



# THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

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

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 25, Folder 2, International Jewish Committee for  
Interreligious Consultations, 1969.

9/9-10<sup>am</sup>



# SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA

235 FIFTH AVENUE . NEW YORK, N. Y. 10016 . MURRAY HILL 6-8670

מועצת בתי הכנסיות באמריקה

August 21, 1969

1926-5686

## M E M O R A N D U M

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- UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF AMERICA**

**TO:** Rabbi Solomon Bernards      Rabbi Israel Klavan  
Rabbi Balfour Brickner      Morris Laub  
Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg      Dr. Joseph Lichten  
Philip Jacobson      Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld  
Rabbi Wolfe Kelman      Dr. Seymour Siegel  
Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum ✓

**FROM:** Rabbi Henry Siegman

You were one of the members of a committee that was formed at the time of Israel's Six-Day War to deal with the problem of interpreting Israel to the Christian community.

The committee met regularly and, I believe, effectively, during those hectic days. The immense good will for Israel that existed immediately following the Six-Day War obscured the urgency of this common effort, and in the past year there have been only occasional and informal conversations among members of the committee.

I am sure I need not make the case that a major effort in this area is more urgently needed today than ever before, and we will therefore seek to reactivate the committee and to develop it into an effective coordinating instrument for those of our national agencies who regularly deal with the problem of interpreting Israel to the Christian world. I am writing to invite you to a meeting that we are calling for this purpose on one of the following two dates:

off-219/51 → Tuesday, September 9th, 10 A.M.  
Thursday, September 18th, 10 A.M.

Please indicate on the enclosed card which of the two dates you prefer.

Informal conversations between members of the committee have indicated that one of our needs is to collect and make available several of the best interpretive pieces that have appeared in the recent literature on the subject. I wonder, therefore, if you could drop me a note in advance of the meeting suggesting three pieces which, in your opinion, are worthy of reproduction and distribution to Christian audiences.

Best wishes for a ketiva vachatima tova.

HS/eg  
Enclosure





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מועצת בתי הכנסיות באמריקה

1926-5886

September 16, 1969

9/22/69

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CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA  
UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF AMERICA

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Marc:

The committee of the Synagogue Council whose responsibility it will be to formulate policy and programs in the area of our relations with the World Council of Churches and the Vatican has scheduled a meeting for 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, September 23 (luncheon will be served) at the office of the Synagogue Council of America.

I very much hope that it will be possible for you not only to attend this particular meeting but also to participate regularly in the committee's work.

I look forward to seeing you next Tuesday.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Henry Siegman

HS/gp

# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

1211 GENÈVE 20 NEW-YORK N.Y. LONDON W.1 PARIS 8e TEL-AVIV  
1, RUE DE VAREMBÉ 15 EAST 84th STREET 55, NEW CAVENDISH STREET 78, AV. CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES 123, YEHUDA HALEVI STR.  
TELEPH. 3413 25 TEL. TRAFALGAR 9-4500 TELEPH. WELBECK 0336 TELEPH. ÉLYSÉES 9463 TELEPH. 29132

## MEMORANDUM

To : Father Cornelius J. Rijk

From : Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner and Rabbi Henry Siegnan

In accordance with our conversations in London last June, we are pleased to submit to you the following outline of a proposed relationship between the world Jewish Community and the Catholic Church.

1. We believe that the time has come to improve the present state of Catholic-Jewish relations and to replace their often accidental and haphazard character by an orderly and systematic approach of which both sides would greatly benefit and which may open new avenues for Catholic-Jewish understanding and co-operation.

It is therefore in our view desirable to establish the framework for an ongoing relationship on a permanent basis between authorized representatives of the Catholic and Jewish communities by providing for them a forum available at all times for the confrontation and consultation on long term concerns and policies as well as on specific situations as they may arise from time to time.

2. We believe that this relationship should concern itself with the following major spheres :

- a) Areas of common humanitarian and social concerns : international justice and peace
- b) Welfare and security of Catholic and Jewish communities throughout the world, especially promotion and protection of human rights and religious freedoms ;

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- c) anti-Jewish elements in Catholic theology and instruction
- d) the State of Israel : theological and political implications

The last three items are specifically Christian-Jewish concerns, the first is not. We believe that it is important that our relationship transcend "the Jewish problem" for otherwise there is a danger that the Catholic Church will relate to the Jews only as "a problem". We believe that it is essential for a healthy relationship between the two faiths that we study together the contributions that our respective faith commitments and historical traditions can make to the great issues of international justice and peace of our day.

