate. I think he's getting a bum rap. He's the mayor of all of the people of New York City. If the mayor tomorrow were to say he wants to go to South Africa, I think Jewish leaders would welcome that, together with black leaders.

STERN: The mayor leaves for Israel tonight. We'll be there and find out how he feels about the anger over his trip. A full report tonight on News 4 at 11:00.

(break in recording)

F: America, to me, is a microcosm of the world.

F2: And [it just?] give everybody a chance to live the way they want to live.

F3: You have these freedoms that really are protected, to live your life in a way that makes you human.

M1: I live in this country, and I think I should take [00:09:00] a strong and great pride in living this country, even though I am from Korea. That's my motherland, but this the country where I live in.

("America the Beautiful" playing) [00:09:11]-[00:09:56]

ROZ ABRAMS: America, America. She is the reflection  
[00:10:00] of the faces of all the teeming masses who  
jostle for space each day in our towns and in our cities.  
They are America. They are the faces of freedom and hope.

F4: Now you have people from the Caribbean, Latin America, East  
Asia, Korea, China, Taiwan, East Indians. They don't  
necessarily understand each other.

ABRAMS: A hundred years ago, 20 years ago, yesterday, they  
came. Today and tomorrow, they will continue to come in  
search of their dreams. And in the process, they will be  
part of the great modern experiment that is America. A  
laboratory for cultures, races, and beliefs, struggle for  
equality, understanding, and to realize ideals.

M2: Justice, and liberty, and freedom, and pursuit of  
happiness. I think that all those type of things,  
[00:11:00] those things are important, or good ideas, and  
if we would just strive to allow people the opportunity to  
reach those goals and ideas, and let America live up to  
those ideas. I think it would be a much, much better place.

ABRAMS: If America can make her experiment work, she can be  
the beacon for true equality and joy in our world. But how  
can we move in that direction that will bring us together?

F5: Well, if people are able to get to know each other and see how other people needs are, then I think by [learning that?], I think [it would promote harmony?].

ANNOUNCER: This program is brought to you by Aetna, a policy to do more.

ABRAMS: Hi, everybody, I'm Roz Abrams, and welcome to *Making a Difference: Creating Harmony from Diversity*. America is the first multiracial nation. Her people represent the entire world. Our [00:12:00] New York Metropolitan Area is a small version of the world. And the way we solve our racial and cultural conflicts can serve as a model to the world. And it will certainly serve to make New York better and stronger. You should know from the outset that this is not an attempt to talk about racism. Rather, it is an attempt to hear from those who want to, or have created harmony from diversity. Now that's a tall order. It is a difficult task. But all of the people assembled here today simply say we have to rise to meet that challenge. At this point, I would very much to introduce to you our studio audience. It is filled with people devoting their time and energy to creating harmony in their communities. Ladies and gentlemen, please give yourselves a hand. We could not do this without you. (applause)

ABRAMS: And then, of course, there are our distinguished panel members. They are here because [00:13:00] they have devoted their lifetime to helping people work together. First we have Laura Blackburn. Laura was formerly president of the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution, and she is recognized internationally as an expert on dispute resolution. Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum distinguished himself for over 40 years by improving Jewish-Christian relations. He also has worked extensively in the area of international human rights. Fay Chew Matsuda is executive director of the Chinatown History Museum, and she is also a board member of the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund. Next up, Dennis deLeon. Dennis is chair of the New York City Human Rights Commission. Dennis is also on the board of directors of the Puerto Rican Bar Association. And finally, we have Gillian Martin Sorensen, president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Gillian was formerly the city commissioner to the United Nations. Welcome, everybody. Welcome [00:14:00] at home, welcome audience, welcome panelists. (applause) I want you folks to know that we have made every effort to reach out to as many people and as many communities as possible. But still, there are groups that are underrepresented because of our limitations of time and space. And we can only hope that you will

understand. OK, let's talk a little bit about the results of the 1990 census. They have recently been released, and they indicate that the racial and ethnic composition of our country is changing faster than ever before. Panel, I want to start with you. What does this mean in terms of this ethnic diversity? What does it mean to our area, this city, and our future? Dennis, why don't we begin with you?

DENNIS DELEON: I think that for us, it means right here and now, to begin fighting complacency. I mean, we've become too settled in how we conceptualize in relating to each other. We believe you can't conquer racism, we believe you can't conquer [00:15:00] fear of a different group. We believe that we can't get along. It means facing that complacency head on and say, "I want to change."

ABRAMS: Facing the complacency. Rabbi, what about our ethnicity, our diversity?

TANENBAUM: I think it's critical that we understand that difference is not a threat, but that difference is a source of enrichment, can be. And we're simply going to have to extend not only our imagination, but our knowledge of groups that have not been part of the mainstream of American up until the present time. They are going to become part of the [warmth and worth?] of this city, and of

the nation, and it's extremely important that we know each other.

ABRAMS: Extremely important. Gillian, you've seen the census information. You've seen how our diversity affects us now, but it certainly is going to have a greater effect in the future. Talk to me a little bit about it.

GILLIAN MARTIN SORENSEN: I think it means that ready or [00:16:00] not, diversity is here. And we have a choice. One choice is to stay as tightly as we can within our own groups, and the other choice is to acknowledge that we live in this extraordinarily, beautifully diverse society, and can make the effort to reach out, to connect to other groups, to understand other groups, and to make of this diversity a strength for the city and for the nation.

