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VATICAN COUNCIL II AND THE JEWS -- 10 YEARS LATER

BY RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM *

October 11, 1972, marked the tenth anniversary of the opening of Vatican Council II. What has been the Council's impact on Jewish-Christian relations during the past decade?

In terms of Catholic-Jewish relations, Vatican Council II continues to merit the judgment that I offered in Rome on Oct. 28, 1965, at the time of the adoption of the Declaration on Non-Christian Religions: the Council was an historic milestone, a decisive turning point in the 1,900 years of relationships between Jews and Christians in the Western world.

The most important net effect of the deliberations and actions taken by the 2,500 Council Fathers is that these have resulted in a profound change of Christian mentality toward Jews and Judaism on many levels in the Catholic Church during the past decade. In fact, Vatican Council II could well be described as "the most extensive seminar on Jewish-Christian relations" ever held during the past two millenia. That alteration in Christian consciousness was a fundamental precondition to taking the first steps in creating a new Christian tradition incipiently characterized by a clear-cut repudiation of anti-Semitism, and a growing respect for Judaism as a living religion of permanent value to its adherents.

To the historian of ideas, there are two "facts of life" that are self-evident; first, that great, seminal ideas that have changed the course of history have been invariably the creation of a small group,

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usually an intellectual elite; second, that it takes decades for such formative ideas to percolate through an entire society and to change its worldview and behavior patterns.

Thus, one of the more significant achievements of Vatican Council II was that its adoption by an overwhelming vote of Nostra Aetate (Declaration on Non-Christian Religions) -- as well as other progressive declarations on Religious Liberty and the Church and the Modern World -- gave strong impetus and provided a sanction for small groups of prestigious Catholic scholars and churchmen to begin the serious process of removing the sources of anti-Jewish attitudes in Christian teaching and liturgy and to lay the foundations of a Christian theology of Judaism that is congruent with the vital realities of Jewish existence.

That there exists today, a decade later, a network of scholars in Scripture studies, theology, church history, liturgy, and sociology in the United States, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and even in Africa and Asia, engaged in creating a new Christian culture that is sympathetic toward Jews and Judaism is itself the most telling commentary on the long-range historic value of the Council.

After 1,900 years of by-and-large tragic experience with Christian tradition and Christian society whose momentum moved horrendously in an anti-Jewish direction, the present reversal of field is simply inconceivable without taking into account the decisions of Vatican Council II.

And continuing for a moment on this positive side of the ledger, the search for a new understanding between Catholics and Jews was not altogether confined to scholars during the past decade. In a study which Dominican Sister Rose Albert Thering and I conducted together in 1970, it was evident that Catholics were making serious efforts to improve teaching about Jews and Judaism in Catholic seminaries, colleges, universities and high schools.

Our study, prepared for a colloquium on "The Theology of Israel," held at Seton Hall University disclosed that "40 per cent of Catholic seminaries and colleges provided courses in Jewish studies; 41.3 per cent of the seminaries and 75 per cent of the colleges treated Judaism in comparative religion courses; and 82.7 per cent of the seminaries and 68.9 per cent of the colleges offered Scripture courses which specifically dealt with the relationship of Christianity to Judaism. Almost 70 per cent of the Catholic high schools that responded to our questionnaire reported that local rabbis were invited into the classrooms when Judaism was being discussed."

These developments, too, are inconceivable without giving due account to the impact of Vatican Council II.

Parenthetically, our study also revealed that "no similar structural reform took place among the mainstream Protestant denominations" -- a negative affirmation of the value of the Council, and perhaps a positive suggestion to the Protestant leadership, "Go thou and do likewise."

A balanced evaluation requires that we look also at the negative side of the Catholic-Jewish ledger and at unresolved issues that call for far more serious attention than has been given thus far since Vatican II. These issues have been stated forthrightly by the Rev. Edward Flannery, executive secretary of the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations in his Nov. 1970 report to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. These problems still exist:

"1) Anti-Semitism, though mostly low-toned and unconscious, is still widespread and requires constant effort to detect and unmask its many disguises.

"2) Catholic Scholars have not yet sufficiently pursued research into the renewal of theology regarding the place of Judaism in the divine plan, though the Vatican Council's statement on the Jews showed the way.

"3) The State of Israel has become a serious stumbling block in Jewish-Christian relations. Since 'Jews have in the vast majority identified with that state' and 'see Zionism as central to Judaism, itself and essential not only to Israeli but also Jewish survival,' they consider it 'as an ecumenical and a religious consideration which should be included in the dialogue.'"

The need to speed up the process of closing the gap between advances made by the scholarly elite and the people in the pew in relation to anti-Semitism, a more adequate theology of Judaism, and of Israel has assumed especial urgency for the Jewish community in light of troublesome developments in recent months. The calculated exploitation of anti-Semitism, including the use of theological anti-Semitism, by the Soviet Union and some Arab propagandists have impelled many Jews to look to the Catholic community as an ally and countervailing force in combating this new wave of hatred toward the Jewish people.

The forthcoming nationwide evangelistic drive of "Key '73" -- paralleled by intensified mission-to-the-Jews programs whose conversionary efforts presuppose a denigration of Judaism as an "incomplete religion" -- have also underscored the importance of Catholic and other Christian efforts to put an end once and for all to proselytizing the Jewish people.

And finally, the recent dastardly acts of murder and terrorism against

Israelis, accompanied by the growing penetration of anti-Jewish Arab propaganda in Catholic and other church circles, have lent a sense of urgency in the Jewish community for Catholics to assume a more vigorous role in combating appeals of extremism and polarization and to engage together in effective works of reconciliation between Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Middle East, and among all peoples everywhere.

For in the last analysis, reconciliation was what Vatican Council II was all about in its ultimate meaning.



IMPACT OF 'HOLOCAUST' SERIES ON THE PEOPLE OF WEST GERMANY

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national inter-religious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, was script consultant to the NBC-TV "Holocaust" series.)

NEW YORK, Jan. 28 -- Nothing -- no book, no TV documentary, no film, no lecture -- has touched the soul of modern Germany on the moral watershed tragedy of the Nazi Holocaust as has the NBC-TV series, "Holocaust." That dramatic but factual conclusion has emerged from a series of overseas telephone calls that I had with public officials in West Germany, and in particular, with leaders in the village of Oberammergau, last Thursday following the viewing of the third installment of "Holocaust."

According to reports from West Germany in major American newspapers, an estimated 14 million people, or 39 percent of the 34 million people in the viewing audience, watched the third of the four installments last Thursday night. This was up from 13 million viewers, or 36 percent last who watched the second installment, and 11 million, or 32 percent, who watched the first installment.

The viewing audience for each of the three installments was more than double the predicted 15 percent that was expected to watch the program over Westdeutsche Rundfunk (WDR) of Cologne, the regional station coordinating the telecasts. (The number of people watching the last installment was not available at the time of this report.)

The German officials I spoke with said that the figures reported in the American newspapers were underestimated, and that, in fact, some 20 million people had seen the second installment. That means that one in three potential regional viewers were exposed to the "Holocaust" account. "That audience broke every record for regional television in Germany," one official told me."

"Quite Extraordinary" Experience

More than 20,000 people called the WDR television offices following the Tuesday night showing, and two-thirds of the callers were in favor of "Holocaust" being televised in Germany. Many of the viewers told the TV station authorities that they either could not go on watching it, and some said that they could not sleep and had to take valium or sleeping pills so powerful was the program's impact.

One authority told me, "The experience with the program already has been quite extraordinary. Nobody, even the most sympathetic in the TV industry, expected such an emotional reaction. It has staggered everybody."

The effect has even spread to East Germany where, according to reports, many living beyond the West German regional broadcasting range are demanding to see the series. Regional television broadcasts can be received in East Berlin and in areas along the boundary, but most East German viewers are beyond their range. According to reports, among the East Germans who had seen the program and called to express their reactions, positive comments outnumbered negative comments 6-2.

Reactions In Oberammergau

I spoke with several people in the village

of Oberammergau who are involved in an effort to revise the anti-Semitic version of the Oberammergau Passion Play scheduled for production in April 1980. Hans Schwaighofer, director of the Rosner text of the Passion Play, told me: "Practically everybody in Oberammergau has watched the first two installments of 'Holocaust.' The impact has been tremendous. There is a feeling of shock throughout much of Oberammergau. Many people are walking around the streets of the village saying, 'God's sake!' and shaking their heads in disbelief. How did we let that happen?"

The Oberammergau Town Council has sent around a questionnaire to all the villagers inviting them to sign up for the 1980 Passion Play. In light of the shocked feeling in the village in the wake of "Holocaust" many are refusing to answer the questionnaire, and it is now being extended for another eight days.

Several hundred of the younger villagers identified with the Rosner text have indicated that they will refuse to act in the Daisenberger version of the Passion Play which has been condemned by Christian and Jewish authorities alike as "structurally anti-Semitic." Some Oberammergau officials told me that they now hope that the reaction to "Holocaust" will play an important role in influencing the rejection of the anti-Jewish Daisenberger text of the play.

There were a good number of negative and hostile reactions of Germans who asked, "Why re-open old wounds? We should forget all this. It is enough time already."

Jewish Reaction Termed Positive

Heinz Galinski, head of the Jewish community in West Berlin, said that "the reaction of the Jewish community throughout West Germany had been positive," adding that he had received many calls from Jews and non-Jews alike. There are about 27,000 Jews in West Germany today, a tragic remnant of the more than 500,000 Jews who lived in pre-war Germany.

Galinski said the "timing of the showing was perfect. It comes at a time when there is talk again of the Auschwitz lie," a reference to the Nazi effort to revise history and claim that the genocide of Jews never took place, "when some students are making jokes again about Jews, when the statute of limitations on Nazi war crimes of murder is an issue and at a time when everybody seems to be preaching 'let us forget.'"

Perhaps the most significant response of all to "Holocaust" was that of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. In a debate in the lower house of the West German Parliament last Monday, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt commended the "Holocaust" series, said the film is a "must" in connection with the current controversy over extending the legal time limit under which Nazi war criminals can be prosecuted. He added that the series encourages critical and moral reflection which "is important in view of the decision each of us must make for himself in the course of this year on the statute of limitations."

Based on the impact already registered, the American Jewish Committee now plans to carry out a systematic study of responses to the entire series in Germany as well as in the 15 other countries in which the film is being shown, and then an intensive follow-up educational program in German religious and secular school systems. I have no hesitation in saying that if this "Holocaust" series had achieved nothing other than the impact that it has already had in Germany, it more than justified all the investment of time and energy in helping bring its message before millions of Germans who might otherwise have avoided facing the tragedy of the Holocaust.

SPECIAL TO THE JTA
THE VISIT OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
 By Marc H. Tanenbaum

NEW YORK, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- There is more than a surface symbolism in the fact that Pope John Paul II arrives in the United States on Yom Kippur, the most solemn day in the Jewish year. For on Yom Kippur the Jewish people throughout the world articulate their deepest values and aspirations for the redemption of the Jewish people, of Israel, and of the entire human family.

"And may all wickedness be consumed as a flame," Jews pray on this day, "and may evil rule be removed from the earth." How is evil in the world to be overcome? The Jewish prayer book proposes as an answer, "May all Your (God's) children unite in one fellowship to do Your will with a perfect heart."

Pope John Paul II comes to these shores at a time when the American people, and particularly the Jewish people, feel deeply troubled about "the wickedness and evil rule" in the world. At Camp David on July 10 I joined a group of 10 religious leaders in discussing with President Carter and his top aides "the malaise of America" and "the crisis of confidence."

