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Series D: International Relations Activities. 1961-1992

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Minutes of Israel Study Meeting
Protestant Chapel, JFK Airport
May 7, 1970

CONFIDENTIAL

The meeting opened at 11:30 with the following present:

Participants: Markus Barth, Roland de Corneille, Roy Eckardt, Edward Flannery, Robert Handy, William Harter, Monika Hellwig, George Lindbeck, Franklin Littell, Vincent Martin, John Oesterreicher, John Pawlikowski, Donna Purdy, Leo Rudloff, Coert Rylaarsdam, Arlene Swidler, Leonard Swidler.

Observer: Bernhard Olson

Guests: Josephine Casgrain, Rose Thering

Staff: Robert Dodds, Richard Johnson, Ann Patrick Ware

Discussion of the Dawidowicz and Fackenheim papers

Rylaarsdam: I want to draw the group's attention to Lucy Dawidowicz's excellent anthology, The Golden Tradition, which presents the leadership of last century's Orthodox Jewry in Central Europe with brief biographies and excerpts.

Harter: I have a question about Dawidowicz's paper which seems to lead right into Fackenheim's concern. She has a sentence I don't understand: "The Holocaust has made us despair that history can teach us anything that we might want to learn."

Littell: She is saying what Fackenheim is also saying, viz., that the measure of the evil is so monstrous that it is incapable of description. We are traumatized by it. I think a breakdown of language is what she is speaking of.

Flannery: I think there is a philosophical dimension missing in the article. You can react negatively to the Holocaust by indifference, as she points out. She mentions the fact that American Jews have not written a history of the Holocaust and haven't an interest in doing so. But how about the younger generation which on principle rejects the past and has become anti-historical? It's not a question of being traumatized in that case. We're traumatized and can't face it but the young have an indifference towards the past including the Holocaust.

Rylaarsdam: The assimilation of the impact of the Holocaust is in process all the time. As I read the Israeli press today compared with that of a decade ago, there is a growing awareness that an Israeli is a Jew. It is a much more self-conscious awareness than it was a decade ago.

Littell: Those of us who teach, whether Jewish youth or Christian youth, find they are turning away from the historical tradition.

Harter: I would push that even further as one who has worked with high school youth and those younger for the last ten years. This is a very serious problem lower down, and I think the reason you've got the problem in the universities is that it isn't being solved in the public education structure in this country. There is an almost total inability to empathize with the Nazi era in general, with what fascism really means. That is why there is a willingness to skirt the cliffs of quasi-fascist activity today. The youth aren't really aware of what's involved. I think in this study we should try to formulate some answers as to how we can get the point across in the public school structure of this country. It isn't just the question of the theological definition. It is also a question of how to speak in some way that this definition will eventually get across.

Swidler: Does anyone know of any study that has been done on public school text books which cover this period of the Holocaust and its consequences? If not, it seems to me that we might seriously consider recommending that such a study

be undertaken. I was involved in a study sponsored by the NCCJ on the treatment of religion in history books used in public schools in Pittsburgh five years ago. What we found was pretty meager and I would imagine that the same kind of thing is true in the case of the Holocaust.

Littell: Shall we turn to Fackenheim's very weighty article? I think we need to take it a little more carefully. He is one of the two or three Jewish scholars who are trying to do what this working party is trying to do, that is, to see if some sense can be made of the past.

Handy: He has a very eloquent article in this week's Christian Century, May 6, "The People Israel Lives," which says some of the things here in an even more personal vein. It's a very powerful account.

Littell: He starts out by saying how both the Gentiles and the Jews shun the record, and then he concludes that there is a kind of intellectual bankruptcy as well as a spiritual problem that makes for difficulty. He develops the point Professor Dawidowicz was making when he says, "Auschwitz is the unique descent into hell. It is an unprecedented celebration of evil. It is evil for evil's sake." There's no way to fit it into a theological system which comes readily to mind.

de Corneille: This is one of the fundamental theological questions. Is the notion of the demonic purely liberalized or defanged or anesthetized so that we no longer really mean demonic, or do we mean demonic? Is there another realm here that we should take seriously theologically, and if so, within the patterns of the various theological systems in which we work, how do we understand this in our own day? There is a further problem which we might include, and that is that some others were taken only because they were Slavs, not because they were Slavs who were against Germany, against the Nazis. Others suffer with the Jews, and there may be some meaning in this theologically.

Littell: This is the same problem as the sometime position of American black churchmen that blacks are America's Jews. Theologically and church-historically this points in exactly the wrong direction, but in another sense it points toward the cancerous growth of evil to the point where the hatred of the Jews becomes the hatred of mankind.

de Corneille: This should not be lost sight of so that our study becomes just a preoccupation with Jews only.

Rylaarsdam: I like the emphasis on the universality of this. There is, however, an emphasis on the particular, and I am very much concerned that we, as a Christian group, explore what the meaning is for the Jew and for Judaism. Historically, the Christian tradition has spoken about this very much along the lines of Mr. Agnew's statement about the events at Kent: "What else can your expect? As long as these people go on existing as a particular group then that's what you must expect." Christians are still in the process of trying to get out from under that tradition. I think it is very important in this process that we learn to talk about it in a empathetic way--what the Jewish self-understanding is, what is the Jew's understanding of his own particularity in this religious way. Along these lines I find the F article a good jumping off point.

Hellwig: Exactly along those lines, F refers to the binding of Isaac. He doesn't talk about it but the whole thing is built upon it, and to me that is terribly important. When he emphasizes that the Jew was taken because he was a Jew, because his parents or grandparents maintained the bond, this is his link with the state of Israel. The fidelity of the Jew is in peoplehood and therefore they cannot see either people or Israel in the categories we use. For him this is an important element in the understanding of the Holocaust. This is what makes the Holocaust a revelatory event which alters preception, as he understands it, for the Jew. It brings to life again the binding of Isaac.

Harter: I think that Dr. de Corneille's point still stands. The Slav was taken qua Slav, as a member of a certain class of people, as an inferior people. This is really a troublesome thing. F himself says that resort to theories of suffering-in-general or persecution-in-general permits the investigation that he wants to carry through to be made. How would you answer on that?

de Corneille: I'm not disagreeing with what anybody has said. I was just saying that there is a value in expanding its implications. I believe we should start with the point of particularism and we'll find ourselves rewarded in terms of finding a basic mythology which becomes from then on a problem of the binding of Isaac, the binding of Jesus the Jew. You focus on this and see what man does in his rebellion against God. Also you have the whole question that Freud brought up. You have a hatred of Christ in the rigorous Christian which he takes out on a scapegoat. The scapegoat is a Jew. You find it in other forms like Maritain's statement that the people of Christ have become the Christ of peoples. This is mystical; it's psychological and sociological. There is a dynamic for the Christian, for he too is an heir to the patriarchs. He too is one who is heir of Christ, and therefore of the whole covenant and its fulfillment in the New. Thus he too is involved in this massacre. He too was involved in this destruction and faces the demonic. Whether he realizes he faces the demonic when the Jew becomes the object of his hatred, whether it's psychological, conscious, unconscious or whatever should be brought out to make the story complete. The Slav as a Christian thus becomes a victim of the Christian. This is a dynamic we should examine.

Littell: It's a dialectic. We're back on the particularity-universality problem, and you can't press one point to the exclusion of the other.

Swidler: When we get to the 19th and 20th centuries we are talking now of racism. Racism isn't limited to anti-Semitism. There are all kinds of racism. The Jews were the main focus, but there were the Slavs, the gypsies, and everybody else was rated accordingly up and down the line. If you move back before the 19th century, when we have anti-Semitism it's much less a phenomenon of racism and more a religious thing. At least, it's a mixture of the religious and social. These people are different because they are not Christian. They live in the ghetto and do special kinds of things. It tends to take more of a religious flavor at this period of time. Then in the 19th and 20th centuries religion becomes less and less important so that we shouldn't try to interpret the Holocaust in this strict religious fashion.

Pawlikowski: To go back to the question of whether Fackenheim's attempt to differentiate the Holocaust from hatred-in-general disagrees with Roland's attempt to generalize it, I think that F was talking about something slightly different. I think that F was saying that these were victims such as the victims of Hiroshima, etc. where the issue is different. They were killed because others thought it was the lesser of two evils. The Holocaust was different. F was condemning a different kind of generalization from the kind Roland is making.

Harter: May I just push that point? F says here, "The ineluctable truth is that Jews at Auschwitz were not a species of the genus 'inferior race,' but rather the prototype by which 'inferior race' was defined." I am wondering if we can or cannot include Slavs on the same level with Jews. What would F say to that?

Littell: He would think that you are dealing with a situation with two points, neither of which should be pushed to the exclusion of the other. First, there is a certain uniqueness to the hatred of the Jews. The Jews are not Cherokees, and the injustice of the white man to the Cherokees is different from the blasphemy of the Christians to the Jews. On the other point which F merely

mentions but which Roland brought out vividly, this must not be detached from the human predicament--the general fact that hatred of the Jews leads very readily and is also related in our whole theological understanding to all who are victims of racism. I think we would have to agree to keep both those things before us.

Barth: F's point is that there is an infinite qualitative difference between the Holocaust and Vietnam or the Cherokees or anything else. If there is an infinite qualitative difference, we cannot endorse this understanding and at the same time add a little bit, because then we contradict him.

Oesterreicher: Let me put it a bit differently. I certainly think that at the bottom of Hitler's hatred of the Jews is a certain Christian phobia, but I think it goes much further. I think Hitler saw the Jews very much as they see themselves. For him they were the people of the Law. There's a famous statement that conscience is a Jewish invention. So Hitler hated the Jews as a symbol of conscience. The fact that he had to kill Slavs and gypsies was just a consequence. The Jews come first and are uppermost. Once Hitler had decided that the Aryan race was poorly represented in appearance by him and all the leaders, he had to go further and further. The Jews were not in his way to achieve his political goals whereas the Slavs were. I think the two persecutions were of a different nature and quality.

Rylaarsdam: I think it is important to keep track of this qualitative difference. The Jew knows himself as chosen, and the Nazi also asserted his chosenness. One of the hardest things to make clear to students is the difference between the consciousness of election which characterizes the faithful Jew and the assertion of superiority found in Nazis.

Eckardt: The way to see the infinite qualitative difference is by asking the question, were there other people who were hating the Slavs while Hitler was doing away with the Slavs? There is a universality of enmity towards Jews in all times and in all places, and this would seem to establish the infinite qualitative difference.

Pawlikowski: I don't want to deemphasize the importance of distinguishing between Hitler's attitude toward the Jews and that toward the Slavs. However, I would say that Hitler's attitude toward the Slavs was something more than a hatred because of a political obstacle that the Slavs constituted. I think F would say (and I would too) that there is a tremendous difference between Vietnam, Cambodia or what the Red Chinese have done and what happened in the Nazi period, but the emphasis should be put not so much on suffering as on mindset. What is unique and important theologically is the uniqueness of the Nazi mindset over against the Mao mindset, the Truman mindset, the Marzist mindset, etc.

Olson: I think that a useful question to ask is why the mindset of the Nazis seemed to so many Christians to be so compatible with Christianity. What does that have to say about the kind of Christianity we profess and practice?

Flannery: Our worrying about what Hitler thought he was doing or what the Nazi mindset was puts the question on a purely historical plane. I think we should pay more attention, as F does, to the effect of what Hitler did, regardless of his intent. I think we should be studying such questions as: What are the Jews in history? Are they chosen? Are they people of a certain type? Are they elect in any special way? I think the uniqueness of the Holocaust will flow from their uniqueness, if they have any. If we try to get into Hitler's mind, I think we're lost in some historical footnote.

Hellwig: I would like to make a distinction that we should keep in mind methodologically. You can interpret the same facts sociologically and psychologically, or you can interpret them theologically. The difference in what we have to do theologically is not in the facts but in the way we interpret the facts.

We begin with the Jewish testimony to us of what this event has meant to them. It has been a revelatory event first and foremost but one with which they have had great difficulty coming to grips with or even discussing. Theologically to them it is unique. From the point of Jewish theology, why would one even want to argue that it is not unique? But the Jewish theological position is also that the Jew considers himself as typical of mankind so that when he reflects on what happens to him, he asks also what it means in general. I think the question for us is not so much whether we can sociologically, psychologically and historically verify the uniqueness. Rather, what does the experience mean for us as Christians theologically? Is it unique for us?

Oesterreicher: I think this kind of investigation is terribly important but is it the important thing at the moment? The reality of the moment is that we are rapidly approaching another 1967 in Israel, and since the question of the State of Israel has brought us together, I suggest that we turn our minds to the present situation and the presence of the Russians and of the Nazis in Egypt.

Littell: Perhaps as chairman, I might say what I thought we were doing. We are working through and making markings of very important theological issues which we will need to explore more in depth. One of these is most assuredly the point on which we have been concentrating, the way in which Jewish particularity is related to the human predicament, seen theologically, church-historically, and so on. The question which you raise is no doubt dear to the members of the commission, but it raises the very critical question of what this working party is doing. My understanding of it has been that this is in a different context from, say, the American Professors for Peace in the Middle East. I have been associated with thirty or more timely efforts, and I have yet to participate in what this working party is supposed to do, namely, an in-depth theological consideration of what Israel--the people, the land, the state--means to Christian believers.

Oesterreicher: I am all in favor of that, but I think it would be tragic if we left here after having investigated the meaning of the Holocaust, the uniqueness of the suffering, and the peculiarity of the Jewish people and forgot about the particular situation today.

Littell: That lends moral earnestness to our deliberations.

Martin: I honestly believe that the key to any theological approach is uniqueness. No Jew will ever accept that his uniqueness is like any other uniqueness. The secret of everything is that Jewish uniqueness is unique. I would suggest an historical study of the Armenian massacres and the way Armenians are theologically trying to understand. In terms of proportion it's about the same. There were one million Armenians killed in a very short time. The Armenian nationalism was singular and moreover Christian. Now I am absolutely sure that no Armenian theologian ever asserted the uniqueness of this massacre in the way the Jews assert the uniqueness of the Holocaust. We will never get anywhere if we don't somehow get the feeling of the Jewish sense of uniqueness.

Littell: Another important issue to mark comes from a study Judd Teller wrote called Scapegoat of Revolution, which is a study of renegade Jews and is the best documentation I have run into on hatred of the Jews, utopian socialism and the development of Marzist communist thinking. A Jew can be a communist Jew, and atheist Jew or a renegade Jew, but in some way in this historical complex he is still a Jew. The enemy knows him even if he doesn't know himself. This is a terribly basic theological issue.

