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Preserving American Jewish History

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

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 13, Folder 9, Carter, Jimmy, 1976.

BILLY GRAHAM
Montreat, N.C. 28757
June 14, 1976

Dear Marc,

Thank you for yours of May 28. I have read with great interest your statement concerning Governor Carter. I thought you have handled it with great wisdom and sensitivity.

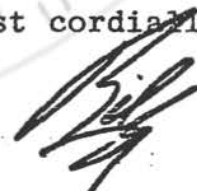
I have also kept up with Leighton Ford's correspondence and address. I personally felt that he gave an excellent representation of my own viewpoint -- much better than I could do it!

Ruth and I will never forget your visit to our home, nor shall I ever forget the meeting with Jewish leaders in New York that you arranged several years ago, in which I had a wonderful opportunity of dialog. Be assured, beloved friend, I have not changed my mind!

I will be most happy to visit with a similar group if you so desire, but I feel that at the moment Leighton Ford has already covered this and we would only be covering old ground. If you feel that there is some necessity for it, I will certainly make room in my schedule. I would rather have such a meeting after the election. I do not want to get involved this year in partisan politics if I can possibly help it.

With warmest personal greetings, I am

Most cordially yours,



Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
The American Jewish Committee
165 East 56 Street
New York, N.Y. 10022

cc. Leighton Ford

GOV. JIMMY CARTER - A MESSIAH PRESIDENT?

by Marc H. Tanenbaum

Is American moving from a "sovereign President" to a "Messiah President?"

That provocative question, first blurted out by a maverick Episcopalian priest during a recent national television discussion, reflects something of the puzzlement and ~~concern~~ concern that many Americans continue to experience over the prospect of having an evangelist, "Born-again" Christian in the White House/ in the person of Democratic candidate, Governor Jimmy Carter.

President Gerald Ford, a lifelong Episcopalian, is also of an evangelical bent, and has written to his closest spiritual advisor, Michigan evangelist Billy ^{Zeoli} Zoili, "Because I've trusted Christ to be my Savior, my life is His." Ford has told reporters that his religious faith is "a personal thing" but added, "I rely on guidance from my God."

Republican candidate Ronald Reagan, a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), once a Sunday school teacher now attends Bellaire Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles, an evangelically-oriented congregation. Regan's wife, Nancy, recently ~~made a point of announcing that~~ ^{made a point of announcing that} ~~her~~ ^{he} husband prays before every major decision. Regan recently told a Christian group in Florida that the country "is in need of and ready for spiritual revival," urged ⁱⁿ believers to join reclaiming the nation's "Judeo-Christian heritage," and added, "As a Christian, I commit myself to do my share in this joint venture."

Clearly the issue of the personal religious commitments of the candidates for the Presidency (and ^{to a lesser extent,} the vice-Presidency) have figured prominently in the current national political campaign, but there can be little doubt that it is Gov. Carter who has introduced a new element into American national politics but an old element in American society. For the first time in modern politics, a presidential candidate

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The nomination ~~in July~~ of Governor Jimmy Carter/^{in July} as Democratic candidate for the Presidency of the United States has introduced a new element into American national politics but an old element in American society. For the first time in modern politics, a presidential candidate has publicly identified himself as an evangelical, "born-again" Christian and has spoken freely and frequently of the inextricable linkage between his faith and his politics.

"The most important thing is my life is Jesus Christ," Carter has testified, "I turn to Him in prayer daily and before every ~~decision~~ decision I have to make which affects the life of others...I don't want anything that's not God's will for my life." (From an interview with the Associated Press, May 24, 1976).

In another interview given about the same time to a Southern Baptist publication, World Mission Journal, Carter said that he would "demonstrate(his) Christian convictions" by asking "God for guidance on decisions affecting our country and make those decisions after evaluating the alternatives as best I could." He added that he believed that "God wants me to be the best politician I can possibly be."

The Republican candidate, President Gerald Ford, a lifelong Episcopalian, is also of an evangelical bent. He has written to his closest spiritual advisor, Michigan evangelist, Billy Zeoli, "Because I've trusted Christ to be my Savior, my life is His." But President Ford has generally muted his Christian faith as "a personal thing."