For Americans, this pervasive anxiety and downbeat mood may well be an accumulated response to the shocks of Vietnam, Watergate, the assassinations of the Kennedys and Martin Luther King -- a gloom now deepened by the economic decline and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries induced oil crisis.

The Passion Play Of Andrew Young

For American Jews who, as Dorothy Parker said, are like everybody else but more so, there is the additional emotional burden these days of watching incredulously as elements in our government and some public personalities fall all over themselves to embrace and legitimize the Palestine Liberation Organization assassins, people who daily murder, bomb and terrorize innocent civilians, men, women and children.

Add to that dispiriting mood the Passion Play of Andrew Young -- the first Black Ambassador to the United Nations who is perceived as martyred, and the fact that some demagogic leaders resort to raw, blatant, racist anti-Semitism trotting out the ancient and discredited canard of collective Jewish guilt -- "the Jews crucified him." And the President of the United States finally tells the truth, namely, that "the Jews" did not crucify Andy Young who foreordained his resignation by his own conscious actions.

Meanwhile, the collective Jewish guilt charge has become established as a dogmatic verity in much of the Black consciousness and will be as difficult to overcome as the original "Christ-killer" canard.

Overarching these domestic troubles, Pope John Paul II comes to the United Nations at a time when the entire human family feels in its bones a universal malaise. The insane proliferation of nuclear weaponry finds the United States and the Soviet Union bristling with the capacity to destroy the four billion people of the earth 20 times over. There is now the real possibility of igniting a global Auschwitz. We are, in fact, the first generation to be told that we may be the last.

Pope Helped Save Jewish Lives

Against that bleak cosmic background, it is little wonder that there is such widespread expec-

tation associated with the Pope's visit. Pope John Paul II experienced in his personal life the barbarism, the suffering, and dehumanization of Nazi racism and anti-Semitism. He responded to that evil rule by helping to save Jewish lives in Poland during World War II.

He stood courageously against the Polish Communists who destroyed Jewish homes and cemeteries in their orgy of anti-Jewish hatred, and he fought effectively for human rights -- for religious liberty, the right to educate children religiously, the right to emigrate and reunite families.

When I first met Pope John Paul II on March 12 in Vatican City, together with other Jewish leaders I was deeply impressed by his intellectual acuity, his deep spirituality, his sensitive respect for Judaism and the Jewish people, his abhorrence of racial and religious hatred, his grasp of the real world, his respect for the human dignity of all people, above all, his hope. Such a commanding personality has the capacity to call the world to its senses -- to turn away from nuclear disaster and moral anarchy and to turn toward human unity.

The Church And The Jewish People

In his first official statement of his personal attitudes on the relation of the Catholic Church to the Jewish people, Pope John Paul II told us: "I believe that both sides (Christians and Jews) must continue their strong efforts to overcome difficulties of the past, so as to fulfill God's commandments of love, and to sustain a truly fruitful and fraternal dialogue that contributes to the good of each of the partners involved and to our better service of humanity."

And the Pope concluded, "As a sign of understanding and fraternal love already achieved (between Christians and Jews), let me express again my cordial welcome and greetings to you all with that word so rich in meaning, taken from the Hebrew language, which we Christians also use in our liturgy: Peace be with you. Shalom, Shalom!"

That message of Shalom -- of peace, of mutual respect, of love, of human solidarity -- uttered by this charismatic Pope in a troubled, even threatened world, could not come at a more opportune time not only for America but for the world at large.

COMBATTING ANTI-SEMITIC PROPAGANDA

MEXICO CITY, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- The Central Jewish Committee is acting to counter a flood of anti-Semitic propaganda from abroad contending that the Holocaust never occurred. The Committee, through its anti-defamation body, the Comite de Tribuna Israelita, will soon publish an anthology in Spanish containing documents, photographs and eye-witness accounts by Holocaust survivors of the death camps and ghettos of Nazi-occupied Europe.

The project was prompted by the appearance here of several books, edited and published in Spain, which deny that Jews were murdered in Europe during the years 1940-1945. Sergio Nudelstejer, secretary of the Central Jewish Committee, displayed samples of these publications at a recent meeting of anti-defamation leaders. They include a book by a Spanish writer, J. Eochaca, titled "The Myth of the Six Million," claiming that the Holocaust was a fraud and a pamphlet in the same vein written by Leon DeGrelle, a Belgian Rexist leader and former Nazi agent.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- The Habimah National Theater has decided to name its auditorium after the 90-year-old First Lady of the Israeli and Hebrew theater, Hanna Rovina.

SPECIAL TO THE JTA
CARDINAL COOKE, THE JEWS AND ISRAEL
 By Marc Tanenbaum

NEW YORK, Oct. 12 (JTA) — The nation's press, particularly the press in New York, has been lavish in its coverage of the life and death of Terence Cardinal Cooke, the late Archbishop of New York. But if one read that press carefully, especially The New York Times, one would never know that Cooke had a long and fruitful relationship with leaders of the Jewish community.

I first met this warm, cheerful prelate when he was Msgr. Cooke serving as personal secretary to the late Francis Cardinal Spellman. Most people are unaware that Spellman played a key role in helping mobilize support among the American Catholic bishops during Vatican Council II (1962-65) for the Vatican Declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations that condemned anti-Semitism and called for mutual respect between Catholics and Jews.

During that period, Msgr. Cooke frequently served as liaison between Spellman and myself, as well as with American Jewish Committee leaders Charles Silver, a close friend of the Cardinal, Judge Joseph Proskauer, and Morris Abram. It was then that Msgr. Cooke received his "on-the-job" training in Catholic-Jewish relations.

Repudiated Anti-Semitism

On his designation as Archbishop of New York, the AJC sponsored a luncheon in his honor on April 30, 1968, attended by prominent Catholic and Jewish leaders. In his "maiden" address on Catholic-Jewish relations, Cooke spoke of his commitment to "heightened respect, sympathy and affection" between Catholics and Jews. He then went on to repudiate anti-Semitism in these words:

"In these years following the Second Vatican Council, we Roman Catholics are more than ever convinced that anti-Semitism should never find a basis in the Catholic religion and must never find a place in any Catholic's life ... We Catholic people are anxious to salute our Jewish brothers anew. Conscious of our common heritage of salvation in the covenant between God and Abraham and his descendants, we pledge ourselves to continue fostering stronger and more extensive bonds of mutual respect, concern and cooperation."

Cooke then encouraged cooperation between Catholics and Jews in social justice areas:

"The pursuit of justice in civil rights and the resolution of our serious urban problems are surely areas in which our cooperation can bear rich fruit. Our opportunities are extraordinary here in New York -- a great Jewish city and a great Christian city I pray today and every day that together we shall seize the opportunities afforded now and serve the needs of our people more effectively than ever before."

Supports Historic Relationship Of Jews to Israel

In November, 1968, at a United Jewish Appeal dinner honoring his close friend, Charles Silver -- who conducted the famed Al Smith dinner for Catholic charities -- Cooke made warm and positive statements supporting the historic relationship of the Jewish people to Israel. Subsequently, he lent his name to petitions supporting the human rights of Soviet Jewry.

During the late 1970's and early 1980's, Cooke attended Sabbath services and spoke from the pulpits of several leading New York synagogues. Reciprocally, rabbis were invited to speak from the pulpit of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

On the problematic side, some Jewish leaders differed publicly with the Cardinal on such issues as abortion and aid to private schools, but there was co-operation with him on the condemnation of drugs, pornography, abuse of sex and violence in the media, and related public morality issues.

Abhorrence Of Violence

Some anxiety did develop in the Jewish community when Cooke became president of the Near East Catholic Welfare Council, whose professionals were one-sidedly allied with Palestinians and other Arabs to the exclusion of any sympathy for victimized Jewish refugees in Israel and in Arab countries. But the Cardinal trod a careful middle ground in upholding the legitimate social welfare needs of Arabs while not retreating from his moral support of Israel.

His abhorrence of violence, made public in his condemnation of terrorism in Ireland, carried over to his disdain for PLO terrorism and violence, as he told me on more than one occasion.

His keen sensitivity to the state of the Jewish soul was perhaps not dramatically reflected when he and I collaborated on world refugee problems, particularly the Vietnamese "boat people" tragedy. At a press conference held at St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1980, Cooke explained his motivation for responding to the Indochinese refugee crisis in these moving words:

"Our generation witnessed the savagery of the Nazi Holocaust which led to the destruction of millions of Jewish lives. To our eternal shame, most of the world stood by while human beings were being destroyed. We are now trying to learn our moral lessons from that tragedy, and that is why we -- Christians and Jews together -- are joining hands to stand against the evil which is afflicting these poor Vietnamese refugees."

**JUMBLATT SAYS HE WILL NOT ATTEND
RECONCILIATION TALKS SET FOR OCT. 20**

PARIS, Oct. 12 (JTA) -- President Amin Gemayel of Lebanon today set October 20 as the date for the national reconciliation talks but Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, on a visit to Paris, stressed that he will not attend.

Beirut Radio monitored in Paris said a preparatory committee will meet tomorrow at the Lebanese Health Ministry, on the green line which separates east and west Beirut, to set the way for the actual talks intended to resolve eight years of civil war.

Jumblatt, one of the heads of the anti-Gemayel opposition front, conferred here today with Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson and various Lebanese political leaders in exile. Yesterday, after a meeting with Swedish Premier Olof Palme, he announced that he will not attend the reconciliation talks unless Gemayel gives concrete assurances that he intends to respect Druze rights in the Shouf mountains.

French sources say that in spite of Cheysson's urging to recognize the legitimacy of the central Beirut government, Jumblatt remained adamant in his opposition.

FOR JTA

POPE JOHN PAUL II AFFIRMS CATHOLIC-JEWISH RELATIONS
AS CATHOLIC DOCTRINE; HOLDS STATUS QUO ON ISRAEL

by Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Rabbi Tanenbaum, director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee, is an authority on Vatican-Jewish relations. He was the only rabbi present at Vatican Council II, and has just returned from a mission to Israel, Italy, and the Vatican where he had an audience with Pope John Paul II.)

VATICAN CITY - At a private audience with American Jewish Committee leaders last Friday held in the resplendent Apostolic Palace, Pope John Paul II went further than any Pope in recent memory in affirming that improved Catholic-Jewish relations is now an article of Catholic doctrine, "an expression of the (Catholic) faith, a word of the Divine Wisdom."

At the same time, he remained cautious and vague about the relationship of the Holy See to Israel.

Howard I. Friedman of Los Angeles, AJC president, led an eight-member AJC delegation in an audience devoted to commemorating the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II and the defeat of Nazism and the 20th anniversary of the adoption by Vatican Council II of Nostra Aetate, the declaration which opened a new chapter in Catholic-Jewish relations. It was the first audience in 1985 of any Jewish group with the Polish Pope devoted to examining the impact of the Vatican Declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations during the past two decades.

"As the Nazi trauma appalled us with despair over human evil," Mr. Friedman said in his prepared text, "so the 20th anniversary of the close of Vatican Council II inspires all of us with hope and promise for a more humane future. ...It is no exaggeration to state that as a result of these far-reaching pronouncements and the practical actions they have inspired, greater

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progress in improved Catholic-Jewish relations has taken place during the past two decades than in the past two millenia."

Mr. Friedman then said that "the American Jewish Committee shares" the Pope's vision "of upholding human dignity by vigorously advocating the universality of civil and political liberties, and, in particular, religious liberty for all peoples everywhere, especially those in oppressive totalitarian societies."

