

ARAB AMERICAN MUSEUM: IMAIL AHMED INTERVIEW
3.18.07

IS:...AHMED, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ACCESS.

IS: ACCESS IS THE ARAB AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SERVICES. IT'S A WIDE RANGING HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATION AND ADVOCACY ORG. WE'RE NOW ALMOST ABOUT 36 YRS OLD. WE STARTED OFF AS A SMALL STORE FRONT HELPING NEW IMMIGRANTS SPECIFICALLY ARAB IMMI'S W FOOD AND SHELTER AND TRANSLATION AND ANYTHING WE COULD DO FOR THEM. IT WAS A VOLUNTEER GRP AND WE WERE OPEN FOR ABOUT 4 HRS/DAY. HELPED OUT 125 PPL OUR FIRST YR, AND NOW THE AGENCY AS A BUDGET OF ABOUT 15 MILLION \$. ABOUT 200 REGULAR STAFF MEMBERS, A MSUS, A VICTIMS OF TORTURE CENTER, EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, CLINICS. WE HAVE ABOUT 70 PROGRAMS NOW SPANNING HUMAN LIFE. WE'RE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL ADVOCACY AS WELL AS LOCAL ADVOCACY, CIVIL RIGHTS QUES, IMMIGRATION QUES'S, WELFARE REFORM QUESTIONS. AND WE'VE EVEN LAUNCHED A NATIONAL NETWORK OF ARAB COMMUNITY CENTERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY WHO ARE AFILLIATES IN 15 STATES.

GERI:...TELL US ABOUT

1:45

IS: WELL THE ARAB AMERICAN NAT'L MUSEUM IS A DIVISION OF ACESS, OR A DEPT. IT STARTED WITH AN IDEA THAT HAS BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME, WE KNOW THERE ARE 15,000 MUSEUMS IN THE US, BUT NOT A SINGLE ONE DEDICATED TO THE STORY OF ARAB AM'S OR THE ARAB WORLD AND THAT;S PRETTY STARANGE GIVEN THE TIMES WE LIVE IN. SO JUST BEFORE 9-11 THERE WAS A BROAD RANGING DISCUSSION, NATIONAL DICUSSION ABOUT THE LAUNCHING OF A MUSEUM AND ACCESS DECIDED TAT IT WOULD BECOME ONE OF ITS FUNDRAISING PRIORITIES. AND SO WE WENT ABOUT THE PROCESS OF VISITING ARAB AMER COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE US AND ASKING THEM IF WE HAD A MUSEUM WHAT WOULD IT BE ABOUT? AND WE GOT VARIOUS ANSWERS. BUT THE KEY ANSWERS WERE THAT PPL WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOMETHING THAT WOULD TALK ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ARAB

WORLD TO CIVILIZATION AND SPECIFICALLY CONTRIBUTIONS OF ARABS HERE IN AMERICA. AND SO THE MUSEUM REFLECTS THOSE IDEAS. WE ALSO WENT AROUND TALKING TO GRPS LIKE THE JAPANESE AMERICAN MUSEUM WHO WERE VERY INSPIRING TO US CUZ WE WANTED LAUNCH A GRASS ROOTS MUSEUM THAT TOOK ADVANTAGE OF ITS PRESENCE IN AN ETHNIC COMMUNITY, BUT WE WANTED IT TO BE OPEN TO EVERYONE AND TRY TO TAKE IN THE STORY OF ALL IMMI'S TO THE US THAT MADE IT AN AMERICAN STORY. SO THEY WERE VERY HELPFUL. THE HENRY FORD MUSEUM WAS A VERY HELPFUL. BOTH OF THEM MENTORED US THROUGH THE PROCESS. AND THEN OF COURSE WE HAD TO RAISE 20 MILLION \$ WHICH WAS FAR AN EXCESS OF ANYTHING ACCESS HAD EVER DONE. AND THAT DOESN'T COUNT THE PROGRAMMING COSTS WHICH ARE ABOUT 3 MILLION \$/YR. SO WE WENT OUT AND ASKED SEVERAL KEY CORPORATIONS IN THE DETROIT AREA WHO WERE SUPPORTIVE AND FOUNDATIONS- KRESAGE , CORPORATIONS LIKE THE FORD MOTOR CO, GENERAL MOTORS DAIMLER CHRYSLER ALL MADE MAJ CONTRIBUTIONS BUT ALSO HELPED TO GET OTHERS TO SIGN UP, SOME OF THE BANKS IN THE AREA, AMERICA BANK FOR INSTANCE, HELPED CO-CHAIR THE COMMITTEE THAT DID FUNDRAISING AND THROUGH THIS WE ACTUALLY LAUNCHED A NEW EFFORT, A NATIONAL EFFORT TO DEVELOP PHILANTHROPY IN THE ARAB AMER COMMUNITY NATIONALLY SO IT LUANCHED SOMETHING IN ADDITION TO SOMETHING WE WERE TRYING TO DO AND WE MADE A LOT OF PROG IN THAT AREA. NOT ONLY IN FUNDRAISING, BUT LEARNING HOW TO FUNDRAISE AND TEACHING OTHERS HOW TO DO THAT AND ON MAY 5TH IN 2005 AT 5 O'CLOCK, WE OPENED UP THE MUSEUM AND THE MUSEUM WAS AN INSTANT SUCCESS WE HAD ABOUT 5000 LINED UP TO COME IN. ALL OF THEM DIDN'T GET IN THAT NIGHT, BUT WE STAYED OPEN LATE AND GOT IN AS MANY PPL AS WE COULD TO SEE THE MUSEUM AS POSSIBLE. TODAY WE ARE SEEING ABOUT OO 1,000/WK. WHICH IS VERY GOOD FOR A NEW SMALL MUSEUM. THERE IS A HOST OF PROGRAMMING. WE HAVE GLOBAL THURS'S WHICH EVERY THURS NIGHT HAS A PERFORMER FROM SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD. A LOT OF IT IS ARAB BUT LAST NIGHT WE HAD A LEBANESE SINGER FROM VENEZUELA WHO LIVES IN MIAMI WHO SINGS IN 5 LANGUAGES AND IN FACT WE HAD TWO RECORD COMPANIES HERE WHO SIGNED HER LAST NIGHT. SO YOU KNOW A LOT OFGOOD PRGRAMMING, WE HAVE A LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTER, HAS READING CLUBS,

SPEAKERS, WE HAVE A GREAT LIL MUSEUM SHOP, THAT'S BECOMING KINDA THE TALK OF THE TOWN. IF YOU WANT SOMETHING ARAB, THIS IS THE PLACE TO COME. LOTS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN COME HERE AND VISITING, SR CITIZENS GRPS. IN FACT, BY FAR THE MAJORITY OF PPL VISITING THE MUSEUM ARE NOT AT ALL ARAB AMER.