Generally in the past, as the Rev. James Wall, editor of the Christian Century, has rightly observed, it has been assumed that religious references by public officials were not to be taken seriously.

has publicly identified himself as an evangelical, "born again" Christian and has spoken freely of his personal religious convictions ^{their} and/meaning for his political behavior.

"The most important thing in my life is Jesus Christ," Carter has testified, "I turn to Him in prayer daily and before every decision I have to make which affects the life of others...I don't want anything that's not God's will for my life." (From an interview with the Associated Press, May 24, 1976). In another interview given about the same time to a Southern Baptist publication, World Mission Journal, Carter said that he would demonstrate his ~~xxxxxx~~ Christian convictions by asking "God for guidance on decisions affecting our country and make those decisions after evaluating the alternatives as best I could." He added that he believed that "God wants me to be the best politician I can possibly be."

In much of the public discussion of Carter and his religion, reference has been made frequently to the 1960 campaign and to the issue of the religious commitments of the late John F. Kennedy. But the issues are quite different in 1976 than they were in 1960. Despite the letter of his mother, Mrs. Rose Kennedy, to the New York Times, ~~xx~~ in which she sought to establish that Jack Kennedy was an observant Catholic in good standing, Democratic candidate Kennedy then actively sought to deny that his membership in the Catholic Church was going to influence him in the Presidential office. In 1976, Jimmy Carter seems eager to make exactly the contrary point *about the linkage of his faith to his politics.*

The religious issue in 1960 was far more related to suspicion and fear ~~xx~~ of the Catholic Church, the Vatican, and the Pope that it was to the personal religious stance of Kennedy. In his book of John F. Kennedy and American Catholicism," Lawrence Fuchs, professor of American Civilization and Politics at Brandeis University, describes

rather than through individual effort (conscience).

To many Catholics and Jews to whom the church or communal dimension is a central feature of religious~~ethn~~ic identity, Carter's personal piety is a strange, perhaps even mysterious fact. This feeling of alientation in many ways parallels the encounter between Oriental and Occidental civilizations. Mircea Eleade writes in *Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries*, (p.7)

"The meeting and confrontation of two types of mentality which might be called, for simplicity's sake, the "traditional" and the "modern", the first being characteristic of man in archaic and Oriental societies; the second of man in modern societies of the Western type.

"As we know, the meeting and confrontation of these two types of civilization count among the most significant events of the last quarter century. This conforntation is developing on two different planes and as a consequence of different ~~xxxxx~~ sets of circumstances. On the one hand, the exo^{stic} and primitive peoples have now come within the orbit of history, so that Western man is obliged to enquire into their systems of values, if he is able to establish and maintain communication with them. On the other hand, a whole series of changes has taken place in the cultural outlook of Europeans. ...The encounters have been made through the more Westernized representatives, or in the mainly external spheres of economics ~~an~~ or politics. We may say that the Western world has not yet, or not generally, met with authentic representatives of the 'real' non-Western traditions. But this encounter is, in the end, inevitable.

"One day the West will have to know and to understand the existential situations and the cultural universe of the non-Western peoples; moreover, the West will come to value them as integral

integral with the history of the human spirit and will no longer regard them as immature episodes or aberrations ~~xxxxx~~ from an exemplary history of men - a history conceived, of course, only as that of Western man.



GOVERNOR JIMMY CARTER - A MESSIAH PRESIDENT?

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That is the "new element" on the American political scene, and it has focused public attention not only on the religious commitments of the candidates, but on the faith and ethos of evangelical Christianity itself. Questions continue to be raised in the minds of American voters about the commitment of evangelical Christians to religious pluralism, the separation of church and state, and freedom of religious conscience of political candidates whose creed involves the call to evangelize.

A liberal Episcopalian priest recently gave public utterance to his misgivings in a question he blurted out during a national television discussion of religion and politics, "Is America moving from a sovereign president to a messiah president?"

A more analytic statement of such concerns was expressed by a writer of a letter-to-the editor of the New York Times:

"Voters are not worried about Carter's faith because it is theistic, but because they would like to know something about the shape of his theology.