Pawlikowski: I think I was one of those who introduced the word "uniqueness," and I have a feeling that it's being misunderstood in some respects. What I meant by uniqueness was that it was the first time such a thing appeared. The Holocaust

was the first and greatest manifestation of the possibilities of evil by man. Rubenstein's point is not that it is unique in the sense that it is not repeatable. It can be repeated. This is the lesson. This is the terrible theological lesson. It can be repeated once more in Israel. It can be repeated even outside a Jewish context. This is the thing we need to learn from the Holocaust. It transcends the Jewish-Christian dialogue. The lesson of what the Holocaust means for all men in the understanding of our times is terribly important and has equal value with understanding what Jewish particularity means.

Eckardt: I'm one of those people along with such others as Emgarden (Jesus and the Zealots) who is trying to work out the idea that Jesus really came too early. Therefore we are commanded to despair. I raise the question with you of whether we are forbidden to speak of Jewish election after Auschwitz. I haven't figured out yet if there can be such a thing as negative revelation, but if there is, I at least pose this question: Are we now forbidden to speak of Jewish election because of what happened at Auschwitz? This is the point Rubenstein confronts us with and also the Jewish community.

Littell: There was one other major theological point that F made which seems to me equally important. F says, "No purpose, religious or nonreligious, will ever be found in Auschwitz. The very attempt to find one is blasphemous." That fits in with what Professor Eckardt is saying. Perhaps Christians ought to keep still for a while about the election of Israel. Further, it seems to me that one of the results of the Holocaust is the incredibility of the god-talk. F says that one of the spiritual perils is for us to slide so easily over the deep meaning of the Holocaust and say that as a result of the Holocaust we now have Israel; as a result of the Holocaust we now have a cultural and spiritual renaissance in Jewish circles; as a result we now have better theology in Holland than we had before, etc. This may have a certain measure of truth but it's all too facile.

Rylaarsdam: We as Christians have an easier way out. We can go into dialectical theology but a Jew has to stay in history.

Martin: The Jewish people of the time of the Bible have a tremendous sense of God acting in history but I honestly wonder if Talmudic Judaism does.

Flannery: We need a Talmudic scholar. From what I can judge, the Talmudic Jew had just as much the sense of God's providence and action in history as the so-called biblical Jew. I've read here and there the rabbinic answers to Auschwitz. We're citing Rubenstein and Fackenheim who are not Talmudists at all, and we are bypassing Orthodox Judaism. It has tried to give an answer.

Hellwig: I think the answer to this question (Does real Talmudic Judaism rely on history? Does God act in exile? Is acting the same as presence?) could be very easily documented. I would be happy to write up a paper documenting this before we meet the next time.

Pawlikowski: It has occurred to me that survival, which is often spoken of in relation to the Israelis especially, may have some theological meaning here. It may be saying something about the nature of the God-man relationship. Man, in the context of the Jewish experience, has come to recognize more fully his role as co-creator, as co-responsible for his own destiny and for the destiny of the world. In a way this changes the notion of the fatherhood of God, which may have to be reinterpreted. Sometimes people speak of the boldness of the Israelis and their sense of survival. I see some implications in this notion of survival which F brings out that are useful.

Hellwig: When a Jew says his obligation is to survive, he is saying it as a Jew. He doesn't simply mean to keep living or to beget children but to live as a Jew and to raise his children as Jews.

Rylaarsdam: This statement about the necessity of survival puts in the sharpest way the dilemma that Christians have faced and continue to face theologically

in respect to the Jews. Christians have historically said that the business of the Jew is to become a Christian. Jews increasingly, and F is among them, are convinced that the only way for survival for the Jew qua Jew (not qua human being) is in terms of Israel. The question of Jewish survival is a serious question for Christians to deal with. If we as Christians can really say yes to this, we will have to say it in such a way that we, in our self-definition as Christians, can affirm a role for the Jew in the divine economy. Can we do this? Have Jews and Christians a common future? What is the role of the Jew in the divine economy after Pentecost? Historically the Christian has said that he is the full and complete heir of the promise. I'm one of those Christians who can't believe that. I have a very difficult time as a Christian in spelling out the ways that I as a Christian am incomplete without the presence of the Jew. How do we describe this witness which completes our witness without which we are incomplete. I am talking about post-Pentecost. We all, as Christians, have no problem with the pre-Christian Jew; it's the Jew after Jesus who is an embarrassment to a Christian.

Rudloff: It is providential that Jewish-Christian relations become more intense at a time when the churches are turning more towards this world and where it will be the function of Judaism to teach us some lessons.

Flannery: We have to consider the subject not only with respect to Jewish-Christian relations but in regard to the very essence of Christianity. We have to image the total disappearance of Judaism. I think this would be disastrous for the Christian faith. Our beginnings were particularistic. They emerged from Judaism. If Judaism were not to survive, it would be the death knell of the Christian faith.

Handy: This raises the question of eschatology, the kingdom of God, of Christology and the relationship of the Messiah whom we recognize as come and he who is to come.

Littell: May I add a footnote? What use have the Jews in their thinking for Christians? The article on eschatology in the old Jewish Encyclopedia reflects a particular platform. It says, in effect, that the mission of Christians is to carry the word to the tribes and the nations, and the mission of the Jews is to win them all back to monotheism. This is one formulation which means that the Jews need the Christians as well as the Christians need the Jews. I see very little theological thought on the part of contemporary Jewish teachers about needing the Christian Church, but if there is any mutuality involved, sooner or later this factor has to be brought out.

Rylaarsdam: One thing that has impressed me increasingly over the years is that we, as Christians, can never define ourselves without having some definition of the Jew. As far as I can determine, this is not necessary for the Jew. The Jew can be a Jew and define himself as a Jew without necessarily having a definition of the Christian.

Littell: If we would affirm anything with our Jewish colleagues, it is that there is a dimension in Christianity which is essentially Jewish in its prophetic and universal outreach which Jews, because of being ghettoized or for whatever historical reason, have not fulfilled. I think you'd find Jewish scholars who would still be prepared to say that historically the Jewish existence needs Christianity.

de Corneille: That is true of a very limited section of Judaism and is adhered to by a very limited number of Jews (The Rosenzweig position). There is a Jewish theology that is very simple. It doesn't pick out Christians separately. It applies to all non-Jews. Those who have obeyed the Noahic laws have as much future in the kingdom of God as Jews do. Beyond that there is also the notion that the eschatological aim of Judaism is to so hold up the Name of God that in

the end God will be one and his Name shall be proclaimed as one. These are, I think, the traditional Jewish views. They give no preference to Christianity in the sense of its being different from any non-Jewish group.

Oesterreicher: I think the vast majority of Jewish thinkers would agree that the Jew does not need the Christian for his self-definition. But historically Judaism has been greatly influenced by Christianity. The whole shekinah theology would not have been possible without the theology of incarnation. I have heard two Jewish scholars, one an Orthodox and one a Conservative, one a philosopher and theologian and the other a sociologist, say that despite all the persecutions Jews have suffered at Christian hands, the Jew only amounted to something in the Western world. The role of the Jew in China or India is nothing. Jews lived there but nothing else.

Father Flannery took the chair for the discussion of Franklin Littell's paper.

Littell: The setting may be interesting. Wayne State University has adopted a study into the history of the church struggle in the Holocaust and will hold an annual conference every March. They have also set aside considerable sums of money for microfilming and collecting the documents on the church struggle and for cooperating with the major centers of research on the Holocaust. Since I was involved in that conference I seized the opportunity to write a paper in preparation for this session. There were about 150 scholars, most of them not theologians. They came from history, political science, sociology and so forth. They agreed on the thesis that the church struggle and the Holocaust must be studied in connection with each other, i.e., Holocaust is a major event in Church history and not just a Jewish misfortune, and that such integrity as was maintained by Catholic and Protestant resisters has implications also for Christian-Jewish relations. The main direction of this paper was to establish that these two things must be kept in common focus, even though they are a separate problematic.

I discovered some interesting points in pulling out the materials and going through them again. For example, as late as 1943, the leading liberal Protestant journal, The Christian Century, was still editorializing to the effect that the story that the Germans were killing the Jews was propaganda. It was left to Reinhold Niebuhr and George Shuster to say what Nazism and its program meant to believing Christians. Some of us in those days were pacificists and isolationists and hardly knew what was going on across the big river, let alone what was going on in Europe. I think we should pay tribute to those who were aware, as well as try to draw some lessons from the experience. There is a section on the theological meaning of National Socialism. One of the unexpected bonuses of the conference turned out to be a major paper by a young man from Drew, Michael Ryan, who analyzed in a brilliant way the role of Hitler as the founder of a religion. There was a system of salvation with a liturgy and all the rest of it--shrines, hagiography, etc. This is intended to show how National Socialism was indeed a religious gestalt and not just a political experiment of rather tawdry or vulgar kind.

The conference itself had the theme, "What Can America Learn?" so that shows a kind of playing back and forth between the experience of the Deutscher Christen and American liberal Protestantism. There is a fairly hard section about the failure of the intellectuals and universities. I remember a pamphlet by one of the leading DC theologians in Germany who said, "If, as our greatest scholars have said, the OT is nothing but Jewish folklore and fable, why not build our

own Alt Testament out of the blood and heritage of the German man?" Why not indeed, unless in some sense the OT is authoritative and also holy history of the Christians? Why not an American Alt Testament or a Deutsches Alt Testament? We're back to the very critical problem that many of the scholars of the 19th century had. When it came to this kind of confrontation, a number of them flunked their exams. If this is true, what does it imply for the affirmation of the Christian faith in relation to the Jewish people? In this connection, without identifying the author, I referred to an irate letter I received accusing this commission of Zionist politics. Anti-Semitism is not just the problem of Gerald L. K. Smith and of fascist elements, but it is also a problem of much of American liberal Protestantism.

de Corneille: In order to avoid the particularism of things like White Citizens' Councils, liberal Protestantism supposedly tried to head in a universalistic direction. But if it does this, how is it to deal with the nationalism of black militants? This flight to universalism has led the liberal to resent Jewish particularism.

Littell: Whenever Christians go bad, when they try to infuse an ethnic bloc, hatred of the Jews is absolutely inevitable. We need a discussion for help in this dialectic between universality and particularity.

de Corneille: The liberal Protestant, in trying to escape the danger of becoming involved in a Nazi particularism of cult and group and fatherland, flees to universalism. Then he asks, "Why make an exception of the mythology of the Jew and his particularism?"

Littell: There is a theological answer to that but not a logical one.

Rylaarsdam: Election is always a confession, an affirmation of faith by the person who is elected or by the community. I don't think you can ever objectively demonstrate this. What I think we can point out is the historical character of revelation in both Judaism and Christianity. In both, the historical character of revelation seems to me to make it inescapable that you will have particularism. That is, you point to Abraham or you point to Jesus Christ or to the Exodus and you are talking about particular events and the people who were there. In this sense, Judaism and Christianity are both particularistic. It's part of their being so historical.

Oesterreicher: There is no commandment in Israel or the Church to love humanity. There is only a commandment to love the neighbor. With reference to finding out that professors fail at facing Nazism, I might recall a saying of one of the great American Jewish thinkers, Solomon Schechter, who said that higher criticism is higher anti-Semitism. Also, I would like to comment on the thesis that Hitler was the founder of a new religion. Ten or fifteen years ago I might have said that myself, but the older I grow the wiser I get and the more I question certain assumptions I made. There is a big difference between the Hitler who spoke for public consumption and Hitler among his companions. The man he liked to make fun of constantly was Himmler and his SS. He had absolutly no relationship to all these attempts to found a new religion. He was a much more limited and stupid man for all his evil genius than we assume.

Olson: We ought to explore the different kinds of universalism and particularism. There is a kind of particularism that says I have to love and serve my brother who happens to be a Christian in my local church or the particularism that says I must serve and love my neighbor.

de Corneille: Liberal Protestantism usually has a need to universalize in theory. Yet it is confronted with having to cope with all kinds of nationalisms which it wants to identify with and be on the side of--the Negro, the Indian, the Eskimo. We have a whole group of people who are hung up on that problem.

Such people are going to be offended by any Jewish particularism because that is particularism at its greatest. On the other hand, those Christians who still believe in divine revelation have less of a problem accepting Jewish particularism for they are themselves oriented toward a particularism in Jesus Christ and the divine revelation in that particular person. It seems to me that you also have two groups of Jews: first, philosophical Jews who also want to look at this in a more universalistic sense and deny that God exists, in a usual sense, and those Israeli Jews who are non-practicing, non-believing Jews, who want to view Israel as another nation among nations; then second, you have Jews who are still practicing and are oriented toward Jewish particularism. If we as a committee speak with only a biblical voice we are addressing only a certain group of Christians. What we have been saying so far is meaningful to us because we have accepted common biblical assumptions. But it is those who do not share those assumptions who provide a real threat to Judaism. Maybe we should bring in some others like that, who are nontheless concerned about Jews, to try and cope with this.

Rylaarsdam: This phenomenon of anti-Judaism rooted in a liberal Christian universalism is hardly new. In some ways it is less a threat now than it was back in the 20's, 30's and early 40's. A couple of my students went through the files of The Christian Century on the matter of its attitude toward the Jewish problem in the days of Hitler. The interesting thing is that The Christian Century was anti-Jewish and didn't mean to be. It was against the particularism of Judaism all the way through. In the 30's it said that Jews must put their religious values into the common American pot. It felt Zionism was a particularism we must stop. This continued until after the establishment of the State of Israel and until Mr. Fey ceased to be editor. This naive way of equating Christianity with the universalism that the American dream represented was an oversimplification that I don't see anywhere in liberal Protestant circles today. It may be that some of the New Left theology will take a similar position, but I don't think that it is quite as naive as The Christian Century was in the 30's.

Flannery: I wonder if we can't widen the charge. It's not only liberal Protestantism that takes such a position. I find the same thing among liberal Catholics and I think you'll find it in politics. The Socialists, when they began, were anti-Semitic. They finally gave the position away to the rightists who have held it ever since. But the Socialists are coming back to it now, not only in Russia but over here too. I think it's build on a similar universalism. When you become too universalist, whether in religion or out of it, you will get this phenomenon. I'd like to ask Dr. Littell why he singled out the liberal Protestants at this moment.