6:48

THE MUSEUM IS VERY INTERACTIVE. THERE'S BUTTONS TO PUSH AND DRAWERS TO OPEN AND VIDEO TAPES TO START AND YA KNOW ITS NOT A MUSEUM WHERE YOU CANT BE IN.., INTERACTING WITH. WE ALSO DO NOW FESTIVALS, WE HAVE THE ARAB FESTIVAL WHICH IS ATTACHED TO THE MUSEUM. LAST YR 300,000 PPL CAME TO IT. IT WAS AN OUTDOOR FESTIVAL RIGHT IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA. WE ALSO DO THE CONCERT OF COLORS NOW WHICH IS ONE OF THE MIDWEST, MIDWEST'S LARGEST MUSIC FESTIVALS. THIS YR WE WILL BE EXPANDING TO 4 DAYS, 4 STAGES. SO THE MUSEUM IS A VERY VIBRANT PLACE WITH A LOT OF THINGS GOING ON. I THINK, WELL THE MAJORITY OF PPL WHO WORK HERE ARE ARAB AMER. ITS ALSO A VERY DIVERSE STAFF. YOU KNOW WE HAVE AFRICAN AMERICNAS AND LATINOS AND ASIANS AND JEWISH AMER WORKING HERE AND OTHER KINDS OF AMERICANS. WE THINK THAT'S A GOOD THING TOO. UMM OUR AIM IS TO HAVE A PLACE UHH IN AMERICA WHERE NOT ONLY ARAB CULTURE GETS PUT FWD, BUT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF OTHER CULTURES. SO IT'S A HOME FOR ALL KINDS OF PPL.

GERI: OUR DOC IS COVERAGE ON ARAB AMERICANS...WHATS YOUR OPINION ON ...

8:31

IS: I'LL GIVE YOU A LIL LONGER ANSWER THAN YOU WANT. YA KNOW, THERE'S ALWAYS, THERE'S BEEN A HISTORTICAL PROBLEM WITH THE WAY ARAB AMER'S ARE LOOKED AT ALWAYS. FIRST ARAB AMERICANS THAT CAME HERE WERE ACTUALLY SLAVES. THEY WERE NORTH AFRICAN SLAVES. ABOUT A THIRD OF THE SLAVE TRADE THAT CAME TO AMERICA WAS EITHER MUSLI OR ARAB SPEAKING OR ARAB. WHICH MOST PPL DON'T KNOW IS THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN, FIRST ARAB AMERICAN ESTEBANICO WAS THE SAME PERSON. THEN OUR STATUS CHANGED AGAIN IN

THE 1700'S, 1800'S AS PPL CAME FROM LEBANON AND SYRIA, AS PEDDLERS AND MERCHANTS. AND THEY WERE LISTED AS TURKISH OR ASIAN AND RIGHT UP UNTIL THE EARLY 1900'S WHEN THEY HAD THE ASIAN EXCLUSION ACTS, YA KNOW THE CHINESE ACTS AND THEN IT WAS BROADEN TO ALL ASIANS, ARAB IMMIGRANTS WERE INCLUDED AND MANY COULD NOT OWN PROPERTY OR BE CITIZENS IN THE US. AS WELL AS THERE WAS IMMIGRATION CUT OFF TO THEM COMING TO THE US. ALL DURING THAT TIME, EVEN AFTER A COURT CASE, GAVE ARAB'S THE STATUS OF CAUCASIANS, WHICH IS STILL STRANGE, WHICH IS LIKE TRYING TO PUT A ROUND THING IN A SQ HOLE. THE IMMIGRATION EFFECT CONTINUED AS IT DID WITH ASIANS AND AFRICANS AND OTHERS AND ALSO THE STEROTYPING. THERE WERE VERY POWERFUL ORIENTALISTS IMAGES OF ARAB AMERICANS AND THEY WERE OF BELLY DANCERS AND SHEIKS AND SINBADS, YA KNOW AND BUT THERE WAS ALSO A VERY NEGATIVE NEGATIVE TONE TO THAT, BUT AFTER 1967, AND THE MID EAST WAR, THERE WAS A VERY POWERFUL CHANGE FOR THE BAD AFTER THAT. THEY MOVED FROM ORIENTALIST IMAGE TO A .. A WAR IMAGES IN THE SAME WAY THAT JAPANESE IMAGES MOVED AFTER THE BOMBING OF PEARL HARBOR, OR JUST BEFORE THE BOMBING OF PEARL HARBOR. AND SO THEY HAD A CAST OF THE ENEMY AFTER 1967 SO THEY NOW WERE KIND OF EMOTIONAL MAD MEN WHO WERE UMM.. TERRORSITS, DANGEROUS IMAGES ALSO ANTI-FEMININE IMAGES. YA KNOW, ARABS BEAT THEIR WIVES, THEIR WIVES ARE SUBMISSIVE, YA KNOW ASK ANY ARAB MAN THEY WILL TELL YOU CLEARLY THAT THEIR WIVES ARE NOT SUBMISSIVE. AHH BUT YA KNOW ALL OF THOSE IMAGES REALLY TAKE US UP TO THIS PERIOD AND THIS PERIOD IS ONE IMAGE YOU HAVE, YOU HAD THE IRANIAN HOSTAGE CRISIS, YOU HAD THE OIL BOYCOTT, YOU HAD SEVERAL OTHER EVENTS, YOU HAD SOME TERRORISM GOING ON IN EUROPE. AND OTHER PLACES.