3. We think it would be premature at this point to define more precisely the four areas outlined above, or the structure of a relationship that will enable us to deal on an ongoing basis with these issues. We propose that this be the purpose of a first consultation to be held either in the Summer or the Fall of 1970.

This consultation would be an "inventory session" at which we would try to ascertain where we stand in relationship to each other regard to these various issues. We would seek not only to define the problems and possibilities that exist in each of these areas, but in the light of such an assessment, to determine what we can most fruitfully do together and the structures to be formed to make such working relationship possible.

4. It is intended on our side to make the framework of consultations as widely representative as possible.

The World Jewish Congress and the Synagogue Council of America will see to it that the Jewish delegation will include representatives of the major Jewish communities, of all significant trends of present day Judaism and of groups particularly active in the field of Christian-Jewish relations.

We trust at the same time that the Catholic delegation will include representatives of all departments of the Curia dealing with the major concern outlined above.

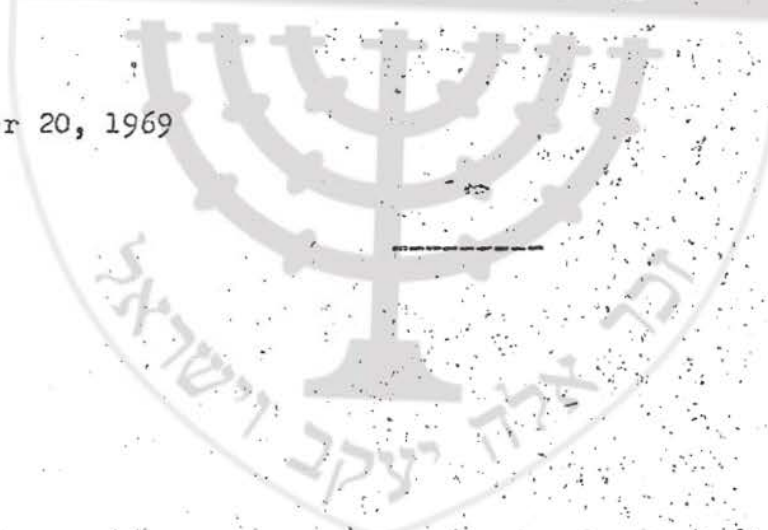
5. In our view each side should be responsible for the composition of its own delegation which should comprise about 12 to 15 persons.

Each side will send out the invitations to the members of its own group.

6. Each side will be responsible for the financial arrangements to cover travel and maintenance expenditure of its members and will provide secretarial assistance at meetings. All other cost - such as hiring of the meeting place, tape recording, simultaneous translation if necessary - should be shared by both sides on an equal basis.

7. If these general formulations are acceptable we can proceed to elaborate the agenda of the first consultation and to decide upon the date and the meeting place and on all other necessary arrangements. These decisions could be taken in the course of a preparatory meeting at which each side would be represented by three or four persons, to be held not later than during the first months of 1970.

November 20, 1969

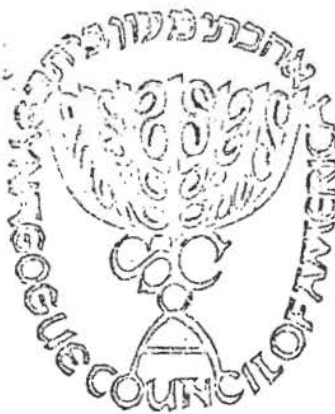




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מועצת בתי הכנסיות באמריקה

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MEMORANDUM

December 1, 1969

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UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF AMERICA

TO: Committee on Relations with World Council  
of Churches and the Vatican

FROM: Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, Chairman

We are calling a special meeting of our Committee  
to consider the enclosed memo which outlines a  
proposed relationship with the Catholic Church.

We will meet for lunch on Monday, December 8, 1969  
at 12:30 p.m. at the Synagogue Council.

I hope that you are able to attend, and that you  
will return the enclosed card indicating your  
intentions.

Kindest regards.

*No card enclosed*

*yl*