Does he believe with fellow Baptist Billy Graham that the Second Coming is close at hand, that persons can be possessed by fallen angels and that the unsaved will suffer eternal torment? Does he share William Jennings Bryan's disbelief in evolution? Does he believe that glossalia and healing are gifts of the Holy Spirit? Does he believe that the Jews refused to recognize their own Messiah when he finally appeared in their midst? Most evangelical Christians answer yes to all these questions.

Some of us are convinced that how a Christian answers such questions is not unrelated to the kind of President he would make.

What is troubling some secular political analysts - and many American voters - is their assumption that the safest bet for President should not be religious enough to count. The evangelical-type believers in the current political race now are, to use Wall's phrase, "more up-front" with their religious convictions in style and practice. The leading candidates, especially Gov. Carter, are clearly not joking. They mean it. That is "the new element" on the American political scene, and ~~it~~ (The remarkable demonstration of unity behind the candidacy of Gov. Carter and his vice-presidential running-mate, Sen. Walter Mondale (son ~~of~~ of an evangelical Methodist-turned-Lutheran pastor), that the Democratic National Convention displayed in July means ~~now~~ that ~~the~~ now that Gov. Carter is the Democratic standard-bearer his personal convictions ~~will~~ will be subjected to even more careful scrutiny than they were during the primary campaigns) because of its potential serious consequences for the political and social fabric of American life during the next four years, it deserves more than the passing examination that it has received thus far.

During the primary campaigns, Gov. Carter and his staff clearly became conscious and concerned over the mistrust and anxiety about his candidacy that prevailed in non-evangelical America, especially among northern Jews, liberal Protestants and Catholic ethnics. Carter spoke out on two issues that were factors in the resistance to his candidacy, namely, bigotry against Southern Baptists, and the Baptist commitment to the separation of church and state and freedom of conscience. The responses to his statements revealed that he had allayed some of the anxieties. Certainly, his clearcut declarations of support of Israel and of the human rights of Soviet Jews were of great reassurance in the Jewish community. The Catholics continue to be troubled by the stance of the Democratic National Committee on abortion, and Carter will have to deal with that "Catholic concern" in the months ahead.

And if Jimmy Carter has no opinion on these questions, or pretends to have opinions he does not have, that too is something we would like to know."

Concerns such as these, which touch deeply the feelings of many non-evangelical Americans, will need to be responded to by Gov. Carter, if not before November, then certainly early in his Presidency, assuming he is elected. Carter has staked so much of his candidacy on winning the trust and confidence of the American voter, and on building a cohesive national community, ^{concerns} ~~xxxxxxx~~ that failure to satisfy such root ~~convictions~~ on the part of millions of non-evangelicals could well inhibit the extent of the commitment that large segments of the American population would be prepared to extend to his Presidency.

There are other levels of clarification which will also need to be considered in the months ahead. Evangelical leadership will have a set of responsibilities involving setting limits where possible on certain evangelical groups that will seek, and in fact are seeking, to exploit the Presidency that might be held by an Evangelical Christian. I will spell that out later in this article. Non-Evangelical Americans owe it to themselves to develop a deeper grasp of the reality of evangelical America.

In many ways, the present alienation that separates evangelicals and non-evangelicals parallels the encounter between Oriental and Occidental civilizations that Mircea Eliade has written about.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date June 7, 1976
to Marc Tanenbaum
from Natalie Flatow
subject Carter and the Jews

While I was as delighted as you must have been yesterday with the fact that you and AJC turned up in both a page one article and the James Reston column, I should like to share with you a personal thought on the subject of Carter and the Jews.

It seems to me that the problem is not whether Jimmy Carter's religion would interfere with his ability to conduct himself properly as President of the United States. Rather, I am concerned with the "green light" that his election might give to the millions of fundamentalists and evangelicals (and I do know the difference) in the openness with which they might approach their conversion activities.

On my way to work this morning I encountered the first of what I believe will be a large number of button-wearers, sporting a large size button that said "Happiness is knowing Jesus." This may have been sheer coincidence but I doubt it.

I think it might be worth your while to note this trend as the campaign progresses.