ABRAMS: But what happens if we don't? Dennis said there's an awful lot of complacency, even though people read every day about the new ethnic diversity of not just this city, but the entire country as well. What happens if we don't heed? Laura?

LAURA BLACKBURNE: Well, I think we see too many instances where we have not heeded the call to relate to each other as brothers and sisters, and be a part of the human race rather than a part of a particular subset of the human race. I think that it's important to acknowledge that we've

had some very difficult times with these relationships, and that that has left a residue of fear [00:17:00] and apprehension. And having acknowledged that, then I think we can go cautiously together. And by that, I mean to take it in little steps. Not that we have to wait and go with all deliberate speed, and all that that has meant, but it does mean that we have to focus on real human activity. We can't talk about abstractions of harmony and brotherhood. We have to make it real. We have to live it in our communities, and our housing developments, and our blocks. We have to have a common interest, a mutual, shared benefit. And that's how I think we begin to penetrate through the barriers that have separated us.

ABRAMS: I know that there are some people at home watching this program, and that they're saying, "OK, in the '90s, what is going to be our ethnic breakdown?" You know, which will be the largest groups, which are the groups that are getting larger. Anybody got those statistics right at their fingertips?

DELEON: Can I just talk about [this?] before you get to --

ABRAMS: Of course!

DELEON: I mean, if people are thinking about how it breaks down, they're probably thinking how it breaks down [00:18:00] racially and ethnically. And if any lesson I'm

hearing right now on the streets is that if you're worried about that, then you're not hearing the message, because there's going to be so many different groups, so many different subparts of African Americans, and new Caribbean citizens, so many Latino populations, that you're not going to be able to use those breakdowns for much of anything except not a useful purpose.

ABRAMS: Fay, do you agree that percentages are not important?

FAY CHEW MATSUDA: I would agree with that, and I would like to make a point that actually change has to really be on different levels. And I see it individually, each one of us has to reach out there. And I don't want to sound like a Pollyanna, which, you know, is something I don't want to do. At the same time, I think institutions and organizations also have to reflect change. It's one thing for individuals to say, "OK, I learned more about my neighbor, you know, the people I live with, the people I work with, the people that I go to school with." But I think institutions -- whether they're school settings, whether it's our cultural organizations, whether it's our housing projects -- they do have to reflect that recognition that diversity [00:19:00] is here, and that we need to live and work together, and find ways to do it.

TANENBAUM: Can I make a quick point? I, at least from my own understanding and experience, it is critical that we understand that the engine of American democracy, of American democratic pluralism, is essentially a tension between group identity and service to the common welfare. By that, I mean, it's exceedingly important that every group have the right to be itself in its own terms in its own culture, and to preserve its identity in the sense of freedom, and for that identity to be appreciated. At the same time, it has an obligation, as it achieves that identity, to serve the common welfare.

ABRAMS: And that's where the active participation comes in? People cannot stand back and assume that racially and ethnically, that situation will take care of itself?

DELEON: [You have to ask why, the people?] -- I'm sorry.

BLACKBURNE: Well, let me just point one thing out if I can. A wonderful opportunity [00:20:00] is about upon us here in New York City. And that is the 51 new city council seats that will result from the charter revision. The whole motive behind creating 51 new districts was to include more people in the political process, and they're targeted to enhance the opportunity for groups that have been excluded from power to now participate in power. So it's really building on your principle of the group identity being the

focus of political opportunity, but for a better New York City.

ABRAMS: And that's just one of the more active ways that people do it politically.

BLACKBURNE: Absolutely.

DELEON: But it's all about building trust, so I don't think you're going to be able to get the smaller group to relate to the larger group and work together unless you have that trust. And that's what the neighbor-to-neighbor thing does. The neighbor-to-neighbor thing builds trust.

MATSUDA: OK. And, well, but when you're talking about redistricting, for instance, in Lower Manhattan, which I'm so familiar with --

ABRAMS: And don't get too [00:21:00] political on us. We're just (inaudible) [some time?].

MATSUDA: We can try to make sure that, you know, people are united on the issues and the concerns, because I think no matter what color New Yorker we're talking about, we're all concerned about safe streets, good schools, decent housing.

ABRAMS: And garbage.

MATSUDA: Because the thing is [the amount that?] we know that we can't [have?] --

ABRAMS: And garbage.

MATSUDA: -- we cannot have a district that's going to be solely Chinese American or solely Latino, for instance, in Lower Manhattan. We know that. But what we want to do is have a community that actually reflects some of those common concerns. And there are many.

ABRAMS: So the point of this, you want people to understand that everybody has the same concerns, no matter what their background, no matter what their culture. I mean, we're all working for safer streets, and that that should be an area in which we should come together, that's an area where we should find some sort of bond and common ground?

BLACKBURNE: And that the subway does come on time. Those are things that every New Yorker can relate to.

SORENSEN: And those are common interests that aren't achieved just by wishing for them, just as racial harmony is not achieved by wishing for it. It takes a more active, more proactive stance than simply thinking of the ideal.

ABRAMS: [00:22:00] Is active and proactive the same thing? I hear the terms. Are they interchangeable? I just want to make sure we educate everybody, including the host. Thank you.