The AJC president then referred to his agency's "close cooperation with Catholic Relief Services in seeking to relieve the suffering, hunger and deprivation of millions of fellow human beings in Ethiopia, and in Africa generally."

The climax of Mr. Friedman's statement concentrated on the importance of establishing "diplomatic ties between the Holy See and the State of Israel and her people." He said, "Such an historic act, we believe, would be a watershed event in Catholic-Jewish relations. It would help create the sense of relaity (in the Arab world) which is indispensable to peace, and we would consider it a happy development and confirmation of the decisions of Vatican Council II."

In response, the Pope declared, "I wish to confirm, with utmost conviction, that the teaching of the Church proclaimed during the Second Vatican Council in the Declaration Nostra Aetate...remains always for us, for the Catholic Church, for the Episcopate...and for the Pope, a teaching which must be followed -- a teaching which it is necessary to accept not merely as something fitting, but much more as an expression of the faith, as an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as a word of Divine Wisdom."

Vatican authorities told us that the Pope affirms by that statement that he regards improved Catholic-Jewish relations as an "article of Catholic faith," of permanent value, and its progress is irreversible. That assumed importance in light of anxiety in Catholic circles that the Vatican Synod called for November may lead to reversal of progressive achievements of Vatican Council II.

Asserting that "the relationships between Jews and Christians have radically improved in these years," the Pontiff stated. "Where there was distrust and perhaps fear, there is now confidence. Where there was ignorance and therefore prejudice and stereotypes, there is now growing mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect. There is above all, love between us, that kind of love, I mean, which is for both of us a fundamental injunction of our religious traditions and which the New Testament has received from the Old."

The Pope then condemned anti-Semitism, saying, "Anti-Semitism, which is unfortunately still a problem in certain places, has been repeatedly condemned by the Catholic tradition as incompatible with Christ's teaching and with the respect due to the dignity of men and women created in the image and likeness of God. I once again express the Catholic Church's repudiation of all oppression and persecution, and of all discrimination against people -- from whatever side it may come."

Pope John Paul acknowledged "the close collaboration between the American Jewish Committee with some of our Catholic agencies in alleviating hunger in Ethiopia and in the Sahel."

On the Middle East, the Pope then vaguely said, "I know also of your concern for the peace and security of the Holy Land. May the Lord give to

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that land, and to all the peoples and nations in that part of the world, the blessings contained in the word 'shalom.''" He then expressed the hope that "the sons and daughters of Abraham -- Jews, Christians and Muslims may live together and prosper in peace."

Then in private conversation with the AJC representatives he spoke concretely of "peace and security for Israel," but said there were "complexities" that stood in the way presently of establishing diplomatic relations.

In meetings prior to the audience with the Pope, the AJC leaders spoke at great length with Archbishop Achille Silvestrini of the Vatican Secretariat of State and with Jan Cardinal Willebrands, president of the Vatican Secretariat for Religious Relations with Jews, on the importance of "full recognition throughout the civilized world, including the Holy See, of Israel's sovereign legitimacy as the only means of dispelling the illusion in the Arab world that somehow Israel's continued existence can be undermined. Nothing would contribute more to peace in that area than the dispelling of that illusion."

In addition to Mr. Friedman and Rabbi Tanenbaum, the AJC delegation consisted of Mrs. Friedman, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Ellenoff of New York, (Mr. Ellenoff is chairman of AJC's Board of Governors), Dr. David Gordis, AJC's executive vice-president; and Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Gardner of Buffalo, AJC governors.

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**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:
FARRAKHAN, THE DEVIL, AND THE JEWS**

By Marc Tanenbaum

NEW YORK, Oct. 16 (JTA) -- The real danger posed by the recent, highly-publicized speeches of the Rev. Louis Farrakhan, I believe, is that he is beginning to be treated as big-time media entertainment.

Audiences appear to be intrigued by the Farrakhan psychodrama -- the bizarre scene of frowning bodyguards in bow-ties; the bravura rhetoric and its outrageous apocalyptic imagery; the wholesale frisking of an entire audience; the mindless, uncritical excitement of the media over another circus "happening."

The danger is that mesmerized preoccupation with the theater obscures or diminishes the content of what Farrakhan is really preaching -- his precise ideology, his geo-political world-view, his propaganda warfare.

A study of Farrakhan's speeches and writings since the 1950's discloses that he has a coherent world-view that at its core is rabidly anti-white, anti-American, anti-Semitic and anti-Israel. Defenders of American democracy, and certainly the Jewish community, cannot afford to dismiss Farrakhan as if he were some minstrel act.

Should he continue to gain large audiences and increased media exposure -- and should the PLO and Libya's Muammar Qaddafi continue to pour added millions of dollars into his coffers -- Farrakhan might well become a significant source of poisonous pollution of the wells of American democracy. And he could certainly become a focal rallying point, especially among young Blacks, for vicious anti-Semitic and anti-Israel hatred in the United States and abroad.

The Core Of Farrakhan's Ideology

At the core of Farrakhan's ideology is a "white devil theory." First propounded by Elijah Muhammad, "prophet" and founder of the Black Muslim movement, this myth tells of an evil scientist named "Yakub" who worked for some 600 years in his laboratory on the lonely fortress island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. After innumerable experiments and many generations of selective breeding of light-skinned Blacks, Yakub created an entirely new race of man -- "the degenerate white devil" who is the enemy and who must be violently destroyed.

In the 1950's, early in his career in the Black Muslim movement, when Farrakhan was known as Louis X. Wolcott, he wrote and recorded a song that became a smash hit among Black nationalists. Its title -- "A White Man's Heaven Is A Black Man's Hell." Farrakhan was a loyal and dedicated disciple of Elijah Muhammad, unswervingly committed to his Black nationalist-separatist policies.

When Elijah Muhammad died, his son Warid D. (Wallace) Muhammad took over the movement and radically changed its outlook. He abandoned the nationalist - separatist ideology; he invited Caucasians, previously vilified and barred from membership, to join the newly-renamed American Muslim Mission; and he urged the faithful to support actively the American democratic system. He also advocated dialogue between Black Muslims and Jews.

In 1978, Farrakhan left the American Muslim Mission, strongly opposing Wallace Muhammad's integrationist views. He then formed the Nation of Islam and advocated a return to separatist, self-help policies of Elijah Muhammad. In his subsequent

sermons, Farrakhan impassionedly called for the liberation of Black people throughout the world, and renewed Elijah Muhammad's call for violent retribution against whites: "The white man is our mortal enemy."

Shares Vision With Islamic Fanatics

Thus, the first key to understanding the real Farrakhan is that he shares the ideological vision of other Islamic fanatics, notably Ayatollah Khomeini and Qaddafi. Like them, he believes there will be an inevitable confrontation between the "children of light" (fundamentalist Muslims) and "the children of darkness" (the white devilish Western world, termed by Khomeini and Qaddafi as "the Great Satan.")

Farrakhan has translated that cosmic vision of Armageddon into concrete political programs studded with appeals to violence. In an address before the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee on March 17, 1984, he stated that the Palestinians and Black people in America were "oppressed" and they should take matters into their own hands.

A chief obstacle to Farrakhan's vision of Islamic triumph at Armageddon is that for some 3,000 years there has existed another "children of light," namely, "the chosen people of Israel." For years -- much before his meteoric rise to prominence through association with Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign -- Farrakhan has devoted major time and energy trying to displace Jews as "the chosen people" and to replace them with Blacks as the carriers of history.

His most recent version of that "new Israel" theory was expressed in his Los Angeles sermon of September 15 in which Farrakhan proclaimed, "I am declaring to the world today that they (the Jews) are not the chosen people of God. I am declaring to the world that you, the Black people of America and the Western Hemisphere, are the chosen people."

Farrakhan's theological views are a vital reinforcement for the PLO and Arab rejectionist political ideology toward Zionism and Israel. If he succeeds in persuading his followers and fellow-travelers that God's covenant with the Jewish people is no longer valid, then by extension God's covenant with Israel's promised land is equally invalid. Farrakhan makes precisely that connection between theology and politics:

"Now that nation called Israel," he said on June 28, 1984, in Chicago, "never has had any peace in 40 years and she will never have any peace because there can be no peace structured on injustice, thievery, lying and deceit and using the name of God to shield your gutter religion under His holy and righteous names." He added, "The people of this earth will never again be deceived by those who come in the name of God, cloaking themselves in the robes of God, but are in fact members of the synagogue of Satan."

Ironically, while Farrakhan's racism is both anti-white and anti-Christian, he has in fact appropriated the medieval Christian mythology and apocalyptic rhetoric depicting the Jews as anti-Christ, the very incarnation of evil. Farrakhan expressed that demonic view of Jews on July 31, 1984, in a ferocious speech before the National Press Club in which he stated, "Israel and Jews will prove to be the destruction of the Western world."

Farrakhan's notoriety, and the attention he is receiving in the media, contribute immeasurably to his being welcomed as a comrade-in-arms by the PLO and Qaddafi. For the past decade, they have spearheaded the infamous "Zionism is racism" crusade against Israel and Jews. Their purposes are identical with those of Farrakhan -- the delegitimization of the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

The Farrakhan phenomenon

Sharing the ideology of Khomeini, Khaddafi

By MARC H. TANENBAUM

The real danger posed by the recent, highly publicized speeches of the Rev. Louis Farrakhan, I believe, is that he is beginning to be treated as big-time media entertainment.

Audiences appear intrigued by the Farrakhan psychodrama — the bizarre scene of frowning bodyguards in bow ties, the bravura rhetoric and its outrageous apocalyptic imagery, the mindless, uncritical excitement of the media over another circus happening. The danger is that mesmerized preoccupation with the theater obscures the content of what Farrakhan is really preaching — his precise ideology, his geopolitical world view, his propaganda warfare.

A study of Farrakhan's speeches and writings since the 1960s discloses that he has a coherent world view that at its core is rabidly anti-white, anti-American, anti-Semitic and anti-Israel.

Defenders of American democracy and certainly the Jewish community cannot afford to dismiss Farrakhan as if he were some minstrel act. Should he continue to gain large audiences and increased media exposure — and should the PLO and Libya's Khaddafi continue to pour added millions of dollars into his cofers — Farrakhan might well become a significant source of poisonous pollution of the wells of American democracy. And he could certainly become a rallying point, especially among young blacks, for vicious anti-Semitic and anti-Israel hatred.

His attacks seek to demonize Jews, Judaism and Israel as deserving destruction

At the core of Farrakhan's ideology is a "white devil theory." First propounded by Elijah Muhammad, "prophet" and founder of the Black Muslim movement, this myth tells of an evil scientist named Yakub who worked some 600 years in his laboratory on the lonely fortress island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. After innumerable experiments and many generations of selective breeding of light-skinned blacks, Yakub created an entirely new race of man — "the degenerate white devil," who is the enemy and who must be violently destroyed.

In the 1950s, early in his career in the Black Muslim movement when Farrakhan was known as Louis X. Wolcott, he wrote and recorded a song that became a smash hit among black nationalists. Its title: "A White Man's Heaven Is a Black Man's Hell." Farrakhan was a loyal and dedicated disciple of Elijah Muhammad, unswervingly committed to his black nationalist-separatist policies.

When Elijah Muhammad died, his son Warid D. Wallace) Muhammad took over the movement and radically changed its outlook. He abandoned the nationalist-separatist ideology; he invited Caucasians, previously vilified and barred from membership, to join the renamed American Muslim Mission, and he urged the faithful to support actively the American democratic system. He also advocated dialogue between Black Muslims and Jews.