12:21

YOU HAD THE BOMBING OF US SOLDIERS IN LEBANON SO REALLY THAT THIS IS A PERIOD WHERE A FRAMEWORK OF HOW ARABS ARE LOOKED AT IN THE MEDIA, IN PARTICULAR REALLY GELS. AND SO YOU HAVE MOVIES, HUNDREDS OF MOVIES WHERE ARABS ARE CLEARLY THE ENEMY YA KNOW HERE IN THE MUSEUM WE HAVE A A LIL EXHIBIT WHERE PPL ARE ASKED, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN AN ARAB FAMILY ON TV AND THEY INTERVIEW HUNDREDS OF PPL AND

ALL THEY GET OUT OF THEM IS “UMMM.. I DON’T THINK SO.. I NEVER..(SHAKY VOICE). BC THEY CANT IDENTIFY A POSTIVE ARAB IMAGE IN THE PAST, THERE ARE A FEW NOW ON TV. SO THIS REALLY, IF YOU WANTED TO SAY WHETHER ITS ORGANIZED OR NOT HAS THE EFFECT OF A MULTI BILLION \$ IMAGE CAMPAIGN THAT HAS ARABS LOOKING AS A THREAT, SO YOU COME TO 9-11 AND 9-11 YA KNOW UH AS THE PLANES FLY INTO THE TWERS, PPL ARE ALREADY GUESSING, WHICH ARABS DID IT. OK. BEFORE THERE’S ANY INFO, Y’KNOW, YOU HAVE THE NEWS SAYING ITS PROBABLY THIS GRP OR ITS PROB THAT GRP AND THEY’RE ALL ARAB GRPS, YA KNOW AND WE’RE HOPING THAT ITS ANOTHER MILITIA GUY OUT OF YA KNOW WHITE MILITIA GUY IN THE MIDWEST OR SOMETHING. UNFORTUNATELY IT WAS ARABS AND IT WAS MUSLIMS AND I THINK GIVEN ALL OF THE IMAGES THE AMERICAN PPL WERE REALLY VERY VERY A CALM ABOUT IT, IN A SENSE THAT THEY DIDN’T GO WITH PULL THEIR NEIGHBORS OUT OF THEIR HOUSES OR BEAT THEM. BUT IF YOU WERE WORKING WHERE I WAS WORKING, ALL OF THE WOMEN WHO WORKED AT OUR CENTER, LEFT WORK, PICKED UP THEIR KIDS TO BRING EM HOME. THEY WERE AFRAID OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THEM. UHH PPL IMMEDIATELY, SPONTANEOUSLY PUT AMERICAN FLAGS IN THE FRONT OF THEIR HOMES. YA KNOW, BUSINESSES TO SHOW THAT THEY’RE AMERICANS TOO. SO PPL WERE VERY VERY FRIGHTENED.

15:03

NOW SOME GOOD THINGS HAPPENED AND A LOT OF THE COORPORATE LEADERS, BILL FORD INVITED SVERAL OF US TO HIS PLANT AT A TIME WHERE HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT HIS PLANT, YA KNOW AND SAID, WHAT CAN I DO AND HE SENT A MSG TO ALL FORD WORKERS SAYING ANY HARASSMENT OR ATTACKS ON ARAB AMERICAN WORKERS WILL BE DEALT WITH SEVERELY. RELIGIOUS LEADERS CAME OUT AND SPOKE, CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS DID, BUT EVEN THE PRESIDENT, Y KNOW SAID, LOOK ARAB AMERICANS ARE NOT THE ENEMY, MUSLIM AMERICANS ARE NOT THE ENEMY. NOW UNFORTUNATELY ON THE HEELS OF ALL THAT WE SAW A FEAR WHIPPED UP. AND AGAIN, THERE WERE GOOD STORIES, PPL WHO IN THE MEDIA SAID THINGS LIKE, ITS NOT YOUR ARAB AMERICAN NEIGHBOR, BUT THERE WERE ALSO THE STORIES ABOUT, ARE THEY POISONING WATER SUPPLIES, ARE THERE SLEEPER CELLS, ARE THERE ... SO ARAB AMERICANS REALLY

REALLY BECAME TARGETED ESPECIALLY IN THE MEDIA. I REMEMBER BEING ASKED HUNDREDS OF TIMES, LITERALLY HUNDREDS, IF I WOULD GO AND SPEAK ON THIS TERRORIST THING AND THAT. I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT TERRORISM YA KNOW, YET YOU WANNA SAY THAT ITS WRONG, YOU WANNA GO OUT THERE AND TELL PPL THAT YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO W/ THAT, BUT IT, YOU'RE PULLED INTO IT. I THINK MOST ARAB AMERICANS WERE BEING ASKED TO SPEAK UP, AND THEY DID, BUT SOMEHOW OUR VOICE DIDN'T GET HEARD. PPL SAID, WHY DIDN'T WE SPEAK UP? WELL WE DID AND WE DID IN A BIG LOUD VOICE. ISLAMIC COUNCILS GOT UP AND SAID, THIS IS WRONG, THIS IS NOT ISLAM. ARAB AMER'S DID THAT AND SO NOW THEN.. WHAT HAPPENED WAS, HATE CRIMES ROSE 5 TIMES WHAT THEY WERE WITH ARAB AMERICANS. NOW THE THING ABOUT THAT WAS INTERESTING IS YES THEY WERE 5 TIMES WHAT THEY HAD BEEN BEFORE, BUT THEY WERE STILL BELOW ASIANS, JEWS, AFRICAN AMERICANS IN TERMS OF %. SO SOME PPL GOT THE OPPORTUNITY THAT THEY HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR TO TARGET PPL, BUT IN A GENERAL SENSE MOST AMERICANS REALIZED THAT IT WASN'T ARAB AMERICANS WHO WERE THE REAL DANGER. I THINK THAT'S TRUE TODAY. WHAT DID GO WRONG, AND IS STILL WRONG IS THAT IN AN ATTEMPT TO ASSURE SECURITY, I THINK, THE GOV GOT OUTTA HAND. IT BEGAN PSSING LAWS THAT WERENT WELL THOUGH THROUGH, AND EVEN WEREN'T WELL LOOKED AT. I TALKED TO SEN. LEVIN DURING THE PERIOD RIGHT AFTER THE PATRIOT ACT. HE DIDN'T EVEN GET TO READ THE FINAL VERSION AND THIS WAS TRUE OF A LOT OF LEGISLATORS, BUT THEY WERE IN NO POSITION NOT TO VOTE FOR THESE THINGS AND SO YOU HAD LAWS PASSED, ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITES USED, IMMIG LAW WAS MISUSED. YOU HAD 3,000 ARAB AMERICANS HELD IN DETENTION, SOME FOR AS MANY AS 3 YRS WHO WERE NEVER EVER CHARGED WITH .. TERRORISM, AND NONE WERE FOUND GUILTY OF TERRORISM. MOST OF THEM WERE IN THERE AND RELEASED, BUT WHERE WAS THAT STORY?

18:53

WE HAD THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS 6 THOUSAND OF THEM IN 2 WAYS, WHO WERE INTERVIEWED BY THE FBI. AND THERE'S A LIL LETTER UPSTAIRS HERE IN THE MUSEUM THAT SAYS YOU ARE NOT .. WE DO NOT SUSPECT YOU OF TERRORISM BUT WE WANT YOU TO COME IN AND BE INTERVIEWED. YA KNOW. THERE WERE..UH.

