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

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 23, Folder 10, Holladay, William, 1968-1969.

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2/14/69

Near East School of Theology
P. O. Box 235
Beirut, Lebanon.
9 February 1969

Rabbi Marc H. Tannenbaum
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Rabbi Tannenbaum:

I am moved to write you in response to your public statement of January 12 before the New York chapter of the A.J.C., a copy of which has just reached me here. Because I myself have been involved in some of the movements in Beirut which you mention, I thought it might be helpful to try to share with you some of the details of the situation here.

Let me first discuss the matter of the vicious anti-Semitic material being circulated here. Your information is absolutely correct. Some months ago I first noticed copies in English of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" and of Henry Ford's "The International Jew" in bookshops here; these pamphlets are published, as you no doubt are aware, by Gerald L. K. Smith and his "Christian Nationalist Crusade" in Los Angeles. Since I picketed Gerald L. K. Smith while I was a student in Berkeley 25 years ago, and would do so again tomorrow, I absolutely deplore this kind of thing and dissociate myself from it completely. In two of the bookshops that carried this stuff, where the proprietors knew me personally, I was successful in having the material removed from sale, and I shall continue to do so wherever I can. I do not say this in order to earn "points" in your eyes, but simply as a matter of fact. Many Americans here, let alone Englishmen and Arabs, know nothing of Smith and his activities; so I have been carrying on a kind of one-man campaign of education in this matter. It is also quite true (and far more regrettable) that such material has been translated into Arabic and is being printed here in Beirut. The Fifth of June Society, which is a group of Palestinians and Lebanese with whom I am acquainted here in Beirut who publish what I consider to be responsible material on the Palestine situation from the Arab point of view, does not touch the stuff (indeed seems not to have heard of it); but I have asked the president, Mr. Fuad Itayyim, to try to find out for me who finances this stuff in Beirut and who buys it. If I learn anything more that is significant I will let you know. Unfortunately it is not a whit easier to impose censorship on such stuff in Beirut than it is in southern California.

I had a long talk a couple of days ago with Dr. Anis Sayegh, the director of the research library of the Palestine Liberation Organization, to learn his position in regard to the Protocols, which always seem to be a central item in anti-Jewish hate literature. He told me that none of the P.L.O. material is allowed to mention or cite the "Protocols," and that they will not have the Arabic translation in their library, though hundreds ask for it. He told me that his wife has translated the diaries of Theodor Herzl into Arabic, and that he himself (Dr. Sayegh) has written the introduction to this volume. In this introduction he devotes two or three pages to explain why he disavows the use of the Protocols; and that because of this disclaimer alone the whole volume is banned in Syria. I am enclosing photocopies of the pages of this introduction, together with a translation. I recognize that his phraseology and his reasoning will not be at all to your taste, and I am sure, too, that it is scant comfort to those who favor the state of Israel that the P.L.O. does not use the Protocols in its publications; but I still think all of us need to avoid oversimplifying our opponents, and I offer it as a matter of record that if some Arabs use the Protocols, others do not as a matter of policy.

I will not try in any detailed way to clear my own name with you or the A.J.C.; the spectacle of someone's trying to show how pure his own motives are is not an edifying one; we all know that everyone's motives are mixed, and none of us can see a situation whole. But I do feel impelled to say a word or two about my colleagues here, both fellow-Christians and fellow-humanists who work in such organizations as the University Christian Center and Americans for Justice in the Middle East, which you specifically cite in your state-

Remarks on the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" by Anis Sayegh, in his introduction to The Diaries of Herzl, translated by Hilda Sha'ban Sayegh (Beirut, 1967), pp. 13-15.

These four deductions¹ from Herzl's Diaries have a more far-reaching impact, are stronger, clearer and harsher than anything found in any other Jewish Zionist source. Hence we draw the attention of Arab readers - particularly those working in the field of information, both locally and abroad - to the importance of Herzl's Diaries and to the necessity of making it the chief source for the exposition of the Zionist movement, its men and means, instead of the many other sources on which our publicists and propagandists rely: I mean nothing else than the book of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, which is well known and widespread in the world and among Arabs.