In 1978, Farrakhan left the American Muslim Mission, strongly opposing Wallace Muhammad's integrationist views. He formed the Nation of Islam and advocated a return to the separatist, self-help policies of Elijah Muhammad's call for violent retribution against whites, "our mortal enemy."

Thus, Farrakhan shares the ideological vision of other Islamic fanatics, notably Ayatollah Khomeini and Libya's Muammar Khaddafi. Like them, he believes there will be an inevitable confrontation between the "children of light" (fundamentalist Muslims) and the "children of darkness" (the white deviled Western world, termed by Khomeini and Khaddafi as "the Great Satan").

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, international relations director of the American Jewish Committee, served 25 years as the committee's national interreligious affairs director.

Farrakhan has translated that cosmic vision of Armageddon into concrete political programs studded with appeals to violence. In an address before the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee March 17, 1984, he stated that the Palestinians and black people in America were "oppressed" and they should take matters into their own hands with violence.

A chief obstacle to Farrakhan's vision of Islamic triumph at Armageddon is that for some 3,000 years there has existed another "children of light," namely, "the chosen people of Israel." For years — much before his meteoric rise to prominence through association with Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign — Farrakhan devoted time and energy trying to displace Jews as "the chosen people" and to replace them with blacks as the carriers of history.

His most recent version of that "new Israel" theory was expressed in his Los Angeles sermon Sept. 15, in which Farrakhan proclaimed: "I am declaring to the world that they (the Jews) are not the chosen people of God. I am declaring to the world that you, the black people of America and the Western Hemisphere, are the chosen people."

That combative, hostile concept is a version of what the late psychoanalyst, Dr. Erich Fromm, described as "group narcissism." In that intergroup dynamic, a group attributes to itself all virtue and denies to the outside group any value, ascribing to the outgroup deviant qualities. Fromm terms such group narcissism a "semipathological phenomenon" that is "one of the most important sources of human aggression" and massacres.

Farrakhan's theological views are a vital reinforcement for the PLO and Arab rejectionist political ideology toward Zionism and Israel. If he succeeds in persuading his followers and fellow travelers that God's Covenant with the Jewish people is no longer valid, then by extension God's Covenant with Israel's promised land is equally invalid. Farrakhan makes precisely that connection between theology and politics:

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Ironically, while Farrakhan's racism is both anti-white and anti-Christian, he has in fact appropriated the medieval Christian mythology and apocalyptic rhetoric depicting the Jews as the anti-Christ, the very incarnation of evil, the devil's creature.

Farrakhan expressed that demonic view of Jews July 31, 1984, in a ferocious speech before the National Press Club in which he stated: "Israel and Jews will prove to be the destruction of the Western world."

In that perspective, his admiring description of Hitler as "a great man . . . wickedly great" was not a casual comment.

All of Farrakhan's attacks on Jews, Judaism and Israel are concentrated on one single purpose. He is obsessively seeking to demonize Jews and Israel as the enemies of mankind who deserve violent destruction if mankind is to be saved. His attacks on alleged Jewish control of the mass media, of banks and industry and of politicians, are violent expressions of that coherent theology and political ideology.

Farrakhan's notoriety contributes immeasurably to his being welcomed as a comrade-in-arms by the PLO and Libya's Khaddafi. For the past decade, they have spearheaded the infamous "Zionism is racism" crusade against Israel and Jews. Their purposes are identical with those of Farrakhan — the delegitimization of the Jewish people and the state of Israel. Together they are seeking to inflict on Israel and Jews what they condemn the South Africans for doing to the blacks — making the Jews the victims of apartheid on the world scene.

Awareness of the nature of Farrakhan's ideology is essential as Jewish agencies and their allies consider strategies to counter this latest bigot's assault on the American democratic traditions of tolerance, mutual respect and pluralistic coexistence.

BACKGROUND REPORT**U.S. JEWRY HAS A ROLE IN HELPING
TO ASSURE THE STRENGTHENING OF
SPANISH-ISRAELI DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS**

By Marc Tanenbaum

NEW YORK, Jan. 22 (JTA) -- On Monday, January 13, my Spanish-speaking colleague, Jacobo Kovadloff and I sat in the office of Ambassador Manuel Sassot, Consul General of Spain, discussing the status of the much-reported plan of the Spanish government to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

While the conversation was warm and friendly, we told the Ambassador that many in the American Jewish community were becoming frustrated over the repeated promises to Jewish leaders by Spanish officials that diplomatic ties would soon be established, but that for more than a year nothing has happened.

Ambassador Sassot, who formerly directed the Middle East desk of the Spanish Foreign Ministry, sat back in his chair, and declared firmly, "I can tell you now that the decision has been taken. I have just spoken with our Foreign Ministry in Madrid and it will happen within the next weeks."

Last week, Spain and Israel exchanged diplomatic formalities in The Netherlands when Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez and Premier Shimon Peres, who are personal friends, met in The Hague. That development rightly deserves to be characterized as "historic." But there ought not to be any euphoria, for a rocky road lies ahead with the Arab world. The rockier that road becomes the more important will be the role of American Jewry in helping sustain Spain's rightful decision.

Intense Arab Pressure On Spain

Spain has been subjected to intense pressures from the Arab League and its member-states threatening reprisals were Spanish-Israeli diplomatic accords realized. The ugliness of that pressure is reflected in a Spanish-language publication issued at the Saudi Embassy in Madrid which declared, "Do you want to establish relations with a racist, fascist and terrorist state?"

But more serious than the propaganda warfare carried out against Spain by Arab nations is the brute fact that the Arab world has become one of the largest buyers of Spanish-made weapons. In the first three quarters of 1983, Spain exported \$2.5 billion in goods to the Arab world while total imports came to \$5.2 billion, mostly in oil.

Saudi Arabia currently buys \$150 million in Spanish arms annually and Madrid is seeking to increase that to \$250 million by the end of next year. Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Libya are the major Arab investors in Spain, with large holdings in real estate, housing, and tourist-related industries. Spanish exports to Arab countries include steel, trucks, heavy machinery, chemicals, and increasingly, military hardware.

In contrast, trade between Spain and Israel is relatively insignificant. Indeed, they are competitors in the world market for the sale of oranges and other fruits and vegetables. However, technical and cultural ties have been steadily increasing. Israeli water experts have been called into Spain's southernmost region to help solve the crippling drought problem there. Last year, Iberia and El Al signed an agreement launching direct flights between the two countries.

While Felipe Gonzalez is known to be a genuine friend of Israel's, it is realistic to expect that Arab pressures, especially economic leverage, will force him continuously to make gestures to the Arab world. Thus, in a letter he wrote to the Arab League on April 25, 1985, he assured the Arab governments that not only will Spain's gesture not entail support of Israel's policy, but that it may, in fact, benefit Arab interests.

But American Jews have an important role to play in helping counterbalance these inevitable Arab pressures against Spain in the months ahead. Spain has gone through a decade of industrial crisis as a result of the 1973 OPEC-induced oil crisis. The official unemployment rate is around 2.9 million, or almost 22 percent of the available work force, the highest rate in Western Europe.

While Gonzalez's government has made significant strides in lowering inflation and the trade deficit, Spain is in urgent need of major investments in industry and technology, as well as in increased trade and commerce.

Mutual U.S., Jewish And Spanish Interests

As is the case with West and East European governments which have sought American understanding and support, Spain very much needs the sympathetic interest of American Jews in helping to promote increased commercial ties between the United States and Spain. Spanish Embassy officials have freely volunteered that American tourism to Spain is one of the largest producer of much-needed foreign currency, and they are aware that American Jews are among the largest groups of tourists to Spain.

Beyond the natural interest of American Jews in wanting to assure the strengthening of Spanish-Israeli diplomatic and other human contacts, Jews have a profound interest as Americans in helping sustain the democratic institutions and values that have emerged out of the darkness of Franco Spain just some 12 years ago. Those democratic commitments, as well as Spain's recent firm opposition to terrorism, deserve to place Spain high on the foreign policy agenda of American Jewry.

Special to JTA

POPE JOHN PAUL II'S PRAYER MEETING IN ASSISI

by Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Rabbi Tanenbaum, director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee, has been a leader in Catholic-Jewish relations over the past 25 years. He was the only rabbi present at Vatican Council II.)

NEW YORK - On the face of it, the meeting of representatives from the world's major religions to pray for peace on October 27 in Assisi, Italy, is a positive development. Called by Pope John Paul II, leaders of Catholics, Protestants, Sikhs, Hindus, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, Shintoists and animists will meet in St. Francis of Assisi's birthplace for prayer, and then will assemble the next day to discuss ideas for the promotion of peace.

While clearly Judaism's leaders are deeply committed to the idea of "shalom," the organization of this prayer demonstration has not been without problems for Jewish spokesmen.

First is the problem of calendar. The prayer day is scheduled to take place on the morning after Simchat Torah, the final day of Sukkot. In practical terms that means that no Jewish religious leader, certainly no Chief Rabbi, would violate yom tov by traveling overseas to Assisi on the Sunday before. As of now, only Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff of Italy is expected to be present as a Jewish religious representative. He will need to travel only a short distance from Rome to Assisi.

Earlier, an official invitation had been extended to Rabbi Mordecai Waxman,

chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), which relates to the Vatican and the World Council of Churches as coordinating body for the American Jewish Committee, B'nai B'rith International, the Synagogue Council, the World Jewish Congress, and the Israel Interfaith Committee. Because of the conflict with Simchat Toray, Rabbi Waxman will not attend.

We were told that some individual rabbis and Jewish organizational people will come to Assisi, but they have not received official invitations.

Beyond the calendar problem, there are some "theological" difficulties which are being discussed in Jewish and other non-Catholic circles. When the idea of a world peace meeting was first discussed in Rome several years ago, the conception that some of us set forth was that the foremost recognized leaders of the major Western and Oriental religions would join together in inviting representatives of their respective communities to join in appropriate prayers and discussion for world peace.

Such "ecumenical" invitations would have precluded any possibilities of religious "one-upmanship" or triumphalism. As it turns out, this meeting is now being perceived essentially as a "Papal" or "Vatican" meeting to which other religions are being invited to take part. One consequence, whether intended or not, might be to establish the Pope as "the moral conscience of mankind" to which these world's religious representatives -- not necessarily the elected leaders of the major religions -- would seem to attest by their presence.

Assisi - Page Three.

That imagery of a predominantly Catholic initiative with interreligious participation rather than a genuine pan-religious event will be underscored by the fact that the climactic prayer event will take place in the Basilica of St. Francis instead of some more neutral assembly place.

In any case, the threat of nuclear catastrophe is so great and the cause of world peace so compelling that religious leaders appear to be ready to put aside ecumenical protocol for the time being in order to make a strong public demonstration for the cause of world peace.

MHT:RPR

10/16/86



**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:
POPE CAPITULATED TOO MUCH
IN MEETING WITH WALDHEIM**
By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

NEW YORK, June 30 (JTA) -- If one were pressed to summarize the entire furor over the incredible meeting between Pope John Paul II and Dr. Kurt Waldheim into a single phrase, I suggest the following would be close to the mark:

Kurt Waldheim, the unrepentant Nazi officer, hijacked the Pope and the Vatican for his own whitewashing purposes.

When Waldheim left Rome last Friday after his audience with Pope John Paul II, he is quoted as saying to the press that his meeting with the Pontiff was "a much greater success than he had expected."

Waldheim had good reason for feeling jubilant. Despite the year-long controversy over the Austrian president's Nazi past -- and his lying about and denying that past for some 40 years -- the Pope chose not to make a single public reference to those grim facts. Instead, the Pontiff spoke of Waldheim in idealized terms of being "a diplomat and foreign minister as well as your activity in the United Nations...always dedicated to the securing of peace among all countries."

