



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series A: Writings and Addresses. 1947-1991

Box 7, Folder 10, Fragments [unnumbered], Undated.



"None of us can be indifferent or uninvolved in confronting the moral issues inherent in the current conflict in the Middle East. We cannot stand by idly at the possibility of Israel's destruction, of decimating the two and a half million people Jewish people. ...The end of hostilities must be followed by a firm and permanent peace: one which will recognize Israel as a viable nation in the community of nations..."

5a "Ecumenical" statements similar in tone and point of view appeared during ~~critical moments in~~ ^{the early} Israel's struggle for survival in each of the regions

of the United States with ~~dramatic examples~~ ^{Another impressive} of broad support for Israel, ~~reflected~~ ^{was} in the fact that in Los Angeles some ~~200~~ ^{where 150} clergymen joined in signing a public

during July declaration that received very prominent attention in the press. ^{and was media} Father ~~Casassa~~ ^{Charles}

Casassa, the Jesuit president of Loyola University in Los Angeles, sent a copy of the declaration to President Johnson, U Thant, and the State Department, and received a sympathetic response from the Administration. In the preamble to ^{action} their document the Los Angeles clergy indicated that their ~~response~~ grew directly out of their involvement in Jewish-Christian dialogues. "In recent years," they stated, "great strides have been made in the area of interreligious dialogues and we are now confronted with the need to express ourselves together in terms of the religious and moral implications of the current crisis."

At the height of the debate in the United Nations/ over the question of Israel's ^{reunification} ~~annexation~~ of the old city of Jerusalem, seventeen of the leading Protestant theologians published an advertisement in The New York Times on July 12 in which they asserted, "For Christians, to acknowledge the necessity of ~~Jerusalem~~ Judaism is to acknowledge that Judaism presupposes inextricable ties with the land of Israel and the city of David, without which Judaism cannot be truly itself. Theologically, it is this ~~dimension~~ ^{dimension} of to the religion of Judaism which leads us to support the reunification of the city of Jerusalem." During the ensuing UN debate, Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban cited this statement as a significant reinforcement of Israel's position.

In discussing Christian reactions to the reunion of Jerusalem, I hear many Jews continue to berate the Vatican and Pope Paul VI for calling for the internationalization of ~~the~~ city of Jerusalem. But the Vatican has changed its

Tanenbaum now position, now aligning itself with the views of the World Council of Churches which from the beginning of the crisis asked only for assurances for free access to Christian holy places. It is beyond my understanding why some Jewish leaders seem ^{fixed} on wanting to attack the Vatican and the Pope for their error of the past, and resist in ^{ing} rather than welcome the change of heart which has led to the relieving of a great international political pressure on Israel. I do not want to scant for a moment the justifiable chagrin which most Jews, including myself, have felt over the tragic silence of the Vatican and the Pope during ^{the} end of May when Jews were being threatened with ~~genocide~~ genocide by the Arabs. Let that judgment stand as a very clear indictment of a ^{profound} serious moral failure, but let us not hinder progress on one ^{level, however, solely} track, ~~which~~ just (because there is lack of progress on another ^{level} track). Following the "dialogue" between Prime Minister Levi Eshkol and the Vatican's representative, Msgr. Angelo Felici, a communique was issued on July 11 stating that they had explored formulae for the holy places "in an atmosphere of cordiality and mutual understanding". Genuine friends of Israel, I should think, should wish to encourage such a development, rather than stand in its way. Here, too, the impulse of many Jews to act as though they are the Israeli government in exile is not without its practical dangers.