NF:jf
 cc: B. Gold
 M. Yarmon

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

PROPOSED MODIFICATION OF
AJC'S CHURCH-STATE-EDUCATION POLICY

Background Memorandum
for consideration by
the Board of Governors
Tuesday - June 15, 1976

The Philadelphia Chapter has introduced a proposal to alter AJC's church-state-education policy as set forth in "Religion and Public Education --A Statement of Views" on page 16. In substance, this modification would commit AJC support for the provision of auxiliary educational services for non-public school pupils at public expense and administered by public agencies in public facilities. On March 17, the Domestic Affairs Commission voted, 11 to 9, to accept the Philadelphia Chapter's recommendation.

The backdrop for the Philadelphia Chapter proposal is the long history of controversy with regard to public assistance to religious schools. AJC, of course, together with most other Jewish organizations has opposed such aid to religious schools, either directly or indirectly, both on constitutional grounds and for reasons of public policy. In a series of rulings, the U.S. Supreme Court has invalidated most proposed forms of public aid for sectarian schools as violative of the First Amendment and, in effect, has foreclosed the possibility of any truly substantial public assistance to such schools. Most recently, on May 19, 1975, in the case of Meek v. Pittenger the Court struck down a Pennsylvania law which provided for public school teachers to render auxiliary services (guidance, counseling, testing, remediation) to religious school pupils on religious school premises.

The Philadelphia Chapter proposal to modify AJC's policy in this area derives from the conviction of many of its members that the denial of public aid to religious schools, with the active endorsement of such denial by most Jewish groups, has embittered many Catholic Church leaders and much of the laity to the point where Catholics today are apt to be indifferent at best, and hostile at worst, to paramount Jewish concerns, support for Israel in particular. In this view of the matter, many Catholics are angry at Jews for the prominent role played by Jewish groups in blocking government assistance to financially hard-pressed parochial schools and Cardinal Krol, in singling out the Jews for attack, was merely voicing the sentiments of a large proportion of his flock. Hence, it is felt, there is an urgent need for the Jewish community to reach out and express its concern for the Catholic predicament in tangible ways, such as by endorsing the new Pennsylvania auxiliary services law which was enacted in the wake of the Meek decision.

The advocates of altering our policy also claim that the change which is being sought is a relatively minimal one in that our policy already supports health and welfare services for all children at public expense, and does not oppose auxiliary educational services for disadvantaged religious school pupils within the context of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

(over)

Opponents of the proposed modification of AJC's policy believe that our present policy remains a sound one and should not be tampered with. Basically, they believe that in the United States it should not be the business of government to support, whether directly or indirectly, the programs of denominational schools whose sole reason for being is to propagate a faith. In their view, the new Pennsylvania auxiliary services law is an attempt to circumvent the Supreme Court ruling in Meek v. Pittenger and, whether or not it violates the letter of that decision, it most certainly violates its spirit in that it authorizes what amounts to the creation of de facto annexes to religious schools. What the Court held in Meek is that tax-raised funds cannot be used to subsidize the operations of religious schools.

The opponents point out also that AJC's existing policy, in which we are "not opposed" to auxiliary services for disadvantaged children within the context of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, explicitly was made "subject to judicial review of the constitutionality of this legislation." Some believe that such "judicial review" has in fact occurred in that the Pennsylvania statute struck down by the Supreme Court in Meek was modeled on the Federal law, except for the latter's restriction to disadvantaged children. They contend, too, that there is no need to modify AJC's policy with regard to auxiliary services because our endorsement of "shared time" provides a perfect vehicle for fulfilling the explicit intent of the Pennsylvania law--i.e., to furnish auxiliary services to non-public school pupils equal to those furnished to public school pupils, simply by making such services available to all pupils on public school premises. This, however, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, in its regulations for implementing the law, has declined to mandate.

The attached supplementary materials provide a fuller understanding of the various elements in this issue.

Attachments: "Religion and Public Education: A Statement of Views"
Suggested Modification of AJC Policy on "Religion
and Public Education"
Statement of Long Island, New York and Westchester
Church-State Task Force on Proposed Modification
of AJC's Church-State Policy.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

SUGGESTED MODIFICATION OF AJC POLICY ON
"RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION"

For consideration by the
Board of Governors
Tuesday - June 15, 1976

"* * * However, benefits directly to the child, such as lunches and medical and dental services should be available to all children at public expense, regardless of the school they attend, provided there is public supervision and control of such programs, while others, educationally diagnostic and remedial in nature, such as guidance, counseling, testing and services for the improvement of the educationally disadvantaged, where offered public school students, should also be available to all children at public expense, regardless of the school they attend, provided however that such programs shall be administered by public agencies and shall be in public facilities and do not preclude intermingling of public and private school students where feasible."