THERE WERE IRAQI'S BROUGHT IN, ABOUT 8000 OF THEM FOR INTERVIEWS LATER. TODAY THERE ARE LAWS ON THE BOOK THAT ALLOW PPL TO DISAPPEAR IN THE NIGHT STILL, AND PPL WILL AND DO DISAPPEAR IN THE NIGHT OR DEPORTED W/O DUE PROCESS. SO WE HAVE THE SAME KIND OF RECTIFICATION THAT HAS TO HAPPEN IN THIS COUNTRY, ONE THAT ASSURES SECURITY, ASSURES A DEBATE ON SECURITY, BUT ALSO FREEDOM. THIS IS.. WE'VE GONE TO WARS AND A LOT OF OTHER THINGS W/O PATRIOT ACTS. THIS IS A STRONG COUNTRY FULL OF GOOD PEOPLE. ARAB AMER'S ARE GOOD PPL AND WHILE THERE ARE STILL DANGERS, OUR ANSWERS TO ALL THIS REALLY NEED TO BE MEASURED.

20:13

I ALSO, IN TERMS OF MEDIA AND MEDIA COVERAGE ON THIS, I THINK THAT YA KNOW WE'VE HAD OUR GOOD GUYS AND OUR ABD GUYS, BUT THE STORY ISNT REALLY THE GOOD GUYS. YA KNOW..OR WHAT. THERE ARE FEW STORIES ON WHAT ARAB AMER'S ARE DOING, HAVE DONE, AND HOW A LOT OF THI STUFF THAT IS STIRRED UP, DOESN'T REALLY HAVE A BASIS BUT IS ALL JUST CONJECTURE. THEY'VE NEVER FOUND A SLEEPER CELL IN THE US, BUT EVERYBODY THINKS THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF THEM, YA KNOW, THEY'VE NEVER FOUND ANY ARAB OF AMERICAN BACKGROUND, ARAB AMERICAN, THEY HAVE FOUND FOREIGNERS THAT THEY'VE SENT OUTTA THE COUNTRY, BUT THEY'VE NEVER FOUND AN ARAB AMER GUILTY OF TERRORISM IN THE US AND ITS HIGHER HISTORY YA KNOW, I THINK THAT'S A STORY THAT'S UNTOLD, YA KNOW. AND THE PROBLEM IS, EVEN IF YOU TELL THAT STORY OR ONE OTHER PERSON TELLS THAT STORY, ITS NOT A COUNTER-WEIGHT TO ALL THAT'S BEEN PILED UP HERE. I HOPE SOMEDAY I CAN LOOK TO THE FUTURE AND SAY, JUST AS AMERICANS, YA KNOW AND SAID WE MADE A SERIOUS MISTAKE WITH JAPANESE AMERICANS, THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO O THAT. WE DO OUR LIL PART HERE TO TELL THE STORY OF ARAB AMERICANS YA KNOW.

21:53

BUT EVEN W THE JAPANESE THOUGH- I WAS TALKIN TO A WOMAN THE OTHER DAY WHO WAS IN ONE OF THE CAMPS AND SHE WAS SAYING TO ME THAT THERE'S STILL PREJUDICE OUT THERE, STILL AFTER ALL THIS TIME, RELATED TO WW2, I KNOW THERE ARE OTHER REASONS-ECONOMIC COMPETITION AND OTHER THINGS IN ASIA

THAT HAVE ENGENDERED THINGS, BUT ITS STILL OUT THERE, YA KNOW . AND SO I THINK ITS PART OF THE MEDIA'S JOB, JUST LIKE ITS EVERY AMERICAN'S JOB IN THE WORK THEY DO, TO SAFE GUARD OUR FREEDOM THAT.. THAT THERES NO OBJECTIVITY FROM THAT. AND TO TELL THE STORY AS IT LIES, IN TERMS OF THESE COMMUNITIES THAT GO THROUGH WHAT THE ARAB AMERICAN COMMUNITY GOES THROUGH.

GERI: YOU MENTIONED THAT ...TERRORISM... WAS IT LOCAL MEDIA, NATIONAL MEDIA?

22:57

IS: LOCAL MEDIA, NATIONAL MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA. AND THAT STILL CONTINUES TODAY.

GERI:

23:07

UMM. THE OBVIOUS ONES, FOX NEWS, IVE STOPPED GOING TO THEM I DON'T GET, YA KNOW, SOMETIMES YOU GET SET UP THERE. BUT I GUESS I WOULD SAY A FEW HUNDRED HAVE ASKED ME TO COMMENT ON A TERRORIST ACT OR ANOTHER-ITS PRETTY UNIVERSAL, YA KNOW, I MEAN EVEN PUBLIC TV AT ONE POINT DID A THING ABOUT, HOW DANGEROUS ARE ARAB RADICALS IN THE US AND SO I WAS THERE TO SAY THERE ARE VERY FEW OF THEM AND HAVE VERY LITTLE WEIGHT IN THE US. BC IF YOU DON'T DO IT, THERE'S NO COUNTER POINT AT ALL. AND SO, YA KNOW, FIRST I THOUGHT, NO, IM NOT GOING TO RESPOND TO ALL THIS, BUT YOU CANT. YOU CANT. YOU DON'T HAVE THE FREEDOM TO DO THAT.

GERI: SO AS A RESULT, YOU'VE DEVELOPED A SPECIALTY?

24:11

WELL I DON'T GO OUT OF MY WAY TO TALK ABOUT TERRORISM. I GO OUT OF MY WAY TO TALK ABOUT THE ARAB AMER COMMUNITY AND WHAT IT DOES AND WHAT ITS CONTRIBUTIONS ARE. BUT I AMD CERTAINLY NO STRANGER TO THIS SUBJECT MATTER AND TALKING ABOUT IT.

GERI: ?? SINCE 9-11...?