Littell: I picked this particular problem because I live with it. Also I think a person has a right to speak more sharply about his own history and relationships. I feel tremendously indebted to the men who put out the second edition of the RGG and it was only later that I recognized what they had done to prepare the way for the Deutscher Christians.

There are two questions being raised. The question of how you heal a Kulturreligion which has a false universalism because it doesn't understand its own identity is really a different question from the question of how you face those who celebrate natural epiphanies. The latter is a much more difficult and awesome question in the present theological arena. Dick Rubenstein, Martin Marty and Harvey Cox have all published in the last few months celebrations of the natural epiphany. The greatest natural epiphany I ever had anything to do with was the old Nazi Party rally on July 7, 1939 in Nuremburg. I would bet on George Wallace before I'll bet on Harvey Cox if we really start celebrating natural epiphanies around here.

Harter: What we're talking about now reminds me of that paper by Dr. Fein which he gave us last fall about defective universalisms vs. valid particularisms. It seems to me that this might be a very good thread with which to tie these things together. I think Kulturreligion and the natural epiphanies are both manifestations of defective universalism. The Woodstock experience purports itself to be a valid universal experience for youth of that particular age group. Possibly this might be a thesis or a line on which these things could be strung together.

Lindbeck: I am interested to know whether the basic framework that Dr. Littell has presented to us receives general agreement among us. I myself am sympathetic to it. At the same time I realize that if I were to say things like this in the context in which I normally operate, most of my colleagues would not know what I was talking about. A lot of them think of themselves as taking the Bible very seriously, but end up on a different side of the fence when it comes to a question like whether there is anything a Christian can recognize as a valid theological meaning for the land of Israel. Once we get down to concrete cases the difference between liberal and biblical gets extremely blurred. When I expound views similar to those a number of us have been expounding here the questions comes up, Can we really admit the validity of a Jewish state? Doesn't a Christian have to insist, out of our experience with church-state relations, on the necessity of a sharp division between church and state?

Johnson: I would wonder how you would defend your strong identification of liberal Protestantism with anti-Semitism against the Glock-Stark studies which found just the oposite, that the more orthodox a person tended to be, the more anti-Semitic he was.

Littell: I would defend it the way Arthur Gilbert did in his review of Glock and Stark, namely, that the study was defective in methodological tools. A much more reputable and dependable study is one by Dr. Bernhard Olson, Faith and Prejudice. Glock and Stark started with the presupposition that theological commitment is on the negative side of the scale. The study of church history demonstrates what I have been saying. The Jews suffered most under Socialism and Communism from renegade Jews. The mounting of the totalitarian threats in the 20th century has been from unformed baptized, apostate baptized, those who were not sure of their commitments and frayed away under pressure. I believe this fraying process, both in the Christian community and in the Jewish community, and its practical consequences can be documented.

Rylaarsdam: I want to speak to the church-state thing. We as Christians have to be terribly careful lest we become patronizing about how Israeli Jews should define their way of relating faith and state. We must remember that it is precisely the closer tie between faith and history that characterizes the Jew as over against the Christian. That makes for a closer tie between faith and culture, including state.

Oesterreicher: There is no theocratic state in Israel, The supreme court takes positions that are contrary to rabbinic law. There are some party constellations which give the Orthodox Jews an influence on decisions that is perhaps not justified by their numbers, but the situation is quite varied. In certain parts of Jerusalem it is impossible to travel in an automobile on the Sabbath but in Tel Aviv there is nothing of that. The situation is in flux and to apply our biblical ideas of church-and-state tie ups to Israel is utterly wrong. There is no basis in fact.

Swidler: I have some disagreements with what has been said. The church-state question is one on which I have problems. I say this as a Roman Catholic who only recently got that monkey off my back, and I can't really in good faith say to my Jewish friends, Go ahead. I would say to them, "It's your decision to make and I respect your decision, but if you want my advice, I

think it's a mistake." I think the union of church and state historically has been mischievous. Also, on the question of the land I have some reservations. If Jewish people want to interpret the significance of the land in a way that's congenial to them, fine. That's their right. But I don't see that I as a Christian must necessarily buy it. As a matter of fact, I have great difficulty in giving religious significance to the land.

Flannery: I wonder if Dr. Swidler realizes the underlying principles he's using here. It seems to me he's putting the Bible down as a purely historical document and perhaps mythological, and so what it contains has no effective relevance as to what meaning the land of Israel can have today. You say as a Christian we have just got rid of the church-state problem. We might have. I hope we have. That doesn't mean as a consequence that the Jews should too. I'd say we Christians must get rid of the church-state problem and probably have, but the Jews must never. We're not talking about the law in Israel but whether they should have a land. Dr. Lindbeck has an idea that we can have today the possession of the land without a state. In this day and age can there be a complete possession and governance of land without a state? If so, it's a very abnormal situation. Also, I think we should study this according to what Jews thought when they lost their state. I think it's plain that before the last exile in 70 AD that Judaism had simply refused to accept the Roman governance. They even were watching for a Messiah, any Messiah who would liberate them from the Roman yoke. In fact, the early Christians partook in this too and asked Jesus on two occasions when he would give them back the kingdom of Israel. They meant freedom from the Romans. Also, on the road to Emmaus too, they asked, "When will the king of Israel be restored?" The early Christians expected that there be complete political governance of the land. Now the exile is over. They're back. Why should it be completely non-political?

Swidler: We really come down to the question of interpreting the significance of the Bible. I don't want to assume that it's only a historical document, but that it is historical I would insist upon. That it's mythological I would say is true in great part, but exactly what is mythological and how that is going to be applied varies and has varied over 2000 years and will continue to..For us to assume that Christians can hammer out a Christian meaning of history that everyone will agree with is nonsense.

de Corneille: I am pleased to hear from Dr. Swidler because he is just the kind of voice we need to hear. There is a large number of people who are not apt to accept the Scriptures as having a revelatory and commanding relationship to theology and who see them more as something which is in addition to or exemplary to theological thinking.

Rudloff: I think we must make a great distinction between two issues: first, the idea of the theocratic state of Israel, to which many Jews and many Israelis are very much opposed; and second, the religious meaning of the land. They are two different things. If a Jew feels that the land is something sacred for him, that doesn't necessarily mean that he want a theocratic identity between state and synagogue.

Harter: Our discussion indicates that in terms of methodology our first step should be to try to understand what the Jew thinks of this question. Of course, there is no one Jewish point of view on anything, but we could determine what major alternative Jewish views and minor Jewish views hold on a given question. Methodologically it would seem to me we should ask Jews what they think of the Holocaust, the land, peoplehood, and then ask what is our theological response as Christians to this.

Martin: I suggest simply a conceptual tool. Theologically, in what we call people we have a very complex phenomenon which has two dimensions: society and culture.

This is a kind of division nobody can explain. Nobody knows exactly what the difference between society and culture is but you don't work without it. I suggest an investigation of the possible difference between nation and people. Esdras is the father of the people, and Judas Maccabeus is the father of the nation. Esdras is on the level of universalism, and Judas Maccabeus in on the level of particularity. The Church can call herself Israel but the Church would never call herself the Jewish nation. The Church came in the land of the universalism of Israel. It could not possibly continue the particularities of the nation. Finally the particularism of the nation did not recognize the Church, and the Judeo-Christian church finally died out. As a nation Israel disappeared from the Church. I think if we use this conceptual tool, not yet refined but certainly capable of refinement, it would throw a lot of light.

Dr. Littell resumed the chair.

Littell: I think we need to brainstorm a bit about where we go from here. We are trying to establish some points where we need papers; we've touched a number of issues; we promised that we would give some regard to the thought of Arab Christians and people who have been not only outside the membership of the committee but rather critical of its existence. I don't think it's too strong to say that there's been quite an effort to politicize this committee on the basis that we are too friendly to the Jews and we should be friendlier to Arabs and other people. This gets back to particularity and universality. We withstood this on the basis that we are not passing resolutions and we are not dealing with political realities in the Middle East primarily. We are doing a theological task which hasn't been done and which desperately needs to be done. This raises the agenda question. Shall we go on in the next session to bring in some spokesmen from the Arab Christian complex and some of our colleagues who want to attack very sharply the existence of Israel? Or shall we get our paper on the meaning of the land and plunge more deeply into some of these things which we have marked on the borders of discussion as needing more treatment in depth?

Martin: What I think would be important for this discussion is a quiet, scholarly exposition of the Islamic theology of the land. What does the land mean to the Muslim?

Hellwig: I'm quite worried about that newsletter that went out and made it clear that we were only Western Christians talking about this and we had only invited Jews to talk with us and yet, for some reason, Islamic anti-Semitism is listed as a special topic.

Littell: We should remind ourselves of the context in which we set these priorities. I'm convinced we've got to bring in other dimensions, and we have a memorandum from Jim Kritzeck of Notre Dame on plans for Muslim-Jewish-Christian trialogue. Kritzeck would be a good person to have with us at the time we're getting into all this so we could have the paper on the Muslim understanding of the land.

Dodds: Probably it would be better to delay getting into topics that brush on the political, and to continue some of the lines of investigation that have been opened so far in the two meetings of this committee. I would suggest that in addition to the Muslim theology we might keep in mind the Oriental Christians and particularly the Armenians.

Swidler: I wonder if there isn't something else we could learn in a very basic way by having Muslim theologians speak to us not only about the Muslim view of the land but also the relationship between Islam and the other two great religions. It might tell us a great deal about how Jews feel about us. We Christians have taken the position that we have fulfilled the Jews. The Moslems feel they have fulfilled both of us.

Littell: I think we agree that we're going to do it. The only question is whether we have worked together long enough and established enough common language to do this now.

de Corneille: I was a little disappointed that we did not go more deeply into the Holocaust today. We got on to the subject of the land and we have really not done much homework on the subject. It seems to me that the theological meanings and implications of Holocaust are just as important as crucifixion is, and without dealing with the crucifixion adequately you don't understand the implications of resurrection. I can see that there may be a value in having an Eastern Christian involved at this point to interject still another point of view, but if you put that much load into the truck it seems to overload it a bit.

Harter: I'd agree fully with the need really to grapple with the Holocaust first. I think we've said a number of times that if the Holocaust is above all the foremost concern in Jewish thinking and their attitudes towards other things really flow from this, then we really need to grapple with several different perspectives on the Holocaust. I'd even be willing to move that we put off bringing in the Muslim concern until we can finish this task.

Hellwig: I'm not disagreeing with this at all. In fact, I am very much one with it, but I'm worried about that newsletter. It is telling people that we are considering the prejudice of another group without consulting them. Are we going to do anything to counter that? Out of just three points we list, we include it, so that it's no wonder that people are getting the impression this is a Zionist undertaking.

Littell: The reason it was stated that way was because of a certain mindset, I suppose, about the way Christendom and Ziondom look at the Jews and in practice treat them. The practical detail is that by some way or another the documents of the commission have found their way into the hands not just of fellow Christians who are highly critical of any such enterprise but also into the hands of official Muslim representatives. This seems to me rather a breach of confidentiality due to the kind of political alliance which some of our colleagues are engaged in these days. Therefore we are under political pressure to indicate that sometime in the immediate future we are going to do a real, wide open, no-holds-barred discussion or series of discussions on the Arab Christians and the Muslim dimension of this whole problematic. Why not? The only question I'm concerned about is whether the commission is prepared to bear the weight of that this soon. I think perhaps in view of the sense of urgency that Dr. Monika and some others of us have aobut it, we would do well now to agree that next spring, in the meeting after the next one, we will concentrate on the problematic of the land, get a good Muslim scholar to talk about it and get a good OT scholar to talk about it. Markus' colleague has been working away at this at our earlier request anyway. We could use that as the instrument for breaking open in a scholarly and irenic way into a larger circle of dialogue.

Swidler: Just looking at the topics in the newsletter as an English teacher, Number 2 is the genus, "Our Responsibility for the Holocaust." "The Significance of the Hatred of Jews in Islam" is a subtitle under "Our Responsibility for the Holocaust." The Muslims didn't have anything to do with the Holocaust, as I read it, and they are going to resent that we have implied they did.

Littell: Let's keep the substantive issues separate from the agenda. We could argue for the next two hours as to the role of the Grand Mufti, the allies that Hitler had in the Muslim area, that Egypt and the Argentine and Spain were the three chief refuges for Nazi war criminals, the fact that there are over 600 of them on the Egyptians' payroll right now, chiefly in the propaganda ministry. The real question is how this scheme of topics happened to be set up

like this the way it was. It wasn't done by a meeting of the commission; it was done by a meeting of the executive committee. The notes are mine and I'm responsible for them. The intention of it, however it's stated, was to try to get before the thinking of Christian colleagues who would cooperate with us the problem of hatred of the Jews during the last 30 years in terms of Christendom and Islam. We said from the beginning that at the point when we began to get in the Muslim dimension we wanted to get in Arab Christians and we wanted to bring in our colleagues from the International Committee to present the positions of the Committee. So let's decide how we are going to handle the work of the commission. Shall we set the spring meeting and line up papers fairly to all concerned? We can't do anything about that newsletter now. All that we can do is prove that we are fairer than words originally issued implied.

Handy: You are suggesting that the newsletter to be released would include the agenda for both the fall and spring meetings?

Littell: Right. That would clarify to everybody that we are going to expand our concern. If we are going to ask for a serious paper on the subject which Father Vincent suggested, we're going to have to ask somebody with time enough in advance to do it solidly. Thus we would announce the primary papers and the subjects under them for the fall and spring meetings.

Ware: I have to say a word about this newsletter. It goes only to this commission and to those persons who said they were interested in the study. I think Monika's point is well taken. There has been very strong objection from several persons who received this. If this announcement of the purposes of the next two meetings needs to reach the community that's concerned about Arab interests, it won't reach them through the newsletter.

Littell: It was a matter of some shock to me to receive a letter from the head of the Muslim community in New York City, using the documents of this commission to ask us what we thought we were doing. I had assumed we were working within the fellowship of the Christian Church initially. Now with the political realism forced upon me, I will assume that even the house organs which we share with colleagues in other agencies and denominations are nevertheless overt and not part of the disciplina arcana. We are not talking about any public announcement. We are simply talking about the realities of the fact. The committee has resisted the effort to politicize it by enlarging its membership to include overt spokesmen for the Arab cause, but we are going to progress as a scientific theological group to handle as objectively as possible as many responsible voices and opinions as we can get. With this understanding can we have an agreement that the meeting after next will devote itself to enlarging the dialogue to include a paper on the Muslim theology of the land, and that the fall meeting will devote itself to deepening a bit our dialogue in the present group.