Taking all the data into account, it seems perfectly clear to me that the sweeping generalizations about "the Christians were by and large silent" ^{on shaky} ~~are~~ without foundation. ^{As I have indicated, (of prominence,)} Individual Christian leaders, and in large numbers in many parts of the country, did speak out in support of Israel on all the issues that are critically important to her welfare. The polls reveal that the overwhelming majority of the Christians in the pews identified with Israel in her hour of plight. ^{Valid and Serious} The one ~~clear~~ criticism that deserved to be made was ^{that directed at} (the silence or the evasion) of the moral and human issues ^{on the part of the} that the "establishment" institutions of the Catholic and Protestant communities. The fact that these bureaucratic institutions are ^{in relation to the clear and threat to exterminate the Jews of Israel} experiencing a profound conflict among their members between domestic concerns ^{of the Jewish understanding of the} religious requirements of domestic Judaism, ^{at the} and the Jewish understanding of the of improved relations with Jews and overseas involvements in missionary installations ^{in the Arab world no more frees them of Jewish criticism than they have been} the moral issue of the potential massacre of 2,500,000 ^{that} spared the criticism of Negro militants who have decried the ponderous, inadequate response of the establishment churches ^{of the inner city crisis.}

This is not to deny that there have been, and there continue to be, Christian clergy and lay people who take positions contradicting those cited here. That ^{one} ~~anti~~ Israel body of opinion - which is also documented in the AJC Study - needs to be examined and weighed in the broader perspective of Christian responses described in this article rather than selecting it out of context as "the Christian response" as, ^{regrettably} has been done. ^{to criticize those who have supported Israel for those who opposed her} is not unlike the clerical routine of blaming those who come to school for those

One ought to be extremely careful not to make too much of declaration by individuals any more than one should make too little of them. In the public debate here, it is ^{important to note} that the tendency has been to minimize the value of individual phenomena. But why? In 1953, Elmo Roper conducted a survey

the question - to fore the level - both cases should compel us to influence the unconverted? The creative need and do we stray away. how do we who

Survey, in which he asked Americans, "Which one of these groups do you feel is doing the most good for the country at the present time?"

Forty percent (40%) of the American people picked religious leaders as the group "doing the most good" and most to be trusted. "No other group - whether government, Congressional, business, or labor - came anywhere near matching the prestige and pulling power of the men who are ministers of God."

The picture of the clergyman that Americans have may not be without its ambiguous aspects, but there can be little doubt

that the clergy as individuals rank high in the leadership of the Vietnam peace effort, in the war against poverty, in community organization in the slums, in support of groups and have further solidified their moral influence.

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When Christian individuals align themselves one-sidedly with the Arab cause - as in the case of the letter of Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen to the N.Y. Times in which he equated the Israeli wrong with the Negro blotting - a great deal was made of how dreadful was his point of view and the harm wrought by his negative influence. Logic and common sense ought to have compelled us to give at least as much weight to the positive value of the declarations of those Christian leaders who unequivocally backed Israel's cause and helped shape the affirmatively the public opinion of America. When the AHC published a survey early in June emphasizing the "widespread support of Christian leaders and masses (as reflected in the public opinion polls), a representative of the U.A.H.C. liberated the conclusions of the survey publicly (terming it "exaggerated oversimplification"). That effort to had to tell some of the most distinguished American Christians - including

That the Jewish-Christian dialogue, on its many levels of encounter - especially with academicians, theologians, religious teachers, seminarians, clergy, and intelligent lay people - has helped bring about changes of a profound and positive character in the attitudes and behavior of many Christians toward the Jewish people and the Synagogue is, in my judgment, beyond question. Here, too, the evidence is so clear-cut and palpable that I find great difficulty in understanding any of the assertions to the contrary.

Jewish history has been pockmarked with episodes of pogroms and bloodshed against the Jews as a result of a whole complex of anti-Jewish teachings and church legislation that centered on such malevolent traditions of the "Christ-killer" charge, the Pharisees as religious hypocrites and as the enemies of Jesus, the great commission to ~~xxx~~ convert the Jews, the false contrasts between Judaism as a religion of law or harsh justice and Christianity as the religion of love, and Rabbinic Judaism at the time of Jesus and since then was "decadent" and ~~is~~ a false way of "salvation" for the Jews.

The dialogue - and especially the theological dialogue - has made it possible for Jews today to challenge these wrong ideas, not in a spirit of ~~xxx~~ disputation but rather in the prevailing atmosphere of seeking mutual knowledge leading to reciprocal respect. Some Jews have participated in one or several dialogues and unfortunately have had bad experiences. To generalize from that limited experience and adjudge the whole process inadequate is unjustified. The frustrations that Rabbis have had with their congregants who, despite years of ~~preaching~~ hearing sermons and participating in adult education courses, have not significantly altered their patterns of religious observance of deepened their knowledge of Judaism has not normally led the rabbi to dismiss the Synagogue or Judaism as a total failure.