\_: I don't think they're the same. (inaudible)

DELEON: I really think that the trust that gets built around me as a Latino, being able to trust a Asian American city

councilperson to look out for my interest is what the next step is. I mean, me trusting another community to think of the larger good. We're not there yet. We're not there right now. We don't have that kind of trust between groups yet. And that's what's ahead.

ABRAMS: We're going to talk about that. Oh, keep those thoughts. We're going to take a short break. But we will be back in a moment with more of *Making a Difference*. Don't go away.

F: We feel we must do something. And I don't know yet. I'm trying, find out how you break those information, and start communicating.

ABRAMS: And welcome back to *Making a Difference: Creating Harmony from Diversity*. You know, America was built by people from all over the world, coming here and living together. And this is still going on today. To see how one group of neighbors are tackling this process, we went to Queens, where people are actively involved in easing the friction that happens when cultures collide.

F7: Today we're going to do the "S" sounds.

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

F7: Right, right.

ABRAMS: At the Community Conciliation Center in Flushing, New York, people from many countries gather to help each other adjust to living in their new land.

F8: You have to understand human nature. You have to understand people. You have to learn how to communicate.

\_: (inaudible)

F9: Listen. Listen.

M3: Listening?

(overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

F9: Listen.

F7: Let's contrast the S sound [00:25:00] with the T-H sound. And really stick out your tongue. I won't get offended, I promise.

ABRAMS: This program and many others like it around New York City participate in Project One City, sponsored by the Citizens Committee. Director [Ken Walker?] explains.

KEN WALKER: And [what was basically?] to happen was to look at ways [and what bounted was thought?] was best to bring New York City to one city, to look at ways to bridge that gap, to see how we can reduce unemployment, how we can we work with (inaudible) issues, how we can work with volunteers to really bridge the gap. And it's working.

F8: It all goes back to some very basic, simple things that we probably all learned in kindergarten. Learning to respect

another person's space, their rights, knowing what their rights, and where's yours began.

ABRAMS: Neighbors from India and Liberia simulate a dispute.

F10: I would like to set some ground rules that both parties have to agree to follow [00:26:00] this evening. One of the basic rule is that we all have to have respect for each other. There no name calling, and there no interruption.

F11: [A lot of body?] and people coming all the time over her place, and I cannot handle those noises that come very night because I'm working very hard to support my husband. I have a lot of people that keep coming in, and I cannot tell them not to come because they are family, and I cannot throw them out of the house, and they need my help. I'm being disturbed, and she does not care.

F12: We also work. I have a very stressful job, and so does he. And every evening, when we come home, I have to deal with her children banging against the wall. There are 15 -- I have counted -- 15 people living in her apartment. This woman waits until past midnight to start cooking. I'm very -- I get nauseous because of the curry smell. [00:27:00]

ABRAMS: Mark Goldberg, who directs this center for the American Friends Service Committee, and [Yani Han?] from the New York City Commission on Human Rights, train in this mediation process.

MARK GOLDBERG: We're trying to be aware of the cultural differences, especially in this dispute.

YANI HAN: Anyone of you feel that the culture difference between these two disputants, do you think that affected, or accelerated, their conflict or tension?

M4: In this case, if Mrs. [Santi?], if you invite [Georgia P. and Samuel?] couple, and let them try curry, little bit at first time, not too hot, not (inaudible). (laughter) Well done.

ABRAMS: Sharing curry and cultures with their neighbors is exactly what the [Shihanis?] do in real life.

F11: They are pretty used to coming to my house, and they are all friends of the building, that oftentimes they'd be having meetings, and I'll be come along. [00:28:00]

ABRAMS: Ever since the beginning of this country, America has been referred to as the "melting pot." But we have changed. The new America is described more or less as a solid, a combination of different ingredients, all tossed in together. My first question as we start this block is are the days of cultural assimilation over, panel?

BLACKBURNE: They never existed.

ABRAMS: Are you sure?

BLACKBURNE: Absolutely. No one really gives up who they are and remains an intact human being. And a culture helps

strengthen your ability to identify yourself. And so I don't think that the idea of assimilation was ever really well done in this country.

DELEON: People always point at Italians and Irish as being assimilated groups, right? But you look at the communities today, they're very fierce, very proud to be Italian, very proud to be Irish.

ABRAMS: [00:29:00] You agree, Gillian?

SORENSEN: Assimilation doesn't preclude some sense of separateness, or independence or self identity at the same time. I think they can both exist (inaudible).

ABRAMS: I want to talk to our audience. This gentleman right here in the second row. You know, you were chuckling about the curry. My question for you is how important is communication in helping people get along?

M5: I think it's very important. I'm part of a group in Queens called People-People Project, where Jewish professionals and Afro American professionals get together and discuss the issues of the day. And it's important to know that you can have separate agendas from, say, Jewish American, and Afro American agenda, but you can still talk about it. You can be different but communicate. And it was one example where [Yuri Severe?] was addressing our group, and someone made a statement which, in Jewish Americans in the room

(inaudible) was upsetting and ridiculous. But we discussed it, and afterwards, there were Afro Americans who discussed [00:30:00] it with us and came as a group. So communication is extremely important. That's what individual people have to do.

ABRAMS: And it's OK to come together and realize from the outset that you're not going to agree with everybody. Is that OK?

F13: That's OK. We agree to disagree.

ABRAMS: Ah, so you agree to disagree. And what happens when you just can never agree? Does that mean that all communication breaks down? Or what are some of the other ways that you can handle this non-agreement? Because you can't always come to terms on everything, can you? Can you?