Ware: I have the names of three persons with respectable academic backgrounds that some would like to see incorporated into the working party. I must report how this group feels about expanding its membership. The names submitted are Dr. John Marks from Princeton, Dr. Sibley Towner from Yale Divinity School, and Dr. Willard Oxtoby from Yale.

Eckardt: We resisted before the politicizing of the committee from within. Now we are falling prey to the politicizing of the committee from without. This is a form of schizophrenia that I don't want to live with.

Littell: I resist entirely the thought that this commission of ten worthy Catholic and ten worthy Protestant theologians has to add anybody. We are not functioning for political reasons. We are functioning as theologians. If anyone wants to come out in public and say that this is not a competent group of theologians or that the chairman is not a competent church historian, let them do so.

However, I do think that we need to give some wise and statesmanlike thought to the fact that we are dealing with subject matter which is often of interest to a lot of people who are naturally and quite properly concerned. Therefore I wouldn't want Sister Ann to have to go back to the office and say, "The working party on Israel: People, Land, State has decided for the next three years that they will not deal with the views or concerns of Arab Christians and Muslims in the same territory. That would be unfair. We've got a commission. We are not going to enlarge the personnel but we are going to proceed in a scholarly and responsible fashion to have a widening dialogue. The only question is how fast we can widen it.

de Corneille: I don't know what "widening the dialogue" means. This committee is a study group, not a dialogue group. Let us submit an agenda of topics that this group intends logically to follow.

Lindbeck: In view of the fact that two of the names mentioned were from Yale, it might be appropriate if I were to comment. I had no idea that these names had been suggested and I have no idea who suggested them but as far as the two Yale names are concerned, I would say they are very responsible suggestions. Both of these men have been publicly and politically identified at the time of the Six Day War with the plight of the Palestinian refugees. Both of them would fit into this group perfectly. I would be willing to withdraw right now and hand over my spot to either of them simply because there would be no more tension that they would create and no greater diversity of viewpoint on theological issues that they would introduce than already exists in the group. They would be able to limit themselves to the theological job and not bring in extra political considerations.

Littell: But they have not been proposed for theological reasons. They are proposed because someone said we don't have a group of theologians but of politicians.

Lindbeck: I am inclined to agree with you in your conclusion. I just wanted to say these things about these particular names because I think it worth while to have some kind of notion about the kind of names being proposed.

Harter: Within this framework if we say that we're going to talk about the land in the spring and the Holocaust in the fall, then we can bring in a Muslim view of the land into that discussion that satisfies Roland's worry.

de Corneille: There's never going to be any satisfaction unless you win the point that this is a study group working on the problem in a non-political way.

Swidler: I want to make one last plea for having some input of Muslim theology early rather than late. We are terribly ignorant of the whole Islamic world. I have one colleague at Temple who is a Muslim scholar, and it's a massive world. They've done a lot of theology, they have some pretty deep thinkers and some people with real religious commitments. It seems to me that if we get at least an inkling of them early on, it would be helpful for us.

Littell: If we use the rubric, the land, this is a controlled enough situation that we're not blowing the whole thing open right away. We will have a paper on Muslim theology and understanding of the land, a paper on land in the OT and the thought of the Jews, and a paper on the Christian understanding of the land. If we have three first-class papers and discuss them, we've got a day's work for the spring meeting. Now what will we do in the fall? Do we have enough material or do we need more material? We obviously have a good paper here which was called to our attention--the latest article in The Christian Century by Fackenheim. It would be good to feed that in. I don't think we want to go back just to the stuff we've got. We want to make some progress.

Hellwig: We haven't begun to discuss Rijk's paper.

Flannery: The Orthodox Jewish position has been ignored. I don't see how we can discuss the Jewish position on the Holocaust and ignore what traditional Judaism thinks about it.

Littell: We have the Rijk paper, the Fackenheim article, the suggestion of an Orthodox Jewish scholar on the Holocaust.

Harter: Could we supplement with a couple of Rubenstein references and a couple of Wiesel references?

de Corneille: I would like to suggest that there should be papers presented which probably the American Jewish Committee might provide on the extension of the Holocaust, namely, the condition and situation of Jewish refugees from the Holocaust and their problem at the end of World War II. Also we need a paper on the plight of the Jews since the Holocaust, which is in a sense a reaction to the Holocaust. I think that the appearance of as many Jews as came from Europe into the Middle East caused in turn certain reactions of Arab prejudice against the Jews. So the Holocaust again comes under your heading, not only the implications of the mufti and of Arab governments in terms of the carrying on of the Nazi policy and the extension of Nazism, but also the question of the plight of the Jews as an indirect consequence of the Holocaust, the plight of the Jews who were in camps. In North America what doors were opened, what doors were closed to Jews after the Holocaust. There are some aspects which are very closely connected with the Holocaust. There is the slaughter. There is the aftermath of the slaughter.

Flannery: That's very complicating, though. The Holocaust is an enormous subject and we have a job getting through it.

Littell: If it is as important as we say, why do our Catholic and Protestant seminaries not have an annual seminar on the subject. The truth is that it's a neglected subject even in intellectual circles, let alone the churches.

Martin: I wish we could have in the morning one lecture by an outsider, by a man who is extremely competent in the field we are treating. He would give us a bibliography and we would have time to prepare for discussion. Then in the afternoon we could have a discussion which would be a bit structured.

Hellwig: Could we define the theological questions about the Holocaust that we want to ask?

Littell: We have noted a number of them, if I can quickly mention them. One is the problem of being forced back on the dependence of Heilsgeschichte language and conceptualization which raises the whole problem of translation. The problem of the language, the recourse to the authority of the Bible, the way we deal with this whole problematic and therefore the whole problem of translation, intelligibility for those who don't agree on internal symbols. The second major question is the question of silence, which came out so clearly in Dawidowicz and Fackenheim and the younger theologians today. Then there's the big question that we keep coming back to every hour on the hour about true universalism and false universalism. Is there a way to reconcile Jewish particularity and Christian particularity with universal humanism? This has come up every session. We've got at least ten major questions related to the problematic raised by the Church struggle and Holocaust. I wonder if you are prepared to trust the secretariat, not the chairman, to go through the notes and to have a fall meeting in which we raise up some of the basic theological questions which have arisen out of our beginning discussion of Holocaust.

Flannery: I think today's meeting where we had papers read in advance gave a lot more time for discussion than a meeting where we bring in a couple of scholars.

Littell: We will try to get papers in advance. I think if we're going to have a Muslim scholar write a serious paper for us on the theology of the land as he understands it, he ought to be here to defend his thesis. But he doesn't have to read it in the meeting. He can summarize it.

Lindbeck: May I make a procedural proposal? I was in a meeting recently where we had all written short papers and we had all read each other's papers in advance. The papers themselves qua papers weren't discussed. But I have never in my life been in a group who didn't know each other previously in which discussion has gone as fast and as far. It seems to me that our discussions would be enormously facilitated if we tried this.

Littell: You've all heard the proposal and I am sure recognize the implications. Are you prepared to tax yourselves accordingly? I don't hear anybody objecting. Now we have the basic themes for our fall meeting. We have the procedure for the fall meeting. We have the basic theme for the spring meeting. Who is going to give us the Muslim view of the land?

Swidler: Isma'il al Faruqi?

Littell: He can do it as well as anybody I know.

de Corneille: It seems to me that the Christian struggling with his concepts of the people of God and superseding or not superseding is a terribly important issue, that is, the question of conversion and the Christian's attitude toward the people of God. We've done the land and the state, but we haven't done the people, so I think we should give that fairly high priority.

Littell: Don't you think in the Fall of '71 we could have a very good session on peoplehood which could deal with the particularity of the Christian Church and the Jewish people and universalism, for example? Do you want to do more on the topic or should we trust the staff?

Eckardt: We will be given a list of topics to which we can respond, is that right?

Littell: Yes. I've heard expressions of approval for the way we set up this meeting. Instead of a day and a half, it's cheaper for a diminishing budget if we do it in one day. Shall we settle on October 16, same plans, same place. The 16th is a Friday.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

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Minutes of Israel Study Meeting
Protestant Chapel, JFK Airport
October 16, 1970

CONFIDENTIAL

The meeting opened at 11:10 with the following present:
Participants: Roland de Corneille, Roy Eckardt, Edward Flannery, Robert Handy, William Harter, George Lindbeck, Franklin Littell, Vincent Martin, John Oesterreicher, John Pawlikowski, Coert Rylaarsdam, John Sheerin, Leonard Swidler
Observers: Bernhard Olson, Rose Thering
Staff: Kurtis Naylor, William Norgren, Ann Patrick Ware

Dr. Littell read Dr. Monika Hellwig's letter of resignation because of the press of duties, and the group accepted the resignation with regrets.

Discussion of the short papers produced by study commission members

Littell: I have before me papers by Coert Rylaarsdam, John Pawlikowski, George Lindbeck, Roy Eckardt and Robert Handy. Why don't we just proceed as colleagues and direct to Dr. Rylaarsdam any questions or comments which we wish to get into the minutes. Eberhard Bethge in lecturing on Bonhoeffer and the Church struggle and the Holocaust at the Wayne Conference in March made the same point that you made so tellingly too, that even Bonhoeffer, a saint to many of us, showed the common illness. And if he did, how much more, then, the rest of us?

Rylaarsdam: My real point in using Bonhoeffer was to draw attention to my fundamental question: Is it simply apostasy that develops anti-Semitism in the Christian tradition, or is it the Christian faith as it has been normatively stated throughout the centuries, beginning with the New Testament? What we must remember is that when we talk about ourselves as Christians and our understanding of the Jew in the light of this, we are talking the language of faith. This is what the Jew does, too, when he explains who he is, when he says that he is the heir of the promise to Abraham. Now the language of faith is inescapable and right, within the community, but when we begin to define the other in the language of faith, in the language of our faith, as though we could transpose that faith into the language of general intellectual categories, then, I think, this thing that I have called arrogance in my statement becomes inescapable. This becomes especially difficult with respect to Judaism because there the language of our faith takes a certain way, much farther than it would with Buddhism or some other religion. If we persist in defining the Jew out of our own testimony of faith about ourselves in which the Jew gets a corollary definition, we make a great mistake.

Littell: I accept and am grateful for your point, since I have been doting so much on apostasy and on the question of whether this is built-in trouble.

Pawlikowski: I want to reecho that point of being built in. Apostasy, as you use it, in terms of transforming Christianity into a culture-religion, has something to say to us, but we can't overlook the fact that there may be built-in elements right in

the Christian teaching. There may be a way in which it's not apostasy or heresy, but rather traditional Christian doctrine.

Too, if you read the articles by Jacob Neusner in the CCAR Journal and JES, he makes the point that many of the Church Fathers make, that Israel was rejected not over the question of whether Israel or Judaism was an ethnic religion and Christianity a universal religion. The point was precisely and clearly stated: Judaism was rejected because it failed to accept the Messiah, it killed the Messiah. I'm not saying that this automatically leads to a Holocaust--but opposition to Judaism and a negative image of Judaism is built into a large segment of what you might call orthodox Christian teaching.

Littell: Eckardt and Flannery have elaborated this point very adequately too in their classic volumes. In teaching patristics this semester I'm impressed again with the thought that the Church Fathers did such a beautiful job with stoicism, with the mysteries, and so forth, but they really failed on Judaism.

Harter: I would just push for something even stronger than the notion of apostasy. I would push for the notion of sheer daimonism, of so much evil directed against Jewishness. The neo-Platonic structure keeps us from taking the demonic seriously.

Swidler: I wonder if we might also be dealing here with something like we find in the Catholic-Protestant split later on. We have Protestants and Catholics, very close brothers, and division and competition, and this is part of the basis for the polarization between Protestants and Catholics. Isn't it something like that with Christians and Jews? It would be very easy for Christians to be nice to Buddhists because they're not that close and there is no real competition, but in the beginning Jews were competition for Christians, and surely that was the case until 312. There seems to be a lot of historical basis for anti-Semitism there. It's quite possible that if Constantine had conquered in the sign of the menorah, say, instead of the cross, Christians would have been in the minority and there would have been a history of 2000 years of anti-Christianism instead of anti-Semitism. Perhaps some of the lessons we've learned in the Catholic-Protestant dialogue of what it means to be brothers might overcome the difficulties and help us to get back to a common background.

Littell: This concept of transcendent particularity seems to me to be a critical issue, because liberal anti-Semitism doesn't go wrong on some hard-shelled hyper-orthodox statement that revelation has given out. As far as the Jews are concerned, liberal anti- Semitism goes wrong because it cannot accept the particularity of any single group.

Rylaarsdam: The particularity of the Jew and the particularity of the Christian which is orthodox, as over and against his apostasy, these two stand in tension with one another. Now the question that I have to face, raised in part at least by one of the other papers in our series this morning, is: Can we talk about the faith and witness and mission and vocation of the Jew without assuming that our mission, our vocation is stronger or clearer because we have Jesus Christ? Can we enter into dialogue with the particularity that makes the Jew conscious of his vocation and mission rather than having his vocation and mission interpreted by us through the light of our particularity? Because if we do it that way, then there never can be any dialogue between equals.

Littell: Liberal anti-Semitism doesn't understand Jewish particularity because it also doesn't understand Christian particularity, and therefore it's able to fall into Teutonism or Anglo-Saxonism or black ethnic racism, which is neither Christian nor Jewish.

Martin: One thing that is very significant is not only that Jewish uniqueness is unique, but that we speak in the language of faith, the Christian faith or the Jewish faith. The two things which are the most relevant for the Jew, whether

in Israel or in America, are the Holocaust and the State of Israel. If you analyze you see that these are the two instances in which the Jew can fully define himself in non-religious terms. Why is the Holocaust so central to Jewish consciousness today? Because to be a victim of Hitler is to be relevant, whether you are religious or non-religious, for religion had nothing whatsoever to do with being the object of the Holocaust. One could be an atheist, deny all one's religious past, even convert to Christianity and still be sent to the gas chamber. This is what has evoked this wide significance of the Holocaust in the Jewish soul today.