Anyone who knows anything about the past ~~is~~ 1,900 years of Jewish-Christian relations knows full well that these theological affirmations by the highest authorities ^{of} ~~in~~ the Roman Catholic Church in the United States are little short of a revolution in Christian tradition. The growth of analogous enlightened views among leaders in the Protestant communities is also/~~becoming~~ ^{becoming} evident. No Jew needs to turn handstands in the street because the Christian world is finally beginning to correct its errors about us. But what moral, intellectual or practical purpose is served through discrediting ^{healthful} this/development, or by acting as though no change is taking place at all? Why do some Jews appear to become so unsettled at the knowledge of these changes in the Christian world?

Perhaps one of the explanations of this behavior lies in the fact that the majority of the opposition to Jewish-Christian dialogue has come from the most traditional elements in the Jewish community. To deeply believing Orthodox Jews, tradition is fixed and stated. The Torah was ~~literally~~ revealed at Mt. Sinai and its every ~~word~~ word remains literally valid until the end of the days. This static view of tradition (which is not shared by all ~~Orthodox~~ Orthodox or traditional Jews) has led to an expectation that traditional Christians will think and behave in the same way. To most Jews, of course, the Catholic Church is the most traditional of Christian churches. For the Catholic Church, which has been viewed as the bastion of religious orthodoxy, to begin to modify, reform and ~~recast~~ recast its basic ~~doctrinal~~ doctrinal positions in a search for relevance and meaning in the 20th century, can become extremely unsettling for other orthodoxies. Among the ways ~~as~~ in which some of our people are responding to that "unpleasant" reality is to deny outright that any change at all is taking place, or to discount the value and extent of it.

The challenge to overcome ignorance and illiteracy among many of their congregants, ~~and to transform their attitudes toward themselves~~ ^{lives by conforming to the} truths of ~~and toward~~ Judaism is precisely what sustains many Rabbis in their conviction otherwise onerous roles as spiritual leaders. An analagous ~~attitude~~ sustains those of us who have accepted the responsibility of representing Jewish interests in relations with the Christian communities.

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The evidence ~~is incontrovertible~~ ^{is} incontrovertible that ~~when~~ the Jewish-Christian dialogue has contributed to fundamental changes ~~we have joined with Christians in confronting such fundamental~~ in official Christian positions on such basic issues as the deicide charge, proselytizing, the permanent worth and value of Judaism and of the Synagogue.



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to ~~xxxxx~~ moral confusion of cause and effect by labeling Israel's retaliation to Arab provocations as "aggression" and "expansionism".

For the sake of the future, how do explain to ourselves this incredible behavior? Firstly, we must accept as fact what one of the greatest Christians of this generation himself had to reluctantly accept about Christian institutional behavior. ~~Reinhold~~ Reinhold Niebuhr, in his perceptive study Moral Man in Immoral Society, confirmed that the corporate morality of religious institutions, and of all institutions, is inferior to the private morality of individuals. Secondly, we must realize that religious institutions have no special grace that enables them magically to resolve internal conflicts any more effectively than any other bureaucracies. These highly centralized church bodies, especially in the Protestant communities, have been engaged in a running conflict between special interest groups-- those who are ~~xxxx~~ oriented toward domestic concerns in America and are eager for strong cooperative ties with American Jewry, and those whose emotional and vocational commitment

helped shape decisively the consciousness of Western civilization.

The Hebrew Bible, which reflects the millennial struggle of the Jewish people to realize the Divine will through their covenanted community, begins not with an account of the origins of Israel. It begins with Genesis - the creation of the world. The Jewish theology of Creation and Judaism's view of the Bible as "the book of the generations of all men" in fact established the conceptual terms for the writing of universal history. Thus, we realize once again how much our knowledge and our lives are shaped by the ongoing movement between the particularity and universality which are in continuous creative tension in the Hebrew scriptural tradition.