24:50

IS: IN THE LOCAL MEDIA THERE HAS BEEN A GROWING INTEREST IN THE COMMUNITY, IN A GENERAL SENSE BC WE'RE SUCH A PALPABLE PART OF THE POPULATION. I MEAN HERE IN DETROIT THERE ARE 300,000 ARAB AMER'S IN THE TRI COUNTY AREA. ½ MILION IN THE STATE SO WE'RE THE EQUIVALENT OF ASIANS IN CALI, OR LATINOS IN THE SW. SO IT'S A HARD POP TO IGNORE, ITS ALSO A HARD POP TO IGNORE BC OF ITS CONCENTRATIONS. NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF COMMUNITIES, THERE'S A 3 MILE LONG ARAB BUSINESS STRIP HERE, THERE ARE VERY FEW ETHNIC STRIPS THAT LONG IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. THERE IS A,.. OUR CONCENTRATION IN BUSINESS IN SMALL STORES AND GAS STATIONS AND NOW IN OIL DISTRIBUTION AND REAL ESTATE AND IN THE PROFESSIONS IS GROWING EVERY DAY, SO ITS HARD TO IGNORE AS WELL, AND ALSO ON RACE RELATION QUESTIONS, ARAB AMER'S ARE NOW PART OF THE FORMULA. THE APPOINTMENT OF A MUSLIM JUDGE, A FEMALE MUSLIM JUDGE, IS A STORY HERE BC THEY ARE BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING IN A WHOLE BUNCH OF DIFFERENT PLACES NOW. YA KNOW. OR THE OR WHEN A SPENCER ABRAHAM, WHO'S AN ARAB AMER IS THE HEAD OF ENERGY FOR THE US OR AND I CAN GO ON AND ON, BUT YOU GET THE IDEA. SO FOR THAT REASON THERE'S BEEN A GROWING INTEREST, ALTHOUGH I WOULD SAY BEFORE 9-11 IN THE MAIN WE STILL STAYED BELOW THE SCREEN, FOR GOOD OR FOR BAD, WE HAVE COME ABOVE THAT LINE NOW. YA KNOW. WE ARE A COMMUNITY THAT'S WATCHED, TALKED ABOUT AND DEALT WITH. NOW HOW WE'RE WATCHED, AND TALKED ABOUT AND DEALT WITH IS A WHOLE OTHER QUESTION.

27:02

AND I'D SAY THAT THE COVERAGE OF ARAB AMERICANS HAS REALLY, LET'S SAY IN PRINT FOR INSTANCE IN THE 2 NEWSPPRS, YA KNOW, DEPENDS A LOT ON WHO'S DOING THE COVERAGE. YA KNOW, IF THEY'VE GOT A GOOD LOCAL REPORTER HERE, LIKE A NIRAJ AT THE FREEP OR A GREG COUPA AT THE NEWS, YA KNOW, YOU GET THAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY AND THE REPORTER THAT'S MEANINGFUL AND REGULAR AND THEY ACTUALLY COME TO KNOW THE COMMUNITIES. ON THE OTHER HAND, EDITORIALY, WHERE THE EDITORIAL STAFF TENDS TO BE VERY FAR AWAY FROM THE PPL THAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT, YA KNOW. ESPECIALLY IN THE CONSERVATIVE PAPERS, YA GET A

REALLY NEGATIVE CAST. IM FORGETTING THE NAME IN THE DET NEWS, I MEAN.. I'M SORRY...NOLAN. NOLAN'S A FRIEND OF MINE AND I LIKE HIM. I HATE HIS EDITORIALS, YA KNOW AND THERE'S NO COUNTERPOINT IN THE NEWS IN TERMS OF THOSE, YA KNOW. UHH, IN THE FREEP, THE FREEP DOES HAVE, NEITHER OF THOSE PAPERS HAVE ARAB AMERICANS, REGULAR EDITORIAL WRITERS, AND OR OR JUST EVEN A GUEST AT IT REGULAR, GUEST EDITORIAL WRITER. THAT'S SOETHING THAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN, I THINK. THERE'S A GROWING COVERAGE OF ARAB AMERICANS, NOT JUST AS ARAB AMER'S, I THINK THAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING, YA KNOW, SO WHEN THE FOOD WRITER WRITES ABOUT FOOD, ONE OF THE PPL'S WHOSE DISHES THEY PUT ON THE PAGE OF THE, OF THE FOOD SECTION, IS AN ARAB AMERICAN. WHEN THEY ASK PPL, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE COME BACK OF DETROIT AND ONE OF THEM IS ARAB AMER, THAT'S A GOOD THING, THAT'S SOMETHING WE REALLY NEED TO ACHIEVE, BC THAT'S WHAT TELLS PPL THAT ARAB AMER'S ARE HUMAN BEINGS THAT THEY'RE A PART OF DETROIT AND DETROIT'S FABRIC, YA KNOW, AND IT MAKES US LESS EXOTIC AND LESS DANGEROUS, AND SO IT'S A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE THAT ALL PPL COVERING ALL COMMUNITIES SHOULD WORK TWD.

GERI:

IS: AHH... ELECTRONIC MEDIA..

GERI: ... TELL US ABOUT THAT..

28:38

IS: I THINK ELECTRONIC MEDIA IS NOT AS GOOD AT THE COVERAGE. AND I THINK FOR A COUPLE REASONS. 1 THEY ARE MUCH MORE FOLLOWERS OF THE STORY, THEY GO HERE AND RUN HERE, THEY RUN OVER THERE. ANY NEW E-MEDIA REPORTER RUNS FROM PLACE TO PLACE, YA KNOW, SOMETIMES THEY'VE GOT 20 MINS TO GET THE STORY, THAT'S EXAGGERATION, BUT THEY REALLY DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO FOCUS IN. THEY DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO BUILD THE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY. SOME DO, BUT THAT'S RARE AND SO THEY TEND TO COME, AND THEY TEND TO BE YOUNGER, NOTHING AGAINST YOUNG PPL, BUT THEY DON'T HAVE THE EXPERIENCES, YA KNOW. THEY'RE USUALLY IN THEIR 20'S AND SO THE AVG REPORTER HASN'T REALLY MATURED IN ITS

RELATIONSHIP W THE SUB-COMMUNITIES AND THEIR STORIES TEND TO BE THE MORE NEGATIVE STORIES IN OUR COMMUNITY. THE TERRORIST STORY, THE CRIME STORY, THE YA KNOW, VERY FEW POSITVE SOTRIED AT ALL OUTTA E-MEDIA. AND THAT'S ACTUALLY WITH PPL WHO LEAD THEM, THAT MAY BE IN CHARGE OF THE STATION WHO DO THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS STUFF, REALLY WANTING IT TO DIFFERENT, BUT NOT REALLY DRIVING IT DOWN TO THAT LEVEL. THERE'S NOT A PERSON, MAYBE THERE IS, BUT IF IT IS, ITS PROOF OF WHAT IM SAYING THAT HAS THE ETHNIC BEAT, OR THE ARAB BEAT, OR HAS THE YA KNOW THERE IS VERY LITTLE OF THE WEAVING IN OF ARAB AMERICANS INTO E-MEDIA. PART OF IT IS BC OF THE VERY NATURE OF THE FORM. BUT I THINK THAT PART OF IT IS THAT THEY HAVE NOT FASTENED IN ON A DEEPENING THOSE RELATIONSHIPS. THAT'S NOT ONLY WITH ARAB AMERICANS, I THINK ITS WITH A LOT OF THE ETHNIC COMMUNITIES.