(Suggested new language underlined)

STATEMENT OF LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK AND WESTCHESTER JOINT
CHURCH-STATE TASK FORCE ON THE PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER'S PROPOSED
MODIFICATION OF AJC'S CHURCH-STATE POLICY PRESENTED TO THE
DOMESTIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION - MARCH 17, 1976

The joint Church-State Task Force of the New York, Westchester and Long Island Chapters opposes the proposed modification of the AJC'S Church-State position.

Our present policy approves certain direct benefits to children, i.e., lunches, medical and dental services, regardless of where they attend school and where the benefits are provided.

In addition, we have not opposed provision of certain of the remedial services mentioned in the proposed modification provided that they are in the context of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, that is, limited to children who are disadvantaged by poverty.

We believe that extending such aid to all children who are enrolled in non-public schools, without regard to disadvantage of the type required by the ESEA, would be against public policy unless it is done within the framework of our guidelines for shared time programs. If such aid were provided on parochial school premises, it would clearly violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment as most recently interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court in Meek v. Pittinger. The proposed modification seeks to remedy this defect by requiring the services to be administered by "public agencies" in "public facilities." But these are not required to be public school facilities. Moreover, the proposal would not require intermingling of private and public school students, but would merely "not preclude" such intermingling "where feasible."

We oppose such substantial departure from our shared time and federal and state aid to education positions. Our shared time guidelines were carefully framed in 1969 and reaffirmed in 1971 in order to guard against the kinds of well documented abuse experienced in the implementation of ESEA. No new considerations of public policy have developed since then to warrant a departure from those carefully researched guidelines.

Our objections do not imply to lack of concern for the problems of the Catholic community. Rather, we believe that positive and realistic approaches can be made within the framework of existing policy. Among them, we suggest more vigorous attempts to implement shared time programs within our existing policy guidelines and intensified interreligious private fund raising drives for sectarian schools. In addition, we suggest for consideration that the field of assistance to institutions of higher education, including those that are church-related, offers a potential bridge area that is responsive to parents' needs for financial help with the ever-increasing costs of higher education.



MEMORANDUM

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RELATIONS

165 East 56th Street, New York 22, N. Y. • Plaza 1-4000

from the desk of ISAIAH TERMAN

Director of Communications and Servicing

June 9, 1976

To: Area Offices

From: Isaiah Terman

Subject: TV Program

On Sunday, June 20, 10:00 A.M. (NYT), the CBS-TV Network is scheduled to present a special program on the Women's Interreligious Study Tour of the Middle East on its "Lamp Unto My Feet" series. Participants include Inge Lederer Gibel, Program Specialist in AJC's Interreligious Affairs Department; Sarah Cunningham, Editor of the United Presbyterian Women's Journal Concern; and Sister Ann Patrick Ware, Associate Director of the National Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Order, co-leaders of the tour.

The tour to Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Israel was an outgrowth of an AJC-initiated Interreligious Dialogue on the Middle East, which brought together women activists and leaders in the New York Metropolitan area for two years of study on questions related to women's role in helping to promote peace in that area.

Filmed excerpts of an appearance by Inge Gibel at a Chicago meeting of the Middle East Steering Committee of the World Without War Council, Middle West, will be included on the program. Present at that meeting and responding to Inge's report on the tour was a Palestinian engineer. Another segment will feature a meeting at the Interchurch Center in New York where the tour's three co-leaders exchanged ideas with several Christian women interested in promoting similar dialogue groups.

The program's major discussion will be among the co-leaders and Dr. Thelma C. Adair, Professor of Education at Queens College and newly elected Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in America, and will focus on highlights of the tour as well as plans for the future, building on that experience. Ben Flynn will be the moderator.

Outside of the New York area, check station for date and time of the broadcast.

76-310-52

The American Jewish Committee, since its inception, has combatted bigotry and prejudice rooted in stereotypes or caricatures of any racial, religious or ethnic group. Themselves frequently the victims of religious bigotry, Jews should be particularly sensitive to any tendencies in the current campaign that suggest that facile generalizations or group-labeling be substituted for a searching examination of where individual candidates stand on a variety of specific issues.