It is not widely known that there is available a substantial body of Jewish doctrine and teaching which, though composed over the past 3,000 years contains ideas, conceptual models, spiritual and human values of surpassing insight and meaning for our present situation. Let us review briefly some of the highlights of what is called "the Jewish doctrine of the nations of the world--umot ha'olam," which today we might well call the Jewish doctrine of pluralism--and world community.

The relationship of the people of Israel to mankind takes as its first and foremost principle the fact that, according to the Torah, all men are descended from one father. All of them, not as races or nations, but as men, are brothers in Adam, and therefore are called bene Adam, sons of Adam. (And if anybody from Women's Lib is listening, this description is intended to include women whose forebear Eve was united with Adam until surgery of the rib separated them.)

From the time of the occupation of the Promised Land of Canaan down to the present day, the treatment of every stranger living in the midst of an Israelite community has been determined by the commandments of Mount Sinai as recorded in the book of Exodus:

"And a stranger shalt thou not oppress, for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Exodus 23⁹).

In the extensive Biblical legislation dealing with the stranger, the ger (sojourner) or the nokhri (foreigner), whom you are to love as yourselves (Deut. 10:19), are equated legally and politically with the Israelite.

From the first century of the present era and thereafter, the "stranger within the gate" in the Diaspora who joined in the Jewish form of worship but without observing the ceremonial laws, became known as a yiré adonay -- a god-fearer. A god-fearer was one who kept the Noahide

yiré adonay -- a god-fearer. A god-fearer was one who kept the Noahide principles, that is, the moral principles known to Noah and to pre-Israelite mankind. As described in the Babylonian Talmud (Sanhedrin 56), the seven commandments of the sons of Noah are these:

The prohibition of idolatry, of blasphemy, of sexual immorality, of murder, of theft, of cruelty to animals, together with the positive commandment to establish courts of justice.

The great 12th century Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, formulated the normative Jewish conception, held to and affirmed by all periods of Judaism (in Mishnah Torah IV, Hilkot Melakhim, Section X, Halachah 2:) in these words:

"Whoever professes to obey the seven Noachite laws and strives to keep them is classed with the righteous among the nations and has a share in the world to come." Thus every individual who lives by the principles of morality of Noah is set on a par with the Jews. Indeed, a statement made by Rabbi Meir (ca. 150 CE) is recorded three times in the Talmud, "The pagan who concerns himself with the teaching of God is like unto the High Priest of Israel." (Sanhedrin 59a; Baba Kamma 38a; and Aboda Zara 36a).

Thus, this Rabbinic doctrine about "the righteous men among the nations" who will be saved made it unnecessary from the point of view of the Synagogue, to convert them to Judaism. At the same time it should be acknowledged that Jews pray daily in the Synagogue for what appears to be the ultimate conversion of the Gentiles not to the cult of Israel but rather to the God of Israel.

"Let all the inhabitants of the world perceive and know that unto thee every knee must bend and every tongue give homage. Before thee, O Lord our God, let them bow down and worship, and unto Thy Glorious name let them give honor."

While there is no unanimity in Judaism regarding the ultimate conversion of the Gentiles, there can be no doubt that, theologically speaking, Judaism does expect a redeemed mankind to be strict monotheists -- in the Jewish sense. It is the duty, therefore, of every Jew to encourage both by teaching and personal example the universal acceptance of the "Seven Principles of the Sons of Noah." The ultimate conversion of the world is understood by Judaism to be one of the "messianic" events. We will know that the messianic age has come when we realize a change -- a conversion -- in the kind of life being lived on earth, and not just in the inner life of the individual. Wars and persecutions must cease,

and justice and peace must reign for all mankind.

Translating this religious language into contemporary terms, it suggests that Judaism affirms that salvation exists outside the Synagogue for all who are God-fearers, that is all who affirm a transcendental reality as a source of meaning for human existence, and who also live by the moral code of the Sons of Noah. This Jewish theological view also perceives and undergirds world pluralism as a positive good. Thus Judaism advocates a unity of mankind which encourages diversity of cult and culture as a source of enrichment, and that conception of unity in the midst of diversity makes possible the building of human community without compromise of essential differences. Symbolically, the human family is like a symphony orchestra. Each group, each religion plays its own instrument; none are interchangeable, the violin is no substitute for the oboe, nor the oboe for the cello. When they play separately and in dissonance, there is chaos. When harmonized, with each performing at his or her creative maximum, the end result is a magnificent symphony which ennobles the players themselves, the entire audience, and the conductor.