Rylaarsdam: The Jewish soul is not of one piece, that is, when Fackenheim ponders the Holocaust, he ponders it in terms of Jewish faith. You may find some secular Jew who ponders it entirely in terms of community activity. The interesting thing is that these two have never been separated. You do not set the natural over against the supernatural. Where there is Jewish faith there are also these dimensions of Jewish mission, of people, of cultural heritage, which for some Jews--or at least for the time being--are enough to keep them Jewish. It's impossible even in the Jewish community itself, let alone for an outsider, to begin to sort out where Jewish faith leaves off and Jewish communal secularity takes over. The thing that has surprised me so often over the years is that the thing which I take to be just a secular, cultural remnant suddenly becomes the seedbed for the recovery of Jewish faith.

de Corneille: Professor Littell, you raise the question of finding liberal Protestantism becoming the most energetic antagonist of what is called the State of Israel. Why is the State of Israel of all the states in the world uniquely set apart for such severe moral criticism? If we think, for instance, of the coming into existence of the State of Kenya, it meant the displacement of some white people out of the country. It meant tradedy for certain Indians who lived in Kenya, who have been thrown out literally and their possessions seized. When you think of the coming into existence of the State of Kashmir, Pakistan, the millions of people moved this way and that, and the world had no moral judgment--at least, Protestantism didn't make this a conscious concern. When it comes to the subject of Israel, there is something that is amazingly emotional here. Now, why the emotion? I would suggest, as has already been so well put forth, an envy. The liberal Protestant has found himself a non-biblical person. His view of the Bible leaves him without foundations. As he loses his biblical faith and knows that the people who are looking at him are saying, "Well, you don't believe the doctrines of Christianity any more," he begins to wonder who he is. He looks with envy at the Jew who seems to know what he is, not only in the spiritual realm but also on the physical plane. A Jew is a Jew. He was born a Jew. The liberal Protestant doesn't know who he is. Why is it that the Jewish nationalism is the only nationalism he can't abide? Why does it challenge his own existence as a Christian, his own lack of having something to which to hold?

Another thing that occurs to me is that Sigmund Freud (and this has been picked up by Father Fbannery and others and has been developed) pointed out that when the rigorist Christian hates Christ, his only way of finding a scapegoat is to blame it on the Jews. Could it be that some of the liberal Protestants, when they are confronted not consciously, sometimes unconsciously, with their rejection of Christ, find again a scapegoat in these Jews?

Littell: You've put your finger precisely on the origin of the Deutsche Christen. Can we turn to Dr. Lindbeck's paper, which is one of the powerful documents before us? Do you feel, as I do, that Rylaarsdam has carried the thing very helpfully a point further? You lean rather heavily on the concept of apostasy too. Would you agree with his point about the built-in problem?

Lindbeck: Very briefly I find it difficult to go with Rylaarsdam as I was understanding him. It seemed to me that he was suggesting that a Christianity faithful to the New Testament has ingredient within it the elements of anti-Semitism no matter what.

Littell: I think what he was saying was "as our fathers have interpreted it."

Lindbeck: All right. If we stress heavily, "as our fathers have interpreted it," then I agree.

Littell: We had better be clear on this point.

Rylaarsdam: Yes, it's very mutual. After I had read all the papers, the one that caused difficulty was Lindbeck's. One of the questions that I had raised was the possibility of dealing with the so-called anti-Semitic cast of the NT. I find it impossible to refer to the NT as definitive revelation if you mean that the contents of the NT, or some of the contents of the NT, stand above the conditioning of historicality in which all human works stand. In other words, what I mean by revelation, by the definitiveness of God in Jesus Christ, does not prevent me from finding it necessary to remember that the first testimony to this action of God was written in a conflict situation in which partisanship was very strong, and that what we have in the NT, not just in occasional phrases about the Jews but in the whole outlook, is a human defining of this action of God in the inescapably conditioned conflict context in which this had to take place. I think that just as we have learned to look at the literature of the Reformation period in a new way since Vatican II, so we must learn to look at the contents of the NT from cover to cover in the same way as we enter into dialogue with Judaism, not only the Judaism of the literature of the First Century but also the living Judaism that we experience in our own day. All our definitions of the event that we call Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the event to which the NT witnesses, will have to be restated in the light of who we are today, whom we encounter in the Jew today. I don't believe in expurgating the Fourth Gospel because in the last analysis you'd have to throw the whole thing away. But I do very seriously want to insist on the relativity of all statements that bear witness to our faith, and this would include the NT.

Lindbeck: What you seem to me to be saying, if I may reduce it to an overly neat and pat formula, is that to read the NT non-historically is to misunderstand it, and such a misunderstanding will inevitably have the seeds of anti-Semitism in it among other things. By reading it non-historically or ahistorically, one has to understand what we can know about the historical context.

Rylaarsdam: No, I don't mean that.

Lindbeck: You don't mean that?

Rylaarsdam: No.

Lindbeck: Well, we would need a lot of time . . .

Rylaarsdam: I mean that, but I also mean the emergence of the awareness of conditionedness that comes to us as our mutual two traditions, Jewish and Christian, unfold. We are always reading our NT in the light of our tradition, and I think as we come to this point in our tradition where we encounter the Jew and

where our conscience troubles us about our own account of the Jew, we are driven back to reexamine our tradition, beginning with the NT itself.

Littell: Professor Lindbeck is right. We're not going to be able to have this one in extenso. I would be grateful if we could agree on the statement of the problem. Is the problem the authority of Scripture or is the problem one of disagreement about the sitz-im-leben of the NT writers?

Lindbeck: I'm not going to answer your question except indirectly. My own thesis is that the problem lies in the nulla salus extra ecclesiam. Unless the election of the Church is understood as the election of witnesses, as a witnessing people and in this sense in continuity with Israel, you get a version of particularism and of the finality of Jesus Christ which has a kind of triumphalistic claim about it which gets us into irresolvable difficulties. Unless one has some understanding of the possibilities of salvation apart from explicit faith in Christ but nevertheless insists upon the necessity of this people as a witnessing people and the utter seriousness for those who are confronted with the call to be a part of this witnessing people to decide either for or against it . . .

Littell: What you are saying is that the problem lies not in the NT per se but in the use and interpretation which the Church makes of it.

Lindbeck: Yes, and from a biblical exegetical point of view, this issue of the Church defining itself as a witnessing people rather than as a vehicle of salvation for all men is the issue that I'm setting up. This issue is one which is not neatly settled in the NT.

Littell: You are less willing than Professor Rylaarsdam to take the scalpel to the text itself. Well, let's nail this down as one of the big questions.

Rylaarsdam: What I'm really saying is neither the NT nor you in your paper, though you manfully tried, really escape this charge of triumphalism. If the NT says there is salvation in "no other name" and if you tie this name to the historical Jesus, then not from the point of view of the language of faith but from the point of view of communication with a people of another faith, you are triumphalistic.

Lindbeck: Then the question becomes: Is it a legitimate exegetical point of view to interpret the "no other name" eschatologically?

Rylaarsdam: Yes, but that doesn't settle the question. As your paper very consistently says, then it would be true that though God may still have something to do for the Jews and though on occasion he may do it very well, if the Christian does what he has been asked to do, what the Christian does would be even better. If you begin with that as a priori, you cannot really enter into dialogue with the Jew.

Lindbeck: Can you define this in such a way as still to leave election? Because isn't the Jew, if he has a strong doctrine of election, confronted with exactly the same problem vis-à-vis the non-Jew?

Littell: I think, Coert, you're much stronger on Jewish particularism than you are on Christian particularism. Suppose you have a Christian who is very strong on Christian particularism, does this mean that he must of necessity be triumphalistic?

Rylaarsdam: This is what it has meant. Whether it must mean that is why we're here, I think.

Olson: I think that the issue of the relationship of the NT and anti-Semitism is a vital area. I tend to agree because of my research at Yale with Dr. Lindbeck,

inasmuch as the Yale research showed that there was very little relationship between the Scripture that was being utilized or expounded upon in lesson material and the image of the Jew as it emerged. We use the same Scripture but we approach it from different traditions and different understandings.

Flannery: I wonder if we aren't skirting what Roland has already referred to, the psychological problem. I certainly don't downplay the scriptural problem. I think something must be done. However, I do believe that if everything were done that could possibly be done--even expurgations--this would in no sense solve the problem. I believe it's a question of anti-Semitism first and we go on from there. This vitiates every discussion. Anti-Semitism has a certain autonomy of its own. It's been made independent of the Scriptures and every ideology too. So what Roland has said about liberal Protestants, I could say about right-wing Catholics. It's common to all. It even overflows the Church. Unbelievers are just as tainted.

Pawlowski: One brief comment on Dr. Lindbeck's paper. I think your point about the finality of Christian revelation is an important one. Something that has to be brought out here is an elaboration of how Christianity can take a stand against any other religion on the basis of its claim of having some kind of finality in its revelation in Jesus Christ. I would like to ask you sometime what sort of experiences you think might be revelatory. You seem to reject equating land and state as one. Is Christ a central unifying revelatory experience?

Littell: Historically we have said that Christian particularism supersedes Judaism, and now the Muslims say to us that Muslim particularism supersedes Christianity and the Jews. So we really have laid hold of an issue here that demands a good bit of meditation. What else do you see in these papers that must be highlighted?

Martin: I have an uneasiness in speaking about Jewish particularism and Christian particularism. I am uneasy about that because particularism derives from the covenant and the whole problem of the relationship of the covenant of Sinai and the covenant of Pentecost. I don't think there are two particularisms at all. The whole question is that the Jews put us out and we put them in.

Rylaarsdam: The Jew says, "You left."

Littell: But most of the baptized are not aware of any particularism, so you get this whole slide into ethnic religion which begins with the rejection of Jewish particularism, whether "in" or "out," then moves on to rejection of Christian particularism and ends up in tribalism.

Harter: Three very quick points on Lindbeck's article. First, p. 2 makes the statement, "The horror is that there is nothing intrinsically redemptive about any of these roles." I think we have to explore this question very seriously. I would quarrel with that. I think there are redemptive factors that can be ascertained in the Holocaust experience as in other typical Holocaust experiences of the Jewish people.

Secondly, on p. 3, "The premise that land and state are henceforth required for survival is an empirical and necessarily fallible judgment." I would say that this can be an article of faith and that the degree to which it is appropriately an article of faith for Christians is something that we should be discussing.

The third paragraph down says, "There is no basis in this period between the times for anticipating either return or no return, nor for expecting an Israeli state to be either better or worse than, e.g., a Maccabean kingdom." I personally would quarrel with this and would say that exactly because the Israeli state

falls in the tradition of such states as, among others, the Maccabean kingdom, there <u>are</u> grounds for expecting it to be better than other kingdoms, and what those grounds might be are worthy of exploration.

Eckardt: "Expecting" but not "demanding."

Harter: Yes, expecting but not demanding. I know he's trying to avoid that aspect but the pendulum might swing the other way.

Lindbeck: "Nothing intrinsically redemptive" was a way for me of making partial agreement with Fackenheim that to search for meaning in the Holocaust is blasphemous. I thought of myself as agreeing with Fackenheim when I said that.

In reference to the second point that you raised, I would be interested in knowing how it could be made an article of faith. I don't see any such way but I'm open to persuasion.

In reference to the third point, that of "expecting the Israeli state," if I were to write at length, I think I would want to modify that myself. "Expecting" is a rather ambiguous word in the context. If one views history as the period in which God is preparing man for the final consummation and he does so by preparatory, anticipatory signs, why couldn't these signs be, among other signs, Jewish signs? Why shouldn't one within the Judaeo-Christian perspective expect them to be? If this expectation is in fact not met, one counts this up, like Christian failures, to human sinfulness. I suppose really "expecting" means "not demanding."

de Corneille: You began with a prayer, or rather a quotation this morning, which links in with the thought of Maritain; that the people of Christ becomes the Christ of peoples. Perhaps Fackenheim is still walking on the road to Emmaus. Perhaps the Christian has the necessity of being able to look at the situation not as a Jew, and may see in fact the Holocaust as the Crucifixion, and see the survival of the Jewish people as the Resurrection with the new meanings that may come for all of us out of this experience of discovering what the immenseness of the Crucifixion means in our own day. This may be a sign to us.

Littell: What Fackenheim is really doing in his article, of course, is to oppose any cheap reckoning. Holocaust is already a resurrection-event in the minds of many Jewish people, the renewal of the whole cultural and spiritual energies of a people.

Oesterreicher: Two short points on Professor Lindbeck's paper. He mentioned the Church as witnessing people in continuity with Israel. I think he would have very little difficulty with that statement, with the exception of the Marcionites, whom he cannot for the moment, I think, exclude. But the big problem is: Are the Jews today separated from us, a witnessing people? Have these two witnesses functioned side by side?

Lindbeck: What would you say to that?

Oesterreicher: I'd say yes.

Lindbeck: I would too.

Oesterreicher: The second, can we expect that the Israeli state be any better or worse than the Maccabean kingdom? Let me say that I would say that it isn't any of our business to expect this or that. For me, this is not a question of faith. I would say that the Maccabean kingdom was rotten in many ways but it served a very good function. It saved Judaism. The Israeli state is at the moment far better than the Maccabean kingdom, and far better than many other

states or maybe even all other states (when you think that this state beset by all kinds of enemies did away with the death penalty). I think this is due to a religious leaven, whether they call themselves religious or not. If the Israeli state does nothing else but save the Jewish people or a part of the Jewish people, it will have fulfilled a wonderful function.

Littell: Let us turn to the Eckardt paper. Roy, I am a little troubled by the concept of Jewish normalcy. If you're dealing with a people who have a continuing purpose in God's providence, the term bothers me.

Eckardt: I've been groping my way lately in the direction of fulfilling some of my frustrated ambitions. I've always wanted to be a politician, so what I'm trying to do is politicize theology. If you take the expression "State of Israel," for example, I think our trouble as Christians is that we begin with "Israel" rather than with "State." This is bad. The reason it's bad is for the reason Sister Louis Gabrielle calls negative theology, that is, where the Jews were ostensibly expelled from the land this is a sign of divine punishment. Now we're in the situation, some of us at least, where we say that the fact that they have been allowed to return to the land is a sign of divine favor. Now to me, one is as bad as the other. We just can't discuss the State of Israel in theological categories. Maybe we can eventually work up to theology later on but I think we have to begin strictly at the political level and this is what I'm arguing, especially toward the end where I quote James Parkes. Whether the right of the Jews to live in Israel is a Christian or a secular matter is not important. The right of the Jews to live in Israel is an historical right. In that sense it's no different from the right of anybody else. I think that when Christians begin to say that it's a different kind of right, they're opening themselves to the possibility that if by some tragedy the State of Israel is destroyed, then this is a sign of divine disfavor, whereas it doesn't have to be a sign of divine disfavor at all. I'm worried, in other words, that negative theology and positive theology are simply opposite sides of the same coin, and that's why I'm worried about the new theology of Israel. The new theology of Israel has to be completely secularized or de-theologized.