Presidential aspirants (Although he is by no means the only presidential aspirant firmly grounded in Christian faith; and Governor Carter) -- President Ford and Governor Reagan share similar religious orientation-- Jimmy Carter's frequent references to his religious commitment and his personal experience as a "born again" Christian have focused public attention on the faith and ethos of evangelical Christianity, and raised questions in the minds of some people about the commitment to religious pluralism, separation of church and state, and freedom of religious conscience of political candidates whose creed involves the call to evangelize.

These questions may be addressed in two ways; by examining the range and diversity of evangelical Christianity in the United States, and by asking specific questions of all political candidates, whose answers will elucidate their position on issues of concern to Americans of various backgrounds and persuasions.

Historically, evangelical Christianity dominated not only religion, but civic and secular life for the first 100 years of our country. In that "evangelical empire," as Dr. Martin Marty

called it, one had to be an evangelical Christian in order to be regarded as a patriotic American. Neither Catholics, Jews, nor dissenting Protestants were entitled to vote or hold public office.

Yet, the Baptist tradition of religious liberty and freedom of conscience is also deeply rooted in American history. In 1638, Roger Williams gathered nineteen men, refugees from the enforced establishment of evangelical orthodoxy in the Massachusetts Bay colony, to form a new colony in Rhode Island that would not only allow but enforce, liberty of conscience.

In his celebrated parable of the ship, Williams elaborated his commitment to "total freedom of conscience" paralleled by his call for complete obligation "to obey the common laws and orders" of the civil sphere:

"There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common; and is a true picture of common-wealth, or any human combination, or society. It hath fallen out some times that both Papists and Protestants, Jews and Turks may be embarked into one ship. Upon which supposal, I affirm that all liberty of conscience that ever I pleaded for, turns upon two hinges, that none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews, or Turks be forced to come to the ship's prayer or worship nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practice any."

A similar range and diversity exists within the evangelical community today, perhaps not so much on matters of faith, but on social and economic policy issues: from the Christian anti-Communism of Billy James Hargis and Carl McIntire, which has lent religious coloration to reactionary politics, through the mass evangelistic crusades of Dr. Billy Graham, to the emergence of a

group of "new evangelicals" who have sought to make Christian faith the mainspring of needed social reforms and who have criticized the fundamentalist disregard for the problems of society as irresponsible individualism.

Few northern Jews and Christians have experienced that diversity, and some base their perceptions on historical and literary images which are largely negative. The American Jewish Committee, which pioneered in establishing ongoing dialogue with segments of the evangelical community, beginning in the 1960s, has enabled numbers of Jewish and evangelical Christian scholars, academicians and theologians to meet and know one another as persons, dispelling mythologies and stereotyping on both sides. Such experiences have punctured the image of either community as a monolith.

The diversity of opinion within our various religious communities notwithstanding, there are authentic differences between them and conflicting claims. The thrust by some evangelicals to win converts has sometimes led to abuses of church-state separation and coercive measures of proselytism. Jews are particularly sensitive to such developments and concerned about them. Moreover, Jews naturally resent any approach which reduces them -- or the State of Israel -- to theological abstractions, preliminary stages in someone else's drama of redemption. Certainly, Jews should and will query all candidates to determine their commitment to separation of church and state, and to the principles of religious pluralism, and their positions on a host of other issues of concern to the Jewish community. Voters should judge for themselves where

all candidates stand on these issues, and if they mean what they say. These are questions of policy and integrity, not of religious affiliation.

Confronting anti-Catholic bigotry in the 1960 presidential campaign, AJC's David Danzig wrote"

"We are a nation in which a multiplicity of religious groups (none constituting a clear majority) struggles ...each to convince the larger society that its own set of values, policies and solutions to problems best represent the truth and the interests of the country and the common good...here are those who consider the presidency as the symbolic arena in which the struggle will be joined and settled...But the major reality to face is that the struggle among religious groups to shape America to their own points of view is irrelevant to the religious affiliation of the president."

These words ring as true today as they did in 1960, and apply as equally to an evangelical Protestant as they did to the Roman Catholic presidential aspirant of that election. Religious pluralism as a functioning reality of American life does not depend on the religion of the president; it depends on the vitality of America's religious communities.