From the point of view of Rabbinic Judaism therefore, the righteous Christian qualifies as a "righteous among the nations" who has a share in the world to come. Beyond that Maimonides spoke of Christianity and also of Islam as being preparatio messianica, agents in the divine economy who prepare the way for the messianic age by helping to bring the words of Torah to the distant ends of the earth. Maimonides implies therefore that Jews have a profound stake in the Christian and Moslem presence in the world since both daughter religions of Judaism are in fact missionary arms of monotheism among all the nations of the earth.

For these reasons, I believe that Jews have a genuine interest in the development of the Christian ecumenical movement and in its success, just as I believe that the renewal and reform of Christianity in its spiritual dimensions will depend on its capacity to restore its Biblical and Hebraic modes of thinking and worshipping. While on one level it is entirely appropriate that Christian ecumenists concentrate on their internal affairs, without any necessary reference to the Jewish community, on another level, that of its ultimate spiritual character, it would appear inconceivable that the Christian ecumenical movement can afford not to be related in active and open dialogue with the Jewish people and with Judaism, for its own sake, not just for the sake of the Jews. Just as Jesus and the early church are incomprehensible without a deep understanding of first century Judaism, so a Christian ecumenism will become rootless in its Biblical origins

without continuous interaction with the living witnesses of Judaism, the Jewish people today. A distinguished Protestant theologian, Dr. Albert Outler, makes this point forcefully:

"The Christian theologian and churchman cannot understand the church and the Christian message in anything like their fulness apart from the problem of the relationship of the Church and Synagogue--the mystery of Israel, the mystery of the New Covenant, the mystery of God's authentic revelations in and through the people of Israel...Christian eschatology makes no sense without some understanding of the future prospects of Church and Synagogue... The Church cut off from the Synagogue is forever incomplete." (Journal of the Perkins School of Theology, Fall, 1970.)

"From the Sermon on the Mount to the crucifixion," writes the eminent church historian, Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan of Yale University, "nothing that Jesus said and did is intelligible apart from his Jewish context." The implications of such contemporary Christian scholarship for ecumenism, according to Professor Markus Barth of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, is critical:

"If Jews were excluded from the respective encounters, discussions and decisions, the unity reached might well resemble a pagan symposium, but hardly the unity of God's one people gathered from all the nations, on the mountain of the Lord. Christians cannot help but beg the Jews to join the ecumenical movement, not for the sake of a super church, but for the search of true service to the one true God."

From a Jewish perspective, therefore, a united Christianity that is truly Biblical in character may rightly be seen as a major step toward fulfillment of the Jewish messianic hope that "all mankind will form one companionship" to realize the divine will through work of redeeming this world, and to that extent Jews should rejoice in positive ecumenical growth.

If Judaism and Christianity can grant the validity of each other's covenants, and seek to affirm the best in each other rather than deny

covenants, and seek to affirm the best in each other rather than deny it, there need be no reservation about their fruitful coexistence.

Indeed the two covenants could be seen in the divine scheme of things as mutually complementary, not mutually exclusive. The very concept of the "covenant of the sons of Noah" shows that Judaism did not limit God's covenanting to the Jews.

The New Covenant, according to St. Paul in Romans 9 to 11, does not revoke the old. Both covenanted communities have after all for some 2,000 years uttered the same prayer, "Thy kingdom come." And when the Kingdom comes, when the Jew sees the fulfillment of the prophecy, "The Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord shall be one, and His name one (Zech 14:9), the Christian, too, will see the fulfillment of prophecy.

"Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father... the son himself will also be subjected to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be everything to every one." (I Corinthians 15:24, 28).



