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POPE PAUL AND THE JEWS: A RETROSPECTIVE

New York (UTA) — Israeli officials and Jewish leaders in the United States rejected today the papal condolences to Catholics throughout the world upon the death of Pope Paul VI. The head of the Roman Catholic Church died Saturday August 6 at the age of 80 after a heart attack in his summer residence at Castel Gandolfo.

Israel leaders including Prime Minister Yitzhak Navon, Premier Menachem Begin and Minis ter of Finance, Shlomo Araz, Hattieza sent condolences to the Vatican on the death of Paul VI. Assistant Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren.

Subsequently however, the papal spokesman Professor Francesco Cardinal Coccia explained that the pope had not arranged in order to not let slip any opportune steps to promote a defense of all religious interests to the Palestinian refugees.

Jewish leaders also lauded the Pope's major theological decisions regarding Jews and Judaism. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, who had attended the Vatican Council II, convened in the fall of 1965, Pope Paul, with his brother in faith, Professor Ab raham Joshua Heschel, who had attended the Vatican Council II, convened in 1965, Pope Paul, with his brother in faith, thanked Heschel for his contribution to the understanding of the Jewish religious religion. However, Pope Paul's stand on the Middle East was more controversial. The Vatican has not recognized the state of Israel and in recent years the Pope has been criticized for his support for the Palestinian refugee problem and the creation of an internationally recognized state for Palestine in the Middle East.

The Middle East is the Holy Land. Pope Paul's visit was considered by the religious and political leaders in the Middle East as a sign of their support for the Palestinian cause.

During his reign the Pope also established contact with Jewish political and religious leaders from Israel and other nations. In addition to receiving Abba Eban, Rabbi Meir, and other leading rabbis, the Pontiff held an unprecedented meeting with Prime Minister Golda Meir in January 1972, the first audience granted to an Israeli head of state.

A Vatican statement released later noted that during the meeting with the Israeli Premier the Pope had re called the history and suffering of the Jewish people.

Since the death of Pope Paul, the Catholic Church has continued to promote understanding and cooperation with the Jewish community. The Vatican has expelled anti-Semitic texts and sermons from Catholic materials and has condemned the use of anti-Semitic symbols and Langkah. The Holy See has also promoted dialogue with the Jewish community, engaging in academic, cultural, and religious exchanges.

The Pope's commitment to the cause of peace and reconciliation has been widely acclaimed by both Jewish and Catholic leaders. His legacy continues to inspire efforts towards a safer and more just world.
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Changing constituency of Church may retard case for Jewish roots

BY JONATHAN BRAUN

Spokesmen for the organized American Jewish community, responding to the news of the recent Baptist-Maronite, who had served 60 years in the Pope since 1959, had suffered a final heart attack.

Lt. Col. John F. R Glacier, chairman of the Board of Judges of the United States, praised the late Pope for making a "fundamental contribution to promoting religious freedom through his personal appointment of the Vatican's secretariat on civil and religious relations and by his issuance of the Vatican guidelines in 1973 for concrete actions to improve the Jewish people's position in the world." He said: "I have always admired the Pope's dedication to international law and human rights. His efforts were instrumental in bringing about the recognition of Jewish statehood by the United Nations in 1947."

First to visit Israel:

A staunch conservative on the question of Jewish statehood, he would never have changed his mind, according to St. Peter's, the Church of the Nazarene, and the Church of the Last Supper, which figures prominently in the Bible. St. Peter's is located at the site of Peter's tomb in Jerusalem.

While there are some who oppose the idea of a Jewish state, many Jewish observers believe that the idea of a Jewish state is important to the survival of the Jewish people. They believe that a Jewish state would provide a secure and stable environment for the Jewish people, allowing them to live in peace and security.

A number of Jews have expressed support for the idea of a Jewish state, including the late Pope John Paul II, who visited Israel in 2000. The visit was seen as a significant moment in Jewish history, as it marked the first time a Pope had visited the country.

In recent years, there have been some efforts to revive the idea of a Jewish state, including a proposal by the Israeli government to annex the West Bank. However, these efforts have met with significant opposition from the international community, and it remains to be seen whether a Jewish state will ever be established.