M6: No.

ABRAMS: All right. So what do you do if you can't always agree?

M6: Well, in order to be agreed, we should have a cultural harmony, we should preserve the culture, and we should share the values of the culture.

ABRAMS: Ah. Sharing the values of the culture. Do you do that by, you know, inviting over for curry? What are some of the ways you can share culture? I like that. Yes, ma'am? I'm

going to just take me a minute to get up there. What are some of the ways [00:31:00] that people can share culture?

F14: One of the most important ways, I think, is through our educational system. That's an experience that every child, whether he is of whatever ethnic group in this country takes part in. And an educational system that teaches the truth about what has brought us to this point in society, what contributions and perspectives have been able to bring us to this point. That includes all of that richness of information that is available to us is one way of doing that, of teaching the truth. And I don't think that that's what we're doing in our educational system now, because we're teaching it from a very narrow lens, when there's much, much more for us to see.

ABRAMS: Education is so important that we're going to devote an entire segment to the role that the school system plays in creating harmony. I saw a hand back here. OK, yes sir?

M7: I was just going to comment on a part that she said about it's not enough in it and whatnot. I mean, it's like, in education, [00:32:00] you only learn about one sort of history, I guess you can say, or one culture. And there's not enough, or, I guess (inaudible) --

ABRAMS: What are you trying to tell me? In education...

M7: I guess it's just is you need more than just one culture, or being taught in one culture, because there's a lot more, like she said, out there that you can learn from.

ABRAMS: There certainly is a lot more out there, and hopefully, with programs like this, the educators who are watching, and the parents involved in parent-teacher associations will get more involved and make sure that all the different cultures are taught and shared within the school system. OK, panel members. Before we wind up on communication, what are some of the suggestions that you have to broaden communication, to enhance communication among people of culturally diverse backgrounds?

BLACKBURNE: Listening. That's the hardest part of any aspect of communication, to really be able to acre what someone else is saying, [00:33:00] and to take it in. Listening doesn't stop just at the outside of the ear. You have to hear what's said, and to take it in. And you can't do that if you're busy trying to frame your response while that person is still talking.

ABRAMS: Can I just say, how many people, when they get nervous, are so busy thinking about what they're going to say that they don't hear what's being said? Come on, be honest. Be honest. The same thing happens to me. So you

make an excellent point. And next time, I'm just going to take a breath, (breathes) and listen to what's being said.

MATSUDA: I would say starting early. Even two and three year olds pick up attitudes, the intonation, the feeling in the voice about when they're commenting on other people, or people in the news is very much felt by little people. Five years old is not too soon to be talking about diversity and talking in positive ways.

DELEON: I think also starting before problems become insoluble. Starting before problems become really manifest. [00:34:00] When your good neighbor that'll pay off when the problems start.

TANENBAUM: You know, I tend to look at the question of community and neighborhood in terms of family, really family therapy. One of the basic principles of family therapy, if you want to keep a family together, keep a marriage intact, is you avoid using toxic language. You don't use poisonous language when you're talking about another group or another person. You don't use stereotypes, which are filled with toxic poison. At the heart of all bigotry, and the possibilities of confronting it, is the issue of self-esteem. If a person has weak self-esteem, such a person will not have the capacity to esteem another person, and therefore, in communication, it's essential not

to seek to undermine the self-esteem of another person. The way to communicate is one of affirming, one of caring and compassion, while acknowledging that there are differences. That's the sense of creating family as well as neighborhood and community.

ABRAMS: I like that, the toxic language concept. I've never heard it quite put that way. Thanks.

MATSUDA: I think people have to take the first step. We just recently had an opening of an exhibition about a school history, which is really Italian, American, and Chinese American. It's now located in the middle of Chinatown. And for a lot of the older Italian Americans who had not necessarily left the neighborhood but had not been walking into that particular neighborhood, which is now considered Chinatown, for them, it's a first step. And they got to meet up with old classmates whom they hadn't seen for, like, 40 years at least. And it was a wonderful kind of interfacing. (laughter)

ABRAMS: There's that word again.

MATSUDA: Right. Between people who really ordinarily may not really know each other too well. And, you know, that was an opportunity for them to get together (inaudible).

ABRAMS: We are going to take a few more first steps. But first, we are going to take a break, and we want everybody at home [00:36:00] to stay with us.

M8: And I always like to make friends with people from other cultures, and I feel very happy when I make some friends with some other people.

ABRAMS: Welcome back to *Making a Difference: Creating Harmony from Diversity*. People come to America to seek a better way of life for themselves and for their children. We talked to some newcomers who are getting their piece of the rock, and negotiating problems to go along with this.

(protest)

ABRAMS: Racial disharmony was at the heart of this boycott of a Korean merchant on Brooklyn's Church Avenue. It was an incident that sensitized other merchants doing business in this culturally diverse community.

MAN HO PAK: (inaudible) what kind of people, you know? But [Americans?], I think America is a small world, right? A lot of people, you know, live together here.

ABRAMS: For three years, [Man Ho Pak?] has been selling produce in this neighborhood. His stand is across the

street from the boycotted merchant. He too was boycotted, and since then, has taken steps to promote racial harmony.

MAN: Number one is CAMBA, Church Avenue, you know, Merchant Association, you know? I need some, you know, more business is better, I talk to them, you know, association to hire, you know, black hire, Spanish hire, to work together. Now so, you know, Spanish hire work together. [That first thing?]. The second thing is, you know, [that?] we make some more, you know, some harmony, you know? We know each other.