TV COMMENTS ON VATICAN COUNCIL STORY

October 17, 1963

BY RABBI MARC H. TANNENBAUM ON WABC-TV

The report in The New York Times this morning regarding a statement by the Vatican Council on the Jewish people and anti-Semitism is of course of great interest. In view of the fact that this decree has not as yet been introduced to the Council nor made public, and since its contents are not yet known, it is obviously inappropriate to talk about it.

One can say, however, that for quite some time, and especially in recent years, there has developed a significant movement of growing understanding and friendship between Catholics and Jews both in the United States and abroad. Increasing contact has taken place between Catholic and Jewish scholars in the area of biblical and theological studies. Pope John XXIII, as is widely known, helped usher in a vastly improved atmosphere of cordiality between Catholics and Jews. You may recall his removal of several references in Catholic liturgy that were regarded as offensive to Jews. And just this past week Pope Paul VI reflected his own positive viewpoint toward such improved relationships. You will recall that he received a delegation of Jewish leaders from the United States and spoke to them with great warmth about the bonds that Christians and Jews share growing out of their common reverence for the Bible and belief ⁱⁿ ~~for~~ one God. Again without presuming to go beyond the report that appeared in the newspapers, many of us are hopeful that this movement of greater understanding and mutual helpfulness will in the long run filter down to the grass roots communities and will become the ~~daily~~ practice of ~~Catholics, as well~~ ^{Jews in their daily} all Christians and ~~Jewish~~ relationships.

Auschwitz convent (TANENSAUM - 2 p -

and the dramatic cross signify to many Jews - and sympathetic Christians - who have recently visited the convent, that Auschwitz is now being commemorated as a place essentially of Christian martyrdom.

Whether consciously intended or not, a revisionist scenario of history has been unfolding -- Christians were the victims, not Jews. The silence over the murder of Jews suggests that no Christians were murderers. If the pattern were to continue, it is not inconceivable that in fifty years Auschwitz will be perceived as having nothing to do with the planned extermination of the whole of European Jewry, nor with the demonological anti-Semitism - the deicide culture - which prepared the way for the Nazi holocaust.

Many thoughtful Jews and Christians with whom I have spoken since 1985 are fully aware of the tragic reality that more than a million Polish Catholics, among them bishops, priests, and nuns, were ^{exterminated} ~~exterminated~~ in Auschwitz since June 1940. The Carmelite nuns and other Catholics, I firmly believe, have both a religious duty and moral right to mourn the death and pray for the souls of their kinspeople.

No Jew of conscience opposes or is critical of such appropriate acts of memorialization. But Auschwitz cannot be allowed to become transformed into a Christian "holy place" that supersedes or displaces the actuality of that purgatory for the Jewish people.

A distinguished Catholic cardinal of France, who has been at the center of this controversy, has spoken to the core issue with utter clarity. Albert Cardinal Decourtray of Lyon, president of the French Conference of Catholic Bishops, has declared:

"It is the attempt to totally exterminate the Jews that we call the Shoah, of which Auschwitz is the symbol. Such affliction and suffering have conferred on the Jewish people through its martyrs a particular dignity that is quite properly its own. And to construct a convent at Auschwitz would, for me, impinge upon that dignity."

It is a fundamental change that has taken place among a growing number of Roman Catholic, Protestant, and even Greek Orthodox and Evangelical scholars, and intellectual leaders, and bids to become one of the genuinely revolutionary developments in theology and religious thought/ during the past ~~xxxxxx~~ two millenia. The extent of that new appreciation of the autonomous values of Judaism as an independent religion was reflected, in fact, in the April 1973 pastoral statement of the French Catholic Bishops Committee for Relations with Judaism in these words:

"It is not possible to consider the Jewish 'religion' simply as one of the religions now existing on earth. It is through the people of Israel that the faith in one God has been inscribed in the history of humanity....According to Biblical revelation it is God Himself who constituted this people, brought it up and advised it of His projects, sealing with it an eternal Alliance (Gen. 17:7) and giving it a call which St. Paul qualifies as irrevocable (Romans 11:29). We are indebted to the Jewish people for the five books of the Law, the Prophets and other sacred books which complete its message. After having been brought together by written and oral traditions, these teachings were received by Christians without the Jews having been deprived of them.