New problems and old ones:

Will Catholic-Jewish relations suffer as a result of the change in the Church's position on the Jewish people? Many experts believe that the change in the Church's position on the Jewish people will have little impact on Catholic-Jewish relations. However, others believe that the change could lead to increased tensions and misunderstandings between Catholics and Jews.

"And the fear," as one observer put it, "is that these principles, or guidelines, could lay the groundwork for an end to the Church's traditional pro-Jewish policies, and to the Church's stance that the Jewish people are a foreign nation and not a part of the Church's mission."
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STATEMENT BY RICHARD MAASS, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE ON THE DEATH OF POPE PAUL VI

The American Jewish Committee is saddened to learn of the death of Pope Paul VI and expresses its heartfelt condolences to the Catholic Church and to millions of our Catholic neighbors in America and throughout the world.

It was during Pope Paul's reign that major strides forward took place in advancing understanding and mutual respect between Catholics and Jews. Pope Paul made a fundamental contribution to promoting interreligious friendship through his personal appointment of the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations and by his issuance of the Vatican Guidelines calling for concrete actions to improve ties between our faiths and peoples.

Pope Paul will also be remembered for his ardent advocacy of the cause of world peace, social justice, and human rights to which the Jewish community is also dedicated.

We pray that he will be assured the eternal peace he so richly deserves.
August 8, 1978

His Eminence Jean Cardinal Villot
Secretary of State
Vatican City, Italy

Dear Cardinal Villot:

The world was saddened to learn of the passing of Pope Paul VI and we, of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultation, join with millions of others in expressing our profound sorrow.

The Jewish people shall remember Pope Paul VI with gratitude for having begun the important process of implementing a new and hopeful era in Catholic/Jewish relations. The establishment of the Vatican Commission for this work is an important contribution toward making real the articulation of the Vatican II Council. The publication of the Guidelines, in 1975, was a significant moment. These are the things that we shall remember and cherish.

With sadness for his passing and gratitude for his life do we, the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultation, join in your bereavement. It is our prayer that his memory will endure as a beautiful blessing.

Most respectfully yours,

Ronald B. Sobel, Chairman
International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultation

cc: His Eminence Johannes Cardinal Willebrands
     The Most Reverend Bishop Ramon Torrella
     Monsignor Charles Moeller
     Reverend Jorge Mejia
As President of the United States, I know that I express the sentiments of millions of Americans in extending to the Jewish people of our nation, our deepest respects and heartfelt greetings on the eve of the Jewish Holy Days. Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur are a supreme moment of moral and spiritual stock-taking of the meaning of one's personal life as well as of the quality of life of society and mankind as a whole. There are few more moving and ennobling utterances of the human spirit than that found in the Jewish High Holiday prayers, May they all (the whole of mankind) form one companionship to do Thy Will with a single heart.

That yearning for the solidarity of mankind, which the Jewish people as the custodians of the Bible, have bequeathed to our nation and to humanity, has seldom been more compelling than it is today. Our nation and the human family have paid too great a price in human lives as a result of religious, racial, and ethnic prejudice and hostility. America, thank God, has been relatively free of religious wars that dominated other continents. The theme of human solidarity, based on profound respect for the right of every group to be itself, true to its own heritage and culture, has been translated into unique reality in the religious pluralism and mutual respect and caring which are distinctive features of American democracy.

In a world that continues to be threatened by group antagonisms and ideological fanaticisms, this 300-year-old American experience in unity in the midst of diversity may very well be the most single most important cultural and May the Jewish people, their fellow Americans, and the entire human family experience that God bless all the various New Year to the world.

As the Jewish people of our country and in other parts of the world unite in their prayerful reflections on this ancient Jewish prayer and yearning, they will be joined by millions of other Americans and people of good will throughout the world who, joined hands with their Jewish brethren.
For Bert Shanes
New York Sunday News
Aug. 9, 1978

POPE PAUL VI AND THE JEWS
by Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Rabbi Tanenbaum, national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee and a pioneering leader in Jewish-Christian relations, was the only Rabbi at Vatican Council II over which Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI presided.)