This above-mentioned work [the Protocols] is a condemnation to Zionism and exposes much of its means and plans, just as Herzl's Diaries do, though in many cases in a much more open manner. But the origin of this book is ambiguous compared to that of Herzl's Diaries. Doubts and accusations surround it in regard to its soundness, origin, and author. Whether the writer of the Protocols is telling the truth or not, whether the conference of the "Elders of Zion" ever took place or not, and whether the decisions were really issued or not, is not so important. What is more important than all this is public opinion, which is convinced that the writer of the Protocols is not telling the truth, that there was no such conference of the Elders of Zion and no decisions. More than this, public opinion is convinced that the Protocols are the product of an anti-Semitic, emotional and conservative plan aimed at harming the Jews by forgery. Consequently, world public opinion has an aversion to any mention of or reference to the Protocols. Thus Arab propaganda abroad fails as soon as any reference is made to the Protocols. Shrewd Zionists make good use of this by spreading the rumor that some Arabs make use of the Protocols and print them locally, so as to turn public opinion against the Arabs, bearing in mind that public opinion has already pronounced these Protocols to be a false and mean anti-Jewish weapon. The result is that we do harm to our cause by averting a large proportion of foreigners every time we make use of the Protocols in our anti-Zionist struggle for information.

To avoid all this, why not make use of such sources as Herzl's Diaries in our attempt to expose Zionism? These Diaries cannot be labelled as either fraud or an anti-Semitic trap. Herzl is the father, founder and head of the political Zionist movement. His Diaries were collected, translated, printed and publicized by the Zionists themselves before they realized the harm these Diaries do to them, and then they were able to withdraw most of the copies from the market. At present it is impossible to get a single copy from public libraries. The effort of the Zionists to do away with these Diaries helped to keep people in the dark: thus there are only a very small number of copies of these Diaries, not more than ten, in the entire Arab world. This lack has intensified the need for the Information Center to publish the Diaries in order to inform the Arab reader of the facts contained in them, fact heretofore unknown to him, and in order to bring into the open what the Zionists strive to conceal. Whereas the distorted history surrounding the Protocols of the Elders of Zion in the West - undoubtedly and basically a Zionist distortion - has deprived us of its use (unless one of us appears who is able to confirm the soundness of the Protocols in such a manner and with such arguments as would be acceptable to the world), Herzl's Diaries, on the other hand, provide us with an excellent opportunity to draw information from a sound, basic source, unimpaired by any doubts or accusations. We have left Herzl's words intact and have not made the least alteration in our translation. But what Herzl wrote seventy years ago is exactly what the Zionist movement has been carrying out, to such a degree that while reading the Diaries one sometimes has the impression that one is seeing images of contemporary events. Arab researchers could make use of these Diaries in several ways by following the roots of Zionist evil in the writings, thoughts and deeds of its first master several decades ago. These writings, thoughts and ideas should reveal to us several lessons and warnings, just as they were a revelation to the Zionists and a stimulus for them to proceed in their attempt to loot Palestine.

ment. I fear it does no good to Christian-Jewish dialog to lump together these and allied organizations with the garbage of Smith and his Middle Eastern allies. Our groups are not parroting the Arab League line or the line of any other political groups; we have come to our conclusions on the basis of such evidence as we have, and out of a concern as responsible as we can make it. We may be mistaken, but we feel impelled to speak out as we see matters. The president this year of Americans for Justice in the Middle East is an Egyptologist of many years' service at the American University of Beirut, who received his doctorate at Brandeis University under Professor Cyrus Gordon. I will only mention my own contacts with scholars in Tenach-studies in Israel through the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament in Europe and the Society of Biblical Literature in the United States. My colleagues at the University Christian Center are likewise responsible people who are seeking to the best of their abilities to serve any whom they can in the university community.

Christian treatment of Jews and Judaism through the centuries has in general been so abominable that it is poor manners, I am sure, for a Christian to make any comment at all about the ethos of Judaism today, but it does seem to me regrettable that the tradition of pilpul in Judaism should be allowed to wither when it comes to open debate on Zionism in our day: at least this is my impression in some cases which have come to my attention. But what is more germane to the discussion between us, as you say, is the state of Jewish-Christian dialog at present. The question in my mind is this: in order for such dialog to proceed, is it necessary for Christians automatically to accept every military or political policy of the state of Israel? If this really is necessary, then it may be too high a price for some of us to pay. What many of us hope for, and work for, is a day when the policies of Israel may be brought under the same scrutiny of world opinion as the policies of any other nation-state. I have disapproved most heartily of the policy of the United States government in Viet Nam during the Johnson administration; so have many of my fellow Americans. But I hope I have had the right to do so without my being labelled "anti-American" or "Communist". By the same token I hope it is possible to raise questions about the particular policies of the state of Israel without my being called anti-Semitic.

You and I may not agree theologically, ethically, or politically on many of the matters that are so important to both of us; but I am still enough of a liberal to believe it is possible to enter into discussion about them without incurring the risk of name-calling.