GERI: ?? WHAT WOULD YOU TELL THEM

32:05

IS: WELL ACTUALLY THIS ISNT THEORETICAL, AS I DO DO THAT. I DO IT PRETTY CONSISTENTLY. I GUESS THE THING THAT I WOULD SAY IS EXACTLY WHAT IVE SAID ALREADY, YA KNOW, WEAVE ARAB AMERICANS INTO YOUR STORIES, HAVE SOMEBODY WHO IS RESPONSIBLE THAT WILL TALK TO US REGULARLY TO KEEP TOUCH AND SEE WHAT STORIES ARE REALLY DEVELOPING. BUT ALSO PART OF THIS IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY, TO MAKE SURE WE ARE BRINGING FWD THOSE POSITIVE STORIES. BC YOU CANT BLAME PPL FOR BEING BUSY, YOU HAVE TO GO TO THEM. IN FINALLY, TAKE AN HONEST LOOK AT YOUR EDITORIAL POLICIES AND WHETHER THEY ARE FAIR TO ARAB AMER'S AND OTHERS, WHETHER THEY TRULY ARE BALANCED, OR LOOK FOR BALANCE, YA KNOW. LOOK TO BALANCE IT, AND LOOK FOR INDIVIDUALS AND OPPORTUNITES THAT MAY MAKE THAT POSSIBLE.

IS: SURE

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33:50

IS: YA KNOW I GOTTA APOLOGIZE, BC I FORGOT A PART OF THE E-MEDIA, WHICH IS RADIO. LEMME JUST SAY THERE, THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL RADIO STATIONS THAT ARE PLAYING A GOOD ROLE, WWJ IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY, WDET HAS BEEN STELLAR IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH US AND TRYING TO GET OUT THOSE POSITIVE STORIES OR EVEN COVER THE NEGATIVE STORIES IN A WAY THAT PROVIDES BALANCE. SO JUST WANTED TO ADD THAT IN. I THINK THE OTHER THING IS, THAT YES, THERE IS A GREAT EMBRACING OF THE INTERNET IM NOT SO SURE IF ITS AS CALCULATED AS IT NEEDS TO BE. EVERYBODY IS DISCOVERING KINDA THE POSSIBILITIES AS COMMUNICATION BECOMES MORE SEGMENTED, AND SO EMAIL OF LATE, HAS BECOME A VERY POWERFUL FORCE IN GETTING OUT THE WORD IN THE ARAB AMER COMMUNITY TO ARAB AMER'S AND OTHERS. SO FOR INSTANCE ACCESS SENDS OUT ITS INFO ON WHATS HAPPENED THIS WEEK TO 10'S OF THOUSANDS OF PPL AND MANY MANY OF THEM ARE OPINION LEADERS, RELGIOS LEADERS INIVIDUALS WHO ARE NOT ARAB AMER. THE ARAB AMER MUSEUM DOES THE SAME, THE ARAB ANTI DISCRIMINATION COMMITTEE DOES THE SAME THING, THE ARAB AMERICAN INSTITUTE FROM WASHINGTON DOES THE SAME. SO I THINK THAT THEY'VE GOTTEN THAT, BUT I ALSO KNOW FOR INSTANCE THAT THERE ARE BLOGS AND SO FORTH GROWING IN THE ARAB AMER COMMUNITY. BUT I DON'T REALLY THINK THE ARAB AMER ORG'S HAVE EMBRACED THIS APPROACH IN THE WAY THEY CAN AND SHOULD. YA KNOW HERE AT THE MUSEUM A YOUNG LADY THAT SITS AT THE FRONT DESK SAID TO ME, DO YOU MIND IF I START A MYSPACE FOR THE MUSEUM. I WAS LIKE, YEH GO AHEAD, START A MYSPACE, I WAS LIKE, LET HER RUN ALONG AND DO THIS THING. AND THEN WHEN I ACTUALLY, WHEN IT WAS UP, IT LOOKED BEAUTIFUL, BUT AS THE FRIENDS STARTED ROLLING IN, I REALIZED THAT THIS WAS IMPORTANT AS OUR WEBPGE. AND THEN I THINK DAMIAN MARLEY SIGNED UP AS A FRIEND YA KNOW ONE OF THE MARLEY SONS, BOB MARLEY'S CHILDREN, HE WAS A MUSCIAN, BEFORE LONG STING HAD SIGNED UP, AND THERE WERE LIKE 40 MAJOR MUSCIANS WHO WERE NOW ALL FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM, US OUR MYSPACE AND WE DIDN'T THINK OF OUR MYSPACE AS A WAY TO GET INFO OR YOUTUBE OR A THOUSAND OTHER THINGS THAT ARE DEVELOPING, SO FUNCTIONING IN THIS NEW SEGMENTED, DEVELOPING, TECHNOLOGICAL APPROACH TO COMMUNICATIONS IS REALLY GONNA BE VERY IMPORTANT FOR THIS COMMUNITY

37:08

I THINK IT'LL BE IMPORTANT FOR TWO REASONS. 1 THE DISCUSSION IS DIFFERENT. THE PARAMETERS OF DISCUSSION IN E-MEDIA, INPARTICULAR, BUT IN GENERAL IS ABOUT THIS WIDE

VISUAL (USES FINGERS TO SHOW SMALL AMOUNT OF SPACE)

YOU TALK ABOUT THINGS, ANYTHING OUTSIDE OF IT ON THIS SIDE AND THAT SIDE, DOESN'T GET DISCUSSED. BUT FOR INSTANCE, HOW MUCH OF A DISCUSSION HAS THERE BEEN ABOUT HOW AL-QUEDA GOT TRAINED. WELL THEY WERE TRAINED BY THE CIA, NOBODY KNOWS THAT. BUT IS THAT A PUBLIC STORY? NOT REALLY, ITS OUTSIDE OF THAT LITTLE LINE

VISUAL (DEMONSTRATES WITH FINGERS AND HANDS)

YA KNOW, AND ITS NOW JUST AL-QUEDA, HAMAS WAS ENCOURAGE BY ISREAL AS A RESPONSE TO THE PLO. SO, MY PT ISNT POLITICAL, MY PT IS THAT TELLING THE STORY IS VERY LIMITED. ALSO HUMAN STORY IS VERY LIMITED. BUT THIS ALLOWS YOU TO GO OUTSIDE OF THAT AND HAVE A REAL DISCUSSION. AND I THINK THE OTHER THING IS IS THAT IS TALKS TO REGULAR PPL BY REGULAR PPL AND THERE'S NO REPLACEMENT FOR THAT. I LIKE THE HUMANTEE OF THAT AND IT HAS A LOT OF HOPE. I DON'T THINK IT REPLACES PRINT MEDIA, I DON'T THINK IT REPLACES E-MEDIA, BUT THE DIVIDE OF PPL WHO ARE GETTING THEIR INFO IN THIS WAY AND THOSE THAT ARE GETTING INFO IN THE OLD WAY IS GROWING AND I THINK THAT THAT IS A GOOD THING.