Swidler: I second.

Flannery: Isn't it possible to consider the State of Israel from both perspectives as long as one keeps them separate? Theology should never substitute for politics but it's a sort of a meditation or rumination on another level on them.

Eckardt: That's good Thomistic doctrine, isn't it? We begin with the empirical level, establish something, then we can climb upstairs, so to speak, to the next story, which is the level of faith. And that's fine. I think we as Christians can celebrate Israel as a sovereign state, we can rejoice over it with the Jewish people, but this level of theological celebration cannot be used as an apologetic device in order to justify the existence of Israel.

Rylaarsdam: I think that as Christians we ought to be very slow in developing a theology of the State of Israel. I think that this is the thing that we ought to leave in the first instance to the Jew. The thing is that the Jew, when he develops a theology of the State of Israel, doesn't worry whether it is going to be better or worse than other states. This is because of his understanding of redemption and of God's work in the world. What he assumes is that it will be a microcosm of the whole world in its good and its evil. He always assumes that just as the world is not redeemed, so Israel is not redeemed. The moralizing that de Corneille spoke about so helpfully is the sort of thing that a Jew never indulges in when he talks of these things and from a very basic Jewish theological point of view.

One other thing, and that is whether there should be a Jewish state for the Jewish faith. Let's remember that no other faith is without a place. What Christians have made use of for nearly 2000 years is the fact that, of all faiths, Judaism is the one without a place. All faiths have some place, large or small, in terms of which their understanding of the meaning of existence under God, or whatever spirits they worship, is worked out socially, humanly, culturally, what have you. The one exception that we have had to that is the Jew.

de Corneille: I sympathize with Roy's point, which is backing up James Parkes' point that there is a position to argue against those Arabs who would maintain that the only reason for the existence of Israel is to placate Christian conscience in the West or that this is harking back to the biblical days. I think it is a most dangerous departure from Christianity, from all biblical tradition, to separate that which happens on the theological level and that which is spoken of on the political plane. Judaism sees no such dualism. Christianity cannot, must not see such dualism. It seems to me that we must as Christians look at what happens as a reflection of theological truths. It seems perfectly obvious, but let us remember that it was precisely this kind of dualism which led to such disastrous results in Germany.

Eckardt: Perhaps I didn't express myself rightly. This is not a dualistic position. It's a kind of architectonic position where one begins at the level of politics and goes up to faith rather than the reverse. It's the reverse of that that has me worried. I would simply have to deny categorically that I have fallen into dualism.

Flannery: This is not a defense of dualism, but don't believe that Jews have not fallen into it. It is built in, so that one group will argue the politics of Israel, while others, the believing Jews, will speculate that this is the will of God. I perhaps expressed myself badly too. I say that the theological should never be the substitute for the political. I don't say that they never meld.

At this point the participants listened to a tape prepared for this meeting by Professor Lucy Dawidowicz of Stern College, Yeshiva University. A transcript of her remarks is attached as Appendix A. Discussion resumed after luncheon, with Dr. Leonard Swidler presiding at Dr. Littell's request.

Discussion of the Dutch Reformed Church Statement

de Corneille: Concerning the paper from Holland, I wonder if there isn't a fundamental thing to be discussed, namely, the biblical role in revelation. The statement presumes almost universally the acceptance of the more usual exegetical approach to scripture, and if we want to work within that framework, that would be of interest. If we don't work within that framework, then there will be a great deal of confusion.

Flannery: Perhaps it would be possible to work outside of it but to make it known that one is so doing.

Eckardt: Well, the very first sentence can be accepted by even such a political animal as myself, that is to say, the motivation behind my concern with that state rather than with some other state, or with the Jews rather than with some other people, is a Christian motivation throughout, and it can be summarized in this very first sentence. But we have to make a careful distinction between

what our motivation is in being concerned and the mundane realm of strategy, the language we use, and so on. By distinguishing between motivation and operation we can accept this line of reasoning, while not necessarily accepting the biblicism.

Oesterreicher: The biblical people of Israel is not what we often call the ancient Israel, that is, the Jewish people as a whole.

Eckardt: No, but Israel still exists in that sense too, doesn't it?

Flannery: I think that our Christian faith is somehow intrinsically involved in this discussion. If we want to adopt a rationalistic or universalistic approach to Israel, the more we would be cutting our foundations. Now one could be, I presume, a Christian and say, "I'm a committed Christian. Nevertheless I believe that our beginnings were quite mythological." But if our beginnings were not mythological, then neither were the Jewish beginnings either. There is a direct tie between Jewish beginnings and the biblical people. Most mean by that, until the year 70. And so the connection between the biblical Israel and the Church is very tight. I assume our connection with our beginnings is tight or loose as one makes it, but it does exist. So I think that through a very direct causation we are involved with what we think about Israel as a biblical people.

Rylaarsdam: One thing that impressed me very much about this paper is, when it talks about the Jewish people, both ancient and subsequently, it talks about their alienation. Now this puts in a more mellifluous way what Christianity has always said about Jews: they were given the covenant by God but didn't fully stay with it.

de Corneille: Does Professor Rylaarsdam see this as also true of the mystery of the Church?

Rylaarsdam: I wasn't going to land hard on the paper for this. I was going to point out that this is precisely what Israel, the community of faith, has always said about itself. And not only in the Old Testament, as Christians report their having recognized it, but throughout their history. This underlies the point made earlier about Israel being not yet redeemed and the world being not yet redeemed. On the whole I find that this is something which Christians historically will admit but they will point to Jesus Christ and say, "Of course, there is no question about it." In the case of Judaism, you don't have that kind of surrogate. It is important for us as Christians to become clear about what the Jew himself means about his alienation from God as a way of correcting some of the historical Christian ways of interpreting this. I am perfectly willing to accept, as this paper says, that Christians are alienated, but Christians <u>in Christ</u> are not alienated. This to the Jew, of course, is an escape; to the Christian it is salvation.

Olson: Where in the paper does it say that Christians in Christ are not alienated?

Rylaarsdam: I don't think it thought it necessary to say it.

de Corneille: It does say Jesus Christ becomes a point of fulfillment in obedience as over against where Judaism is non-obedient. The paper does beautifully say elsewhere that the Church has also been alienated and sinful, but, as you say, there is a difference qualitatively in ultimate terms.

Harter: Could there not be a comparison, that Judaism looks to Yahweh while the Church looks to Jesus?

Rylaarsdam: Yes, but Judaism doesn't have a doctrine of salvation. Professor Werblowsky last year came to my class to speak on certain aspects of Judaism. The first thing that he said to the class that disarmed them all was, "If you think that I am here to tell you about Jewish salvation, I must warn you. We Jews don't have salvation. Christians say they have salvation. We don't have it, but we do know a lot about the will of God."

Lindbeck: May I suggest we look at #39 and #40? I personally react to these as a beautifully balanced way of avoiding the Christian triumphalism at which you are pointing.

Rylaarsdam: Yes, I like this paper very much but it does not completely overcome this triumphalism.

Harter: Both #39 and # 40 perhaps err not taking seriously enough the Talmud and succeeding realms of Jewish experience mitigating the alienation and being vehicles of revelation and grace of God. I think it would give many Christians who are looking for a way to say, "We are better than the Jews," a lot of very sophisticated acceptable theological backing for their stance.

Lindbeck: I would really like specification on that.

Rylaarsdam: Read a sentence from #39, the second sentence: "Up till now the church has not made good her destiny any more than has the Jewish people." Now the point is, the Church does have that by which the destiny can be made good. It's precisely at this point that you have Jesus Christ again as the final test. From a Christian point of view, speaking out of faith, I don't see how you could see it any differently. But we've got to be very much aware that from a Jewish point of view this is begging the question.

Harter: And #35 falls into the classic critique of Jewish legalism, about interpreting the law as legalism rather than the law as a vehicle of grace.

Littell: I keep coming back to the thought, is there any denominational convention or assembly in the United States that could come up with a thing like this? What use can we make of this statement? Shall we go paragraph by paragraph, which will take us at least two sessions? Or shall we ask ourselves, would it be possible for this commission or for two or three members of it to draw up something comparable for discussion to debate among our churches to see if we can't get started in this land the kind of exercise that this paper represents?

Oesterreicher: Is this a realistic proposal of yours? Do you think there is any church group, non-Roman or Roman, that would come forth with a similar statement?

Littell: What I'm asking is, could we have, say, three members of this commission prepare for later consideration by the commission a statement of this comprehensiveness which could then be passed on to church judicatories, to seminaries which have written that they want to cooperate with us, etc. and see if then we can start a process going which would be edifying to the churches?

Rylaarsdam: I think we must remember that what we have here is an officially accepted document of the national church. Behind this document there lies a long history of discussion.

de Corneille: Must Americans always "americanize" what comes before they can call it their own? I wonder if this paper as it is doesn't stand as a basis for discussion and study.

Secondly, another question raised in my mind is, because it is so thoroughly thought through, is it not, in fact, the kind of thing that this group needs to go through somehow? Perhaps only some of our members go through it, perhaps all of us.

(Long discussion followed about whether the group should circulate the paper.)

Eckardt: Would the mailing come with the specific identification of this committee? If so, I think I would object for two reasons: I'm not familiar enough with the paper to know whether I want to lend my name even to passing it along. It may be the most wonderful thing that was ever written, but on the other hand, there are some things in here that I think some members of this committee would have some worry about. I select just out of context the beginning of #30. Does this

committee want to say--it's not just a question of americanization; I think it's a question of christianization, if you will, and of theological position--do we want to associate ourselves at this stage of our life as a study group with such a statement as "In Jesus Christ God has come to Jews and non-Jews in a way which cannot be surpassed. In him the final decision is made.... The Jews did not let themselves be called back by their Messiah to their true identity as God's people"? I think there are people on this committee that would have some serious trouble with this.

Olson: I have a practical question arising out of experience of dialogue with Jews which pertains to #47, the location and the ambiguity of the state. In reading you find that usually the objections to Israel are its exclusivism and, secondly, its militarism and its administration of justice. When you ask American Jews about these objections offered by the New Left, especially about Jewish militarism (the Jews have learned their lesson well from the Nazis, etc.), they immediately will say, "Why do you expect more from the state of Israel than you do from other nations? These things are being done by other nations, even by our own country. Why do you expect more from Israel than from the ordinary secular state?"

Flannery: I find that #47 as a sort of Christian "lecturing" to the state of Israel, and I think it's also triumphalistic. There's a case that can be made for the State of Israel as perhaps one of the best in the world today, despite its militarism and other things it is accused of, its aid to African nations, its lack of capital punishment. So I think we ought to challenge the very facts of the matter first. I think at least secretly we do expect more of Israel. It's perhaps the completely secularized Jew who wants you to accept Israel purely like another nation, e.g., Biafra. But we see with the eyes of faith that this is a prophetic nation. Now you'll find Jews that do this much more than we do, Magnus and Buber and others, and it's perhaps their job.

Rylaarsdam: I agree. The thing, I think, that you have to tell not only the New Left but anybody that raises this question is that if there were no militarism in Israel, there would be no Israel. We've had this two or three times today. Israel is always a miniature of the world as a whole. In terms of its physical, historical, natural existence it never ceases to mirror the human situation. It isn't just Israel but the world that is in brokenness and ambiguity. This is the Jewish understanding of the form of the Jewish nation. Israel will not be redeemed until the world is redeemed. And by being redeemed you mean an end to militarism, among other things. Christians are funny this way. Christians will lecture about the superiority of America as over against godless Communism or Lord knows what, and they will do it in terms of how we treat the poor or how we have the better system of justice (which is probably debatable). But as to the evils of the American scene, "Christians aren't strong enough to do anything about those things," we say. We always want it both ways. As far as the Jew is concerned, he is always a part of the completeness and the wickedness of the whole world, even though he is called to witness to the need of that world for redemption and simultaneously to his own redemption.

Swidler: It seems to me that the tendency for idealistic persons is to expect a great deal of their own. For instance, I think there are lots of Christians who are highly critical of the U.S. We feel desperately disappointed when we see all that is going on in the U.S. at present that is not really living up to our ideals. The same sort of thing happens with Israel. There are a lot of Americans who identify with Israel as being western and Jewish vis-à-vis the Arab Muslims, and the tendency, therefore, is to expect more.

Harter: As Father Flannery was saying, the lecturing tone is what I think we could push a little more because that applies not only to this paragraph but to numerous portions of this statement. There is a kind of aura of presumption here which is perhaps inevitable in a statement made by a national church. We are Americans, not Israelis; we are Christians, not Jews. This is the problem when we adopt this tone.

Swidler: We identify with Israel here. We say, "special vocation for Israel" and we identify as the inheritors of that vocation.

Olson: I think that point is well taken, but in any writing up of these same points points we could be aware of this danger, and yet make explicit the theological assumptions. As in #48 where they talk about military power: "It is true that the so-called christian states also have frequently succumbed to this temptation," "that is, militarism. "But this is exactly the point, namely, that in this way Israel is in danger of becoming a people like all other peoples, not worse and not better. Such a collective assimilation would be a denial of its true nature." Now we could re-state this and consider the fact that perhaps some Jews do look upon the state of Israel this way, through the eyes of the election of God. Nonetheless what I see missing here is a true illumination of our own situation as Christians, who are both members of the Christian Church and citizens of other nations.

Eckardt: It seems to me that this very section reflects an almost incredible confusion of theology and politics. May I say in all jumility--I mean without any humility--that if these people would listen to the distinction that a couple of us tried to make this morning they would never have got into this impossible situation, that is, that a responsible theological comparison can be made between Israel and Christian countries. But a responsible political comparison can never be made at that level. It has to be made between Israel and Egypt. When one confuses theology and politics, as these people do, he ends up by introducing something that is completely irrelevant, namely, the behavior of the Christian states. The really relevant behavior is the behavior of the Soviet Union and Egypt in the missiles, for example, that they have west of the Suez Canal.

Martin: The only difficult problem is not even mentioned, the right of the Palestinians to a national home. They ignore the question completely.

Rylaarsdam: I don't think that's what this paper is about. It isn't a political paper in that sense.