I would welcome correspondence from you or any of your colleagues; and in particular I should be happy to help you in the matter of the circulation here of anti-Semitic material if any further information comes my way.

With every good wish,

Sincerely yours,

William L. Holladay
William L. Holladay

The four deductions are:

- (1) The Zionist movement is an imperialistic movement, born in imperialism and dependent on and supported by it.
- (2) The means used by Zionists and the means which Zionists were called upon to use for the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Arab Palestine were immoral means: bribery, lies, harshness and opportunism.
- (3) The Zionist movement is a rightist movement which opposes socialism, fights it and plots against it.
- (4) What the enemies of the Jews and of the Zionists have said about Jews and Zionists in the past hundred years is neither harsher nor worse than what Herzl himself said about Jews and Zionists.

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تقريباً في العالم قد أصبح مقتنعاً بأن كاتب البروتوكولات لم يتكلم الصدق ، وأنه لم يكن هناك مؤتمراً لحكام صهيون ولا مقررات . وأكثر من ذلك ، أصبح الرأي العام العالمي ، كله تقريباً ، مقتنعاً أن هذه البروتوكولات إنما هي من صنع مخطط لاسامي ، عاطفي متعصب ، يريد أن يوقع الشر باليهود عن طريق التزوير . وبالتالي فإن هذا الرأي العام العالمي أصبح ينفر من أي ذكر للبروتوكولات وأي اقتباس عنها واستناد لها . مما يعني أن الدعاية العربية في الخارج تخسر الجولة بمجرد أن تثير قصة هذه البروتوكولات أو تستند إليها أو تقتبس عنها . كما يعني أن الصهيونيين ، بدهائهم المعروف ، يشيعون في العالم اعتماد بعض العرب على هذه البروتوكولات ونشرهم لها محلياً ، ليؤلبوا الرأي العام العالمي ضد العرب . ما دام هو قد حكم ، مسبقاً ، بأن هذه البروتوكولات مزيفة وأنها سلاح لا أخلاقي ضد اليهود . وتكون النتيجة أننا نؤذي أنفسنا كلما اهتممنا بالبروتوكولات المذكورة ، وكلما أبرزناها في معركتنا الإعلامية ضد الصهيونية فتنفر قطاعاً واسعاً من الأجانب ، دون أن نكسب شيئاً .

كل هذه المحاذير والعراقيل والأخطار تزداد إذا كنا نعتمد ، في سعينا لفضح الصهيونية ، على مصادر أخرى لم يدع بعد ، ولم يشع بين الناس ، أنها مزورة وأنها فخ لا سامي ، بل ولا يمكن أن يداع ذلك عنها ولا أن يشيع هذا الاتهام ضدها - مصادر من نوع مذكرات هرتزل ، أبو الحركة الصهيونية السياسية ومؤسسها ورئيسها ، في يومياته التي كان الصهيونيون أنفسهم هم الذين جمعوها وترجموها وطبعوها ونشروها ، وذلك قبل أن يفتنوا إلى ضررها عليهم فيسحبوا معظم نسخها من الأسواق بحيث لم يعد بالإمكان حالياً الحصول على نسخة واحدة منها من المكتبات العامة . ولعل حرص الصهيونيين على

رابعاً ، إن ما قاله أعداء اليهود وأعداء الصهيونيين في اليهود وفي الصهيونيين ، في مئة السنة الأخيرة ، لم يكن بأعنف ولا بأسوأ مما قاله هرتزل نفسه في اليهود وفي الصهيونيين .

هذه هي القواعد الأربع التي تتجمع خيوطها من يوميات هرتزل صفحة بعد أخرى ، بشكل أقوى وأصرح وأعنف ، وأبعد أثراً ، مما تتجمع من أي مصدر يهودي صهيوني آخر . وهو ما يدعوننا ، في هذا الكتاب وفي مقدمته بشكل خاص ، إلى لفت نظر القارئ العربي (وخاصة الذي يعمل في الحقل الإعلامي ، محلياً وعالمياً) إلى أهمية وإلى ضرورة الاعتماد على يوميات هرتزل كمصدر رئيسي في فضح الحركة الصهيونية ورجاله ووسائلها ، بدل الكثير من المصادر التي جرت العادة أن يعتمد دعائنا وإعلاميوننا عليها ، على الرغم من محاذير ذلك الاعتماد وأخطاره أحياناً . وأنا أقصد هنا ، وبالذات ، كتاب بروتوكولات حكماء صهيون ، واسع الصيت والانتشار في العالم وبين العرب .