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I had the privilege of meeting Pope Paul VI on three separate occasions in Vatican City and in New York. The overriding impression that I carry with me of the late Pope is that of a complex, dedicated, highly intellectual person who, at the same time, was a deeply spiritual man, who was warmer than first appearances indicated, and who genuinely cared for human beings.

Pope Paul entered the diplomatic service of the Vatican Secretariat of State in 1925, five years after his ordination. He spent most of his adult life in Vatican City. He had, therefore, little opportunity to get to know Jewish people, their religion and culture (or, for that matter, any of the other major religious communities.) Vatican Council II, which flung open the windows of the Catholic Church to the world outside Italy, became in effect an extraordinary "on the job" training for Pope Paul to experience first-hand that outside world, including the world of the Jewish people and Israel.

During World War II, as Monsignor Giovanni Batista, the first group of Jews he met were refugees from Nazi-dominated Central Europe. So he knew Jews mainly as victims in exile. That would tend to confirm some of the ancient images in certain traditions of Christian teaching of "the wandering Jews" who suffered exile as punishment for not becoming Christians. But Pope Paul's exposure to the pitiful plight of thousands of Jewish refugees from Nazism and fascism also undoubtedly heightened his awareness of the catastrophic effects of war, as well
as the demonic consequences of anti-Semitism.

From the time of his election as the 262nd Supreme Pontiff on June 21, 1963, until his death on Aug. 6, 1978, Pope Paul clearly went through an evolution in his attitudes toward Jews, Judaism, and the State of Israel. Some of his early pronouncements inevitably reflected his limited contact with Jews and Judaism. Thus, in his first encyclical issued during August 1964, Pope Paul invited Jews, Muslims, and followers of "the Afro-Asiatic religions" to join with the Catholic Church in "defending common ideals of religious liberty, human brotherhood, good culture, social welfare and civil order."

But, in the same breath, he declared, "loyalty requests us to declare openly our conviction that there is only one true religion—that of Christianity. It is our hope that all who seek God and adore Him may come to acknowledge its truth."

Needless to say, Muslims and Eastern religions were no happier with that attitude than were Jews who do not believe that their religion is inadequate or unfulfilled.

It is a genuine tribute, however, to Pope Paul that his native intellectual integrity and his genuine, if cautious, openness to new ideas and experiences led him increasingly to modify his traditionalist views as he gained new insights. Some of his "new insights" began to emerge from his growing number of audiences with various Jewish leaders. Thus, the Pope met with such Jewish groups as the United Jewish Appeal on Oct. 14, 1963; the Jewish War Veterans on May 22, 1964; the American Jewish Committee on June 1, 1964; with 540 national Jewish leaders (and with Protestants and Catholics) during his visit to the United Nations on Oct. 4, 1965; with Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, renowned Jewish theologian, in Nov. 1965; with Prime Minister Golda Meir of Israel during Jan. 1973 in the Vatican; in 1965; finally with the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations on Jan. 10, 1975, at a reception in Rome.

His changing attitudes were perhaps most clearly expressed during one of his first audiences, that with the American Jewish Committee, in ink 1964, and with his last, with the International Jewish Committee in 1975. Referring to the
trauma of the Nazi holocaust, Pope Paul told the AJC delegation that he "strongly
deplores the horrible ordeals, the many trials and sufferings, of which the Jews
have been the victims in recent years."

Anticipating the Vatican Declaration adopted in October 28, 1965, which
condemned anti-Semitism and repudiated the false charge of collective Jewish
guilt for the death of Christ, Pope Pope then declared that he "does not believe
Jew should be held responsible for the death of Jesus"... and the Jewish
people should "never undergo any diminution in your human rights."

Finally, he spoke of his appreciation of Judaism in these words: "Our
particular consideration for the Jewish religious tradition with which Christianity
is so intimately linked, and from which it derives hope for trusting relations
and for a happy future." The Pope concluded the audience with a blessing to the
Jewish leaders, saying, "We wish you every favor from God whom we invoke with all
our hearts on your behalf and that of all those who are near and dear to you."
To underscore the significance of his declaration, Papal authorities had the
Pope's full text reprinted on the front page of the official Vatican newspaper,
L'Osservatore Romano.