Martin: No, but it has to do with the ownership of the land in religious terms.

Rylaarsdam: But the land of Palestine, the land of the Palestinian people, was taken away from them by the United Nations, not by Israel.

Martin: But can you talk about the theology of the land without dealing with the right of ownership?

Littell: Next spring we are going to spend our whole session on the problems involving the Palestinian homeland, the Moslem and Christian and other conceptualizations of it, and how that fits into the Jewish homeland. Probably we shouldn't now get into a discussion of the land.

Pawlikowski: The final paragraph, #55, says, "Our starting point is the way of Jesus Christ, who is not yet recognized by Israel as a whole as the fulfillment of its destiny." I think that might be Romans 9-11 and good biblical theology, but not good biblical theology for our day. I think we need to go beyond that. Ultimately I think it's saying, in Jesus Christ there is all that is necessary for salvation. It doesn't really say that the Jewish people have something unique to contribute to Christianity which Christianity may in fact lack. The problem in my mind not only with Judaism but with other world religions is, do they have something to say to us, to give us, which may not be within Christianity, which is essential to salvation.

Martin: Isn't Christ a perfect Jew?
Flannery: Jews don't think so.
Rylaarsdam: Christ is a human confession. This is just waving the Christian flag.
Oesterreicher: I am rather unhappy with general statements that are being made all along. This is due to new Platonism. It is an assertion without the least scientific proof. Are world religions able to give something to Christianity? A priori I am perfectly willing to accept this, but what does it mean? I think we are in the danger of the post-ecumenical age, that we will get rid of all the old cliches--that we will have new cliches.
Flannery: On Page 7, #28, the first sentence under the title "The Church" reads: "The Jewish people as a whole did not accept the recall out of their alienation which their Messiah had urged." Left by itself I would find that completely unacceptable; integrated it's perhaps a little better. Something quite opposite should be incorporated: to the effect that Christianity was the flower of one of the best parts of Judaism. The point can be made quite strongly, I think, that Jesus was a product of Phariseeism and rabbinism, and without them as his predecessors he couldn't have existed. This is quite the opposite of Jesus coming out of their alienation to call them out of it, as if he came from somewhere else to call them out of alienation. I think the point should be made that he came out of their finest flower. Christianity is rooted so deeply in Judaism and in a certain phase of it that Christianity was impossible without it.
de Corneille: When one takes a theological approach, one must come to see Israel in a special way, not quite like all of the nations. Then we get into trouble. Either we do see Jews in a special way or we don't. The value of this paper is that it comes at it from an unqualified Christian approach, and we feel uncomfortable with it. Those of us who have been thinking about the subject and have been in dialogue with Jews see how horrible the language sounds and are very uncomfortable with it, and of course we want to modify and change it. But we had better ask ourselves: On what basis, as Msgr. Oesterreicher has pointed out, are we making these modifications? Just because it makes us more comfortable? Or have we some clear premise on which we make these changes?

At this point the agenda called for the planning of the Spring meeting. The conclusions of this discussion are recorded in Appendix B (attached): Actions of the Group.

Discussion of the Fackenheim paper

Littell: (Called attention to an article in Midstream June/July, 1970 on Holocaust) Let us look at the Fackenheim paper, which is an effort on the part of a Jewish philosopher-turned-theologian to interpret the Jewish experience of the last 40 years. Actually there are two papers by Fackenheim.
Rylaarsdam: The second article represents a considerable progression, I would say, from the initial statement. The first, "The Jewish Faith and the Holocaust" is his exposition of the meaninglessness of the event as such, and particularly the absence of any teleological significance. He says though this event is completely opaque, though the inscrutability of God is utterly dense, just humanly speaking, we must not let Hitler win posthumous victories. This is really only a human statement. It does not really grow out of an analysis of the situation. In the article, "How My Mind Has Changed," to use a metaphor we've already invoked in this discussion, he has moved to the resurrection, in a way. That is, he is affirming the resuscitation of a community that was, as it were, in death. This is where his association with the land has its pinnings.

Littell: There's one profound theological point that stands out in this article. "Once I held the mild view that Christian anti-Semitism was vanishing in the wake of Jewish-Christian dialogues which confined attention to what the two faiths have in common. I have now been forced into a more radical view: Anti-Semitism exists wherever it is held (or implied) that the 'Jewish people' is an anachronism which may survive, if at all, only on sufferance." One of the theological points we have swung back and forth on is whether there is, in fact, a continuing place in the providence of God (not in fact, but in truth) for the Jewish people. An ancient Christian resolution of this question was made. It was to say that the Jews existed only by sufferance since the full purposes of God were revealed in and through the Church. Are we prepared to agree as a commission with the Hervormde Kerk and with Fackenheim that there is a continuing providential purpose in the life and work of the Jewish people?

Rylaarsdam: There is still the further question, How do we deal with the distinction that develops between the statement of the Dutch Church and Fackenheim respecting the relationship of that commission and the vocation of the Christian? For the Dutch Church this continuing vocation of Israel is subsidiary to and finally subsumed under the vocation of the Church. It finally comes under Christ. Now this, obviously for Fackenheim, is not the case. How can we as Christians speak to Fackenheim respecting this non-subsidiary understanding, this non-derivative understanding of the Jewish vocation?

Littell: I read Professor Lindbeck as saying that until the fulness of time the Jewish people has a place of significance in God's providence.

Lindbeck: I suppose the way the position which I'm trying to represent and which I think the Dutch statement also represents, should be formulated, is that both witnesses are subsidiary to Christ. That obviously is a Christian way of doing it. But if a Jew is ever going to find any messianic significance in Christianity, he would have to interpret the Christian mission, granted the Church did have a mission, in terms of his understanding of the Messiah, just as we, if we're going to find significance in the Jewish understanding of the Messiah, have to interpret it in terms of our understanding of the Messiah. If you want to call this subsidiary, yes. It's a subsidiarity which is inevitable if you're going to be particularistic. And it's not condescending, because you are saying that the mission of Israel is necessary in God's plan and it's necessary for the very health of the Church, because only when the Church understands that it is--let me say it in an extreme form--a Jewish sect, is it the Church. It is the witness of Israel that keeps the Church somewhat faithful to its roots. That's scarcely being condescending.

Rylaarsdam: I once tried that out on a Jewish rabbi, and he said, "Well, I'd hate to think that my existence is simply a sign to keep the Christian on the right track."

Lindbeck: No, no. It's part of preparing the world for the coming of the kingdom, and quite apart from their role of keeping the Church faithful and being a challenge and critique to the Church, the Jewish people are also preparing the world for the coming kingdom. The Jewish witness is a genuinely messianic witness.

Rylaarsdam: All this was not in your paper. I rejoice at this. I still think we have to come to terms with what we mean by the finality of Christ as Christians. Whether we really can claim objectively--not within our circle of faith but objectively claim--that we are closer to the truth than the Jew because of Jesus Christ.

Swidler: We shouldn't identify ourselves with Christ. The Church and Christ are not the same. So you can't claim for us the virtue of Christ. You imply this.

You slide back and forth saying "we cannot claim that we are better because we have Christ." We don't have Christ. Christ is above us.

Rylaarsdam: Christ and Christians belong together, and when you talk about one, you're talking about the other.

Swidler: No, that's not true. Christ is like a genus and we're like a species. Christ surely, even in Christian doctrine, outstrips the Church, outstrips any manifestation of Christianity.

Lindbeck: And Judaism too, as far as that goes.

Pawlikowski: I wanted to ask you, when you said that Judaism's witness is necessary as a continual challenge to the Church till the end-time, about the more concrete areas in which this witness is important. What elements might there be present in Judaism that at the minimum have been underplayed in historic Christianity, or else are not present there at all? I think it's important to talk about historic Christianity. If you're familiar at all with the writings of Eckert, the German, he says the Christ concept is not Jewish at all. He says that it is a unique Christian contribution, perhaps the most profound historic contribution that Christianity as a religion has to make. It's not simply a takeover of the Jewish messianic notion. So that when we say that Christ is the finality, I think that the Christ concept represents something new. Is the Christ concept by itself sufficient for an understanding of what human salvation means? This is where we might be able to incorporate into Christianity some insights from Judaism or from some of the other world religions, this, in fact, is what the Vatican Council document on non-Christian religions does.

Olson: Apart from the question of Christology and the Messiah, it is my own view which I articulated at length in a rather extensive unpublished paper given early in 1968 (and it is essentially the position of George Lindbeck), that the Jews are a witness to the world of the one God. Israel's vocation has many facets which are hidden to Christians. Part of the vocation of Israel is to witness on God's behalf to the Church and to the churches as a corrective to the Church's continuous backsliding tendency to unfaithfulness, apostasy and so on. Take the debate that has taken place historically between Christian theologians and Jewish rabbinic theologians on the question of the nature of God. I truly believe historically that the Christian Church without the existence of Israel would today be tritheistic rather than monotheistic or trinitarian. The very existence of Jews and Judaism in conversation with Christians has certainly helped us to identify Marcionite tendencies, and above all the meaning of idolatry in its many manifestations in the life of a Christian.

Eckardt: There is a way to affirm particularity without falling into subsidiarity. Jesus Christ is the savior of the world. But to speak of Jesus Christ as the savior of the Jews, this is quite another proposition. A Messiah is not accepted unless he is expected. The world remains unredeemed, as Martin Buber teaches us. To say that the Jews should accept Jesus as Messiah is not only to ask them to go against their own national integrity and expectations but also to ask them to be blasphemous, because though we think in trinitarian terms and say that Christ is divine, for the Jews it is very bad for any man to be divine. I'm being very particularistic in my testimony but I'm not claiming that their point of view is somehow subsidiary to my point of view. We're really on the same level. We are two peoples within the one unfolding covenant, which finally and fortunately has come to the gentiles.

Harter: In relation to George's paper, in the second paragraph you have the sentence, "To be sure, it is essential to the church's identity to believe that because it knows Jesus as the Messiah, its witness can be (though scandalously often is not) fuller and clearer than that of Israel, but this does not mean that the latter's call to testify has been abrogated nor that a specifically Jewish witness is no longer needed." This is one sentence I have trouble with, because I think it bears in on exactly the questions we're discussing here. Do you hold to that absolutely or are you willing to entertain other alternatives?

Lindbeck: I suppose the general logic of this position (and here again the Dutch paper, as I read it, would be in agreement) is that it really won't be fuller and clearer until the wall of separation between Jew and gentile is broken down. I don't know how to take this Pauline business about the reunion and the regrafting and the final consummation. I insist that however one talks about it, though, one must talk about it eschatologically.

Harter: But of course we can talk in terms of realized eschatology.

Lindbeck: The Christian can agree with the Jew that we are awaiting the Messiah, and that we don't know completely and fully who the coming Messiah is by any means. But the logic of this position is that we do know that in the coming Messiah we will recognize--and I think the phrase is from Teilhard de Chardin--the lineaments of the Lord Jesus. It doesn't mean that we can project from the one who has come to some concrete, empirically verifiable notions of the one who will come; rather that in the messianic fulfillment we will recognize the one who has come. And that's not saying that we know more about the coming Messiah than the Jew does.

Harter: Would you be willing to grant the possibility that this statement could be rephrased to say that Israel's witness can be fuller and clearer than that of the Church?

Lindbeck: I expect that when Israel expects the coming Messiah, and the Church forgets that the Messiah is the one who is to come, as well as the one who has come, that under those circumstances you could well argue that the Jewish witness is fuller than the Church's.

Rylaarsdam: When the Messiah comes, will the Jew see in him the lineaments of Jesus Christ? Or will he see in him something of his story rather than the story of the Christian?

Lindbeck: Yes, yes.

Harter: When you use the word witness, do you mean witness to Jesus or witness to God?

Lindbeck: Jesus is the one through whom God has in an unsurpassable way revealed himself, interpreted himself, identified himself in history? It's witness to God.

Harter: Then I think we have room for developing something.

Rylaarsdam: We're coming closer.

Flannery: The question could be reversed. I've heard it as, "Will Christians recognize Christ in his second coming?" which gives a possibility of mediation here. Perhaps the one the Jew might accept the Church will too. There is a possible mediation here between the second coming and the first. Are they identical? Is it Christ in the skies coming with the same visage? Or was it that boy on the gallows, for example (referring to Elie Wiesel's selection read at the opening of the meeting)? Or would it be a greater Israel if it's going to be a collective thing, an age or an era? This would take a lot of revision of the Christian concept of eschatology.

I would like to tie this up with the question John asks, "What does Judaism do for us?" I think we've lost many things in the harsh severance from Judaism,

but principally our messianism, or theirs. The word "waiting" has been used several times. We wait, Jews work. Our idea of messianism is that we sit waiting. In fact, we have quite forgotten about it. The early Christians had the veni, domine Christe. We became privatists, rationalists, or supernaturalists (everything comes from above). We sit and we wait. As to changing or transforming the world, we have lost that point of view, which is quite Jewish. Chardin is getting it back. Possibly that's what we have to learn from the synagogue, to relearn our messianism as an act of transforming the present world and seeing if the kingdom of God will be the kingdom of this earth, transformed by us.

Lindbeck: I agree wholeheartedly with the general thrust of what you're saying, but I get a little bit uncombortable, because to say these things involves buying in on a whole systematic. We should remind ourselves that it's also possible to say things about the specifically Jewish mission without this rather revisionist systematic theology. May I refer to the Dutch paper again? In #37 it says: "Where a nation is in danger of sinking into racism or a national self-glorification, one of the first warning-signs is that the Jews are felt to be offensive." The fact of being a stumbling block is a very important witness. It makes the point which we are all aware of in #38, "It is often pointed out that in the struggle for justice and humaneness a remarkably large number of Jews is found." These are things one can say in a kind of concrete way that are evident to everyone or could be evident even if you don't buy in on a kind of elaborate systematic that we were operating with in the last few minutes.