IS: OK (SMILES)

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39:35

IS:

WELL ID SAY A FEW THINGS. 1 THERE WAS A RECENT DEMONSTRATION HERE OF SHIA IRAQ'S ABOUT KILLING IN IRAQ AND AS THEY MARCHED DOWN THE ST THERE WASN'T A SIGN IN ENGLISH, THEY HA DONE NO PRESS WORK AROUND IT, YOU REALLY,

IF YOU HAD GOTTEN A PHONE CALL IN THE NEWS RM AND WENT TO COVER IT, YOU WOULDN'T REALLY KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH IT. YOU WOULD HAVE TO DO CONJECTURE, MOST OF THE PPL WERE NOT ENGLISH SPEAKING. SO THERE IS A PART, EVEN WHEN THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR TOOK PLACE, THERE'S NOT A SENSE, THAT IF YOU'RE MARCHIN DOWN THE ST YOURE TALKING TO THE AMERICAN PPL AND YOU REALLY NEED TO FORM YOUR MSG. I THINK THAT, ESPECIALLY THE CHOICES THEY MADE TO DO IT IN DEARBORN, YA KNOW YA KNOW, REALLY KINDA DIDN'T HELP THE MSG I GUESS. SO I'LL BE CRITICAL OF ARABS AND MUSLIMS IN THAT WAY HAVING SAID THAT THOUGH, THE WAY THAT THIS WAS PUT FWD, ALMOST UNIVERSALLY IS THAT THE HEZBOLLAH WAS TERRORIST AND THE ISREALIS WERE GOING IN TO DEAL WITH TERRORISTS, TERRORISM. TERRORISM IS SUPPOSED TO MEAN THAT IF YOU KILL CIVILIANS PURPOSELY AS A TARGET TO ACHIEVE POLITICAL ENDS, AND THERE NOT ON COLLATERAL DMAGE BASICALLY, I DON'T LIKE THE TERM ANYWAY, BUT THEN THAT'S NOT TERRORIST. BUT IN FACT THE ISREALIS KILLED HUNDREDS OF PPL ANYWAY IN CIVILIAN RAIDS, IN THE BACAH VALLEY WITH NO MILITARY TARGETS THEY BOMBED MY HOME VILLAGE. THERE WERE NO MILITARY TARGETS, THEY BOMBED THE CROPS. I JUST, SO WAS THERE TERRORISM? THERE WAS TERRORISM ON BOTH SIDES OF THE EQUATION. BUT NOBODY TOLD THAT STORY BC ITS IN A FRAMEWORK, ISREALIS ARE NEVER TERRORISTS, ARABS CAN BE TERRORISTS. AND SO I WOULD HAVE ARGUED THAT, AND DID PUBLICLY, THAT WHAT WE NEED TO DO IS FOCUS IN ON THE LOSS OF HUMAN LIFE, CUZ THAT'S THE BIG THING OF WHAT WAS GOING ON AND IN FACT IF WE LOOK TODAY WE SEE, IN FACT THE OPPOSITE OF ISREAL'S OBJECTIVES, THE US IS IN SUPPORT OF THOSE OBJECTIVES BY THE WAY, HAPPENED IN WHICH HAMAS WAS MADE MORE POWERFUL AND IS IN A POSITION WHERE IT IS FIGHTING THE TOPPLED EXISTING GOV. SO, I THINK THAT, BUT AMERICANS DON'T GET ALL THE CONNECTIONS CUZ WE'RE NOT GIVING THEM THE CONNECTIONS , SO THE COVERAGE, REALLY I THINK THE STORY IS THOUSANDS OF PPL LOSE THEIR LIFE ON BOTH SIDES, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS LOSE THEIR HOMES, FUTURE OF LEBANON IS NOW AT STAKE, AND THE FUTURE OF PEACE IS INTERRUPTED. THAT'S STORY, THAT'S THE TRUE STORY, I CANT SAY THAT, BUT I THINK THAT'S THE TRUE STORY. BUT THE STORY WAS ABOUT TERRORISM,

BUT THAT WAS NOT THE CENTERPIECE OF WHAT WAS GOING HERE, I DON'T THINK

QUESTION: ???

43:42

IS:

NO IT DIDN'T COME FROM THE US MEDIA AT ALL. I MEAN WE NEW THAT, FOR INSTANNCE, THAT HAMAS WAS UNDERMINED WHEN THE PRES OF LEBANON WAS KILLED. THE LEBANESE PPL WERE TURNING AWAY FROM HAMAS UNTIL THEY BECAME THE ONLY PPL CAPABLE OF DEFENDING LEBANON AND IN THIS COMMUNITY, AND I'LL TELL YOU A QUICK STORY, AT ACCESS ¼ OF THE STAFF WAS IN LEBANON FOR THE SUMMER, OK. IT HAD BECOME THE PLACE TO GO FOR YOUR SUMMER VACATION, SO WHEN THE WAR STARTED, ¼ OF OUR STAFF WAS THERE, 17 STAFF MEMBERS LOST A FAMILY MEMBER DURING THAT TIME. ONE WOMAN LOST 7 PPL IN HER FAMILY AND THERE'S A WOMAN IN THIS BUILDING RIGHT NOW WHO WE COULDN'T CONVINCED THAT HER GRANDMOTHER AND GRANDFATHER WERE DEAD UNTIL THEY DUG THEM OUTTA THE RUBBLE AND 3 WKS LATER. SO THE CONNECTIONS TO THE MID EAST FOR THIS COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY SOUTHERN LEBANON WHERE A HUGE PORTION OF THESE PPL STILL HAVE THEIR FAMILY WAS HUGE. AND SO UNDERSTANDING THE POLITICAL CONTENT OF THIS WAS NOT BRAIN SURGERY AT ALL

45:08

IS:

I THINK THE CONNECTIONS WERE TALKED ABOUT. SOME OF THE LOSS WAS TALKED ABOUT BUT IT WAS TALKED ABOUT IN A WAY OF-WELL- YA KNOW HEZBOLLAH USED THESE PPL AS COLLATOREL WHICH REALLY WAS NOT TRUE BC IF YOU KNOW KINDA THE SITUATION THERE, ITS NOT LIKE THERE'S HEZBOLLAH AND THE PPL THAT LIVE IN THE VILLAGE. HEZBOLLAH ARE PPL FROM THAT VILLAGE, AND THEY WERE DEFENDING THEIR VIALLAGES, I MEAN I AGREE IF PPL WANNA SAY, AND ALSO THERE WAS NO STARTING PLACE FOR THIS THE PRESS PUT IT FWD AS THEY ROCKTED AN ISREALI SETTLEMENT AND THAT'S WHAT STARTED THIS, BUT THEY'VE BEEN ROCKETING EA OTHER FOR MONTHS BEFORE THAT

AND FOR ACTUALLY YRS BEFORE THAT. THERE WERE A COUPLE OF CEASEFIRES, SO THAT WAS ONE OF A WHOLE STRING OF BACK AND FORTH THAT'S BEEN GOING ON, STRIFE BOMBING THAT'S BEEN GOING ON, ALL OF THIS TIME, TO SAY THAT A SINGLE INCIDENT MADE THIS HAPPEN WAS NOT OBJECTIVE REPORTING AT ALL.

QUESTION: ??

46:38

IS:

WELL , I THINK WHEN WE 1ST STARTED, I MEAN MAINLY WE SAID WE DID A HUNDRED THINGS, TODAY, MOST OF THOSE THINGS WOULD BE FEED PPL AND PROVIDE HEALTHCARE FOR SOMEONE THAT DOESN'T HAVE IT OR, YA KNOW TOUR SOMEBODY IN THE MUSEUM OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. BUT WE'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED YOU'VE GOTTA GET UP THE RIVER ON PROB'S. YOU CANT JUST WATCH THINGS COME DOWN THE RIVER. YOU HAVE TO GO UP AND FIND OUT WHY ALL THIS IS HAPPENING, SEE IF YOU CAN LOOK FOR LONGER TERM SOLUTIONS. SO ACCESS HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN ACTIVIST ORG I THIS WAY. WORKING WITH A LOT OF THE COMMUNITIES, COLOR IN PARTICULAR ON ISSUES. MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING OH AH. ALL KINDS OF THINGS. BUT IN PARTICULAR RIGHT NOW WE FASTENED IN ON A FEW THINGS THAT WE THINK CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ONE OF THEM IS IMMI REFORM. SO WORKING TWD A PATH TO CITIZENSHIP FOR.. AND THAT'S NOT REALLY OUR CENTRAL ISSUE, WE DON'T HAVE THAT MANY UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS IN THE US, BUT ITS SUCH A BIG QUES THAT EFFECTS EVERYBODY, THAT WE THINK WE NEED TO BE PART OF THAT SOLUTION. BUT WE ALSO KNOW THAT IMMI REFORM AND IMMI QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN USED MORE AND MORE TO KEEP PPL IN JAIL AND ARRET THEM AND PUT THEM IN DETENTION. AND ARAB AMER'S IN PARITCULAR HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THESE DUE PROCESS QUESTIONS. WE WANNA WORK FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM AND ASSURE DUE PROESS AT THE SAME TIME. SO WE'RE WORKING WITH GRPS LIKE LA RAZA, THE NAT'L IMMI FORUM, AND MANY OTHERS TO TRY AND TRY TO ASSURE THAT OUR LEGISLATORS ARE AWARE OF THE ISSUES IN THEIR FULL BREATH.

QUESTION:??

48:57

IS:

WELL I THINK IMMIG QUESTIONS.. ARE...

49:04

IS:

NO THERE'S BEEN VERY VERY LITTLE OF IT, WE'VE HAD REG EVENTS. THERE'S BEEN SOME COVERAGE. THE BIG IMMI MARCH TOOK PLACE IN DETROIT HERE. WE WERE A MAJOR FORCE IN IT, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE MAINLY LATINO , OUR PRESENCE WAS ALMOST NOT MENTIONED. SO I THINK MORE OF OUR PRESENCE CAN BE FASTENED ON. WE CERTAINLY DO THE PRESS WORK AROUND IT, BUT I THINK LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE THERE'S A STEREOTYPE HERE. IMMIGRATION IS A LATINO QUESTION. AND I THINK IT'S A BROADER QUESTION THAN THAT. THERE ARE QUESTION RELATED ESP TO DUE PROCESS QUES'S. THEY'RE VERY VERY IMPORTANT FOR QUALITY OF FREEDOM IN THE US.

GERI: ?

50:03

IS:

OK, I'LL TELL YOU A LONG STORY MY FATHER, MY GREAT GRAND FATHER, CAME TO THE US FROM LEBANON, SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 1860 AND 1880 AND HOMESTEADED IN S DAKOTA. AND MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER JOINED HIM BUT WAS HELD IN MEXICO FOR A LONG TIME BC OF THE ASIAN EXCLUSION ACT. AND FINALLY MADE HER WAY HERE THEN MY FATHER CAME TO THE US.. THAT'S MY MOTHER'S SIDE. AND MY MOTHE ENDED UP IN DETROIT WITH HER FATHER WORKING IN AUTO BC THERE WAS A LOT OF OP IN AUTO. AND MY FATHER CAME FROM EGYPT IN 1930'S, HE CAME HERE AT 10 YRS OLD AND WAS UNDOCUMENTEDHIS FMAILY HAD ASKED HIM TO LEAVE BC THERE WAS NO FOOD, THEY WORKED ON THE DOCKS, AND GOT ON A BOAT, ENDED UP IN NY, WALKED OFF THE BOAT, NOBODY ASKED HIM A THING. HE HAD JUST BEEN PEDDLED THERE BY THE DOCKS, AND LIVED IN NY AND EVENTUALLY MET MY MOTHER IN DETROIT AND STARTED A SMALL EGYPTIAN RECORD STORE, IN GREEK TWN IN DETROIT, WHICH WENT BUST, IMEDIATELY. AND I WAS BORN IN BK, NY AND BUT BEEN IN THE DETROIT AREA

SINCE I WAS ABOUT 6 YRS OLD. IVE LIVED IN OTHER PLACES, NY MAINLY BUT I LOVE DET IT'S A GREAT CITY AND IN SPITE OF ALL THE NEAGTIVITY I THINK IT'S A CITY THAT PRODUCES REALLY WONDERFUL THINGS, MAYBE BC ITS SUCH A HARD CITY.

THANK YOU
THAT'S THE LONGEST INTERVIEW I EVER DID