Responding, Waldheim referred to Pope John Paul II as "the conscience of mankind" as if to suggest that the Papal embodiment of the world's conscience had completely exonerated him. Thus, the worst fears of the Jewish people about this audience were realized -- Waldheim appears to have obtained instant absolution of his sins, without ever acknowledging his activities in Greece and Yugoslavia as an officer in the ruthless Nazi Army Group E.

Cries For Examination

Many implications flow from this incomprehensible episode that call for the most serious and responsible examination by Catholics and Jews, especially by the Vatican authorities who orchestrated this morally bizarre event.

First is the moral damage that this audience may well cause to international law and order. In effect, the worldwide publicity given to this Papal reception to Waldheim exudes the message that every former Nazi, every murderer, criminal, and terrorist need never feel any guilt or remorse over their evil deeds. If they manage to lie about their anti-human actions successfully, and hang around long enough, they might even obtain instant absolution through an audience with the Pope or his surrogates. Waldheim did just that.

Second is the issue of the Vatican policy of indiscriminate invitations to every head of state, regardless of personal history or moral character. If a head of state who is a Catholic wishes to enter a Papal confessional booth and repent his or her sins and ask for forgiveness, that is an entirely private matter between the Pope as universal pastor and the Catholic believer. Jews and other non-Catholics have no standing to raise questions about such religious matters, no matter how good or bad the moral character of the *gentile*.

It might be instructive for Jews to articulate the Jewish doctrine of "teshuva" ("repentance") which is completely relevant to the Waldheim testimony. Judaism requires four actions of a would-be penitent (according to Maimonides): a

penitent must confess explicitly one's sins; he or she must have an overwhelming sense of shame for one's evil deeds; he or she must make a firm determination to turn away from such wrongdoing; and, the crucial test, the penitent must demonstrate changed behavior. Waldheim has met none of these penitential requirements.

Raises Ethical Questions

The Pope-Waldheim audience also raises the questions for moral accountability for what use the head of state makes of that audience. When PLO chieftain Yasir Arafat manipulated an audience with Pope John Paul II (not a private audience, as generally believed), his henchmen plastered the photograph of the Pope with this master terrorist all over the Arab, Muslim, and Third World press. The caption, invariably, was a version of "Pope Blesses PLO Policies."

The Vatican issued a muted clarifying statement subsequently, but it never caught up with the exploitation of that "photo opportunity" by Arafat and his terrorist band.

President Idi Amin of Uganda did exactly the same thing with a photo he took with the late Pope Paul VI. Amin, whose PLO guards and Muslim tribesmen massacred nearly 500,000 Black Christians (half of them Roman Catholic), exploited that audience by having his Papal picture splashed all over the African and Muslim press with a similar caption, suggesting that the Pope and the Vatican "blesses" his murderous policies and actions.

The moral question seems self-evident: If one opens the door of your apartment house to a confessed burglar or rapist, and he proceeds to rob every apartment in the building or rape its women inhabitants, is it morally responsible to say only, "All I did was to let him in the front door. Freedom of access, you know."

Look At Austria's Politics

But the real and ultimate question is: Why did the Vatican Secretariat of State agree to this audience which it certainly knew would be controversial and possibly damaging? And the answer to that crucial question, I believe, lies buried deep in the internal politics of Austria.

Waldheim has been a major embarrassment to Austria. The Social Democrats have become increasingly vocal in attacking the People's Party, which nominated Waldheim for the presidency, for bringing shame and political isolation to Austria. After the United States put Waldheim on "the watch list," barring his entry, the People's Party began a desperate effort to break out of the growing vice of Austrian isolation and rejection by the U.S. and Western Europe.

The Vatican became the pole vault out of that isolation and humiliation. Since Austria's population is about 87 percent Roman Catholic, and since there is a real danger of political turmoil in Austria if the Waldheim boil is not lanced, the Pope and the Vatican, responding to the People's Party entreaties, decided to help bail them out through this audience.

But the haunting question that won't go away is: Why did Pope John Paul II have to capitulate so completely on Waldheim's terms?

(Editor's note: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee, was the only rabbi present as guest observer at Vatican Council II.)

FOR:

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

POPE JOHN PAUL II AND THE JEWS -- A TURNING POINT

by Marc H. Tanenbaum

The journey across the Tiber River on September 1st from Rome to the Pope's summer residence in Castel Gandolfo was one of the longest journeys in Jewish history.

On that morning, three Vatican limousines drove nine representatives of world Jewry from Vatican City to the Pope's summer villa. Before the media of the world, the Swiss Guards greeted us with a formal salute, and the Papal chamberlains whisked us into the Pope's reception room.

Days before our "unprecedented" conversation with Pope John Paul II, I wandered through the grimy remnants of the ghetto in which Roman Jews lived under earlier Popes. My ghetto visit was a poignant reminder of the 1,900 years that Catholics and Jews have traveled in modern times.

This ghetto was established by Pope Paul IV in 1555. Convinced that the Jews were "Christ-killers," he ordered them debased behind ghetto walls. He also decreed that all Jews wear a yellow hat -- precursor to Hitler's yellow star -- as a symbol of their pariah status. Before the Piazza Giudia, or Jewish square, stands the Church of Santa Maria della Pianto where ghetto Jews were forced to listen to sermons for their conversion.

Such was the demonic pattern of Catholic-Jewish relations under Papal direction for much of the past 1,900 years, relieved only occasionally by a compassionate Pope who intervened to prevent acts of violence and persecution against the Jews in their Papal States.

By contrast, on this September morning in 1987, Pope John Paul II demonstrated dramatically his rejection of that anti-Jewish past. After greeting each of us with the welcome of "Shalom," the Pope joined our semi-circle. He then affirmed his desire to build a new future between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people, based on shared values and mutual respect.

There were no prepared speeches and surely no sermons for our conversion. Instead, Pope John Paul II sat as if in a family circle and listened to what was on our hearts and minds. To my knowledge, that has never happened before.

Each of us acknowledged his commitment to the principles of the Second Vatican Council's historic declaration, Nostra Aetate, which urged "brotherly dialogue" between Catholics and Jews. This globe-trotting Pope has met with Jewish leaders on 20 different occasions. More than any of his predecessors, each time he has rejected anti-Semitism and affirmed respect and friendship for the Jewish people and Judaism.

Precisely because his record has been so strong have the "surprises" of the Waldheim audience, and the earlier Yasir Arafat meeting been shocking to world Jewry. We were deeply concerned, we said to the Pope, that the Waldheim audience had sent an unintended message to millions of Catholic youths in Germany, Austria, Poland and elsewhere who are struggling to face that horrendous past that the Holocaust has now become irrelevant, not even worth a mention in the presence of this former Nazi lieutenant.

The Pope anticipated this discussion in his opening remarks to us: "Today is September 1, 1987, the 48th anniversary of the Nazi invasion of Poland. I know what the Nazis did to my Polish nation, I know what suffering they inflicted on the Jewish people." And then later, to a small circle of us, he said, "This monstrous evil of the Shoah must be overcome by the good."

In direct response to our Waldheim discussion the day before, Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, president of the Vatican Secretariat for Religious Relations with Judaism, announced that an official Catholic document would be prepared examining 1,900 years of anti-Semitism in the Christian West, and proposing concrete means for uprooting its poisonous seeds throughout the world. To that unprecedented proposal -- a major achievement of our Vatican discussions -- the Pope responded, "I support that study. I endorse it wholeheartedly."

If that project is not derailed along the way, it could like Nostra Aetate literally transform the Catholic-Jewish landscape for generations to come.

The absence of full diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Israel was also fully discussed. The Pope said he understood how central Israel and Jerusalem are in the consciousness of the Jewish people. A breakthrough took place when Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the influential Vatican Secretary of State, agreed to meet with us "from time to time" to explore obstacles that stand in the way of full normalization of relations.

When the Pope meets with Jewish leaders in Miami and in other cities, I believe he should be welcomed with sincere goodwill. Despite the disturbing fits and starts in the recent past, this Polish pope has a better track record on Jewish issues and human rights than any of his predecessors -- except possibly the late Pope John XXIII. Precisely because of his struggles against Nazism and Communism, and because he feels keenly the powerful bonds between Christianity and Judaism, I expect that he will yet make historic contributions to Catholic-Jewish solidarity, and even to the forging of full diplomatic ties between the Holy See and Israel.

Good meetings between the Pope and American Jewry can be invaluable stepping-stones in that direction.

Rabbi Tanenbaum, director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee, was the only rabbi present as quest observer at Vatican Council II.

MHT:RPR

9/9/87



JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (250 words)

FOR RELEASE

MARCH 25, 1988

ANSCHLUSS REVEALS WORST AND BEST OF AUSTRIA

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

The observance this month of the 50th anniversary of the Anschluss, Nazi Germany's annexation of Austria, is revealing the worst and the best of Austrian society.

The worst is reflected in the appalling fact that for the past 40 years most Austrians have imagined themselves the "first victims" of Nazi aggression and have systematically denied or repressed any knowledge of their massive involvement. But the historic truths brought to the fore during this commemoration can no longer be denied.

When Hitler and his Nazi hordes marched into Austria on March 13, 1938, they were greeted deliriously by some 200,000 Austrians in Vienna. Austria provided three-quarters of the death-camp officers, including Adolf Eichmann and SS Commander Ernst Kaltenbrunner.

Bitter political anti-Semitism was incubated by Vienna's Mayor Karl von Lueger in the 1870s and other politicians, and heavy traces of that pathology remain.

But the best of Austria is also surfacing today. Young Austrians by the thousands are holding vigils, demonstrating for Waldheim's resignation and sponsoring seminars on Austria's Nazi past. And most reassuring is the leadership of Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, who embodies the now democratic Austria. Vranitzky gave meaning to the Anschluss, on March 12, in these words:

"We must never forget and we must insure there is nothing in today's society that could lead us into and abyss, as happened in 1938."

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY
COMMENTARY (270 words)

FOR RELEASE
APRIL 1, 1988

OUR MODERN MEDICAL SAINTS

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

I recently have been a patient in the Lenox Hill Hospital in New York, and it is absolutely amazing how that experience can affect one's attitudes toward everyday life.

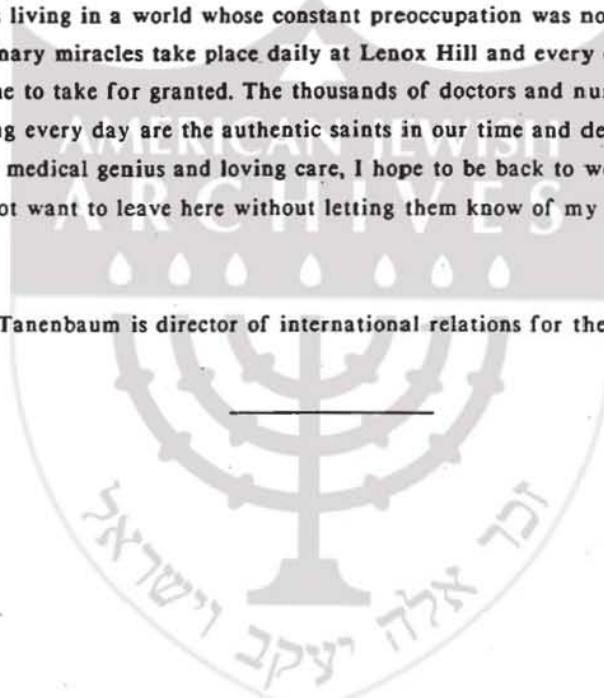
I should explain that I was brought here as a result of an overreaction to an experimental, powerful new medication that nearly wiped me out. It took the quiet thinking of my wife, Georgette, and the brilliant response of the Emergency Medical Service ambulance team to save me from potential tragedy.

But that was the beginning of the story. The heart of the story unfolded during the daily rounds here at the hospital. When I was fully conscious, my head was filled with all the important events of the daily headlines -- U.S. troops in Honduras, the Iran-Contra stories, Panama, Israel and the Palestinian warfare. That's our daily world -- war, conflict, invasions, crime, drugs, terrorism.

Suddenly, I was living in a world whose constant preoccupation was not death and killing, but life and healing. Ordinary miracles take place daily at Lenox Hill and every other hospital that somehow we have come to take for granted. The thousands of doctors and nurses who save lives and ease pain and suffering every day are the authentic saints in our time and deserve to be honored.

Thanks to their medical genius and loving care, I hope to be back to work by the time this is published, but I did not want to leave here without letting them know of my abiding gratitude.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee.



JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (300 words)

FOR RELEASE

MAY 15, 1988

CATHOLIC JOURNAL RENEWS ITS TRADITION
OF ANTI-ZIONIST INVECTIVE

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

Civilta Cattolica is a Jesuit-run, biweekly journal published in Rome. In Italian, the title means "Catholic Civilization."

It is difficult to imagine a more uncivilized, unfair and unhelpful approach to the current Israeli-Palestinian problem than the 11-page essay on "The Palestinian Revolt," written by Rev. Giovanni Rulli, that appeared in the latest issue of that authoritative journal.

In that article, the Jesuit priest uses some of the worst demonological anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish rhetoric and images to condemn Israel for carrying out "Nazi-like final solutions" for the Palestinians.

It is universally known that world Jewry is anguished over the excesses that have occurred, but to ignore decades of Arab rejectionism and terrorism against Israel as a central dynamic in this present tragedy is simply to become an agent of extremist Palestine Liberation Organization propaganda.

Truth to tell, I was not terribly surprised by this anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish invective. Civilta Cattolica has a long and ignominious record of anti-Semitism dating back to the 1880s, when it published outright accusations of ritual murder against the Jews. On Oct. 3, 1936, this journal wrote, "The Jews constitute a serious and permanent danger to society."

In a later issue in 1936, it advised the Catholic world that "Zionism might offer a way out, but the creation of a Jewish state would increase the Jewish menace." Then, in an April 2, 1938, editorial, Civilta Cattolica proposed that the best thing for the Jews to do was to relinquish their claims on Palestine and, if possible, to leave the country altogether.

Father Rulli's article, regrettably, is singularly consistent with Civilta Cattolica's historic opposition to Zionism and later to Israel.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (500 words)

FOR RELEASE

MAY 26, 1989

A MODEL OF AUTHENTIC BLACK-JEWISH FRIENDSHIP

By Marc A. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

He was probably the most physically beaten civil rights leader in the 1960s. Like the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Bayard Rustin, he became to informed American Jews one of the most trusted and respected black Jewish leaders in the nation.

The "he" is Congressman John Lewis of Atlanta, organizer of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, which mobilized some 10 million voters to register.

Few Jews seem to know his full, unbroken record of commitment to the well-being of Israel and to the freedom of Soviet and Ethiopian Jews, as well as his fierce and unrelenting opposition both to racism and anti-Semitism.

On May 7, nearly 2,000 blacks and Jews came together at Queens College in New York to honor the memories of Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney, the two Jewish and one black youth who were murdered by white racists in Mississippi in 1964.

Lewis and I were the keynote speakers at that moving 25th commemorative observance, conceived by Ernest Schwarcz, a Hungarian Jewish survivor and the college's dean of general studies.

Lewis told that audience, which included hundreds of young blacks, that "without the massive moral and financial support of the Jewish people, the civil rights movement would not have succeeded."

As chairman for the past four years of the effective black-Jewish dialogue in Atlanta, he called on blacks to renew their close relationships with Jews based on mutual respect and solidarity of interests.

"We are not each other's enemies," he said. "Together we have many enemies out there, and they are usually the same people who hate blacks and Jews."

My remarks concentrated on the deep trust that Dr. King and Congressman Lewis established with American Jews.

When Lewis was recently in Moscow with a U.S. congressional delegation meeting with members of the Supreme Soviet Parliament, he told the Russians that "as long as Soviet Jews are persecuted and denied their freedom, we are all Jews."

He was the only member of Congress to be applauded by the Soviets.

He was spontaneously critical of President Reagan's visit to the Bitburg military cemetery in Germany, and he speaks regularly at high schools and colleges about the importance of all Americans understanding Jewish suffering under the Nazi Holocaust. In and out of Congress, Lewis is an ardent supporter of sustained aid to Israel.

In genuine reciprocity, many American Jews have joined John Lewis in condemning South African apartheid and have marched with him against white racists in Forsyth County, Ga., and recently to the Selma, Ala., bridge where he was brutally beaten in 1964.

If black-Jewish relations are restored, the reliable models of authentic friendship and trust epitomized by Congressman John Lewis -- and his Jewish counterparts -- will be the engine of that vital renewal.

Rabbi Marc A. Tanenbaum is international consultant to the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (275 words)

FOR RELEASE

JUNE 3, 1988

FARRAKHAN CONTINUES HIS DEMONIZATION OF JEWS

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

Black Muslim demagogue, Louis Farrakhan, added another vial of his anti-Jewish and anti-Israel poison during his latest performance in New York. It is frustrating in the extreme -- even dangerous -- for the media to continue treating him as some theatrical artifact.

Ironically or cynically, both the print and electronic media seemed to have highlighted the most irrelevant aspects of his latest act. Most media that I viewed concentrated on the "charm" of the fact that his meeting was held at a kosher catering hall, and that he spoke on Shavuot.

What that mindless coverage persistently ignores is that Farrakhan is not a clown. A study that I published in 1985 on "The Farrakhan Phenomenon" disclosed then that "Farrakhan has a coherent world view that at its core is rabidly anti-white, anti-American, anti-Semitic and anti-Israel."

Defenders of American democracy and certainly the Jewish community cannot afford to dismiss Farrakhan as if he were some minstrel act.

Should he continue to gain large audiences and increased media exposure -- and should the PLO and Libya's Qaddafi continue to pour into his coffers added millions of dollars -- Farrakhan might well become a significant source of poisonous pollution of the wells of American democracy.

Worse yet, he may well become a rallying center, especially among young blacks, for further vicious anti-Semitic and anti-Israel hatred.

It is long past due that media do a serious investigative reporting job on the content of what Farrakhan stands for rather than concentrate on his show business appeal.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY
COMMENTARY (225 words)

FOR RELEASE
JUNE 24, 1988

AN HISTORIC MITZVAH -- A POST-SUMMIT REFLECTION

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

The just-concluded summit meeting between President Reagan and Soviet leader Gorbachev has received mixed reviews, and for good reason. But on balance, I believe the positive far outweighs the negative.

The late psychologist Erich Fromm once described the cold war between the Soviet Union and the United States as "reciprocal paranoia."

In a nuclear-missile age, containing spiraling paranoia with its potential deadly consequences can only be seen as a positive gain for mankind. Thus, the signing of the medium-range missile treaty was a modest but useful beginning.

Perhaps the most important moral aspect of the president's performance was his dramatizing, front and center, the human rights and Soviet Jewry issues.

His address before the Moscow State University audience on the issues of freedom and democracy, and his strong affirmation of religious freedom in his U.S. Embassy meeting with refuseniks and others was an historic mitzvah.

Solid appreciation must be expressed to the president and Secretary Shultz for their deep and unwavering commitments to this cause.

We could have done without the trivial references to Soviet bureaucrats and the cook who makes the dinner as an argument for the Creator.

But clearly the president's heart was in the right place on the right issue, and he deserves more gratitude than ridicule.

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JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY
COMMENTARY (275 words)

FOR RELEASE
JULY 22, 1988

CHIEF RABBI OF ROMANIA MARKS JUBILEE YEAR

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

One of the most remarkable Jewish leaders in the entire diaspora is Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen of Romania. Two weeks ago he observed the jubilee year of his ordination as rabbi and his fortieth year as spiritual leader of the Jewish community of Romania.

After many years of professional and personal contacts with the chief rabbi, I have only admiration for his "chochma" (knowledge and wisdom) as the religious teacher and guide of his Jewish community.

But above all, I join thousands of others in saluting him for his remarkable courage and tenacity in his relations with the Communist government of President Nicolae Ceausescu and the Romanian society.

It is not an easy role to be a devout Orthodox Jew in an officially atheist country. Nor is it simple to maintain reasonably good relations with a society that has been saturated with centuries of anti-Semitism.

The Romanians knew that Chief Rabbi Rosen has excellent contacts with Israel and world Jewish communities, especially in the United States.

Since Romania was eager to realize most-favored-nation status with the American government, they periodically "used" Rabbi Rosen to try to build good will with American Jewry, and through them with the United States.

That, in turn, gave Rabbi Rosen leverage to demand, among other things, an end to anti-Semitic press and other attacks on Romanian Jews, as well as on his own person.

That he has not only survived but prevailed in keeping together a shrinking Jewish community is in itself a tribute to his intelligence and political skills. We wish him and his gifted wife many more years of good health and strength.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (300 words)

FOR RELEASE

AUGUST 12, 1988

THE REVOLUTION IN JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS CONTINUES

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

After some 27 years of service seeking to advance improved relations between Jews and Christians -- and, where possible, Moslems -- I have come to a rather basic conviction about this important field of human relationships.

To put it simply, I believe there is a fundamental divide between those in Jewish and Christian communities who have been involved in the Jewish-Christian dialogue, and those who have been unininvolved.

Those who have experienced the real progress in these ties know that despite setbacks on some given issues, the general movement forward in overcoming hostilities and misunderstandings is genuine and irreversible.

The unininvolved tend to react to headlines and symbolic pictures and are prepared regularly to throw out the baby with the bath water.

The latest example of constructive achievement is the adoption in Detroit last month of a set of far-reaching "Guidelines on Jewish-Christian Relations" by the U.S. Episcopal Church.

It is a magnificent declaration that rejects all the old and damaging Christian polemics and shibboleths about Jews, Judaism, anti-Semitism and the State of Israel. It is suffused with love and respect for the Jewish people.

That statement follows earlier pronouncements issued by the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ and the American Catholic bishops, all of which deserve to be read in full, especially by the skeptics and scorners.

At a time when Arab extremists have been seeking to isolate Jews and Israel from the mainstream of Western civilization, these testaments of genuine Christian friendship and solidarity with the Jewish people should not be allowed to be taken for granted.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (225 words)

FOR RELEASE

NOVEMBER 4, 1988

THE GENOCIDE TREATY -- A MORAL ADVANCE

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

The approval by the U.S. Senate last month of legislation implementing the international treaty against genocide deserves the appreciation of every American who cares about preserving human life.

The treaty makes it an international crime to kill or injure members of national, racial, ethnic or religious groups.

While some 97 countries have ratified the treaty, it has taken the United States some 40 years to finally adopt this course. Better late than never.

The father of the Genocide Convention in 1948 was Raphael Lemkin, himself a survivor of the Nazi Holocaust.