Pawlikowski: I think that what George has said is true, but I don't think it anywhere near sufficient. Perhaps when we're dealing with a popular audience on the level of polity, or a group which wasn't ready to accept this revisionism, I could see this type of thing, and maybe we have to be ready to accept the Dutch Reformed statement in that light. It was directed not primarily to theologians but at the popular church. I was going to echo Ed very strongly at that point. You see, we've been talking about the Messiah. I think for the Jews there is no Messiah without a messianic kingdom; the two are intertwined. The Christian has tended to focus on the Messiah. What Ed brought out is that perhaps what we lost was the messianic kingdom. While in Jesus, the coming Messiah, we will definitely see elements of the one who has come, namely, Jesus of Nazareth, nonetheless in Judaism we will continue to see elements of the messianic kingdom.

de Corneille: This question is right at the heart of Christian-Jewish dialogue. I find it most exciting. One of the things that came to my mind in this discussion is that the one thing that is theological in the Jewish tradition is that at the end of time his Name shall be one, that all the world will acknowledge that his Name is one. This is its eschatological expectation. A link is seen between a Messiah, a messianic time and the messianic kingdom. The Jew is less concerned about the personality than he is about the kingdom and the time. Christians have pointed out that this is a materialistic and unspiritual attitude. Both Christian and Jew have their terminology as to what will be in the ultimate eschatological time. It seems to me important to say that they both do have an expectation, they both see an ultimate, and have an eschatological future. This is unique to Christianity and Judaism and in a very real sense binds them together. Now it can be that while I still, in my particularism, hold to a Christian concept of Christ as savior and while the Jew, in his separatism and his particularism, awaits the time when the Name shall be one, when he does come both of us will recognize something which we know, and perhaps both of us will have to learn that

we will recognize something of what the other sees in him too.

Olson: I find it helpful to remind myself that at the end of time with the coming of the Messiah not only God's own time but God's own terms will prevail, and not the terms that have been set by the Church or by the Christian. Too often in some types of Christian literature the coming of the Messiah is a kind of triumph of the Church over the Jew. The more biblical view is that in this coming God will triumph over both the Jew and Christian and indeed all mankind. It is this kind of perspective that helps to keep the Christian from making the doctrine of the second coming or of the end of the age something which vindicates the Church at the expense of the Jew.

Harter: I'm still back on George's point. I'd have to rephrase it as "gives witness which can be as full as and as clear as that of Israel" rather than "fuller and clearer."

Lindbeck: My revision would be to add a clause at the end of that sentence, saying, "But this does not mean that the latter's call to testify has been abrogated or that a specific Jewish witness is no longer needed, nor that the Jewish witness to the Messiah may not often be fuller than ours, i.e., the Christian witness."

Littell: We as mortals have to sign our names to our convictions, and I think the point that Roy made a long time ago, that we have to operate within finitude without making absolute claims for it, should be kept in mind too. I have a perfect right to bear testimony if anybody wants to listen as to what my convictions may be on any fundamental point, and I have only the obligation to listen to him. What we're trying to get at really is the situation in which Jewish faithful and Christian faithful will listen to and learn from each other. In the end even the form of words is in God's hands, as far as what is true is concerned.

Martin: I'm going back to my own experience. I was ten years in China, and really tried to become a Chinese for the sake of Christ. I won't go into details but I entered into the Chinese mind as very few foreigners have done. I was dreaming in Chinese. Constantly I could feel that as a Christian I could not break and burn incense. I could not share fully in many aspects of Chinese life because it was idolatry. Constantly I knew I could not be 100 per cent Chinese because it would be against my deep religious convictions.

I spent four years in Jerusalem. I went to the synagogue, I went to the university, I lived completely like an Israeli, and never once, never for five seconds, did I feel, "Stop, stop, you are a Christian." I cannot say that never in my life have I eaten pork, but I have no problem in <u>not</u> eating pork, no problem in observing the sabbath. No psychological problem at all. Now when I am with my Jewish friends, I say, "Please, don't feel that you have to come to Mass. I am too Jewish not to know how uncomfortable you would be." Temple Emeth has shabbat services in our chapel. Jews cannot bear a crucifix. Reform Jews do not mind having a shabbat service before a crucifix, but I, as a Jew, would suffer, I think. The reverse is not true. In my own experience I am constantly upset when we say Judaism and Christianity are like twin sisters, or twin brothers, or a blonde and a brunette. You pick the one you like. This is not at all my experience. I am 100 per cent a Jew, and I spend most of the summer studying St. Paul, and for St. Paul the Church is Israel. Take St. John, the vine and the branches: we are the branches, God is the trunk, and Christ is of the house of Israel. No Jew will ever accept that. Where do we have a specific Jewish witness which will never be Christian witness? We have a lot of things which are not in Judaism--no baptism, no Eucharist, no profession of the Word made flesh. But when you go beyond cultural relativism, when you go beyond culture and liturgy and tradition,

where do you get that element in Judaism which as a Christian I cannot accept?

Littell: A related question is: what is there in Christianity that you must have? A Christian must be a Jew. Even to define my historical existence I must take Israel seriously. But the Jew doesn't need me in the same way. Does Jewish eschatology need the Church? I'm quite clear that Christian eschatology needs Israel, but I am not clear as to why Jewish theologians need the Church.

Lindbeck: I was wondering whether these reflections of yours lead you to agree with the position that gentile Christians have no business in trying to persuade Jews to become Christians because that's God's job? In other words, when the Jews recognize Christ as the Messiah, it will have to be a Jewish Messiah; it can't be a Christian Messiah. So we have no business trying to convert Jews to Christianity. Is that one of the conclusions you draw from these observations?

Martin: That's another question. My personal attitude is never to preach Christ to an individual Jew. I preach Christ to the people of Israel. I see a corporate coming of them to the Church, not one by one. Today for a Jew to come, one by one, to the Church, he has to lose his Jewishness.

de Corneille: Every one of these emotional and experiential things of which Father speaks I would agree with personally. They are my own experiences too. I've been so often in synagogues and I feel the same as you do.

Pawlikowski: In one sense maybe we can say there's no value-meaning in the Holocaust, but there is meaning. It's hard to say there's value-meaning when any group suffers. You can't put the suffering of six million on a par with the suffering of a single man. Yet there has been a tradition in Christianity that there is some kind of meaning in suffering. I think there's a danger in saying, as both Fackenheim and Dawidowicz say, that the Holocaust was somehow that unique, and that there was no meaning in it. There was a rationale behind it. It wasn't an economic rationale, such as was in the mind of Stalin when he murdered the Russian peasants, but rather the idea of creating a new man, of building a new society. But modern man after Nietzsche has recognized that he has a demonic force within himself and he has lost the guidelines he needs to deal with it. What may emerge is another Holocaust. It's important to say that there is a kind of meaning in the Holocaust, because if we don't say that, we're liable not to take the kind of steps that will prevent it from happening again.

Littell: That's the reason why earlier I suggested that the whole crisis of religious language has come out of it. Even if it has no meaning except the "death of God," it has meaning. I would have to disagree with you as to the uniqueness of the Holocaust because I think that in Christian history, quite apart from Jewish history, the Holocaust is an absolutely unique catastrophic event. It may be the end of Christendom and perhaps of any possible integrity in Christian language or Christian life, except for people who still live back a hundred years ago. The Holocaust, if nothing else, created a major crisis in the whole credibility of the Christian enterprise. These people were murdered by the baptized. That's why I used apostasy originally, to make clear that the easy business of saying, "These were a bunch of neo-Germanic heathens," is not the answer. They were murdered by the baptized. This, then, seems to me to create the kind of crisis which means that the Holocaust is really unique. It's not like the white men slaughtering the Indians or the Turks slaughtering the Armenians.

Pawlikowski: There is a rationale. It is a different rationale from the white man's in slaughtering the Indian, i.e., territorial expansion or economic advantage. It's important to understand that reason, and not just say that the act was irrational.

Martin: To continue this question of apostasy. Take the 18th century, Voltaire and the Enlightenment. All these people were baptized, yet you cannot say that the spirit of the Enlightenment was a Christian spirit.

Littell: If they had set out to annihilate all the Jews in Europe, then they would have been the ones who precipitated this present crisis.

Martin: But baptized people can be converted to ideologies that are anti-Christian.

Littell: And they are apostate if they are.

Martin: Yes, but that is not Christianity.

Littell: What I'm saying is that Adolph Hitler's chancellor released a statement in 1943 that the Fuehrer was a Catholic and intended to remain a Catholic. Goering said in the Nuremberg tribunal, "I am an Evangelical Christian, and I haven't been very active at it, but we've always had the pastor in to baptize and to celebrate family festivals." I agree with Rylaarsdam's point, that I put too much weight on this concept, but I was just trying to get at the question of whether the Holocaust is not in fact a sort of major question mark over our whole enterprise.

Harter: Fackenheim gets into an idea which interests me in his article just before IV: "Still shrinking from such a listening [to Wiesel who claimed revelatory significance], I attempt to listen at least to those who survived. I hear in the very existence of each and every one a totally astonishing, albeit totally fragmentary, faithfulness and testimony: in him who stayed sane, to the sacredness of sanity; in him who chose life, to the sacredness of life; in him who raised Jewish children, to the sacredness of the survival of the Jewish people; in him who stayed with his God, to a sacred bond between God and Israel which even Satan himself did not break." I think that despite what he himself says here he is finding some meaning. The most ultimate satanic effort to destroy God's people did not succeed totally. I think this is fruitful for further pursuit as a possible source of meaning.

I would also add two corollaries worth developing along that line. First, that the so-called "life of reason" is a delusion. We may be meeting and recognizing that the power of the irrational, of the grossly irrational and unreasonable, is far greater than civilized persons are willing to grant. Secondly, I think there is meaning in a reverse way, as in the crisis in religious language. There is meaning in a reverse way in that we have managed so well to conceal it. As Kazin says, there is no place in many distinguished minds for this question.

Handy: I find that quite helpful. We're in danger now of attempting to answer statements of Rubenstein and Fackenheim and others like him. Mustn't we take this attempt to convey feeling with utmost seriousness, these existential statements revealing to us the depths of terror in the universe, the depths of satanism, the depths that are hidden in ourselves? One reason we find that difficult is that we hate to admit that that's there. Our task is to listen to that and not to try to negate it or answer it even, but to take it for what it is. In our work we must go on to make theological statements which have a rational component but which are beyond reason. They are faith statements, as George has been saying all day.

Swidler: Do you suppose that people like Fackenheim and Rubenstein are saying that when they look at the Holocaust they can't find any meaning that justifies such a massive suffering here? Who could? We would all say the same. But when we say we see meaning, it's like a dark cloud with a silver lining. There's an edge to every cloud, no matter how large it is, and so we can find results, messages post factum, but none of them come anywhere near justifying the event.

Littell: I think the main question is, What does the Holocaust have to say to Christians. The question for theologians is, Is this a major event in Church history? We had a vivid exchange between Elie Wiesel and Dick Rubenstein in which Rubenstein did his thing about being neo-pagan for the sake of his children, and Wiesel said, "No one talked that way in the concentration camps." I regard that as an exchange between Jewish persons which they have a right to engage in, but I don't have the right as a Christian, certainly as one carrying the guilt of Christendom, to say that I prefer Wiesel to Rubenstein or Rubenstein to Wiesel. What I have to ask is, What has this done to our people, to our credibility, to our language.

Lindbeck: Agreed. But do you really mean that? Do you really mean that it's possible not to react in some way from your perspective. Isn't it inevitable that the believing Christian will prefer Wiesel to Rubenstein?

Littell: I think my primary responsibility is to keep still, when talking about what the Holocaust means to Jews, and to ask what it means to me.

Lindbeck: If you mean this as the right way to proceed, yes, but otherwise it sounds curiously like the impossible dream of detached non-commitment.

Littell: No, not detached at all. There was an article in the Reconstructionist back about '46 or so, after the October statement of guilt, in which a rabbi said, "If these Christians really mean it, then some of them ought to join the Jewish people in the agony of recovering their identity and rebuilding." What he was saying to us is the same thing Fackenheim is saying to us, "You Christians better not take this too lightly, and for heaven's sake, don't come out with some easy answers, easy solutions, and fit it into your whole scheme of Providence." That's the reason why he's saying this is a great abyss of meaninglessness.

Eckardt: You speak of one way of identifying with the Jews. I think maybe one way we could say the Holocaust does have meaning for Christians is that since 1948, there has been a way in which we as Christians could,for the first time in history, identify fully with the Jews without giving up our Christian confession: by becoming Israelis. This doesn't mean that I'm going to go over and live in Israel, but at least theoretically or eschatologically this is an alternative that has been opened for us and because of the Holocaust.

Littell: One of the most impressive men I have ever met is Dr. Pillon who has done this.

Lindbeck: While we're being speculative, let's return to the Wiesel passage that was read this morning: under what circumstances is it possible for a Christian to say something like this? Maybe part of the meaning of the Holocaust is that here Jews are discovering that God is on the gallows, that they are discovering Jesus Christ, the Crucified One, not in the Christian form but in their form. Is there anything wrong with saying things like that, to ourselves at any rate?

Eckardt: That God is suffering?

Lindbeck: That the Holocaust is something like the crucifixion. This was being said earlier this morning. I'm just trying to make it a little more vivid.

Swidler: Can we do it so that it doesn't sound like the Christians are putting the Jews on the cross?

Eckardt: Following John Parkes' line of thought earlier this morning, I suppose one could say that just as the crucifixion was followed by the resurrection for us in personal terms, so the crucifixion of the community--that is, Parkes' distinction between the natural community and the person--so the crucifixion of the community was followed by the resurrection of the community now in Israel. That doesn't justify the crucifixion, any more than we would say that the crucifixion was good as such because it led to the resurrection, but yet the fact that the crucifixion

was followed by the resurrection does have meaning.

Flannery: Just to add a realistic perspective to this discussion, there seems to be a consensus emerging between Dr. Lindbeck and Roy and Roland who say, "Can't we talk about crucifixion and resurrection of the Jewish people, and therefore see it in Christian categories?" I think so too. This is for Christians to think out. But I wonder if this isn't talking in a vacuum. I'm very impressed by the fact that the vast, vast majority of Christians have not the slightest interest in the Holocaust. Most don't or couldn't define it. In fact I find a resistence to discussing it. Just the fact that we, a handful of people in a large community, are aware that there was such a thing as a Holocaust shouldn't lead us to believe that we will have an impact, that we have a theology in the budding, and so on. I just add that word of caution, that we could get the idea that we have a full blown theology of the Holocaust, or that all Christians have a deep sense of guilt about the Holocaust and want to try to understand it and to do something about it. I don't find that anywhere except maybe right here and an odd other place in the world.

Littell: That simply illustrates how important the work of the commission is.

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9/71

MINUTES OF ISRAEL STUDY MEETING
PROTESTANT CHAPEL, JFK AIRPORT
APRIL 30, 1971

CONFIDENTIAL

The meeting opened at 11:10 a.m. with the following present:

Participants: Markus Barth, