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Box 15, Folder 12, Committee on the Church and the Jewish People, 1964.

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# WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

DIVISION OF WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM

## COMMITTEE ON THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE



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Geneva, 11. February, 1964.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum,  
165 East 56 Street,  
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N.Y. U.S.A.

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum,

Thank you very much for your letter of Februar 4.

You present in your letter some proposals which I shall be very glad to accept and consider.

I appreciate the frankness in your letter and hope our correspondence will always be in that spirit, as it seems to me *conditio sine qua non* for any sincere and valuable relations.

You mention your reservations about some emphasis on proselytism. Here seems to me to be a typical illustration of the kind of danger of speaking passed each other which we often face. In my article which you refer to I begin with the history of the Committee which admittedly reflects a missionary concern. You will also notice that a change is taking place and that I even use an expression "Proselytism and methods which are insulting the Jews must be condemned." This is my attitude towards people who have some kind of missionary concern and such are still found within the churches and even in our Committee.

We both use words as 'proselytizing' and 'proselytism' and are aware of it as something to be deplored. I think if we should not misunderstand each other it will be necessary for both of us to explain what we mean by those words. May I quote the official statement from New Delhi on this matter which is the context in which I use the word:

"Proselytism is not something absolutely different from witness; it is the corruption of witness. Witness is corrupted when cajolery, bribery, undue pressure or intimidation is used - subtly or openly - to bring about seeming conversion; when we put the success of our church before the honour of Christ; when we commit the dishonesty of comparing the ideal of our own church with the actual achievement of another; when we seek to advance our own cause by bearing false witness against another church; when personal or corporate self-seeking replaces love for every individual soul with whom we are concerned. Such corruption of the Christian witness indicates lack of confidence in the power of the Holy Spirit, lack of respect for the nature of man and lack recognition of the true character of the Gospel. It is very easy to recognize these faults and sins in others; it is necessary

"to acknowledge that we are liable to fall into one or the other of them ourselves. Since the difference between witness and proselytism is a matter of purpose, motive and spirit, as well as of means, objective criteria alone cannot adequately distinguish between the two. Nevertheless such criteria do exist, and some general objective standards of practice are possible."

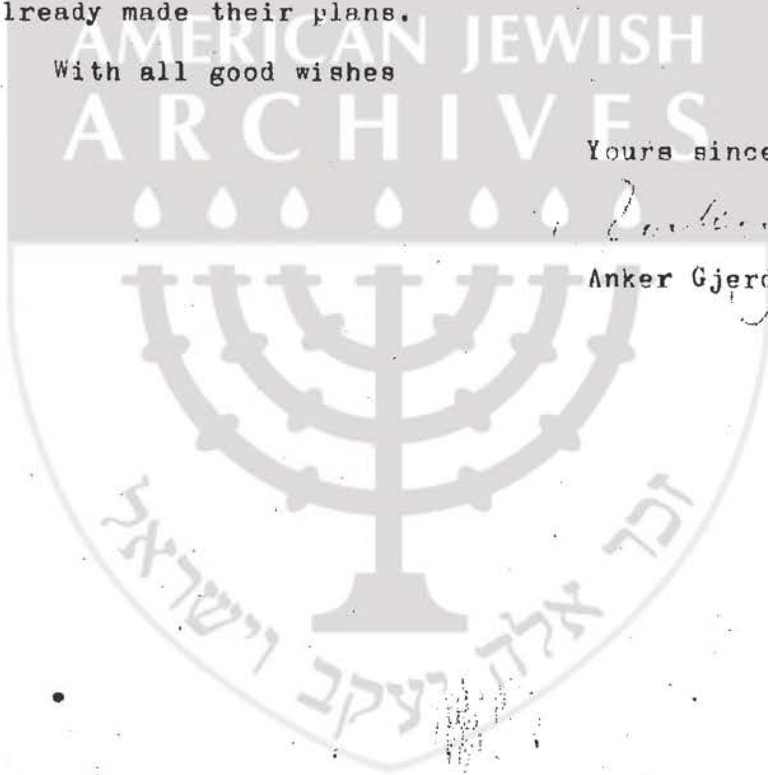
I should like to know if this is also your conception or you will define it in a different way.

Thank you for your offer regarding the summer camps. I shall certainly bear that in mind for the future. This year the Dutch Churches have already made their plans.

With all good wishes

Yours sincerely,

*Anker Gjerding*  
Anker Gjerding.



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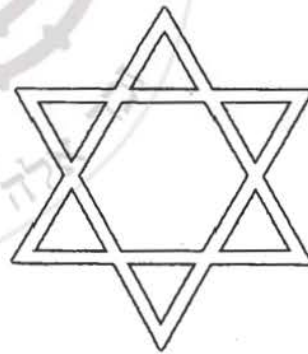
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS  
of  
Rev. Anker Gjerding  
*Secretary*  
COMMITTEE ON THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE  
of the  
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
DIVISION OF WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM

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# Religious Trends In Modern Israel

## The Impact Of Nazism On European Jewry



Committee on the  
Church, and the Jewish People

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
Division of World Mission and Evangelism



The following Lectures were given at  
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of the World Council of Churches.

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Rev. H. P. SCHNEIDER :  
*Religious Trends in Modern Israël.*

Rev. K. H. LEUNER :  
*The Impact of Nazism on European Jewry.*



# Religious Trends in Modern Israel

by The Rev. H. P. SCHNEIDER  
Chaplain at St. Luke's Church, Haifa, Israel

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

NEVER a dull moment is certainly true for any person who tries to follow the religious scene in Israel from day to day. It would be surprising if there were not many interpretations of events and much disagreement about them but one thing does seem indisputable and that is, that there is a unique relation between religion and land, Judaism and the State of Israel — hardly a day goes past when religion in this sense is not mentioned in the daily press.

I do not think that I am the only one who is bewildered with what is happening in the religious scene in Israel, but bewildering as the facts may be we can hardly interpret them without ourselves being confronted by certain critical events (one must admit at once that one cannot help but be selective) which have taken place in Israel and which have confronted the public. We must not make too much of these outward happenings, the precise truth of which it is always difficult to determine (for often the deeper issues and quiet progress of religion goes unmentioned) but try and see to what they point and mean.

I want to leave aside the Eichmann trial and the many issues it has brought up because this has already been so much written and spoken about that the actual facts are now quite familiar. The particular and unique significance it has for Israel is that it demonstrated Israel's claim to speak on the behalf and in the defence of world Jewry.

Perhaps there is no better starting point than the relation of Church and State or rather Torah and State, for this is at the bottom of much of the religious perplexity in the country. Three times in the last eighteen months has this subject been treated in the Jerusalem Post Interviewpoints. The first was the old chestnut,

'Who is a Jew?', the second was the direct relation of 'Torah and State' and the third coming in the middle of the Yossele uproar was headed 'Religion in Israel : A Plea for Co-Existence.' A fundamental Christian mistake is to draw simple parallels between the relation of Church and State in the so-called free world and Israel and then to accuse Israel of religious intolerance because it has not followed this pattern. This ignores the unusual relationship between Judaism and the Jewish people and, therefore, a Jewish State and also the particular concept or rather modus vivendi of religion in the Middle East. It is essentially one of community and this as it has been worked out in the Holy Land is known as the Millett system. Briefly stated, this has given the rights of the individual in the area of personal status to his or her religious community and not to the civil authorities, and further has tried to maintain the status quo between the various established religious communities such as Orthodox Jews, Moslems, Eastern and Latin Christians. The system goes back to the decrees of Theodosius in 425 A. D. which were clarified by Sultan Abdul Mejid in 1852 A. D. and reiterated and extended by other international treaties at almost regular intervals. Britain as the Mandatory power followed the line and endorsed it by an Order in Council in 1922 and was so intent in upholding the status quo that it declined to give full communal recognition to the fairly large but comparatively new arrival of the Anglican Church. The main difficulty of the Protestant community stems from the very fact that they are comparatively recent arrivals in the Holy Land and that the Protestant ideology is steeped in an individualism which makes it difficult for it to understand and appreciate the workings of the Millett system. Whereas Orthodox Judaism, with its unique link between religion and people, sacred and secular, finds no difficulty with a religious authority which has complete control in the area of personal status. It is not without significance that the present Jewish opposition to this state of affairs comes mainly from the unreligious westerner, who has been brought up within the framework of Christianity. Yet it must be admitted that there are today serious strains and difficulties in this situation, indeed this is an understatement as several incidents during the last year have highlighted.

So, for example, is the now notorious case of Jaffa Ajamini. In addition to numerous letters which appeared on this case in the Jerusalem Post there was also a leader in that paper on November 15, 1961, taking up the whole question of Law and People. The incident centred round a Jewish girl and a Moslem boy, neither of whom wanted to convert to the other's faith and so they both continued to come under the jurisdiction of their particular religious community. As they were of two different religions and one of them continued to be Jewish they could not be married and eventually a child was born out of wedlock. The court ruled that an unmarried mother was not fit to look after her child and as the child was Jewish (since it was born of a Jewish mother) it was, therefore, committed to

an appropriate Jewish institution. Thereupon, the mother snatched the child back from the institution and was after arrested for contempt of court. This brought on a public outcry. The unfairness of the situation was pointed out that, because of the peculiar law in Israel these two lovers were unable to marry and then punished because they were unmarried. A further complication in this case arose because of the conflict between Moslem and Jewish law. The Moslem law allows a Moslem to marry a non-Moslem but the Orthodox Jewish law completely forbids this. This is yet one among many indications of the breakdown and difficulty in the Millett system.

Neither could the Millett system take account of the modern immigration of Jews whose orthodoxy, or more correctly orthopraxy, has been called into question. The case of the Karaites and the Bene Israel has figured quite largely in the Israel Press during the last year. As far as the Karaites are concerned there can be little doubt that they have deviated in orthopraxy considerably rejecting as they do the rabbinic interpretation of the law. Evidently, at one time, Rabbinic and Karaite families intermarried quite freely, but as their laws on divorce differed considerably intermarriage was soon forbidden. Indeed, there have been times, particularly that of persecution, when the Karaites claimed to be altogether distinct from the Jewish people. Be that as it may, they have been treated as Jews as far as the Law of the Return of the modern State of Israel is concerned while their relationship in Israel with the Chief Rabbinate is, at present, anything but happy. In that relationship, Prime Minister Ben Gurion has made it quite clear that he treats them as full Jews and would like the Chief Rabbinate to do the same.

The case of the Bene Israel is very different. Their heteropraxy arises from their isolation from the rest of Jewry and dates almost from the time of their immigration some sixteen to nineteen hundred years ago. Contact with Orthodoxy was established as late as the 18th and 19th century 'When Cochin Jews as well as Oriental Sephardim mainly from Iraq began to supply them with teachers and brought them into line with traditional Judaism. Today, the Bene Israel synagogues in Bombay and elsewhere are indistinguishable from any Oriental Sephardy synagogue.' Their case, as far as intermarriage is concerned, has been considered from time to time with both positive and negative judgments. With their immigration reaching six thousand the problem has now arisen in an acute form, but up to last year had only been treated in a rather ad hoc manner. Chief Rabbi Nissim, who was at first inclined towards a negative attitude, after studying the case *halachically* came to a more positive decision. It was decided that the Bene Israel were definitely Jews and that no doubt could be cast on the correctness of their family laws. Great care and *halachic* scholarship went into this decision, indeed, Chief Rabbi Nissim has already published the first of two volumes entitled — Bene Israel: *Halachic* Decisions and Sources... The Chief Rabbinate of



Israel, Jerusalem 1962. This treatise shows how very seriously the Chief Rabbinate has taken this question. The tragedy in the situation arises from the angry response that this reasoned *halachic* judgment called forth from the orthodox extremists. "We will rouse all Torah scholars abroad against the Chief Rabbinate's ruling allowing marriage between Jews and members of the Bene Israel community," Rabbi Yeshayahu Scheinberger, "Foreign Minister" of the Natorei Karta religious zealots, declared here yesterday, prior to his departure for London and the U.S. — Jerusalem Post. November 2, 1961. The Zealots evidently were not able to produce further *halachic* evidence to contravene the Chief Rabbinate's ruling. Happy as these decisions of the Chief Rabbinate were in October 1961, the directives of the Chief Rabbinate to the Rabbis in their capacity of marriage registrars in February 1962, were certainly retrogressive and detrimental to the community. They were full of 'ifs' and 'buts', the main point being that each case had to be examined. The Action Committee of the Bene Israel strongly resented this probe into their lineage and encouraged their people not to reply to the questions of the Rabbinical registrar. In all this, President Ben Zvi proved and continues to be a mediating force, regretting 'the probe' addition in the directives of February 1962, and commending the more positive council decisions of October 1961, he at the same time asked the Bene Israel community to co-operate with the Rabbinical registrars.

One can have real sympathy with the Chief Rabbinate in the serious *halachic* way it tackled the Bene Israel question but regret that they should allow themselves to be influenced in any way by extremists and thus widen the gap between the religious and non-religious public. There is little doubt on what side the majority of the Jewish people were. If anything, the decision of October 1961 should have come earlier and should have been even more courageous and should never have been followed by such negative directives as that of February 1962, which directives have resulted in constant strife and have, as President Ben Zvi indicated at the time, in practice negated the positive and hopeful decisions of October 1961. The latest case occurred at the end of June in Haifa and produced the following remark in the Jerusalem Post. 'Nissim's Instructions Blamed for Confusion over Bene Israel. Asked why he married Rachel's older brother to a girl outside the community four years ago, Rabbi Charlap said: "There were no instructions from the Chief Rabbinate then".' Jerusalem Post. June 25, 1962.

If only the Chief Rabbinate would hearken to one who was not exactly a moderate in religion but a lover of all Israel, rather than extremists who seem to be full of hate and concerned only for the more narrow confines of religion, the religious scene would be far happier. 'You stand in fear of the punishment which may await you in the hereafter' said Rav Kook to a rigorist who opposed his ruling on the *Shemittah*, 'for sanctioning a breach of the Law, whilst you feel

no concern for the whole Yishuv which might become engulfed in complete economic ruin. It behoves each one of us to shoulder the responsibility since we all aim at the rebuilding of the Holy Land.' Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook, His Life and Works, I. Epstein, p. 23. The point needs no underlining!

If we can detect a lack of breadth and moderation for the six thousand Bene Israel, what can be our judgment for the handful of liberal and progressive Jews in Israel? If one were to draw a parallel with Christendom one might liken the Bene Israel to the Greek Orthodox, and the Liberals and Progressives would in that case be more like the Left Wing of Protestantism. The case is one of entire and bitter opposition. In a manifesto by the World Union of Progressive Judaism on 'Reform in Israel' it is evidently a matter of surprise that the purchase of the ground for the first Reform Synagogue in Jerusalem should go through without Orthodox riots or Government opposition. Yet the sponsors obviously expected serious opposition, stating in their manifesto, 'A distinction should be made between the Israel Government, who has not restrained or repressed Reform Judaism, and the Orthodox community of Israel whose opposition will continue to be relentless and ruthless.' It is not difficult to understand why the Orthodox opposition should be so fierce. Indeed, as the Reform manifesto itself indicates, 'Merely non-practising Jews may, at any time, feel the need for religion and return to the established Orthodox synagogue, but once a non-practising Jew has been won over to another form of Judaism their spiritual needs are met and there is very little likelihood of a return to orthodoxy.' Similar motives actuate against the Jewish believer in Christ and it is part of the reason why he is denied inclusion in being a 'Jew,' while his atheist brother is admitted into the fold. As far as Orthodoxy is concerned, a Jew is one who has been born of a Jewish mother and has not accepted another religion. More serious than this is the accusation of Orthodox pressure from a position of power and privilege. The Reform manifesto declares, 'Examples of Orthodox pressures are becoming evident today. Hotels have recently found themselves without available rooms when facilities are sought for a Reform service or *Bar Mitzvah*. The threat of retaliation from the Orthodox *mashgiach* who supervises the *Kashrut* of the kitchen is real, and could bring about financial disaster. A few families whose business involves a broad spectrum of the buying public have indicated that they would prefer the Reform service but cannot affiliate because of the very probable economic boycott which would result.'

One would be happy if one could dispense with such allegations of economic pressure as mere 'propaganda,' but unfortunately, I have come across evidence of like pressure in the case of Christians of Jewish origin. One should regret this not merely because of the difficulties against whom the pressure is directed but even more for the Orthodox, for whom this is an additional widening of the rift between themselves and the rest of Israeli Jews.



Christians, who have experienced all the evil and dissipation of disunion, must weep with Orthodoxy at the widening rift and the possibility of a separate, second kind of Judaism in Israel. We must not fall into the trap of siding with Liberal and Progressive Judaism just because we may experience similar pressures or because Liberal Judaism takes a more moderate view of Christianity.

It does not appear to me that Liberal Judaism will 'take on' in a large scale in Israel and that, despite the very widespread and serious discontent there is with Orthodoxy. There is much truth in what Martin Buber once remarked that, 'So far, there has not been a reform in Judaism but only a reduction.' There is also the suspicion against Liberal Judaism that it has been too influenced in the externals of its worship by Western Christendom. The accusation that it has been a preparation for the Baptism font is, I think, unfair but does reflect a strong and popular criticism against it.

There are many who advocate that Israel needs a new and indigenous Judaism which will be a serious alternative to Orthodoxy. This would be a tragedy. One hopes that a true reform within Orthodoxy which can meet the demands of the day but not merely reduce religion would be possible and so help to maintain (and to prevent from imminent break) a single people. Part of the Orthodox claim is that, religion is a unifying element in the Jewish people making it one, and keeping that unique link of people and religion unbroken. There can be no doubt that this should be so but one cannot see it being maintained unless there is a thorough-going reform within Orthodoxy itself. In this respect, it seemed to me that the International Convention of the World Council of Synagogues which assembled in Jerusalem in May, showed real sensitivity for the situation and a foresight for the whole people of Israel. The theme of the congress was 'Strength in Diversity.' The congress took a healthy and critical look at its own inner life and declared its intention to infuse and stimulate spiritual vitality here and in the diaspora rather than to create separate Conservative congregations in Israel. 'The keynote to the Convention,' said its President, Mr. Rosengarten, 'was a call for strength in diversity' (it sounds almost like Anglicanism). 'The objectives of the Council and its constituents were to give guidance to the many communities; to transmit Judaism's precious heritage to future generations; to combat assimilation and make the people of Israel a light unto the nations.'

It is significant that the congress looked upon Schechter and Rav Kook as their spiritual fathers. Schechter with his particular emphasis on Jewish values and theology and his concept of a 'Catholic Israel'; and Rav Kook with his insistence of the link between religion and land, Judaism and Zion. There is no room for a separatism from the State of Israel, as has occurred in the extreme Orthodox camp such as Natorei Karta, or as manifested in the American Council for Judaism. To prove this a study centre was being set up in Jerusalem and every Conservative Rabbi would be encouraged to spend some part of his training



in Jerusalem. The press comment endorsed this attitude of Strength in Diversity when it remarked: 'At this point, the movement apparently does not intend aggressively to throw down the gauntlet to Israel's religious establishment. But its presence here is sure to create a stir that can only be beneficial to the country's religious, intellectual, and social life. Already Hechal Shlomo has been spurred to try to infuse some life into that part of the country's synagogue life which it dominates.' — Jerusalem Post. May 27, 1962.

A few days later when, at the American Israel Dialogue, Rabbi Dr. Prinz criticized the orthodox leadership in the country stating that, 'In these 14 years we have not heard the voice of religious Israel raised on the great moral and social issues facing the world and Israel, and that the concern of Israel's religious leaders with ritualistic observance seemed greater than with issues such as peace and war, and social justice...' it called forth an immediate reply from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Dr. Wahrhaftig's reply was vehement but hardly to the point. "Religious Israel" he said, "maintained a continuous fight for every Jewish soul and family in Israel and in the building up of a healthy and moral nation". He had the impression that, Dr. Prinz wanted utterances on general world problems without obligating one to personal self-realization. The difference is between practical *mitzvot* and mere theory, which is the difference between Orthodox Judaism and Reform Judaism.' — Jerusalem Post. May 30, 1962. A caricature of Reform Judaism hardly becoming of the Minister. It would be unjust to make too much of the Minister's rejoinder in this particular case as he has shown himself to be both wise and possessed of a real concern for other religious minorities in Israel. It is due mainly to his initiative that the Druze community has recently achieved complete community status. What is so disconcerting is that it is yet another sign of a hardening attitude within Orthodoxy, which is, perhaps, one of the most serious encumbrances in the way of a revival of religious Orthodoxy. A further disturbing feature is that, no one seems to know to what extent Orthodoxy approves or allows itself to be pressured by the religious extremists in the country.

It is the attitude of the Chief Rabbinate and the Government to the excesses of the 'lunatic fringe' which is more significant than their particular exploits. It is this which I believe greatly worries the general public.

So we may take two incidents which have recently filled the press, that of Yossele and the stoning of the police in Bnei Brak when they attempted to remove a corpse. That extremists, who deny the existence of Israel, refuse to serve in the armed forces or even use Israeli currency should go to the length of kidnapping is surely no surprise. What is disturbing and disquieting the non-Orthodox public was the apparent Orthodox connivance and pressure on the Government for an amnesty for the kidnappers. Why didn't a single rabbi raise his voice against this inhuman behaviour was the outcry. Again the intervention on behalf of

the mob who stoned a policeman and the Government's kid-gloved policy when dealing with these outrages is what really did the damage to religion in Israel. Dosh, the cartoonist, put his finger on the point when he represented the religious and unreligious public standing on either side of a gulf. Beneath the cliff on which the religious man is standing is the extremist, destroying with a pick the ground beneath his feet. The non religious member of the public is calling out, 'Do something to make him stop!'

Something is being done but not by the religious but rather by their bitter opponents — I refer to the revitalisation of the League against Religious Coercion. The activities of this League have received considerable publicity but it should be remembered that it is, after all, the activity of a very small western intelligentsia which is attempting to arouse a reluctant public against the pressures of the Orthodox. Their publicity is directed against the tie-up between State and Religion with a particular plea for civil marriage. They demonstrate against the orthodox tightening of Sabbath observances, their intolerance of other religious groups, and against their pressure on the Government for a soft policy with the religious extremists.

That there are grievances can hardly be denied but hardness cannot be met with hardness. It is fool-hardy for the Christian Church to support the League, for the League is motivated by too selfish a concern for rights without giving due regard for the evil of creating two Israels. The League is the enemy of Orthodoxy; the Christian Church is not. It differs but it has fought far too much in the past and needs now to do all it can to remove the wall that is between it and Orthodoxy. The danger in the League's campaign is that of hardening the attitude of the non-religious against the religious and of reducing Israel merely to a small Levantine state with no sense of divine mission to the world. A movement such as this, the Christian Church cannot support even if the League is championing some causes from which the Christian Church in Israel would directly benefit. Yet while the Christian Church must be careful not to support the League it cannot deny the rightness of some of its agitation against established Orthodoxy. If only Hechal Shlomo would react courageously and thus help to bridge the gulf. As it stands at present, there seems little meeting point between the two parties. After all, the Jewish people owes its present existence to the cement of Orthodoxy during the years of exile. It is mainly on religious grounds that the Jewish people claim their right to return to this land, and it is chiefly a religious understanding of election in terms of service that differentiates Israel from any other Levantine country, and can sweeten the present overdose of nationalism. These are strong points in favour of Orthodoxy and it could well afford to listen to the criticisms which are being levelled against it both by Liberal Jews and the League, instead of the sad state of the present debate in which one party doesn't appear to recognize the validity of the opposing side. Typical of such fruitless



discussion was the double Interviewpoint in the Jerusalem Post (March 9, 1962) on Torah and State. 'The pig has cast its obese shadow over the land, while members of the Knesset debate its ethics and personal habits. Militant free-thinkers maintain their right to drive on a Saturday along Jerusalem's King George Avenue, while equally belligerent believers prepare, stone-in-hand, to resist the disturbers of the Sabbath peace. The fate of a little boy has become a political football as well as a private tragedy. Marriage law requirements threaten to split communities asunder instead of merely joining man and wife together. Dr. Rom Moav, Chairman of the Jerusalem branch of the League to Prevent Religious Coercion in Israel and Rabbi Shlomo Lorincz, M. K., discuss problems of State and Religion.' In this vein, no one wins and no one has prizes. Rabbi Lorincz is anxious to point out that the religious demands against pig-breeding, of Sabbath observance only hurt the comforts of the free-thinkers not their conscience. Where it affects their conscience as in the case of religious marriage this is better than losing the nation's identity and values — for is there an intelligible definition of a Jew without some reference to the Jewish religion? Can there be a Jewish State without Torah, which is the reason for the existence of the Jewish nation? Clever debating it may certainly be but there is little here to meet the point of view of the opponent. Perhaps the pig and Sabbath observance in its present form are not of the essence of religion; perhaps they are worth sacrificing to keep and maintain a religion and people together; perhaps even the Christian Church can help in a situation such as this?

The wisdom of Solomon and one wiser than him is necessary in a situation such as this, and not the counsel of Rehoboam, if history is not to repeat itself.

## *2nd Lecture*

In our first lecture we took account of some of the religious issues and incidents which have crowded in on the Israel scene. In this study we shall try and go deeper to see what lies below the surface. After all, we should hardly like Christianity in Britain to be judged by issues taken up in the secular press.

What to me is far more serious than the popular criticisms levelled against the Orthodox is the cynism amongst so many intellectuals. Herbert Weiner, in an attempt to sketch the present religious trends in Israel, recounts an interview that has much warning both for the majority Jewish religion and for the Christian minority.

'If it is religion you are looking for, you have come to the wrong land. Oh, you may find a few spiritual athletes, as I call them, performing their spiritual gymnastics in some cell in a monastery. But if by religion you mean anything associated with theological thought, ideas, spiritual creativity in any civilized sense, you will not find it here.'

The Christians here — I don't mean the ignorant peasantry who are held in contempt by their own clergy — but the hierarchies, the various orders and sects, look upon themselves mainly as sentinels in a cold-war truce. Their main function is to act as guards over the ever-continuing war over the holy sites, and their main task in this war is to see to it that they are not dislodged from positions that their particular religious army has acquired on these sites, by deceit, thievery, and murder. It's been a little more polite in recent years, but still, there have been incidents... You know how Runciman, the authority on the Crusades, summed it up, "... a desecration of the Holy Spirit in the name of God."

The Moslems — they don't even pretend to be interested in religion. The peasant holds on to his superstitions, paints his house blue, and draws pictures of hands on his trucks and doors; but the only thing the educated, city Moslem worships is Nasser and Arab nationalism. They don't even pretend any more to abstain from the liquor which is forbidden every good Moslem by his Koran.

Of course, the most repellent religious group of all here now — mainly because they suddenly have power — are the Jewish Orthodox spiritual authorities. I have been wondering lately if the whole business hasn't been a bluff, if these Orthodox professional Jews ever believed in anything. Yes... that is religion in the Holy Land — politics, organization, and power drives; spiritual warriors who specialize in being against — but if you're looking for something else, spiritual creativity or theology, you're in the wrong land.' (The Wild Goats of Ein Gedi by Herbert Weiner. New York, 1961. P. 8-11)

Let me haste to say that this is not a statement of fact but rather a caricature of an extreme kind. The disturbing fact is that there are elements of truth in it. A factual account of the Christian communities has been well given by Dr. Chaim Wardi of the Ministry of Religious affairs in an article on the Christian Problem in Israel in 'Judaica' — December 1960.

The sad history of the Crusades and the quarrels and fights surrounding the Holy Places are well known. They are a continual shame to Christianity and to that shame has been added profiteering from modern tourism. Further, we cannot gloss over the terrible sin of bringing to the Holy Land all the multiplication of Protestant sects. That Israel seems to be attracting the 'lunatic fringe' of the sectarians is a continual embarrassment to the main stream of Protestant Christianity. However, for this infusion, the Protestant community can hardly be held responsible, but for the divisions in the major Protestant Churches there is little excuse. It is something, which, if not healed very shortly may spell the death of Protestant Christianity in Israel. More serious however than the organisational and ecclesiastical divisions among Christians is the allegation of the lack of Christian understanding and appreciation of the major religion of the land, and lack of interest in theological dialogue. This was made abundantly clear when some Christian leaders were addressed by a leading Jewish theologian who felt he



had to say with all sincerity that, if he and his colleagues desired to be understood they had to look to the Church abroad because they had been so bitterly disappointed and frustrated with the Church in the land. Yet, there has been of late a change of attitude and a real interest in trying to probe into the 'mystery of Israel.' Foremost in this field have been the Latins and significantly priests of Jewish origin. Recently, Father Bruno Hesar has established a house in Jerusalem for Jewish studies, not only to encourage the Church here to understand its own origin better but to develop a proper Christian understanding and attitude towards Judaism, thus combatting antisemitism by attacking its root of anti-Judaism in the Christian Church here and at large and so to foster truly Christian attitudes towards the Jewish People. This movement has received very real encouragement from Pope John XXIII who has already permitted the expunging of certain harmful and derogatory statements from the Roman liturgy. Ahead as the Latins may be in this field there is a counter-part in this search for new ways and attitudes among the Protestant community also, coupled also as it is among the Latins, with a real love for the Hebrew language. The Baptists have already shown their interest by encouraging the researches of Dr. Lindsey and by the regular holding of seminars in their centre at Petah Tikva. Also a recent suggestion for a short course on Jewish studies under the auspices of the Jerusalem Archbishopric with Jewish scholars taking part has been well received by the United Christian Council in Israel. Meagre as all this may be it is a movement with real hope and promise for a deepening relationship between Judaism and Christianity. Rather than the kind of flattery of an ultra Christian-Zionist attitude taken up by some sectarians in the country, motivated by philo-Semitism which cannot lead to adult relationships or to true appreciation of and sensitivity to the Arab minority in the Land.

A task the Christian Church has escaped so far is to work out and define a theological significance of the Jewish State in such a way that will keep a truly Christian attitude to the Arab minority in the Land and open the way for a united Christian Church of whatever national or ethnic origin the Christian may be. The Church indeed must put its own house in order and seek to be of help and service to the majority religion of the Land. It must do so with the humility of a minority movement for the main task of religion remains in the hands of Jewish Orthodoxy.

The cries against the Orthodox in Israel are many and some have been examined in this study, but there are also encouraging signs of spiritual depth. These are not so much publicised but they are nevertheless present. Of all the religious leaders in the recent history of the Holy Land there have been none of the stature of Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook and A. D. Gordon of Degania. These men in different ways are both religious giants and are largely responsible for the religious kibbutz movement which although small in size is certainly not

insignificant in importance and value for Israel. Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of Palestine, has become a legend and as one has surveyed his works and doings one has been struck by real similarities to William Temple. Both were profound religious thinkers and both were deeply concerned with the non-religious masses. Both tried to reach across the gap which separated the believer and unbeliever — both were severely criticised by the more narrow and strictly religious leaders of their day. Both remain an inspiration for the present and the future. Rav Kook was personally strictly observant in orthodox practice but possessed of a charity which encompassed the whole household of Israel. In his concern for all Jews and his readiness to go out into the new settlements, free thinking as they might be, he was severely criticised for mixing with those who defiled the Sabbath and made little or no attempt to keep the Law. His reply is characteristic of him: 'Better that I should risk the sin of "causeless love" than that of "causeless hate".' It points to the one thing which is lacking on the part of religious extremists of today and that is love and concern for the whole Jewish community in place of angry hate (which breeds separation) on the part of the religious against the breakers of the Torah.

There is a rather beautiful anecdote of how Rav Kook justified the non-religious *Chalutzim* in a parable about the building of the Holy of Holies. While the Temple was in building workmen had need to enter — it was only after construction had been completed that it was restricted to the High Priest. Further, he never tired to point out how Diaspora religiosity had been limited to exercises of the soul, here in the Land it was being reembodyed, here the thinness of a one-sided piety was being thickened. After this adjustment he was full of hope that a true religious revival and wholeness would come in this land.

His love for the land and its reclaiming, his final vision of what God would do led him to such extravagances that people who give their lives in reclaiming the land were, in a sense, already religious. Surely such *Chalutzim* could not be far from repentance and *tshuva* was for him more than repentance, it was a return to primordial oneness. This return to unity and to integration for Jewry meant a return back to Torah, back to Hebrew, back to *Eretz Yisrael*.

Synthesis of a cosmic order in which the Jewish people had their unique place played a special part in the theology of Rav Kook. It was around this theme that Professor Simon wove the whole of Rav Kook's theology and thought in a lecture given to the World Council of Synagogues — 'The Legacy of Rabbi Kook. Search for Synthesis of Cosmic, Jewish and Personal Identity.' — Jerusalem Post. June 7, 1962. There is much in his writings of the twin concepts of Godliness and Nationhood and the need of real synthesis between them. He would see the enormous danger of the present religious scene, indeed he has some prophetic words of warning — 'Only Godless nationalism is thoroughly bad — religious nationalism can be a blessing.' It should become a synthesis between the idea



of Godliness and the idea of Nationhood and in this synthesis he believed Israel had a special part. 'There is no people' he declares, 'among all the nations of the world in whose innermost soul there lies hidden the precious goodness emanating from the transcendent light except Israel. Individual saints and sages exist everywhere, but there is no righteous nation "on earth but Israel". Israel has been selected by providence as the bearer of the idea of Godliness which, wedded to that of nationhood, was to enable them to establish that ideal state of society in which Godliness and nationhood are fused in one complete harmony.' (Epstein, see above, p. 15).

Furthermore, it was his strong and fervent belief that only in the activity of the present *Yishuv* reclaiming *Eretz Yisrael* could such a synthesis be brought about. Hence, when the *Yishuv* was endangered by a particular religious law such as *Shemittah*, he went to all lengths to find a *halachic* solution which would be of benefit to the whole of the *Yishuv*.

It was not thus an easy-going religion or a shallow charity or a reduced Judaism which led the extreme Orthodox Rav Kook to such breadth of thought and liberal judgment but rather it sprang from his belief in God and His working, in which Israel had such a special place and the particular secret of it all was that he was able to hold together events which to lesser minds were dim and separate, or to express it in the words of his son — 'I think the secret of my father's thought was his power of inclusion, of being able always to see what seemed to be isolated events and fragments of reality as included within a larger whole.'

Turning our attention now to A. D. Gordon it might be of interest to try and find Christian parallels to Rav Kook and A. D. Gordon and perhaps this might best be done in terms of the early Christian Socialists of whom F. D. Maurice is an obvious parallel to Rav Kook and perhaps Leslie Hughes could be compared to A. D. Gordon. It is interesting that Herbert Weiner, who went to *Degania* where Gordon lived, laboured and died, with a readiness to demythologise Gordon, after spending an afternoon in the Gordon Corner Memorial, admitted that he was indeed a Saint and one who can well take his place in the *sui generis* of this world.

Gordon was a remarkable personality. He left a good position in Russia at the age of 48, settled and worked for 18 years with the *chalutzim* in Judea and Galilee. One cannot but help feel attracted to this stern and awesome figure who asks for no privileges except a table and a lamp and to be allowed to rise at three every morning to write and think but refused any reduction in his hours of physical labour. Even great personal grief could not keep Gordon from his hoe and the field of Galilee. His Religion of Labour, as it has been called, had two fundamental ideas. That of actual toil and the place of the individual in the community as a pattern of the family, the nation and finally of mankind.

His theology of labour was very simple. He believed that direct physical contact with the soil brought man into harmony with creation, the result of which was far more than the produce of the land. But not only did Gordon preach it, write and philosophise about the dignity and worth of agricultural labour he lived it out with a determination and devotion that was a great inspiration to the *chalutzim* of his generation. His emphasis for an outgoing concern of the individual for the family, community and nation gave his religion of Labour the upward look, for he did not advocate labour at the expense of studying but rather he advocated the recapturing of the Jewish concept of *Torah li Shemah* (Study for study's sake).

There is a great and attractive altruism about Gordon but he was somewhat of a utopian dreamer and he would, no doubt, be greatly disappointed with the lack of idealism, and the waning of the pioneering spirit in some of Israeli society today. He was a forceful personality whose presence more than his writings inspired the *chalutzim* of his era and gave them the incentives and ideals which are so much needed today. Mayer Waxman in his masterly history of Jewish literature calls him an autodidact and points out that Gordon never mastered the art of writing nor of presenting his thoughts systematically; this may be the reason why he is not an object of study among the Israeli youth of today but it may well be that the next generation may rediscover him. Such a rediscovery will do much to combat ideas of force and ultra-nationalism and to infuse the young with asking what they can do for the community rather than to join the general 'rat race' or of 'keeping up with the Jones's', an element greatly worrying the present kibbutz movement.

We do not need, however, to look completely to the future for there is surely some fulfilment of both the ideas of Rav Kook and A. D. Gordon in what has come to be known as the Religious Kibbutz Movement. It seemed to me that there was much in common in the live ideas and actual experiments in *HaKibbutz HaDati* with those of Rav Kook. So, for instance, the attempt of a religious revival centered in life and action on a *kibbutz* is the kind of embodiment and 'thickening' of Jewish piety that Rav Kook continually advocated and believed necessary before a national religious revival and fullness were possible. So, also, the idea of integrating religion and labour was certainly of the spirit of A. D. Gordon, though of course the execution and emphasis are very different.

Mr. Yehuda Haffner, editor of 'Iggeret LaGolah,' the bi-monthly publication of the Religious section of the Zionist Organization, replying to my enquiry as to what extent Rabbi Kook could be considered one of the founding fathers of *Hakibbutz HaDati*, comments, 'It would be an overstatement to describe him as "one of the founding fathers." That he had an influence in molding the character of the movement there is no doubt. The following quotation (freely translated) from his work "Chazan Ve Hagshama" is an indication of his attitude of mind



to a religious communal society, "Without attempting to finally define the actual nature of Torah society, it is certain that a regime of personal property could have no place in it, providing all the social and economic laws of the Torah are consistently observed without compromise or deviation". This is Kibbutz Dati ideology and in the formative years of the movement's growth, Rabbi Kook was an active supporter and guide. He showed an acute understanding for the novel religious problems relating to kibbutz society and many of his pupils became the leading educators of the religious pioneering movement. In conclusion, it may be said that today his image serves very much as a spiritual guiding light to the religious kibbutz movement.'

For some considerable time I had been attracted to the religious kibbutz movement and one day when speaking enthusiastically about this to an intelligent Israeli businessman, I received the rejoinder — 'There is no such movement, it is simply a kibbutz which tries to be religious.' I think this is a typical understatement which may, unfortunately, reflect the general attitude and prevailing ignorance of *HaKibbutz HaDati*. It must be admitted that this religious movement came rather late in the whole kibbutz movement, that of the 1930s, and also that 10 kibbutzim out of a total of 230 in Israel is, after all, less than 5 %, yet small though it is, it is I believe a very significant movement and one of the most hopeful within Jewish Orthodoxy within Israel today.

The need to adjust the *halacha* is part of the normal process of Rabbinical Judaism. It is, I think, the emphasis and fervour and the particular situation in terms of experiment and example to the whole community in Israel that gives the special significance to *HaKibbutz HaDati*. In this attempt to apply the *halacha* to the real needs of an actual Jewish community in Israel, there is a stern refusal to use the *Shabbas Goy* or a non-religious Jew or even lenient but strictly correct *halachic* solutions which would be detrimental to religious education in the present situation of the country as a whole. Not to be spurned is the real measure of success and the high standard of productivity that the religious kibbutz has maintained. Nearly every settlement has a turnover of IL. 1,000 per year and, for example, Ein Tsurim was awarded a gold medal in 1956 by the Israel Association of Dairy Farmers for having the best dairy herd in the country.

All this is commendable and so also is the keeping of Torah to one's own economic detriment, but it takes much understanding not to see much of this as trivial and it needs great religious zeal and commitment to Orthodoxy to keep it up. It reminds one very much of the struggles of the Priest Worker Movement in France and of its rather sad ending.

What is of particular interest to Christians are the adjustments in liturgy and synagogue structure in *HaKibbutz HaDati*. What is happening is certainly exciting and invigorating and of great importance for the revival of Judaism. Worship has become an integral part of the life of the religious kibbutz and

the inevitable has happened. Liturgy tends to be simplified and there is a reversion from cantor and choir worship to congregational worship. Keen interest is taken in the correct pronunciation of Hebrew and new liturgical tunes as well as new prayers are being introduced. Significant also is the place given to the synagogue building, that of centrality and the new emphasis which has appeared on dignity in the style of building and the worship itself. Michael Perlman of Yavne, one of the kibbutzim where a permanent synagogue building has already been erected, writes 'The fabric of our life is reflected in our service to the Creator. We note with much concern the order of prayer customary in the cities and the towns in Israel. The services there do not attract the younger generation, generally speaking, for suitable aesthetic forms are not fostered; often even the Sephardi pronunciation is not introduced. We are concerned with questions of education and as such ask: How are we to ensure that our youth remain religious as they grow older? We seek to provide a suitable reply. We members of *HaKibbutz HaDati* do not claim that we have found the answers to all the questions that are troubling us. But we have recognized the problems. Future generations will pass judgment on the solutions we are developing, on the thought and the effort we have invested in beautifying our synagogue and our customs, in blending our worship within the framework of *halutzic* living, in harmonizing our prayer service with the revival of Judaism in its own land.' (The Religious Kibbutz Movement. Edited by Aryei Fishman. P. 66-67) It sounds all very much like a genuine revival of liturgical form in any God-fearing community.

Summing up the achievements of the movement, Aryei Fishman writes 'Thus the religious *kvutza* has succeeded in developing a new form of religious living, firmly rooted in the soil and culture of Israel as well as in the Jewish heritage. Its agricultural celebrations and pageants, its new forms of prayer, its budding art, its very folkways and mores point to a religious culture evolving in the nascent Jewish society of Israel.' (The Religious Kibbutz Movement. P. 20).

Many would, no doubt, like the religious kibbutz movement to be more radical in its demands on the Rabbinate and would like to see the Rabbinate not merely circumventing the *halacha* but actually daring to reform it — there are similar demands by youth in the ecumenical movement who are sick at heart by the slowness and dryness of ecclesiastical machinery.

In this connection, a most unusual and certainly radical experiment is being lived out by a group of young people who have become aware of the emptiness of modern city life but are not prepared to return to Orthodoxy, indeed they are seeking to discover a new religious way, free from shiboleths and definition. They are open to the insights of other religions and have been deeply influenced by Chinese nature patterns which they are trying to reapply in Israel. They owe much to a certain Dr. Joseph Schächter, a science teacher in Haifa. They have



now established themselves as a community in the remains of an old fortress called Yodephet — Josephus's last place of resistance in Galilee. They place considerable emphasis on quiet and meditation and in their new kibbutz there is one room where they have 'placed two loaves of bread and a bowl of water on a table under a constantly burning electric light to symbolize the daily, earthly life constantly lighted by a light from above'. (The Wild Goats of Ein Gedi by Herbert Weiner. P. 268). There are, I think, motivations similar to the Angry Young Men, 'John Osborne and all that', which is an undeniable challenge to both synagogue and church to meet the modern need and to fill the vacuum of a craving for something which must be either 'all or nothing' — it must be purposeful and real and cut through much of the empty symbolism, definition and anachronisms that have attached themselves to both the expression of Judaism and Christianity.

It is, I think the REBELLION of this movement which is of greater significance than its solutions, for it points to the deep religious vacuum which, although we are told can only be filled by what is real and genuine, may very easily be filled by a creed which has vitality and novelty but which is less than either Judaism or Christianity and which in the end is idolatory and cannot lift up a nation.

It is with some hesitance and trepidation that I dare to suggest that the revival of Bible interest in Israel, expressed as it is in the popular Bible Quizzes, is one such religiously defective movement. It is an open secret that this movement is largely centred around the dynamic personality of the Prime Minister, and his interests in this field are well known. They are primarily of three kinds. First there is Mr. Ben Gurion's famous 'Leap into the Past' by which he maintains that the actual incidents of the Bible are nearer to the Israel of today than the official Rabbinical interpretation. Then second, there is his scholarly interest in the sources which have sometimes even roused controversy in the *Knesset*, and thirdly, there is his great attachment to the Prophets, seen largely as great national heroes.

All this has achieved much publicity. What is not so much publicised is the Orthodox shyness of much of this which they have termed bibliolatry. It must be admitted at once that the Prime Minister has not gone so far as Achad Haam, who has been rightly declared by Baruch Kurzweil as a religiously destructive force. A truth which teachers have discovered when they attempted to retain a live interest of their pupils in Bible study without giving that study a religious significance. The most pertinent criticism has come from Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, who sees in this revival of interest a falsification of the essential nature of Torah in two specific ways. First, it attempts to 'cut off' the Torah from its official interpretation within the Jewish people, and second, from the God who alone gives it authority. Is there not here a parallel to the Christian claim that the Old Testament can never be fully understood without the One to Whom

it points? Let us admit at once that there is a great danger in this revival of interest which tends to reduce the Old Testament to an Israeli Shakespeare. The danger is that of widening the gap between Israel and the Diaspora by doing away with Rabbinical interpretation and by emptying the fundamental source book of religion from religion. It must be admitted that Mr. Ben Gurion is aware of this 'cutting off' in his Bible interest but the positive lesson one can draw is that the Bible without religious motivation falls to the ground, and also that the Bible in the midst of a complicated system of interpretation can so easily be lost. Can there not be a reformation by which tradition is cleansed and religion kept? Perhaps one step towards this has already been taken by Nehama Leibowitz and her 'problem' approach in encouraging her readers to choose and distinguish between various Rabbinical interpretations and not simply throwing them all away.

Another such step can be seen in the works of the popular Jewish Library and the serious attempt which it is making to get Orthodoxy across to the interested enquirer. Of particular significance is the title 'An Introduction to Jewish Bible Commentary' by Rabbi Bernard M. Casper.

In the midst of all this there is the much talked about search for 'something'. What this something is appears to be rather inarticulate but it can be detected on several levels. Most simply, it is present in the individual who finds now that the Jewish State is a fact, that there are still needs of the spirit. Then there are those who are rediscovering the treasures of Orthodoxy and yet those who are probing other ways. For many, Orthodoxy remains a strange and unattractive world and the alternatives to Orthodoxy are not articulate enough.

On the communal level this search for something can be seen in the difficulties of the kibbutzim to maintain their pioneering spirit and thus to attract adventurous youth. As one *kibbutznik* put it to me 'Communal living does not solve everything'. On the national level this search for something is a desire for more than mere national independence. It can be detected in Israel's struggle with Zionism to take over the political and ideological leadership of world Jewry and to work out some distinctive purpose for Israel in the world at large over against its mere size and political significance.

If Israel is to be a light to the nations and the Diaspora, it must obviously work out and exemplify relevant distinctive Jewish values. One such value was outlined by Pinhas Lavon as a society which keeps up the 'pioneering' spirit instead of clutching at the goal of a Western 'Welfare State'.

What is quite clear in the present unease and bewilderment is that the Christian Church here is also involved in this search for something, for there is a bewilderment among Christians and Jews alike.



Is it that in this strange land Jesus is confronting His Church in a new way, challenging us to repent of our anti-semitism and misrepresenting Judaism and the Jewish people and calling us to a new understanding of Land, People and Faith? Is it possible, also, that Jesus is once more confronting the Synagogue in this land, freed at last from the two thousand years of misrepresentation which Christian oppression and majority have cast upon his image and that he can once more be seen as he really was? Jew and Christian alike are in God's hands and is it too much to believe that God is going to do something new for both?



# The Impact of Nazism on European Jewry

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## AMERICAN JEWISH

THE sole aim of the following paper, read at the International Summer School on "The Church and Israel" in Cambridge, is to impart to Anglo-Saxon readers some knowledge of a period of history with which most of them are fairly unfamiliar. People on the Continent of Europe and those linked to them by the bond of blood, are only too intimately aware of the happenings and their repercussions.

Neither time nor space permitted a full discussion of details such as would really do justice to the project in all its complexity. A mere sketch could be provided, bearing all the marks of deficiency, over-simplification and generalisation of which the writer is acutely conscious.

The reader, and especially the Christian reader is throughout being asked to feel himself faced with the challenge: What does it all mean to me, — did I know about it, — have I shut my eyes and ears to it, — did I do everything in my power to help the victims, — and how can I assist in preventing a repetition of the tragedy?

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It is quite possible that our 20th century may one day be called the Age of the Homeless. During the last thirty years some forty million people were rendered homeless all over the world and this sad process of uprooting human beings is still going on as was demonstrated by the recent flow of refugees from Algeria. The period of history called the migration of Nations pales into insignificance compared to the upheaval experienced in our time, but it is noteworthy that it

all started with the Jewish people. The Lord God of history has always been using his Chosen Nation as a mirror in which we may see what happens whenever we disregard and ignore his eternal precept to love our fellow man as ourselves. Long before the wall in Berlin split Europe into two, a structure of bricks had been erected in Warsaw to separate Jews from the rest of mankind and it was this line of division which has been called The Wall of all walls.

The order of procedure that suggests itself for the treatment of the subject in hand, is to paint first of all a broad canvas of the general background and historical development and later to turn a spotlight on the sociological, psychological and religious aspects of the impact Nazism has made on the Jews of Europe. As Nazism originated in Germany some considerable time and space will have to be devoted to that country but can, with due alterations of details, be applied to all countries which were overrun or occupied by the Germans in the course of that greatest demonstration of the power of darkness the world has ever witnessed.

There will be statistics and figures some of which will run into millions if not the innumerable and thus create a real difficulty for the question of actual interest and genuine sympathy is invariably bound up with the individual. A child maltreated, a dog shot into the stratosphere will arouse our emotion or sensation, but thousands and millions of people subjected to terror and cruelty fail to register with our mental faculty of visualizing; they just go beyond our power of imagination. Simply in order to help, and by no means to boast of something that is only too typical of countless Jewish families, I want to break down those astronomical figures into something comprehensible by referring to the fact that twenty of my own next of kin perished in various concentration camps. But let me at once add a further remark of a personal nature for which I would beg indulgence: there are, by the grace of Christ, no feelings of resentment, hatred or revenge in my heart for I could not engage in the Lord's Prayer unless I was sincerely ready to forgive those who have sinned against me even as I hope to be forgiven.

In turning to the general background and historical development, we come at once face to face with that phenomenon commonly called antisemitism. Without going into details, let us recognize two main strands: *a)* the anti-Jewish bias and prejudice as noticeable in secular society, — and *b)* the hostility against the Jew which has become a concomitant of Christianity and has even been called a by-product of its teaching.

*a)* The common antisemitism might be explained as an objection to one who is different, the dislike of the unlike, the aversion of the majority to the minority. Most people are thinking in patterns and practically all of us have a certain, natural propensity to generalize. We accept such generalisations as e.g. professors are absentminded, artists are frivolous, and Italians are musical. Such stereotypes (fixed mental impressions) are to some extent necessary but



become rather dangerous whenever they turn to be predominantly negative. Antisemitism has stereotyped the Jew and assigned to him mainly negative attributes such as greed, slyness, ostentatiousness. Ever since 1925 Hitler kept on proclaiming: the Jews are the embodiment of everything bad and evil.

b) Anti-Judaism is almost as old as the Church. Ever since the second century of the Christian era, attempts have been made to label the Jews in general as the "Christ slayers" and to divorce Jesus from His own nation. Without that age-long bias, hatred of the Jews would never have been able to inflame the passions of whole nations that have, at least nominally, been christianised for centuries. Whether we like it or seek to shut our eyes to it, a tradition of anti-Judaism runs through the heritage of the Church. The Epistle of Barnabas and the patristic writings of the third and fourth centuries drew a portrait of the Jew in which he was pictured as God's everlasting opponent. Even as gentle and well-beloved a man as St. John Chrysostom, one of the greatest Christian expositors and saints, went the length of calling the synagogue a den of scoundrels, a repair of wild beasts, the temple of demons devoted to idolatrous cults and a place worse than the heathen circuses, and told the Christians in 387 that it was their sacred duty to hate the Jews. At the time of the Crusades and the Middle Ages the Church was time and again instrumental in, or at least connived at persecutions of the Jews which led to massacres, expulsions, enforced baptisms and other actions that made a mockery of Christ's prayer, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Nor did Luther and the Reformation bring about a basically different attitude, though certain, and at times determined efforts at replacing hatred with love and understanding were not lacking. Apart from some notable exceptions it still holds true that, instead of confronting the world with God's Christ as the Jew dying for the world's sin, the Church presents the nations with a picture of the Jews betraying and killing the Christ Messiah, thus making hatred of the Jews practically inevitable. To give but one telling instance, a wellknown German Bible Society published in 1912 (!) an edition of the Luther Bible that gained tremendous popularity all over German speaking Europe because the biblical text was interspersed with a running commentary. Following Gen. 25; 33, the explanatory note said: « Jacob is acting like a cunning businessman, exploiting the weakness of his opposite number: the typical haggling Jew (Schacherjude) ! »

Hitler made the fullest use of both strands but added, before twisting them into a rope for hanging the Jews, two further strings, viz. economical jealousy and envy and the myth of the superiority of the Aryan race. Though the fable of the German master race (Herrenvolk) was by no means his own creation he succeeded in persuading not merely the Germans that the Jews constituted an inferior race, comparable only to vermin. More than once he explained that like bedbugs and cockroaches, the Jews were admittedly living beings but only

fit to be destroyed. He found the stage well set. Large strata of the German people had never acknowledged their country's defeat in the First World War. Germany had been stabbed in the back by an enemy within, they believed, and while that term covered all sorts of imaginary powers like Socialists, Anarchists and Communists, it applied in a special sense to the Jews. It is intriguing to touch here on a strange side of German mentality which seems to be unable to admit military defeat. Books dealing with the Second World War will refer to the "catastrophe" that overtook the Germans, or speak of the "collapse" but carefully avoid the word defeat. One of the most popular German heroes of the war, Fieldmarshal von Manstein, quite recently published a book with the significant title "Verlorene Siege" (Lost victories).

The first victim of a concerted antisemitic campaign was Walther Rathenau, the Jewish Minister of Foreign Affairs in the German government who on 21st June 1922 was assassinated on his way to the office. Three years later Hitler published his «Mein Kampf» and began to apply himself to the building up of his National Socialist Party, his avowed aim being the destruction of the Jews. On 30th January 1933 he was called to be Chancellor and 58 days later the first nation-wide boycott of Jewish firms took place. It was followed by a gradual elimination of the Jews from academical posts, the civil services and public life and accompanied by an ever growing and well organized campaign of unparalleled viciousness. Books by Jewish writers were publicly burned and Jewish individuals were beaten up by Stormtroopers. In September 1935 the so-called Nuremberg Laws were proclaimed, reducing people of Jewish descent to the level of outcasts.

Germany had been the classical country of assimilation, her Jews priding themselves on being first Germans and only in the second place Jews. The most powerful organisation of Jewish people in Germany since 1893 called itself "Central Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens" (Central Union of German citizens of Jewish faith). One look at the number of mixed marriages will help us to gauge the deep inroads the process of assimilation had cut into the Jewish community. In 1915, 103 mixed marriages were contracted to every 100 Jewish marriages, and even in 1932 there were still 60 mixed marriages to every 100 Jewish ones. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that, apart from the 500,000 Jews in full membership of their religious community, there were at least half that number of Jewish descent, amongst them some 50,000 baptized Jews.

The 19th century and the first 30 years of the 20th century had produced many thousands of baptisms of Jews, not so much as a result of Christian missionary activity but as a natural consequence of a secularization which had affected Church and Synagogue alike. Between the two causes some 250,000 people were found in the autumn of 1935 to whom the new term "non-Aryan" could be



applied. It had nothing whatever to do with religion but simply signified that one had more or less Jewish blood in one's veins. If the father and mother had been Jewish at the time of their birth one was stamped a "Volljude" (Full Jew) — if one parent was Jewish at the time of his or her birth the son or daughter were Half Jews, and if one grandparent was Jewish at the time of his or her birth, one was termed a Quarter Jew, irrespective of one's adherence to Judaism or Christianity. You may have been a truly converted follower of the Messiah or simply a nominal Christian or even an Agnostic or Freethinker as many of that category would have classified themselves, it made no difference to your status as a Jew. But it certainly made a world of a difference to the way in which you reacted to the shock; whether you accepted it as a trial of your faith or helplessly and uselessly kicked against it. The Jew still belonging to the community of the Sinaitic Covenant, still knowing of the age-long suffering imposed upon his people, submitted to the persecution with a degree of humility that has been the marvel of friends and foes. The genuine Hebrew Christian found comfort and strength in the Christ of the Dolorous Road. But those between the two groups, and they formed the vast majority, felt overwhelmed and swallowed up by what they could only experience as an utterly senseless and purposeless tragedy.

The next step taken by the Nazi government was the systematic and wholesale spoliation of German Jews. Then the Crystal Night occurred on 9th November 1938 following the assassination of a member of the German Embassy in Paris by a Jew. The Nazis organized all over Germany a reprisal action in which every synagogue was burned down and the contents of Jewish homes and business premises were thrown into the streets, the heaps of glass and smithereens giving the event its name. Thousands of Jews were herded into concentration camps. A little later all Jews were forbidden to use public baths, parks, transport, etc., compelled to leave their houses, flats and rooms to be shut up in certain districts, and with the outbreak of the war allotted starvation rations. That ignominy was soon followed by the introduction of the Yellow Star that bore the inscription 'Jew' and had to be worn by every person of a 100 % Jewish blood above the age of six years, irrespective of his or her religious faith. They were marked for the so-called Final Solution, the deportation to the Death Camps where they were slaughtered, beaten to death, shot by the thousands, choked by poison gas or simply left to starve.

We are apt to forget that all those measures, in fact the whole anti-Jewish legislation, were ruthlessly applied to every country overrun or occupied by the Germans: Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Holland, Belgium, France, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Yugoslavia, Roumania, Hungary, Greece, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia and Russia as far as the Caucasus mountains. Many of those countries had already been undermined by anti-Jewish pro-German movements,



e.g. the Cagoulards in France, the Rexists in Belgium, The Iron Guards in Roumania, the Henlein movement in Czechoslovakia and the Arrow Cross Organisation in Hungary. It has to be stated that in most of those countries people accepted all too gladly and readily the victimisation of the Jews. As time went on resistance movements developed almost everywhere but only Holland and Denmark can claim the distinction of having shown a nation-wide refusal to comply with the anti-Jewish legislation. In Holland the average citizen went out of his way to protect his Jewish neighbour although he risked thereby, and often enough lost, his own freedom and even his life. In Denmark practically the whole Jewish population was in barges and small boats transferred to the safety of neutral Sweden at the very moment when the Germans were about to enforce the rounding up of the Jews prior to their deportation.

When the curtain went up again in 1945, approximately six million Jews had perished in Europe. Prior to Hitler European Jewry had formed about 62 % of the world's total Jewish population — by 1945 they had dwindled down to 31%. And children, the most innocent of all, made up one quarter of the ghastly figure, viz. 1,500,000 ! Before going on, we ought to remind ourselves that this unparalleled mass murder was carried out by people who for the most part had, at least nominally, been members of Christian churches. Jews have been asking ever since and there is no flinching from the frightfulness of the question, 'Were Hitler and Goering and Goebbels as well as their henchmen not baptized — did they not once attend Sunday Schools ?' Nor is there any denying of the Church's failure to speak out against the persecution of the Jews with unequivocal voice at the rise of Nazism.

A few figures will help to illustrate the catastrophe that had overtaken European Jewry.

The	525,000	Jews of Germany	had been reduced to	20,000
"	100,000	" " Czechoslovakia	" " " "	20,000
"	3,000,000	" " Poland	" " " "	40,000
"	150,000	" " Holland	" " " "	21,000
"	850,000	" " Roumania	" " " "	225,000
"	403,000	" " Hungary	" " " "	100,000

A look at the Jewish population of a number of German cities which prior to Hitler had contained particularly large Jewish communities is even more instructive and saddening. In Berlin not even 6000 of the former 172,000 Jews were left, in Frankfurt/Main only 2,000 of 30,000, in Hamburg 1,300 of 17,000, and

in Cologne 1,000 of 16,000. As will be explained later on, the figures quoted do clearly reveal the number of survivors for they contain many Jewish people who had originally belonged to other countries but found themselves as members of forced labour camps or as displaced persons somewhere in the countries or cities mentioned. Only in a few instances we know how many of the local Jews actually survived as e.g. in Ulm which in 1933 had a Jewish population of 530, of whom precisely 4 were left alive. Many Jews had flown from Germany to Austria, from Austria to Holland, from Holland to France only to be caught eventually and be deported to annihilation unless they were spared by some fluke and discovered at the cessation of hostilities in the place whose population had kept them in hiding. Thus Jews of formerly German and Polish citizenship were found in France, people of previously Hungarian, Czech or French nationality in Germany, and so forth.

Switzerland and Sweden had accepted only restricted numbers of Jewish refugees within well defined limitations; others had been turned back. Great Britain and the USA had admitted considerable numbers of Jews but it has remained an open question whether or not those two countries whose governments were particularly vociferous in asserting their Christian principles, did all they might have done. Quite a number of refugees had, even after the outbreak of the war, escaped to Shanghai where they eked out a precarious living while those who had found asylum in Britain and America usually succeeded not merely in making a living but contributing to a large degree to the war effort. Surprisingly only a limited number had turned to Palestine whose appeal to German speaking Jews had not been great prior to Hitler; they looked upon the Zionist scheme as a mere charitable enterprise, certainly worthy of financial support but too risky and idealistic to be fully accepted. On the other hand it has to be remembered that Britain as the mandatory power ruthlessly carried out the restrictive policy which had been agreed upon by the League of Nations.

The material losses of European Jewry can only be mentioned in passing but they were truly gigantic. Assets of all kinds, including property, businesses, valuables, furniture and money were seized all over Europe. Huge taxes, imposed upon entire communities, have to be added to the seizure of assets. Gold bridges and fillings from murdered victims' teeth provided some 17 tons of gold for the Nazis. There have been instances when even the value of the bullets used to kill part of the Jewish communities, and the urns containing the ashes of the cremated had to be paid for by those left alive.

Such was the apparent end of European Jewry but the forecast made in 1945 that no Jews would remain or settle anew in Europe has proved wrong. Jewish life has risen again from the ruins, the few over have been reinforced by those who returned from exile. Leo Baeck, the most eminent Jewish sage, who had in 1945 declared that there was no future for Jews in Germany, revised his opinion within

two years and was by the time of his death in 1956 firmly convinced that a new possibility was arising. The Jewish population in Germany has in fact grown from some 20,000 in 1946 to 30,000 in 1961. Regarding those behind the Iron Curtain, we have but scanty and not too reliable information. In a general way it may be said that their religious life has frequently been hampered while apparently no strictures are being applied to their ethnic self expression, provided they do not engage in any propaganda for Zionism.

Before moving on to the sociological impact Nazism has made upon European Jewry, it may be appropriate to warn against the utterly un-Christian condemnation of the German people as a whole. Collective or corporate guilt is a term which ought not to occur in a Christian's vocabulary, for it contradicts Christ's teaching as much as life's experience. It would be just as wicked to blame *the* Germans as it is to blame *the* Jews as a people for the crucifixion of Christ.

## AMERICAN JEWISH

We have to remember that Poland and the European parts of Russia together with Roumania had constituted the great reservoir of World Jewry. With more than nine million Jews, a traditionally high birthrate and with their deeply religious communities they had been an immense intellectual power house from which the rest of the world profited again and again. Statesmen like Chaim Weizmann and Ben Gurion, historians like Joseph Klausner, politicians like Nahum Sokolow, Vladimir Jabotinsky and Moshe Sharett, writers like Sholem Asch and Bernhard Berenson, Rabbis like Isaac Herzog and Mordecai Kaplan, artists like Marc Chagall, musicians like Mischa Elman, Jascha Heifetz and Anatole Fistoulari, and scholars like Solomon Zeitlin have all come from the same part of Europe, whose Jewish inhabitants used to supply the Western world with a seemingly incessant flow of talent, and this source has been cut off, the flow has stopped for good.

Prior to Hitler the Ashkenazim, i.e. a Jewish group employing a distinct pronunciation of Hebrew and differing in religious rites, formed almost 90% of the 16 million Jews in the world. Now only some ten million are left and, as most of them live behind the Iron Curtain, can no longer exert much influence upon world Jewry. Accordingly the other group, the Sephardim, who once listed a mere 1,500,000 and only suffered the loss of some 100,000 of their number, are now gradually gaining supremacy.

In all European countries this side of the Iron Curtain, with the exception of Sweden and Switzerland, Jewry is deeply divided into three groups, namely a) the so-called native Jews, i.e. those who still or again are in their country of birth b) refugees and displaced persons from Eastern Europe ; and c) repatriates



who have returned from America, Britain and Israel. This division merits a closer study. Complete figures are only available for Germany but we may *mutatis mutandis* use the same principle as relative to other countries.

a) This so-called native group consists of the remnant of German Jews, numbering about 15,000 survivors, most of whom are living in mixed marriages and aiming at full re-integration. They owe their survival in the vast majority of cases to their Gentile or Christian partners whose faithfulness and loyalty provided the reason why they were left alive although compelled to forced labour on starvation rations. Jews married to Aryans who refused to divorce them were given a privileged status. Their partners had to undergo indignities which are beyond description and turn almost every case into a story of heroism. Others in this group were kept in hiding, fed and rescued by Christian friends, but in every case all of them had more or less continued in their original environment.

b) The Displaced Person from Eastern Europe on the other hand owes his survival to his ability to adopt to larger or smaller degree the methods of his enemies. Every means was legitimate as long as it served its purpose. According to the circumstances he had to use bribery or brutal force, in the course of which he developed a strong element of egotism. He became the lone and frequently savage wolf, whose group consciousness was gradually lost in his battle to survive. At the same time he is often burdened with a deep sense of guilt and haunted by nightmares which make him ask himself, 'Was it right? Why am I still alive whereas my people are gone?' Some 20,000 of this group were found in Germany immediately after the war, most of them went on and immigrated mainly to USA and Israel, leaving some 5,000 at the present time. Between them and the first group an almost unbridgeable gulf seems to exist and as most of them have congregated in the principal cities, they sometimes make up 40% of the total Jewish population of those cities. They desire to remain distinct from the rest, calling themselves a 'Sherit Hapleta' a last remnant according to Isaiah 37,32.

c) The repatriated Jews, numbering about 6,500, have frequently to face the question put to them by their coreligionists, 'Why did you not stay where you were?' The answer is complex. There may have been economical reasons like pensions they are able to claim under the schemes of reparations and restitutions provided by the government of the Federal Republic of Germany. There may have been emotional reasons, nostalgia for the land or town they used to love. Nor can social reasons be ruled out as many could not manage to take roots or master the language of the lands of their exile. They had been strangers and far too often they had not been accepted. On their return they are frequently meeting distrust and being reproached for making the re-integration of the native element more difficult. This applies especially to the so-called Yordim who have returned from Israel. Yored (pl. Yordim) is a contemptuous term, meaning one

who descends in the sense of degeneration and decadence, over against the Ole (pl. Olim) who ascends, that is : takes part in the Aliyah, the going up to Zion.

Another sociological factor of grave importance is to be seen in the age of European Jewry. Between one quarter and one third are over sixty years old, another 30% between the ages of 40 and 60. The age group between 20 and 40 has largely remained in the countries to which they had emigrated and in which they had gone to school and trained for their work. Most of the children and youngsters are to be found among the repatriates and their lot is at times particularly tragic. They have been uprooted from the country in which they were born, and their parents may have told them that they were going back to Germany 'only for a time', an excuse to overcome the natural feelings of revulsion. They are reluctant to go to school or enter into training, hardly ever applying themselves wholeheartedly to the life of what must appear to them as an entirely alien environment. Their heart is in Israel and they often speak Iwrit among themselves, the language of their real homeland. Among the 3,500 Yordim now living in Germany, 618 are between one and twenty years old, and very few of them desire a share in German civilisation.

Finding so many old people among European Jewry, we cannot be surprised to learn that almost 25% are living on pensions. Not only the old ones but often enough people of 50 years belong to that category. It aggravates the relationship between young and old. How can an adolescent respect his or her father who is not engaged in any work whatever ! Some have undoubtedly lost the skill or the urge to work as the result of their sufferings but others can quite comfortably live on the capital sum paid to them as restitution or reparation not merely of their own losses but of what has come to them as inheritance from their relatives. Formerly one Jew might have had as many as five or ten heirs to claim whatever he left. Now it may happen that one survivor can claim the assets of as many as five to ten relatives who perished in the holocaust of Nazism. We should not, however, commit the dreadful mistake to imagine that every Jew on the Continent of Europe was financially fairly well off. The opposite is unfortunately true, for the average pension provided by the governments is distressingly low and small and there is a considerable amount of genuine poverty amongst the Jewish survivors who are depending on the welfare organizations of World Jewry to augment their allowances.

From what has already been said it is obvious that the proportion of Jews living in a mixed marriage is fairly high. In Frankfurt/Main only 405 Jews are married to Jewish partners, compared to 963 in mixed marriages. In Berlin the corresponding figures are 1159 against 756. Even more interesting is the fact that most marriages contracted by Jews in Germany over the last ten years were mixed marriages, the proportion being 3 to 1. One cannot be surprised to discover that there are hardly any Jewish leaders who are not living in a mixed marriage.



The example of Mannheim will serve as an appropriate illustration. Until 1939 almost 7,000 Jews lived in that city. To-day's Jewish community numbers 210 members, of whom 63 were born in Germany while 147 hail from Eastern Europe. Of the natives all but one are living in mixed marriages. Or take an even more tragical illustration. In Worms, one of the oldest Jewish settlements that existed already in the year 1000 and possessed a medieval synagogue, 1,200 Jews used to live. The present community can hardly assemble the quorum of ten male Jews which is required for every diet of worship or any other religious ceremony.

To sum up : in the place of a really homogeneous group of the same upbringing, culture and mother tongue, we find European Jewry to-day as an incohesive mass of various groups whose members not merely differ on ever so many points of their common interest but frequently refuse to co-operate with one another.



### AMERICAN JEWISH

Lack of time and space will permit but a brief glimpse of the psychological impact though it constitutes a very important factor in the life of post war European Jewry. Very few people in the rest of the world are in a position to realize that even now, more than fifteen years after the collapse of the Third Reich, many survivors are in one way or another affected by what they have come through, and suffering from trauma, that morbid condition following a shock, although they may have recovered from the economical and physical effects the ghastly experience has left. Many have mentally succumbed to the stress and strain of ten years of a life that resembled the continuous flight of a hunted animal, and have become inmates of homes and institutions. The incidence of mental disorders among the Jews of Central Europe amounts to about double that for the general population and the same applies more or less to Hebrew Christians of the first generation who had been subjected to precisely the same cruel treatment. It is not so much the result of physical deprivations like forced labour and imprisonment but the outcome of all the indignity they had to accept which has left scars liable to break open on the slightest provocation. It may be the name of some loved one, a memory raised in the course of the most casual conversation, or even a question of a child inquiring about the missing grandfather or grandmother which can set a whole process of emotional upheaval into motion and frequently lead to a mental state no psychiatrist is able to cope with. Whenever a fresh outbreak of antisemitism occurs the course of healing is interrupted or stopped for good, lacerated susceptibilities are turning into open sores and causing emotional torment. Occasionally you will come across deep rooted feelings of vindictiveness though their extent is much smaller than might be expected. On the whole it has to be said that the Jews of Europe have succeeded in not hitting back even



when they were given an opportunity of revenging themselves, and that phenomenon has made a deep impression both upon their Gentile and Christian environment.

One other psychological effect of the past must, however briefly, be mentioned. The proverbial optimism of the Jew has largely though certainly not completely disappeared. It is well to remember that in the shadow of the Spanish Inquisition Jews had for some considerable time accepted knighthoods, high offices and riches, they had laughed at the ignorant priests and felt secure until the tribunals turned upon them. In Poland and Russia Jews had bedecked their synagogues and their women with gold and jewels only to make them more easily a prey for fanatical mobs and plundering Cossacks. The same optimism had led Jews in Germany, Austria and France to enlist by the thousands as volunteers in the First World War, to fight and die for what they considered their respective fatherland. Right up to the time when the Nuremberg Laws were proclaimed, most Jews had solemnly affirmed their loyalty to whichever country they happened to live in. That optimism has been shaken to the core and to a large extent been replaced by the realisation that there is only one country to turn to in case of need and they had better support it to the very hilt. The interest in, and financial backing of, the State of Israel to be observed among the Jews of Europe, are not so much the expression of a genuine love or understanding but rather a sort of re-insurance against an emergency which might develop at any moment.

Moving on to the religious impact Nazism has made upon European Jewry, the following remarks ought to be prefaced with a twofold caution. The first is that we are not concerned with assessing the various trends discernible in the changed situation but simply with reporting certain facts that are emerging. The other warning is directed against the all too common assumption that the religious situation among the Jews of Europe can be equated with the one prevailing in the Anglo-Saxon countries. Nothing would be more fatal to any sound judgment for in the whole of the Western world Anglo-Saxon Jewry in Great Britain, and to a lesser degree in the USA is the only group not so badly affected by the violent convulsion that has shaken the Jewish people.

Of the Jewish population in the Federal Republic of Germany more than 25% are no longer registered members of the synagogue. In Berlin only 4% of the 6,300 resident Jews are in the habit of visiting the synagogue services, elsewhere in Germany the average varies between 4 and 5%. Of the 22,000 Jews of Holland more than 5,000 remain outside the religious community. In France more than 80% are out of touch with the synagogue. In Denmark whose Jewish people used to receive fresh blood through a constant immigration of pious

coreligionists from Russia and Poland, Jewish religious life has become stagnant and marriage out of the faith is rampant ; with 60-70% it holds the world record. About ten people leave the community every year and an annual average of 30-40 birth cannot outweigh the yearly death roll of 75-80. In all countries which had a direct experience of Nazism, the movement away from the synagogue is so formidable that it is giving the Jewish authorities a real headache.

The changing spiritual climate in the world at large has touched the Jews of Europe as much as other people. The focal points of Judaism have shifted from Europe to the United States and to the new State of Israel. Many distinct features of the Mosaic religion are fast disappearing on account of an ever-increasing loss of faith which has its parallels on the Christian side. Very often the observance of the Biblical rite of circumcision is the only remaining token of allegiance though we must not overlook that it is not through any rite or declaration of faith that a Jew is a Jew, but because he is born of a Jewish mother. A most revealing article was published in 'The Jewish Agency's Digest' in December, 1954. A member of the Executive, Mr. E. Dobkin, wrote as follows : 'Surely we must be alarmed by the fact that in the present-day Jewish world eighty percent of Jewish children are completely ignorant of Jewish traditions and values, and have never seen a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in their lives. Am Haarazut (i.e. people ignorant of Jewish matters) has become widespread and those sources of spiritual substance from which Jewish life in Europe of days gone by drew life and strength and thought, have disappeared.'

Ghetto Judaism with its deep seated animosity against Jesus as 'the hanged one' has largely vanished and remains merely in a few isolated areas occupied by the ultra orthodox. The Jew who has appeared from beneath the rubble of burnt down habitations and the horrifying experience of the concentration camp, is a vastly different person from the gregarious member of the synagogue who had to a larger, or usually lesser degree accepted the tenets of traditional Judaism. He has been exposed to events that have shaken his faith in a God who, as he would put it, allowed such a grievous disaster to happen. Martin Buber, writing in his book 'At the Turning' has most succinctly summed up that outcry, 'How is life with God still possible in a time in which there is an Auschwitz ? One can still believe in the God who allowed those things to happen — but can one still call upon him ?'