The issues of difference among religious groups are real. Those relating to public policy should be openly discussed and confronted. Hopefully, the surfacing of religion as an issue in this campaign will provide the opportunity to enhance and deepen the existing evangelical-Jewish dialogue, further dispelling misconceptions in both communities, and advancing mutual understanding.

6/16/76

RPR

Rabbi Says Carter Tests Our Mettle

By MAURICE P. SULLIVAN
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

The presidential candidacy of former Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter will test the maturity of Americans, a Jewish leader said here last night.

Here to address the 31st annual meeting of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Jewish Committee, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national director for interreligious affairs for the committee, said:

"The Carter candidacy, especially that associated with his evangelical background, is going to test the maturity of Americans to face the prejudices and stereotypes of about 40 to 50 million Evangelical Christians in this country."

"Historically," Rabbi Tanenbaum said, "evangelical Christianity dominated American nationalism for the first 100 years of our country. In that evangelical empire, as Dr. Martin Marty called it, in order to be regarded as a pious American, you had to be an evangelical Christian. Neither Catholics, Jews, nor dissenting Protestants were allowed to vote or hold public office."

Crash Kills Youth, 15

WASHINGTON, Pa. (AP)—A Washington County teen-ager was killed and three others were injured yesterday when the pickup truck in which they were riding ran off a rural road and struck a tree.

Ronald Bdnarski, 15, of Avella R.D. 1 was pronounced dead at the scene. His sister, Andrea, 14 was reported in satisfactory condition at Washington Hospital. James Headley 16, of West Middletown was listed in good condition.

All three were passengers in a truck driven by Richard J. Moore, 17, of Avella R.D. 2. He was treated at the hospital.

"So one of the unanswered Yankee questions is whether a President Jimmy Carter would help resurrect a mentality of second-class political status for non-evangelicals."

"There are liberal evangelical Christians who are committed to social justice as passionately as any northerner is, and Americans must know that."

President Gerald Ford, he added, is an evangelical Christian.

Rabbi Tanenbaum, whose headquarters is in New York City, said he has asked Jewish leaders of the United States not to let bias against Evangelicals go unchallenged in the Jewish community.

Approximately 250 persons attended the meeting in the Concordia Club.

Rabbi Tanenbaum pointed out that the committee has been fighting bigotry against religious, racial or ethnic groups since it was founded 70 years ago.

When John F. Kennedy was a candidate for president in 1960, Tanenbaum said the committee opposed bigotry directed against Kennedy.

"Since Vatican II it is very clear that relationships between Catholics and Jews, as generally between Christians and Jews, have never been better," he said.

"This doesn't mean there are no problems. We have learned in America through use of dialogue and negotiation to try to resolve our differences in a rational and mature way, not with the use of hand grenades, terrorism and massacres," said the rabbi.

The religious pluralism that developed in America in recent years is "the most valuable export America has to give to the world," he observed.

Commenting on another recent trend, Rabbi Tanenbaum continued:

"The use of church investments by a number of major Christian bodies and ecumenical

groups to change the policies of those industries which have capitulated to the Arab boycott and to anti-Jewish discrimination is a significant and welcome contribution to restoring ethical accountability and social responsibility in the world of commerce," Rabbi Tanenbaum said.

"In this Bicentennial year, the genius of American democracy rests on the fact this is a society in the world in which there have been no religious wars," Rabbi Tanenbaum said, "as there are today in Ireland, Lebanon, Cyprus and Uganda."

"For centuries people have been taught hatred and contempt for each other. In America we have begun to learn to respect difference, not as a threat, but as a source of enrichment."

Americans, he explained, have been spared religious wars and experience with religious pluralism and coexistence is something that countries now having internal strife will have to import if they are to survive.

Flea Market Slated To Assist Symphony

A flea market to benefit the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and Heinz Hall will be held June 18 to 20 in the alley between the hall and Woolworth's variety-store.

Used clothing, sports and garden equipment, housewares and other items will be sold.

Inside Heinz Hall, an original copy of the Declaration of Independence, a cranberry-glass collection and art work will be on display. The exhibits will be open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. June 18 and 19 and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 20.