ABRAMS: Besides hiring from the community, Mr. Pak has reached out by helping to start a soccer team, and getting to know his West Indian customers' culture.

MAN: I didn't know the West Indian food. But I tried it. You know, I tried. I make a try, cook, you know. It's good, it tastes good. [00:39:00] I eat, you know, West Indian food.

ABRAMS: [Silvano Ballastero?] came from the Dominican Republic, and speaks little English. He has found that doing business on Church Avenue is a lot like doing business on his native Caribbean island.

SIVLANO BALLASTERO: (in Spanish with subtitles) We feel good here because I know people like us because we treat them well. If someone is short a dollar or fifty cents, we tell them to bring it tomorrow, no problem. Those people return,

and you get more customers. The word spreads. In that sense, I've had no problems with racism.

(background dialogue)

ABRAMS: Shirley Walker has been in business for 12 years. She was born in Jamaica, lived in England, and has been active in bringing the Church Avenue community together.

SHIRLEY WALKER: You have to learn what is it that makes this other person behave different [00:40:00] from the way you do. You have to learn what is it that excites them, what doesn't, what insults them. Different things. You just have into the [conscience?] and have a community workshop, which I think we're doing right now.

ABRAMS: The workshops are organized by the Church Avenue Merchants Block Association. Mario [Cavalino?] and Fred Miller help let the shop keepers and residents find a way to work together.

FRED MILLER: What we've tried to do is bring in representatives of the different cultures that make up the community, bring them in, talk to the community, and talk to merchants, so that they can become, the community can become a little more aware of the cultural aspects of the different people in the community.

WALKER: We must love our neighbors like we love ourselves. Respect. That's it.

(Aretha Franklin's "Respect" plays)

ABRAMS: Whenever there is racial strife, there are always charges of unfairness. Now how can we make sure that what we're doing is always fair? And people don't always know that the things that they say and the things that they do are unfair to some groups.

BLACKBURNE: I'd like to tackle the first part of that. The notion of fairness, I do believe is something that leadership and government can help facilitate. We must establish more mediating structures. In this last film, we saw in the aftermath of a very bitter struggle, a structure through which some change occurred. That was the work of CAMBA and the City Commission on Human Rights. But there was a mediating structure that provided an opportunity to redress what was perceived to be a serious grievance.

ABRAMS: A serious grievance, and also something that came up during that taped piece was respect. And any members of our audience, where does respect begin? Where does it come from? Sir?

M9: Respect starts with the individual. If we respect ourselves, [00:42:00] our families, our friends, our community, and the nation at large, and think globally, but act locally. Respect will spread. With the spreading of

respect, we will have harmony and diversity. We can make that difference.

ABRAMS: I like it. I love the way you talk. (applause) Yeah, go ahead, give -- you know, come on! It's OK. You have a question for one of our panel members.

M10: Right. I would just like to address it to anyone. I was wondering what people thought about the proposal to have all black, all male high school in New York, and whether they think that would promote separatism, or whether that would promote self-esteem for black males in New York City?

ABRAMS: Good question.

DELEON: I think it's really a mistake to begin viewing it as one or the other, first of all. I think that people establishing pride within their own communities, and [heeding?] process in their own communities benefits everybody. It benefits people who aren't from those communities. So to see it as a divisive me-against-them gesture misses the point. And we've got to get over that fear.

BLACKBURNE: I think Dennis is absolutely right on that issue. The idea of addressing a very serious issue like the alienation of black youth is something that no one has come up with the right answer. And so here's a proposal. And before it can get off the ground, it's shot down as being

the wrong answer. So I think that we have to recognize there's a very serious issue regarding black youth, and then explore as many options as possible to respond to that issue.

ABRAMS: Do you have a question for our panel members?

F15: Yes I do. Roz, you as the hostess began your program by introducing the panel as people who have devoted their life to promoting harmony in cultural diversity. I'd like to ask the entire panel -- I recognize that some of you are bilingual. How much do you think that your bilingualism has enhanced that position?

DELEON: I really want to start with I think one of the currents in this show has to do with our tolerance for each other. And if you're not tolerant of somebody else's language and their need to express themselves in their own language, then you are not a tolerant person. And coming to accept diversity in languages, and coming to accept a multilingual society is the first step. And if you're not there, you have a long way to go. And so yeah. (laughter)

SORENSEN: I would add that language is loaded, and people who are new to this language may not fully understand the weight that certain words carry. And it takes a long time to become fully at home in a new language. So I think, especially with immigrants who speak other languages coming

in, it take an extra outreach to really understand. But I do want to make one point. Sometimes, these are not just differences of language or minor cultural differences.

[00:45:00] There really is, in this world, bias and bigotry. And when it's racism, we should call it by its true name. That's not, to me, toxic language. That is realistic language, and racists come in all colors, and they should not get away with it.

DELEON: Can I follow up on that point, Roz?

ABRAMS: Of course.

DELEON: Very briefly. That, you know, one of the -- you asked before about communication, how do we enhance communication and respect? I think it has to start with some looking inside ourselves to see what are my attitudes towards Indians? What are my attitudes to American Blacks, or Caribbean Blacks? Because the folks who are coming over, they're not white, primarily. The folks that are coming over now on this new wave are black, brown, yellow. It's an immigration of color that's happening. It's not an immigration like the one we had in the past.

ABRAMS: OK. I'm looking inside myself.

MATSUDA: Language differences.

ABRAMS: Go ahead.

MATSUDA: Let me just get into that, because I'll follow up with Gillian's remark also, that it is not really a question of different languages and whether someone is bilingual, and it really is a question of tolerance. It seems to me that, with the new languages -- and I'll speak specifically with Asian languages, for example -- that I think people can be very impatient, can really be less tolerant. And being bilingual, of course, gives you that other view of it. I have to confess, by the way, since I'm assuming you may have aimed that question at me too because you think I'm bilingual, is that my confession is that I'm not very bilingual, and I'm really primarily English-speaking. And that perhaps may say a little something about how children in America really kind of sometimes, talking about assimilation and acculturation, really acculturate to the point where they do, unfortunately, sometimes leave off some of their own culture. And my years of working in Chinatown have really given me back a lot more of the language. Not as fluent as I'd like, but, you know, that just kind of is the other side of what happens with assimilation.

ABRAMS: Everybody who devoted themselves to an answer to that question used the same word: tolerance. So I guess

[00:47:00] the obvious follow-up is how do we become more

tolerant? Is there a formula? Audience? Yes, sir. How do people become more tolerant? Meet me halfway here, OK?

M11: I think the capacity for tolerance can only be increased by education. People have to be informed as to the cultural differences, and be made aware of the things that make people different, as well as what makes them the same. Tolerance and the fact that you understand why a Korean individual hands you money with her head bowed. Tolerance in the fact that a person speaking loudly doesn't necessarily dictate disrespect. So that people have to become educated to the differences in people in order to tolerate.

ABRAMS: About the -- that's [interest in different cultures?]. That's very good. (applause) That is very good.

F16: Yeah. I'd like to say something. Sometimes [I find just smile?] and show you are friendly, you are not [nothing to hiding?]. That's very important I found, [yes?].

ABRAMS: Well, if smiling is important, I got it made. (laughter) Of course, you (inaudible) lesson in Chinese and Japanese. We are going to take a very short break, but we will be right back.

F17: [I have been working with American?], so I'm doing very [much?], because from them, I learn the language, from the education of my coworkers. I learn how to live here.

ABRAMS: Ah, welcome back to *Making a Difference: Creating Harmony from Diversity*. How do young people cope with diversity? We found many programs in schools dealing with harmony. [00:50:00] And you know, it's said a child shall lead them.

(children singing)

MAX MAAS: This program, [the songs?] (inaudible) [needed?] in every school. It started about two and a half years ago at the [S-52?]. And it's a program to help kids build self-esteem, and get along better with each other, without fighting.

ABRAMS: Max [Maas?], the guidance counselor, set up each song to have an accompanying lesson plan.

F18: Could you tell him how that made you feel?

F19: That made me feel sad.

F18: It made her feel sad. Did you want to make her feel sad, [Joaquin?]?

JOAQUIN: No.

F18: What?

JOAQUIN: No.

F18: You didn't want to make her feel sad. So what could you say to her?

JOAQUIN: Sorry?

M12: Our singing is going on all over the school, and they [getting a?] (inaudible) to their mind. And every time they're about to get in a fight, they think about it.

ABRAMS: The next step in the program is for the older children to be [00:51:00] to be mediators.

F20: I try to help children solve their problems when they have a problem. But if they don't want to solve the problem, they'll go to the office. (inaudible) You can say sorry. You want to say sorry? (inaudible)

M13: Yes.

F20: (inaudible) happens again.

M13: [Come back to y'all?].

(children singing)

ABRAMS: Moving on to the Bushwick section of Brooklyn, some seventh graders think they are about to have a math test.

F21: (speaking French)

ABRAMS: Instead, they get a taste of what it's like to be on the other side of the language barrier.

F22: We're from the National [00:52:00] Conference of Christians and Jews. Now, what if this were a class that you really had to know and learn, and you were going to be graded on what she was speaking about? How would you feel?

M14: I would feel upset, because I knew I was going to fail it.

F23: I had done a library research project on racism among various ethnic groups. When you stereotype people because of their language, it's a problem, because to me, that's sort of -- that's a form of racism.

ABRAMS: Teacher Robin Watkins thought this would make the point.

F24: Namaste. Namaste.

ROBIN WATKINS: [Kehachahe?].

F24: [Kehachahe?].

WATKINS: [Kita, sholo, sholo?]. Very good. Very good.

F22: They don't want to be different, yet it's amazing how in some of these groups, you do still have the awareness that keeping your culture and your ethnicity is important.

F23: To me, [00:53:00] it starts with the kids, as far as racism. You know, being open-minded, learning how to deal with other people in a harmonious way. To me, it starts here.

ABRAMS: On another front, Queens College students provide enriching experiences through kids through their Big Buddies program. And the students learn about each other at the same time.

M15: One of the ways to create harmony is by mixing groups together, and just spending time with one another to take the time to develop a relationship where you can get beyond

false perceptions. And, for example, in this group, we all come from varied backgrounds. But spending time with our little buddies and with each other, it's a great learning experience.

F25: Well, we have a common goal, to step (inaudible) helps break down the barrier. You know, everybody here is the same, even though we come from different backgrounds. We're all alike.

ABRAMS: This program teaches many important lessons to our youth, expanding both their experiences, [00:54:00] and their humanitiy.

M15: What the Big Buddies do is they serve as a very positive role model, introducing them to very important recreational, and cultural, and educational activities in the city. And it just highlights their everyday life activity.

(music playing)

ABRAMS: SO as we see, crises both cultural and racial are not just limited to adults. Young people, students have to deal with these kinds of things. Melissa will be a student at FIT in the fall, and there have been a couple of incidents in your life where you have had to deal with racism. And how did you choose to deal with it?

MELISSA: I chose to ignore it.

ABRAMS: Are you comfortable sharing what it was all about?

MELISSA: It was children. You know, it was kids saying -- they called [00:55:00] a nigger, and I couldn't believe it, because I had never heard it before. A teacher of mine had told me once that, you know, if I wanted to live in this neighborhood, you know, a white neighborhood, I couldn't, even if I could afford to buy the house. And I couldn't believe that she said it, you know? Because I have never been a racist, you know? We were not raised that way. And I had never experienced racism. She was telling me about racism in the North and racism in the South. You know, and I told her the only difference between New York and North Carolina that some white people there are racist, and they let you know it, you know? And here, they smile, and they're happy with you, you know? And that's the only difference that I could tell.

ABRAMS: OK, panel. Melissa handled the situation like a lot of people do, they simply ignore it. That's her way of being nice in the hope that it will go away. Is that, in your opinion, the best way to deal with situations like this? Anybody.

BLACKBURNE: I think it's absolutely the [00:56:00] poorest way. Sometimes, out of fear, and out of helplessness, and out of nervousness, we do ignore it. But I think it is

absolutely critical that when racism happens, that we individually and personally take responsibility for addressing it. Now, you may not always be in a position to address it to the person who inflicts that racial insult on you. They may be bigger and more powerful --

ABRAMS: But we're talking about kids, young people. So they don't always handle it as coolly as we adults might.

BLACKBURNE: Well, I think that sometimes people have to know that when you step on my toe, it hurts the same was as it hurts when I step on your toe. And I'm not suggesting that we start stepping on each other's toes, but if I don't say "ouch," you will never know that it really hurt me. And so I have to let you know that what you've done has been a hurtful experience for me.

DELEON: I think it's really important to start in your own family. I mean, I have a member of my family who whenever he watches some [00:57:00] TV shows, he says, "Oh, there's the Jews again. They're all over TV, all the Jews on TV." I let that slide for a number of years in my family. But now, I'm kind of --

TANENBAUM: Am I going to have trouble with him?

DELEON: Yes, yes. (laughter) But I decided the last several years to begin, you know, raising it, and saying, "What do you mean?" Confronting it. In our own homes. If we don't do

it in our own homes with our kids, and our own family members, it's not going to work anywhere else.

ABRAMS: Should you also do it in the workplace? When people tell me, you know, ethnic jokes, should I say to them, "I really wish you wouldn't do that because it's not funny"? Should I say that?

DELEON: You're buying into a big task when you do confront it. But if you don't confront it, it's going to haunt you day to day. Now, it's going to be a situation that you need skills to address. I mean, there were things said about Latinos in my presence. People know my background, almost baiting me to come out in a negative way. And you have to learn ways to deal with it and turn it back on them, basically, in a positive way.

TANENBAUM: See, it's also -- I'm sorry.

MATSUDA: What we did at Hamilton Madison House when I worked there as a [00:58:00] settlement worker, was that recognizing that there was a diversity of cultures; Chinese, Latino, black, Italian, Jewish. We actually had a staff development conference. We closed down the entire house one day and just literally planned for months on how to deal with some of the issues, just even between staff people. These are professionals, people who are social workers, people who are teachers. But having to for

ourselves. Just because we're sitting here doesn't mean that we don't, you know, get confronted with the same things that happened to the young lady here. And, you know, how we deal with it. Professionally, you can organize conferences and try to promote some understanding of each other's cultural diversity and background. Individually, I sometimes have done the same thing that she has. And other times, I hold back, you know, something of my own. And that doesn't really help either.

DELEON: I was walking down Sixth Avenue and someone called me a faggot last weekend. A faggot. "Hey, faggot. Hey, faggot." And I had a choice, [00:59:00] being a gay man, I could have just walked -- you know, I could have said, "What do you mean?" And (inaudible) there were 10 of them. There were 10 of them. There was one of me. And sometimes, you got to let it slide to get through the streets of New York City. And I had to get through the streets of New York City that night.

ABRAMS: So you see, Melissa, sometimes you do have to let it slide. One second. This gentlemen. Wait, one second. He asked me, he said please. He has something to say, and I promised him some time. Yes, sir?

M16: OK. Fundamentally, you have a right to challenge racism.

However, you don't have control over it, as Ms. Blackburne

stated. But happens so many times to me as a Hispanic and also a black man that I've had incidents with the police, at work, people can't believe that as a black person that I'm doing stellar work. They always question that. And you're always thinking about yourself and how people devalue you as a person. So if we're talking about making a difference, we all have to adhere to the same principles, which is respecting each other. Respecting the (inaudible).

ABRAMS: Respect. [01:00:00] And then we have so little time left, and one of the biggest questions that we have to at least broach is as we approach the new century, how are we going to make it better, so that the next time we come together, the metropolitan area will be better? Anybody. How do we make the new century better? All right. Yes, ma'am?

F26: I think, you know, if I may not speak in the abstract, but speak in the --

ABRAMS: Quickly.

F26: Quickly, quickly, and real, I think we have to each work very hard to conduct ourselves and perform in a manner that outrightly refutes whatever, you know, anyone else might think of us, and then really spiritually develop the self confidence and the strong character to not be swayed by

hat, you know, other people might think of us. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

ABRAMS: Good point. Anybody else? [Wrap up?]?

DELEON: (inaudible) one very concrete thing that I found helps, get to know someone different than yourself. Get to know someone who's not like you. If you make that a task day to day, I think you will eventually make a difference.  
[01:01:00]

ABRAMS: I think you will too.

BLACKBURNE: Write to the media and say we want a more harmonious image of our society.

ABRAMS: Ooh, write to the media. That's me, care of the post office. Yes, sir.

M16: I think always we should, you know, think in the person, the other person's in a situation. Not from starting from the starting from my students, but the person who is, you know, with me.

DELEON: That's the key, that's really the key, thinking of somebody else's point of view.

M16: And when we have communication, I think we should two ways. In New York City, we have a lot of one-ways in Manhattan. So I have trouble when I drive. But we have two ways. We must listen to that, and we must express first, I mean, express later.

ABRAMS: And Laura says learning to listen is the key. We're going to take a break, but we'll be right back.

(applause)

F27: And even though we're all from different backgrounds, each one of us takes a bit of our coping mechanism and shares it with each other, [01:02:00] and teaches each other different ways of dealing with these problems that are going on in America, in the world.

ABRAMS: You know, you guys at home should be here. This audience is phenomenal. If we in the New York Metropolitan Area really work hard to ease racial tension, we as a people will be much, much better. But we will also have the blueprint for solving some of the nation's -- and even some of the world's -- conflicts. And we will be more than just a great international city. We will be able to help shape this new world order that everybody keeps talking about. Through person-to-person exchange and mutual respect, we can lay a very strong foundation for creating harmony from diversity. We really can. I want to thank all of the panel members. You guys were extraordinary, very smart, very warm, and thank you [01:04:00] very much. I also have to thank this audience. I don't know where you guys came from, I mean, but you're wonderful. Your enthusiasm, your

expertise, and your sharing. Thank you very, very much.

(applause) All of you, the panel and the audience, really made a difference in this *Making a Difference*. And many thanks to you at home for joining us. We are going to get together again, I have a feeling. I'm Roz Abrams. Bye-bye.

(applause)

ANNOUNCER: This program was brought to you by Aetna, a policy to do more.

[01:04:37-01:05:57] (credits with music)

(break in recording)

GREG HURST: And up next, in this world of trouble and turmoil, it's comforting to find people who are reaching out a lending hand.

ABRAMS: And [more special?] special report, you will meet a man who has helped thousands [01:27:00] of people over the years, a man who is truly making a difference.

ABRAMS: Many people dream of making the world a better place to live, but very few are able to make those dreams come true. Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum is one of those rare individuals. In his four-decade career, his vision of a better world has improved the lives of tens of thousands of

people of every race, ethnic background, and religion. He's a man who is truly making a difference.

TANENBAUM: The ideals that you have a responsibility to care for other human beings and try to make a better world has shaped my entire life.

ABRAMS: Rabbi Tanenbaum took hold of that ideal and built a career, helping people live in racial, ethnic, and religious harmony. Although the 65-year-old Tanenbaum never led a [01:30:00] congregation, he is one of the nation's most influential religious leaders. Among his many achievements, the rabbi cites his efforts on behalf of improving Catholic-Jewish relations as one of his biggest.

TANENBAUM: For 1,900 years, the hatred between Catholics and Jews was demonic, and Jews suffered terribly because of that hatred. But when we began sitting down with popes, with cardinals, with bishops, and we began sharing our common fears and our common hopes, we began realizing we're all human beings.

ABRAMS: Rabbi Tanenbaum has met with popes on numerous occasions, including historic talks in 1965 that produced a landmark document repudiating anti-Semitism. The poor and downtrodden in New York City are also the recipients of Tanenbaum's efforts. He helped set up a soup kitchen here at the Holy Apostle Church on Ninth Avenue. He also worked

to improve the city's race relations. Is racial harmony a necessity or a luxury?

TANENBAUM: [01:31:00] The city will not survive if every community ends up with people battling each other over the basic essentials of human existence: housing, food, clothing, financial aid. So we've got to find a way to help bring people together.

ABRAMS: Here are just a few of the rabbi's other achievements. In the 1960s, he organized self-help projects for minorities in the city's ghettos. In the early 1980s, Rabbi Tanenbaum was involved in the first movement of Christians and Jews to push for housing for the homeless. And he is currently organizing relief efforts for the Kurdish refugees. He's also on the board of directors of Covenant House. The rabbi often goes to the shelter and talks with the teenagers who live there. He took a particular interest in this young man, who's in a special culinary arts program. And he still continues to speak out on what he perceives as injustices against the poor.

TANENBAUM: I can't understand why we can't find the resources and the political will, and the moral [01:32:00] support, to concentrate on our inner city problems in something of the same manner. We can make a difference.

ABRAMS: Rabbi Tanenbaum is currently working on a book on the history of Vatican-Jewish relations, a history in which the rabbi played a very large part.

HURST: Making a difference.

ABRAMS: Always.

END OF VIDEO FILE