Beautiful new synagogues have been built in the place of the destroyed houses of worship but they are empty except on very special occasions. Many a community cannot even produce the obligatory quorum of ten male worshippers on the Sabbath. There is an acute shortage of rabbis. No theological seminary exists in Germany to train candidates. The individual Jew has frequently lost his sense of being a member of a distinct religious body, he rather feels himself severed from his religious past and his coreligionists elsewhere. A national consciousness



has taken the place formerly occupied by religion. This conception of being a people and not merely a religious community has always been latent in Judaism, but it has now acquired an importance overshadowing everything else. Jewish leaders, religious and secular ones alike, are desperately seeking a new 'way' attractive enough to bring the indifferent or disappointed back to the fold but there is no easy method to regain the allegiance of those who are convinced that they, like modern man everywhere, have a legitimate claim to self-determination and self-expression.

There are three features of the new situation of which we ought to take cognizance.

1) Jews and Christians have in many parts of Europe been drawn together as victims of totalitarian terror. They were persecuted side by side and often shared the gruesome experience of the concentration camp. To mention but a few amongst a host of Christian heroes who stood by the Jews in their hour of need, the names of Martin Niemöller, Heinrich Grüber and Bernhard Lichtenberg in Germany, Abbé Glass in France, Ds. Ader in Holland, and Bishop Berggrav in Norway may be recalled. The witness of those men and women has left a deep impression upon the Jewish mind as it was their deeds rather than words which had made all the difference to Jewish suffering. Here we must put our finger on a regrettable failure on the part of the churches and Christians in general, who have neglected to pass on and publish in cheap editions the glorious story of their heroes and martyrs, who suffered torture and death under Hitler, were dragged from pillar to post but would not bow their knees before the new Baal. The record of their struggle for Christ's sake would make most exciting reading but has been made available only in expensive books which cannot be popular.

2) Jews have entered into a religious dialogue with Christians. That applies mainly to Germany and constitutes one of the most amazing repercussions of the past disaster. We are not here dealing with the activities of the organization corresponding to the Council of Christians and Jews or the Goodwill Movement in the Anglo-Saxon world, though it has to be said that they provide many excellent social contacts and are in the frontline of the never-ending battle against antisemitism. Our interest is rather centered on the activity of the German Evangelical Committee for Service to Israel under the leadership of Professor Rengstorff, the head of the Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum in Münster. Ever since 1948 the Committee has arranged Study Conferences under the general title 'The Church and Judaism.' Up to date 14 such conferences have been held, their subjects ranging from Righteousness and Neighbourly Love to the Holy Scriptures and Guilt and Forgiveness in Jewish and Christian views. They are attended by sometimes as many as 200 participants, many of them students from different Universities. The lecturers are on both sides outstanding personalities, the Christian point being treated not merely by theologians, while on the



Jewish side Rabbis of eminent scholarship such as Robert Raphael Geis, Paul Holzer, Ignaz Maybaum, Leo Prijs and Kurt Wilhelm have taken part. Jews and Christians are talking and listening to each other in a religious encounter that provides for the Christian a truly humiliating experience, rebuking our superiority, condescension and false security, e.g. when the Jewish side remarks, 'We thank God that we were the victims rather than the murderers.' Nor is the dialogue confined to the protestant camp for men like Karl Thieme and Willehad Eckert, and women like Gertrud Luckner are engaged in a similar effort among Roman Catholics. The Jewish-Christian encounter reached a climax at the German Evangelical Kirchentag in Berlin in 1961. Under the motto 'I am with you' more than 80,000 people from all over Germany attended that German Church Congress. Over 1,000 visitors had come from more than 30 countries, among them church leaders from the Near East and Africa, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and the Bishops of North Tanganyika and Liberia. For the first time in the history of the congress that unites mainly laymen from all the protestant and evangelical churches, a committee had been formed of Jews and Christians as the steering panel of one of the seven groups into which the masses are divided. This particular group proved the greatest attraction and was throughout the three days of the congress attended by 6,000 to 8,000 people. The wall of the huge hall where the sessions were held, was decorated with the emblem of the Kirchentag, seen against the background of a burning synagogue, and a very large Star of David. The audience, predominantly young and interspersed with many coloured brethren, listened with rapt attention to the lectures dealing with the religious history of Jews and Christians, and with the nature of religious anti-Judaism, and enthusiastically participated in the discussions which went on for hours and brought to light much of the prejudice and ignorance so evident in Jewish Christian relationship. The press, at first completely surprised by the overcrowded meetings, pointed out that what had happened here was a new phenomenon in the 1900 years' history of the Christian Church. Nor has the end of the Congress meant the termination of the working together, the panel has established itself as a permanent study circle of Jews and Christians, joined in a fellowship of those prepared to learn from one another.

3) As a mediator and bridge between Christians and Jews, the Hebrew Christian witness has come into existence and is slowly being accepted on the Jewish side. It bears repetition that Hitler had made no distinction between the Jew by religion and the Jew by race so that Hebrew Christians of the first generation had to wear the same Yellow Star, being subjected to the very same treatment as the members of the synagogue. The Hebrew Christian on the Continent of Europe will take a definite interest in Jewish affairs, Jewish life, history, customs and culture, and may at times emphasize his Jewishness without the slightest detriment to his Christian convictions. The question before him is not merely

how to explain Jesus to the Jew but how to explain the Jew to the Church, to interpret his Jewish brother's genuine problems in facing organized Christianity as distinct from Jesus Christ. He will make no secret of his fervent Zionism without holding a brief for everything done by the government of Israel. As a result he may retain, or succeed in building up, relations with Jewish people such as would be considered impossible or unheard of in the Anglo-Saxon world. Hebrew Christians in Europe are trying to help both the Church and Israel, the former to a new and clearer understanding of her Jewish roots and Jerusalem as her only rightful mother, the latter to the recognition of their Jewish Messiah, through all the fog of man-made usages and institutions. They will argue that both Israel and the Church have grievously sinned against the light given to them, and will include themselves in that responsibility and guilt, thus creating a further aspect of fellowship. Being at once Jews and Christians, they dare not make the mistake of taking from both sides whatever they like and dismissing what they dislike, but accept the heritage of both, glory and shame alike, and seek to turn them into a new attitude in order to help both their brethren after their flesh and those after the Spirit.

## ARCHIVES

The embers of Nazism are still smouldering all over Europe and Hitler's ideas have been widely disseminated. Occasionally we observe a new outbreak as in January 1960, but that is common knowledge and has had its salutary effect in breaking the long period of a real conspiracy of silence which had reigned not only though certainly most successfully in Germany. Literally thousands of books and articles have been published to throw light upon the persecution of the Jews and in a wider sense upon the anti-Judaism within the Christian Church. That literature can roughly be grouped under three headings: 1) autobiographical reports of inmates and victims of concentration camps; Prof. Bettelheim's book 'The Informed Heart' deserving a special mention here. 2) Novels, stories and plays about all that had happened during the first half of our century; the Diary of Anne Frank, and Andre Schwarz Barth's 'The Last of the Just' being of major importance. 3) Works of historical, psychological and sociological research like Eva Reichmann's 'Hostages of Civilization', and Gerald Reitlinger's 'The Final Solution,' to cite just a few first readers available in English.

Restitution and reparations have gone a long way to help the survivors and their families but the fact remains that a great deal of guilt has never been confessed and any guilt not yet confessed is bound to result in further guilt.

The situation in Germany remains complex. Only in April, 1962, the Federal Ministry of the Interior revealed that 86 neo-Nazi and Right-wing organizations, with a membership of some 35,000, functioned in West Germany. They published



46 periodicals, with a total circulation of 160,000 and employed more than 200 journalists, writers and publishers. Antisemitic literature, such as newspapers, booklets and leaflets are steadily smuggled into Germany, Austria, France and the Benelux group of countries from Sweden, the USA, Argentine and Egypt. At the same time a growing number of Germans can be found almost falling over each other to be exceptionally kind to Jewish people. That philosemitism is not at all helpful and has already resulted in making young people more suspicious of their parents than they have been. There are, very briefly three reasons for the attitude taken by many young people. They are more interested in the present and the future than in past events in which they had no share. Many of them are loath to recognize that their parents were either stupid or evil enough to become involved in the persecution of the Jews for no defineable reason, which easily makes them think that, after all, something must have been wrong with the Jews. And finally, adolescents are naturally sceptical of their parents' sincerity when they see and hear what is now written and said about the Jews, which is the precise opposite of what was said and written twenty years ago.

One cannot help feeling that the real test is still to come when an economic crisis develops, for German democracy depends on economic prosperity and is not a natural outcome of a new political attitude of the average citizen. Democratic ideas in Germany did not develop as the fruit of indignation at the Nazi past but were imposed upon the Germans by the Allied nations. A truly democratic growth that may well be achieved in the course of time, is constantly being retarded by people of an unrepented Nazi past who have found their way into key positions both in industry and in the professions to say nothing of the civil and military services. How far that infiltration has gone will be revealed in the 700 trials of war criminals at present under preparation as a direct or indirect result of the trial of Eichmann.

Humanly speaking, we must build our hope mainly upon the young people who are open-minded and ready to listen and to learn. One has to meet them face to face to realize how much good will and sincere eagerness are to be found amongst them.

The Jews themselves are none too happy about raking up the past. In Germany as in Austria, in France as much as behind the Iron Curtain they feel that by their very existence they remind the peoples, in whose midst they live, of the shame and guilt of the past. The older generation has no other desire but to be left in peace, the younger generation, so small in number, is looking to the State of Israel for a guidance which has not yet come in the full meaning of the term. In either case most of them are sick and tired of being what the Almighty has called them to be, a peculiar people, the Chosen Nation. Both the Jews and their environment, the affluent society, are largely secularized and therefore abounding with negative ideologies, of which antisemitism is particularly popular.



In the last generation society, obsessed by its faith in progress, expected the paradise on earth and had to search for a scapegoat when their hopes did not materialize. Over against that generation of illusions, our time is breeding a generation of disillusion for nowadays society is full of pessimism which again requires a negative outlet so easily provided by antisemitism. In either case we can observe the effect of the loss of faith in Christ which alone inspires confidence, hope and love.

Some but tragically too few of both Jews and Gentiles have been driven to the question asked by many Hebrew Christians in Europe: 'Why have I been spared while my brother and sister, my father and mother have had to go all the way through the valley of the shadow of death?' It is a question to which there is no answer but the inscrutable mercy of God; it issues in the never-ending prayer of thanksgiving from which we rise to a thorough realization of commitment. It is the knowledge that we are saved to serve, and some of that sense of responsibility would go a long way in giving Christianity to-day a fresh and sorely needed vitality.

## AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

The impact of Nazism on European Jewry ought to remind us of the situation prevailing after an air raid or some natural catastrophe like an earthquake when thousands of victims are buried under the rubble or injured beyond recognition. European Jewry is lying at our feet, covered with ruins and boulders, smothered by the heat of an age-long hatred which had resulted in an explosion of the most tragic dimensions. This is not the time to plague them with tracts or smooth talk of glib phrases. The buried and the injured have lost the sense of hearing, the only language they can understand is the language of love in action which incidentally used to be the language of Christ.

Israel's continuing existence in spite of all attempts to destroy the Jewish people, constitutes the greatest theological challenge to Christendom which cannot be answered with traditional explanations that were more voluble than sincere or thoughtful. It calls for a new realization of the fact that the Almighty has not rejected his Chosen People but is still using them.