"Even if, for Christianity, the covenant has been renewed in Jesus Christ, Judaism ought to be looked upon by Christians not only as a social and historical reality but primarily as a religious one; not as a relic of a venerable and completed past, but as a living reality through the ages."

In a similar vein, the United States Catholic Bishops articulated

their new understanding of Judaism in the Guidelines which their Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs published ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ on March 16, 1967. They stipulated that the following theme "merits the attention and study of Catholic educators and scholars,"

"An acknowledgement by Catholic scholars of the living and complex reality of Judaism after Christ and the permanent election of Israel, alluded to by St. Paul (Romans 9:29), and the incorporation of the results into Catholic teaching."

Nowhere in the Vatican Guidelines are there any statements regarding Judaism or the Jewish Bible that even approximate these Catholic view^s of unambiguous respect and appreciation. There are abstracts calls for "a better mutual understanding and renewed mutual esteem," and a statement that "dialogue demands respect for the other as he is; above all, respect for his faith and his religious convictions."

But in the very next sentence the Vatican Guidelines qualifies the "respect for the other as he is" what a proclamation of the Church's mission to convert the world:

"In virtue of her divine mission, and her very nature, the Church must preach Jesus Christ to the world (Ad Gentes, 2). Lest the witness of Catholic to Jesus Christ give offence to Jews, they must take care to live and spread their Christian faith while maintaining the strictest respect for religious liberty in line with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council (Declaration Dignitatis Humanae). They will likewise strive to understand the difficulties which arise for the Jewish soul - rightly imbued with an extremely

high, pure notion of the divine transcendence - when faced with the mystery of the incarnate Word."

"While it is true that a widespread air of suspicion, inspired by an unfortunate past, is still dominant in this particular area, Christians, for their part, will be able to see to what extent the responsibility is theirs and deduce practical conclusions for the future." (Does that mean that since "the hard sell" won't work with Jews - because of "the unfortunate past" - try the "soft sell"?)

The seriousness of this conversational reference was clearly understood by Professor David Flusser, of Hebrew University, perhaps the greatest living authority on Judaism and Christianity in the Intertestamental period, whose sympathetic book on Jesus was widely praised in Catholic (and other Christian) circles. Writing in the Hebrew newspaper, Davar, on January 12, 1975, in an article entitled, "The Vatican: How To Deal With Those Jews?", Prof. Flusser declares:

"Of course we know that Christianity cannot forego its concept of mission, nor do I fear missionaries. It's clear that someone inserted this passage into the document not in order to initiate a missionary offensive that would benefit by the dialogue between Jews and Christians. Rather, so it seems to me, the reference to the mission in our document is intended to silence as it were, 'bad conscience' - lest the conclusion be drawn, Heaven forbid, that recognition of Judaism as an autonomous entity means that Catholics are relinquishing their missions to the Jews!"

Dr. Flusser adds: "It's a pity, a great pity, that this passage on the mission was included. There was no need for it in principle: the mission is even less relevant to the document than is the relationship between the people of Israel and its land,

a relationship of which not a word is said in the document."

It is little short of scandalous, in my view, that three representatives of the Jewish delegation to the Vatican-Jewish consultation in Rome - Dr. Gerhardt Riegner, general secretary of the World Jewish Congress; Rabbi Henry Siegman, executive vice-president of the Synagogue Council of America; and ^{Dr.} ~~Rab.~~ Shmaryahu Talmon, professor of Bible at Hebrew University - raced to the Vatican Press office on January 9 and issued a press release denying that there was any proselytizing or conversionary intent in the guidelines. Their statement was issued in response to a critique which this writer had published earlier on the guidelines in which I stated that "no self-respecting Jew~~s~~ could accept a statement as the basis for Jewish-Christian relations in which Judaism was perceived as a second-class religion."

Without denying the positive features in the document, that is the crux issue of the guidelines. Again, Prof. Flusser, more committed to scholarship than to public relations, states the issues forthrightly:

"On the level of its religio-ideational approach toward Jews and Judaism, the new~~s~~ document is -- to use an understatement -- a big step ~~back~~ backwards when compared with its predecessor, which itself was a shameful compromise between progressive and conservative positions in the Church.