In his last address, Pope Paul spoke even more forthrightly of "the
connections between Jewish thought and Christian thought," noting that in the
past "there has been real and profound mutual esteem (between Christian and Jewish
scholars) and a conviction that we had something to learn from one another."
Significantly, he reminded the Christian and Jewish leaders present that he
had called on "all the faithful of the Catholic Church to pay heed in order
(in the words of the Vatican Guidelines of 1975) 'to learn by what essential
traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience.'"

Again, with a special warmth, Pope Paul expressed to the Jewish leaders
"and for your families, but widely still for the entire Jewish people our best
wishes of happiness and peace."
The most dramatic expression of his growing interest and appreciation of Judaism as a source of religious insight and inspiration became manifest in his study of several books on the Philosophy of Judaism by the late Rabbi Heschel, with whom he developed a personal friendship. From the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, in 1969, Pope Paul quoted from the texts of Rabbi Heschel's book and spoke of the spiritual treasures of Judaism which he commended to the attention of the Catholic faithful before him. To my knowledge, that was the first time in 1,900 years that a reigning Pope cited a Rabbi and texts of Judaism as a spiritual resource.

Similarly, with regard to Israel and Jerusalem. In Jan. 1964, the "pilgrim Pope" made a journey to the Holy Land. While many were troubled by his diplomatic reticence in referring to Israel by name, the Pope's exchanges with President Shimon Peres were warm and mutually respectful, and left Israeli authorities feeling extremely positive by his visit. His authorization of Eugene Cardinal Tisserant to visit the Memorial Room of the Holocaust on Mt. Zion and to light candles in memory of the Jewish victims of the Nazis during World War II led a particularly forceful impression on the Jewish people.

Of profound importance was the fact that after the Pope Paul visited Christian shrines in Jerusalem and saw first hand how well they had been cared for by the Israeli Government, he abandoned the Vatican's earlier policy calling for the internationalization of city of Jerusalem. In his audience with Golda Meir in Jan. 1973, - a most cordial audience despite newspaper reports to the contrary - he repaid his gratitude for Israel's safeguarding of Christianity's holiest shrines.

While Pope John XXIII deserves the credit for beginning the process of changing the Catholic Church's negative attitudes toward Jews and Judaism, to Paul Paul VI belongs the merit of personally creating the Vatican Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations which is the first instrument in the Catholic Church's history charged with specific responsibility for translating ideas into realities - in revising textbooks, liturgy, sermons, and promoting joint social action.
If you were to ask me what qualities many Jews would like to see in the next Pope, I think it would involve the best qualities of both Pope John and Pope Paul. Pope John, the charismatic prophet who proclaims fresh new visions of mutual respect. Pope Paul, who translates those visions into practical programs, not only for Jews, but for the peace and unity of the whole human family.
August 6, 1978

"POPE PAUL VI"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

The last time I saw Pope Paul VI was in Vatican City in 1975. The Pope was pale, and tired from his arthritic condition, yet he had a genuine spiritual radiance in his face, a warmth, which left a deep impression. The occasion of our meeting was to discuss the present state of Catholic-Jewish relations in the United States and in other parts of the world. It was Pope John XXIII who actually made the breakthrough in improving understanding between Catholics and Jews through his calling Vatican Council II into being. In October 1965, the Vatican Council adopted almost unanimously a declaration which repudiated anti-Semitism, and called for fraternal dialogue and mutual respect between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people. It fell to Pope Paul who officially promulgated that historic declaration, to implement its principles. He personally proceeded to appoint a special Vatican Commission on Catholic-Jewish Relations one of whose lasting achievements is a set of far-reaching guidelines for revising textbooks, liturgy, and promoting joint social justice. While much less publicized, there also took place during his reign extensive interchange between scholars in Israel and in Vatican City. Above all, Pope Paul dedicated his Papacy to world peace and human rights – causes that were equally cherished by the Jewish people everywhere. We extend heartfelt condolences to millions of our Catholic neighbors in America and throughout the world over the loss of their revered spiritual leader, Pope Paul VI.

*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.