إن الكتاب المذكور يدين الصهيونية ويقضح الكثير من وسائلها ومخططاتها ، مثلما تفعل يوميات هرتزل ، وبأسلوب أصرح من أسلوب اليوميات في حالات كثيرة . لكنه كتاب غير واضح الإصول وضح أصول يوميات هرتزل . وبقدر ما لا يشوب أصل هذه اليوميات وضحتها وصحة علاقتها بصاحبها أي التباس ، تراكم حول مصدر كتاب البروتوكولات وأصله وصحة علاقته بالكاتب الذي تنسب إليه الشكوك والإتهامات . وسواء كان كاتب البروتوكولات قد تكلم الصدق أو لم يكن ، وسواء كان اجتماع « حكماء صهيون » قد حصل أو لم يحصل ، وسواء كانت المقررات قد صدرت بالفعل ، وبالشكل الشائع ، أو لم تصدر ، فإن أهم من ذلك كله أن الرأي العام كله

إخفاء اليوميات ، وما أدى إليه ذلك الإخفاء من إجهال العالم بحقيقتها (فمثلاً لا يوجد في الوطن العربي بأكملة غير نسخ معدودة جداً من اليوميات ، لا تزيد على العشر نسخ بأي حال) كان مما يزيد في حرص مركز الأبحاث ، من جهة ثانية ، على نشر اليوميات : ليعرف القارئ العربي ما لا يعرفه حتى الآن من الحقائق التي تعبر عنها اليوميات ، وليكشف عما يحاول الصهيونيون حجب قدر الإمكان . وبقدر ما قوت علينا تشويه سمعة كتاب بروتوكولات حكماء صهيون في الغرب (وهو تشويه صهيوني في الأساس ، بلا شك) فرصة الإعتماد على الكتاب المذكور أو الاستفادة منه (ما لم يقم بيننا من يستطيع أن يثبت صحة هذا الكتاب للعالم بأسلوب وبحجج يقبلها العالم) يؤمن لنا كتاب يوميات هرتزل فرصة ممتازة للإعتماد على مصدر صادق ورئيسي لا يشوبه أي شك أو اتهام . وقد تركنا كلمات هرتزل كما هي ، وترجمناها بدون أدنى تحريف . ولكن ما كتبه هرتزل ، قبل سبعين سنة تقريباً ، هو نفسه ما حصل في السنوات الأخيرة ، وهو نفسه ما نفذته الحركة الصهيونية ، لدرجة أن قراءتنا لليوميات تجعلنا أحياناً نتصور أنفسنا وكأننا نشاهد صوراً من واقع الحال المعاصر . وبإمكان الباحث العربي أن يستفيد من هذه المذكرات في عشرات النواحي ، عن طريق تتبع جذور الشرور الصهيونية في كتابات وأفكار وأعمال معلمها الأول قبل عدة عقود من الزمان . وإنه لجدير بنا أن توحى هذه الكتابات والأفكار والآراء لنا بعدة دروس وعبر بمثابة أرواح هي به للصهيونيين وكانت حافزاً لهم على المضي في مساعيهم لسلب فلسطين .

انيس صايغ

December 18, 1968

Palestine have been farmers, villagers, and city dwellers... 'the slogan, 'Israelis have made the desert bloom' is misleading. And even if... true, better agricultural performance does not confer property rights. 2... dig out the facts... how both sides were responsible for... the war of June 1967... Jerusalem has been overwhelmingly Arab from the 7th Century... as for the name of the city; it first appears... in Egyptian texts of the 19th Century BC, more than 800 years before King David occupied the city... 3... we must try to understand the feelings of both sides as well. Westerners... are already aware of how the Israeli feels: pride that he is... master of Palestine... The Arab feels resentment at being unable to make his claims understood... Arabs compare them (fedayeen) to the underground fighters in Europe during the Nazi occupation... 4... we must challenge the assumption that might makes right... Israel has won three wars, has increased her size four-fold... has caused the displacement of 1½ million Arabs... many Christians will assume she has the right to do it... isn't it too simple to assume all this... is a manifestation of God's grace?... 5... we must challenge the assumption that the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem, and Palestine represents the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. The Old Testament does speak of the return of Israel to the Promised Land, but... at the very end of history rather than... within history... the whole Old Testament experience (is)... transposed into a new key by the coming of Jesus Christ; so that the whole Church is the

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new 'single Israel of God'...6...the Christian obligation is to minister to the last, the ^{least} ~~lost~~, the lost of the world. Just as Christians were called upon to do all within their power twenty-five years ago to relieve the suffering of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution,...we are called upon to do all within our power to relieve the suffering Arab refugees. 7...we must seek to prevent new ones (wounds)...Israel should therefore be held to the UN resolution of November 22, 1967, calling for a withdrawal of Israeli troops from the area occupied after June 5, 1967 and an end to the state of belligerency...we now wonder whether the time has come to exert specific political and economic pressures on Israel because of her continual defiance of the resolutions of the UN..."