"Nor should one say that in a document meant to provide guidelines there is no room for cogitation: for there is cogitation in the new document -- it's just that it's not acceptable to us. It's possible, for the time being, to define the document's approach to Judaism like this: one step forward and two back. One of the amusing things one can do

with this document is to ~~xxx~~ study the ideological--and practical significance of the small word 'although,' which appears numerous times. It has a tragic comic, fateful meaning. 'Although Christianity sprang from Judaism, taking from it certain essential elements of its faith and divine cult, the gap dividing them was deepened more and more.. ..'The statement up to here is positive, though the words 'certain substantial foundations' already arouse some astonishment.

"Another 'although' is more interesting: 'a...although his teaching had a profoundly new character, Christ, nevertheless, in many instances took his stand on the teaching of the Old Testament...Jesus also used teaching methods similar to those employed by the rabbis of his time.' Is that all? Why isn't the simple truth expressed here, namely that Christianity sprang from Judaism and that the contents of Jesus' words were Jewish?

"Another example: 'The history of Judaism did not end with the destruction of Jerusalem, but rather went on to develop a religious tradition. And, although we believe that the importance and meaning/^{of} that tradition were deeply affected by the coming of Christ, it is still none the less rich in religious values.'

"Here before us is an approach, familiar to us from the past, according to which Judaism is not only less valid than Christianity but is also a stage preliminary to it, that in fact being its function.

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REPORT FROM VATICAN COUNCIL II: THE JEWS

by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Rabbi Tanenbaum is the National Director of the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee. Regarded as an authority on Christian-Jewish relations, he has worked closely with Cardinal Bea's Secretariat to advance Catholic-Jewish understanding. He is the only rabbi at the/Vatican Council.)

VATICAN CITY? ROME

It is one of the ironies of history--and perhaps ~~ex~~ it is symbolic of a turning point in Christian-Jewish relations -- that the Jewish declaration has been introduced and debated by Vatican Council II during Simchath Torah, the Jewish festival of "rejoicing with the Torah" which ~~anticipates~~ ^{climaxes} the celebration of Sukkoth, the Biblical festival of Tabernacles.

From a historical perspective the irony is sharpened by the awareness that in this Vatican City in which some 2,300 Bishops of the Catholic Church are considering this week a declaration that will repudiate decisively the deicide charge and thereby ~~be~~ help put an end to anti-Semitism, about 600 years ago Jews and their Torah, the sacred scrolls of Mosaic Law, were subjected to humiliating indignities.

During the Middle Ages, the leaders of the Universita degli Ebrei (the Jewish community) of Rome left their cramped ghetto quarters and journeyed each year to the Vatican to pay compulsory homage to the Pope by the presentation of a Scroll of the Torah, which the Pontiff would return contemptuously over his left shoulder with a derogatory remark. Thus, for example, Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) said to Roman Jewish leaders that he acknowledged their reverence for the Law but condemned their "misrepresentation" of it. That "dialogue" is regarded by Jewish historians as "typical" of Vatican relations with the Jews in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Admission
It is with ~~deep~~ regret that we learn that the second session of Vatican Council II has not adopted in principle, as a basis for discussion, the proposed declaration regarding the Catholic attitude toward Jews. This declaration, submitted to the Council Fathers on November 8 and formally introduced by Augustin Cardinal Bea on November 19, was considered only procedurally, not from the point of view of its substance. This inaction on the part of the Council, coming as it does at a time of great hopefulness for increased understanding between Catholics and Jews, is a source of ~~profound~~ ^{deep} disappointment.

Principles set forth in this declaration represent, to Jews throughout the world, a ~~present~~ ^{much needed} corrective to distorted religious concepts that have been used to sanction anti-Semitism ~~since~~ ^{over} the centuries. The declaration itself reflects an important trend within the Catholic Church to uproot prejudice ~~and antagonism~~ and to establish relations of mutual respect and esteem between Catholics and Jews. We are confident that significant leadership within the Catholic Church, and particularly in the United States, supports the substance and objectives of this historic document. ~~We~~ ^{profoundly} hope that the basic principles of the declaration will be adopted at the next session of the Council.