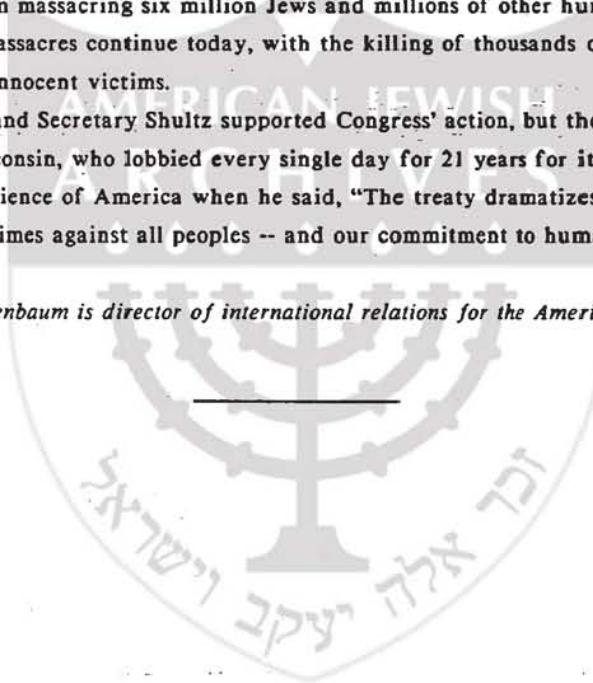
Lemkin was persuaded that had the international community agreed decades ago to outlaw mass murder and establish mechanisms to punish criminal nations, it might have been possible to prevent Hitler and the Nazis from massacring six million Jews and millions of other human beings.

Tragically, such massacres continue today, with the killing of thousands of Afghans, Kurds, Mozambicans and other innocent victims.

President Reagan and Secretary Shultz supported Congress' action, but the real hero is Sen. William Proxmire of Wisconsin, who lobbied every single day for 21 years for its adoption.

He spoke the conscience of America when he said, "The treaty dramatizes the revulsion of our nation against massive crimes against all peoples -- and our commitment to human rights."

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee.



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JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY
COMMENTARY (350 words)

FOR RELEASE
NOVEMBER 25, 1988

A CHANGE IN CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1988, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

Something of potentially far-ranging importance for relations between Jews and Christians in the United States, and elsewhere, happened two weeks ago during the commemoration of Kristallnacht.

For much of the past 50 years, many Jews -- especially survivors -- have felt that most Christians have avoided facing the trauma of the Nazi holocaust, viewing it as a Jewish obsession.

The commemoration of Kristallnacht by the highest Catholic and Protestant leaders in practically every major American city, in Germany, Austria and throughout Europe, suggests that something profound may be changing in Christian consciousness.

In St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, I was deeply moved hearing an impassioned sermon by Cardinal John O'Connor, who condemned "the sin of Christian indifference" toward the plight of Jews and called for respect and love of the Jewish people, "the source of moral law in the world."

Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago repudiated any efforts to "universalize" the Holocaust, and to deny "the collaboration with the Nazis by church members and officials."

In Minneapolis-St. Paul, a Lutheran pastor, the Rev. John Matthews, publicly declared that "the murder of two-thirds of Europe's Jews should be of particular concern to Lutherans because Nazi Germany was basically a Lutheran nation."

A joint declaration by Catholic bishops in West and East Germany and Austria criticized their predecessors for failing to protest against the anti-Jewish outrages.

"We owe it to the memory of the victims that their deaths should not be forgotten. The attitude of the Church remains a heavy load on the conscience of the Church today," the statement read.

These Christian leaders were joining Jewish communities in lighting up their sanctuaries or ringing church bells as public signs of solidarity with Jews, in demonstration against the horrors that the Kristallnacht pogroms inaugurated.

My fantasy is that had Catholics and Protestants in Germany and Austria performed such acts of protest in the 1930s -- instead of signing concordats with Hitler -- Kristallnacht might not have been possible.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (425 words)

FOR RELEASE

FEBRUARY 24, 1989

VATICAN REJECTS RACISM, ANTI-SEMITISM AND ANTI-ZIONISM

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

-NEW YORK

Two religious myths -- lies, in fact -- which have wrought much havoc in Western civilization were powerfully repudiated last week.

One religious lie is that of apartheid, which has resulted in terrible oppression of black people in South Africa. More than 300 years ago, the Dutch Reformed Church there declared that God cursed Noah's son, Ham, father of black people, and his children. That false Biblical teaching was used to justify the enforced segregation of South Africa's blacks.

The other religious lie was that of deicide, the canard that the Jewish people are collectively responsible for the death of Jesus. That absurd teaching became the engine for nearly 2,000 years of anti-Semitism which helped destroy millions of Jewish lives.

Last week, the Vatican Secretariat for Justice and Peace, issued a major document on "The Church and Racism." The declaration rejected apartheid and racism in all its forms as a "sin" and urged that it be uprooted.

The document termed anti-Semitism the most tragic form that racist ideologies has assumed in our century, with the horrors of the Jewish Holocaust," and called for its complete elimination.

Significantly, it added that today "anti-Zionism" often serves as a screen for "anti-Semitism."

With the personal endorsement of Pope John Paul II, this latest Vatican instruction to the entire Catholic world could go a long way in countering the racist ideologies of both apartheid and anti-Semitism.

Historic footnote: The Vatican Secretariat on Justice and Peace, which drafted this far-reaching document, is headed by His Eminence Roger Cardinal Etchegaray of Marseilles. I first met Cardinal Etchegaray in the 1970s, when he hosted an international Vatican-Jewish meeting in his chancery.

This warm-hearted cardinal helped save Jewish lives during the Vichy regime in France, and since then has been a steadfast and loyal friend of the Jewish people and Israel.

At the last World Synod of Bishops meeting in the Vatican a year ago, he unexpectedly called on the Catholic Church to confess its sins of anti-Semitism and ask forgiveness of the Jews.

He was ably assisted in drafting this text by Bishop Jorge Mejia, formerly secretary of the Vatican Secretariat on Religious Relations with the Jews. Bishop Mejia of Argentina is also a long-standing friend of the Jewish people.

Cardinal Etchegaray's personal stature lends great credibility to this major Vatican declaration.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is international relations consultant for the American Jewish Committee.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (225 words)

FOR RELEASE

MARCH 3, 1989

THE STEINBERG TRIAL AND ITS MORAL IMPLICATION

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

There remains something deeply unsettling about the Joel Steinberg trial. I'm not talking about the legal decision itself. The democratic virtues of the jury system again worked effectively.

What troubles me is that the central moral and social issues that this entire tragedy represents seems to get confused with the technical legalisms.

Look at the moral magnitude of this human drama. Two apparently intelligent, highly educated people -- Steinberg and his lover Hedda Nussbaum -- became sucked into a culture of drugs, becoming human robots who unfeelingly engaged in people-battering, and in helping to fatally abuse Lisa, their adopted child.

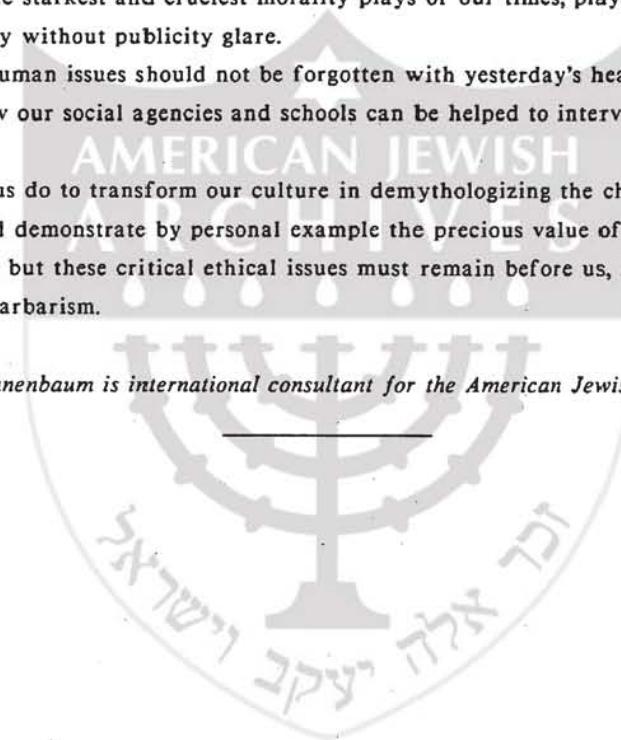
That is one of the starker and cruellest morality plays of our times, played out over and over again across the country without publicity glare.

The social and human issues should not be forgotten with yesterday's headlines. We should be pursuing relentlessly how our social agencies and schools can be helped to intervene in such obvious tragedies.

What can all of us do to transform our culture in demythologizing the chicness of drugs? How can we teach better and demonstrate by personal example the precious value of each human life?

The trial is over, but these critical ethical issues must remain before us, if civilized life is to prevail over domestic barbarism.

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JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

COMMENTARY (375 words)

FOR RELEASE

JUNE 9, 1989

SOUTH AFRICA'S HELEN SUZMAN -- A JEWISH JOAN OF ARC

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

The retirement of 71-year-old Helen Suzman from the South African Parliament next September will be a serious loss in the moral struggle against the evils of apartheid.

Undoubtedly, this feisty, courageous Jewish Joan of Arc, who frequently was the lone white politician opposing the oppression of apartheid in Parliament, will continue to speak out against South African racism, but there is no question that a large moral vacuum will be left by her retirement.

On a mission to South Africa in 1984, I had the privilege of seeing Helen Suzman in action. The overwhelming impression was that of the extraordinary respect in which she was held by virtually everyone we met in South Africa -- her opponents in the government, politicians, industrialists, newspaper writers and Christian clergy.

While the black homeland of Soweto had been declared off-limits as a result of recent conflicts, Helen arranged for our American Jewish Committee group to visit that destitute place -- with police escort.

During our lengthy discussions in Soweto, you could literally feel the trust and confidence that black leaders, and ordinary black people, placed in her.

A card-carrying liberal and human rights activist, she was impatient with nonsense and could be very tough.

During our visit with Archbishop Desmond Tutu in his church, the Anglican leader made a throwaway comment about how apartheid and the Nazi Holocaust are the same thing.

"Desmond, you know where I stand on apartheid," Suzman shot back. "But that in no way can be compared to what the Nazis did to the Jews in the gas chambers and crematoria." The archbishop remained silent.

Helen Suzman maintained friendly, diplomatic contacts with the leadership of South Africa's 120,000 Jews. Increasingly, in recent years, individual rabbis, lay leaders, as well as the South African Board of Jewish Deputies have followed carefully Helen Suzman's lead and have begun speaking out in forthright condemnation of the moral scandal of apartheid.

When the history of the collapse of apartheid is written, Helen Suzman will surely deserve one of its major chapters as a prophetic Jewish and humanitarian voice in the wilderness.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is international relations consultant for the American Jewish Committee.

POPE JOHN PAUL II APPEALS TO ISRAEL TO HELP SAVE LEBANON

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

The recent appeal by Pope John Paul II to the Israeli government to help prevent "the destruction with which Lebanon is being threatened" is a dramatic sign of the desperation that the Vatican feels over the plight of that decimated country, once the center of the Arab Christian presence in the Middle East.

It is also a statement of the actual, de facto ongoing relationship between the Holy See and the sovereign State of Israel.

I am still convinced -- and this papal act underscores it -- that once peace is established among Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians, full diplomatic relations will follow among the Vatican, Israel and Jordan.

Cardinal John O'Connor's recent visit to Lebanon, following full consultation with the pope and the Vatican, unfortunately became caught up in controversy as a result of an apparent contradiction in two primary objectives in Vatican foreign policy.