Four (As mentioned above, this letter has already appeared in ~~three~~ publications.) It contains many of the themes that are now current in pro-Arab Christian circles today: the Arab is misunderstood in the West, Israel created and is responsible for the Arab refugee problem, Jews are relative newcomers to the Land of Israel, even the very name "Jerusalem" is Egyptian not Hebrew, the obscene comparison that Israel now treats the Arabs the same way the Nazis persecuted Jews in the 1940's is made twice in this letter, Israel is now the Goliath of the Middle East, not the David, any Jewish religious claims to the Land and to Jerusalem are null and void since Christians are the "new Israel" and finally "political and economic pressures must now be used on Israel."

*only
August 7*

conducted a "Near East Seminar" in Beirut, Lebanon, during May 1968.

Rev. Richard Ittner of Brooklyn's Arlington Avenue Presbyterian Church was one of the 40 delegates present in Beirut. He represented

the University Christian Movement, an international group made up of Protestants, Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians. *from various parts of the world who were affiliated with WCC?*

When Rev. Ittner returned to the United States, he issued a report on the Seminar and he concluded with some "strategy" for the UCM to follow: "1. show (Arab) refugees films available through

the United Nations and Jordanian Information Service...2. Aid in distribution of Americans for Justice in the Middle East Newsletter.

3. Encourage work and dialogue with the American Council for

Judaism (an anti-Zionist group). 4. Attempt to get information into Approach and other Church related newsletters (see below). 5. Help

disseminate statement of Lebanese missionaries to Churches and

newspapers (see below) 6. Meet with National Council of Churches

Middle East Committee. 7. Meet with Christian, State Department,

and United Nations representatives to discuss conflict. 8. Seek

cooperation with existing pro-Arab groups in the United States.

or
Task
force

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9. Sponsor Arab discussions with Arab student leadership in the United States. 10. Organize letter writing campaign for quick response to crisis. 11. Seek to introduce Middle East issue into the 1968 Presidential Campaign. 12. Organize boycotts of tours to the Holy Land (Israel) during the crisis. 13. Seek to support a non-violent march of the (Arab) refugees to their homeland."

Despite many personal misgivings that Rev. Ittner had about the Beirut Seminar, he considered the meeting a success and, "the high point of the conference" was a trip to a Jordanian refugee camp and to the "shelled village of Karameh." The WSCF Near East Seminar did not include any Israelis among its delegates nor did the Seminar's participants visit Israel during the conference.

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? Such onesided arrangements are fairly typical of many study sessions and/or conferences sponsored by American Christian groups in the Middle East.

The attempt to use an international Christian body (UCM) for narrow partisan purposes is clearly documented in "Rev. Ittner's strategy." [A careful investigation has shown that some American Christian ministers have intensified their pro-Arab campaign since June 1967.] Rev. Ittner's call for an Israeli travel boycott, a *earlier "homeland"* non-violent march on Jerusalem and close cooperation between Churches and pro-Arab groups in America are, however, indications

LEBANON

May 10-17, 1968 - World Student Christian Fellowship Conference in Beirut on "Peace with Justice in the Middle East" (Al Montada International Seminar on "Justice and Peace in the Near East")

Took place in Beirut and Amman, organized by coordinating committee of Christian students in Lebanon under sponsorship WSCF (See Al Montada report - No. 12-13; June-July 1968) Students, teachers, pastors from 11 countries - Britain, Netherlands, Sweden, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Germany, USA, Czech, Syria and Palestine.

Visited Amman, met Al Fatah "resistance movement"

Adopted anti-Israel Resolution

At the end of the seminar, each delegate studied the possibilities of making his own association aware of what he had learned and experienced, in order to give Europe and the USA a more objective picture of the Israeli-Arab conflict.

Rev. and Mrs. Ittner of Brooklyn offer suggestions of what the American students can do to contribute to the solution of the Israeli-Arab conflict (Report published in the liaison sheet of the university Christian movement)

Spring 1968 - 60 missionaries in Beirut send "Open Letter to Christians in West" (See U.S. Christians in Arab Countries)

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