Since the days of Pope Leo I (440-461 C.E.), the Vatican has had a primary obligation to defend the interests of the Church and the security of Christians in the world.

During the Middle Ages, the Vatican inherited the mantle of the Roman Empire and became a major instrument of arbitration between nations. Arbitration necessitated a posture of impartiality, if not neutrality.

But Maronite Catholics in Lebanon and many Christians of conscience -- particularly in the Western world -- have been deeply upset that Lebanese Christians have been abandoned by the Western and Christian world to mayhem and massacre by Syria and extremist Moslems.

I see Cardinal O'Connor's visit as a quiet, legitimate effort to signal Maronite Catholics that the Vatican and the Catholic world indeed care about their survival.

The pope's appeal to Israeli President Chaim Herzog, while couched in the language of impartiality, is a plea to help save the Christian remnant in Lebanon from total genocide.

Herzog's response was sensitive and caring. He expressed Israel's horror over the current wave of Syrian bombardment of the Lebanese Christian population, and Israel's interest in helping establish "the stability, unity and independence of Lebanon."

If this diplomatic pattern continues, Israel may yet help the Vatican save what is left of the Christian community in Lebanon.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, international consultant for the American Jewish Committee, is former chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY
COMMENTARY (300 words)

FOR RELEASE
JUNE 23, 1989

PRESIDENT VON WEIZSACKER AFFIRMS GERMANY'S DEMOCRACY

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

It was not as publicly dramatic as the turbulent revolutions for democracy in China, the Soviet Union and Poland. But it was a revolution for liberty nonetheless.

Earlier this month, President Richard von Weizsacker of the Federal Republic of Germany met in New York with several Jewish and Christian groups.

He declared the commitment of his government and its political and other leaders to a total rejection of Nazi ideology and their firm adherence to constitutional democracy.

That was not, I believe, just another public relations speech made for export to America.

Von Weizsacker has become something of a legend in West Germany, especially to German youth. He has made one powerful speech after another insisting that Germans must face the horrors of Nazi hatred and brutality in order to learn the lessons for building a democratic future.

During his American Jewish Committee address, he also spoke movingly of the special relationship that West Germany has established with Israel since the early 1950s.

The Federal Republic is second only to the United States in commercial and trade relations with Israel. Dating back to 1952, that significant relationship was established by the anti-Nazi chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, with Israel's prime minister, David Ben-Gurion.

The Federal Republic of Germany today is economically and politically the most powerful nation in Europe.

While keeping before us the massive moral anguish of the recent past, all of us, I believe -- Jews and Christians alike -- have a profound stake in encouraging the new German democracy and its commitment to law and human liberties.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is international relations consultant for the American Jewish Committee and former chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations.

SOME 'JEWISH' ASPECTS OF FELIX BLOCH

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

I first met Felix Bloch, the alleged Soviet spy, in Vienna during August 1986. Ronald Lauder, now a Republican candidate for mayor of New York, had just been named U.S. ambassador to Austria. I was in Vienna as a member of the first American Jewish Committee delegation to develop educational programs for helping young Austrians confront their country's Nazi past, including its virulent anti-Semitism.

As a gesture of support of our mission, Ambassador Lauder tendered a dinner reception in his home in honor of the AJC delegation and for senior members of his embassy staff. Felix Bloch was among the embassy people present.

The following morning, our delegation was invited to the U.S. Embassy for a comprehensive briefing on Austrian-U.S. relations with the top embassy specialists. Bloch took an active part in that briefing.

It became evident to our group that Lauder and his deputy chief of mission were operating on different wave lengths. At our several discussions, Lauder spoke passionately about his concerns over Austrian anti-Semitism, Austrian-Israeli relations and especially about the cause of Soviet Jewry. (Austria has been the transfer center for some 250,000 Jews from the Soviet Union and Iran.)

In subsequent "coffee talk," Bloch cautiously but clearly left the impression that he thought Lauder was misconstruing his role.

"He is supposed to be the ambassador of the United States to Austria, not the ambassador of the UJA," he told several of us. We were flabbergasted by his comments and told him so.

Ambassador Lauder developed a close relationship with the Jewish community of Vienna, helping to support some Jewish communal projects with personal financial contributions.

To my knowledge, Felix Bloch kept his distance from the Kultusgemeinde and its members.

While bigots and anti-Semites may seek to exploit his "Jewishness," Felix Bloch was in fact an archetypical assimilated Austrian-born Jew.

At an early age, he was converted to the Presbyterian church, hoping to escape from the perils of anti-Semitism from which his father's family had suffered.

He intermarried, and his children are not known to be raised as Jews. His daughter, Andrea, however, claims that despite his conversion, her father "felt an intense connection to the Jewish faith."

In sum, I know nothing about the validity of the charges and rumors about his being a Soviet spy, but I do know it will be a very bad rap if anyone seeks to make any connection between his Jewish background and his alleged betrayal of his country.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is international relations consultant for the American Jewish Committee and is immediate past president of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations.

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JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY
COMMENTARY (275 words)

FOR RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 8, 1989

MALCOLM FORBES, MOROCCO AND MAIMONIDES

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

"A man should not be miserly, nor be too lavish. He who avoids extremes and follows the middle course in all things is a wise man . . . The noblest of all ornaments is modesty."

Those words were written by the great Jewish Talmudist and physician of the 12th century, Maimonides. I thought about that incisive wisdom on moderation as a way of life when I read accounts of the estimated \$2 million extravaganza given in Morocco two weeks ago celebrating the 70th birthday of Malcolm Forbes.

I don't know Mr. Forbes. He comes across the media as a friendly, bright, fun-loving man, and I wish him many more years of good health and success.

But quite frankly, those images of some 600 of America's best and brightest engaging in that lavish self-indulgence upset me very much.

While all that gorging and boozing was going on, tens of thousands of starving Africans a couple of hundred miles away in North Africa were scrounging on the ground for grains of wheat in order to survive. The contrast to me was morally obscene.

I believe Forbes when he says he contributes generously to charities. But if he really wants to celebrate next time in a meaningful way, I hope he will invite his many influential friends to visit the refugee camps in Africa, Asia and Latin America, or the homeless people in the United States.

Maimonides and an awful lot of Americans could then join in wishing him a truly happy birthday.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is international relations consultant to the American Jewish Committee and is immediate past president of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations.

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY
COMMENTARY (300 words)

FOR RELEASE
OCTOBER 27, 1989

POLAND NEEDS SERIOUS JEWISH ATTENTION

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

On Nov. 27, Sir Sigmund Sternberg, Lori George Weidenfeld and this writer will travel to Poland at the invitation of newly elected prime Minister Tadeusz Mozawiecki, the controversial Cardinal Josef Glemp and the harried Cardinal Franciszek Macharski, archbishop of Krakow.

The inflamed controversy over the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz has made a number of issues abundantly clear, one of them being that there is evidently a major intellectual, religious/cultural and political struggle going on within Poland.

On the one hand, there is the pre-World War II old political culture, joined by the traditional Catholic church, which reinforced each other by using anti-Semitism to assert their domination over the Polish people. Read the political platform of the National Democratic Union and "the Camp" in the 1930s, which cynically exploited anti-Semitism to achieve political unity.

There is also the old anti-Jewish tradition of Cardinal Hlond, who called for an economic boycott of Poland's Jews prior to 1938.

But there is now a new Poland being formed under Mozawiecki and Solidarity's Lech Walesa, who are ashamed of that hateful past and who wish to forge a new relationship with world Jewry and Israel.

Our visit to Poland is intended to help move forward the concrete steps to building the new convent away from Auschwitz. It is also intended to help establish programs in key areas of Polish culture and religion that will in time uproot the worst weeds of anti-Semitism.

In the possible new East-West reorientation, Poland and Hungary may well become linchpins in any European reunion. It is in the interests of the democratic West, and especially of Israel and world Jewry, to have a Poland reasonably free of its chronic anti-Jewish past.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is international relations consultant to the American Jewish Committee and is immediate past president of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations.

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JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY
COMMENTARY (375 words)

FOR RELEASE
NOVEMBER 17, 1989

'AN INITIAL REACTION TO EAST GERMANY'S UPHEAVAL

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Copyright 1989, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc.)

--NEW YORK

Most Jews, I believe, welcome the collapse of the totalitarian oppression in East Germany, as well as elsewhere in Eastern Europe. But clearly there is a growing anxiety among many Jews, as among others, over what a possible reunification of East and West Germany could mean to the future of constitutional democracy in the Federal Republic, as well as to its foreign policy.

Pundits will be reflecting for months to come over the possible effects of a reunified Germany on the future of NATO and the European Economic Community. Within that context, there are specific Jewish concerns.

The Federal Republic of Germany has been the strongest economic and political supporter of Israel on the continent since the end of World War II. On the other hand, East Germany, the German Democratic Republic, has for the past 40 years been the fiercest anti-Israel, pro-Arab country among the Warsaw Pact allies. Demagogic anti-Israel propaganda has been the daily diet of the East German population.

Indeed, studies on terrorism disclose that the GDR has been the major training center for international terrorists -- especially the Palestine Liberation Organization -- for decades. What effects could those hostile policies toward Israel have on a possible reunified German foreign policy?

On the domestic front, should hundreds of thousands of East Germans relocate in West Germany, it is inevitable that there will develop conflict among West and East Germans for jobs, housing, health care, education and social welfare.

Such domestic turmoil is ready-made for exploitation by the right-wing Republican party in West Germany, now headed by a former Nazi SS officer. That neo-fascist party has already made some gains in recent elections.

GDR has also been double talking Jewish leaders about reparations to victims of Nazi persecution. What influence, if any, would they have on the Federal Republic's more open reparations and pro-Israel policies?

This is therefore not a time for irrational paranoia, but for rational vigilance and concern.

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LECH WALESIA IS A FRIEND OF THE JEWS

By Marc H. Tanenbaum

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Lech Walesa came and captured America's imagination as the authentic symbol of the freedom revolution in Poland and throughout Eastern Europe.

I met and spoke with Walesa, the electrician-turned-statesman, at the International Rescue Committee reception last week. (The IRC, which rescued from the Nazis Albert Einstein and Enrico Fermi, among others, carries out a medical relief program in Poland and other parts of the world.)

It is easy to understand his moral appeal -- he comes across as an unpretentious working man, direct, blunt and good-humored.

"Good Polish-Jewish relations are important to me," Walesa said to me. "Poles and Jews need each other. I want to work to improve our ties."

He then proposed that he would like to sit down with me and other Jewish representatives in Poland and work on projects that would lead to improvement of understanding, both about the past history and the present.

On Friday morning, Walesa met with the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. He was unambiguous in condemning anti-Semitism. "There is no room in the new Poland for anti-Semitism, and Poles who harbored hatred for Jews deserved to be spat upon." Those were Walesa's own words.

The charismatic Solidarity leader also predicted that Poland would soon establish diplomatic relations with Israel -- Israel has already agreed to rebuild Poland's telephone communications system -- and that he wanted to visit the Jewish state.

There were some reservations at the Presidents' Conference meeting over Walesa's defense of Cardinal Jozef Glemp as a religious and not as a political leader.

But it is clear to me that Lech Walesa, hailed as the hero of Europe, is taking his first serious steps on a long journey to empathize with and better understand Jews, Judaism, anti-Semitism, the Nazi Holocaust and Israel.

It is in our common interest, I believe, to strengthen and support his and Solidarity's commitment to constitutional democracy and human rights. It is in the Jewish interest to bring him closer as our friend, and not alienate him from the Jewish people.

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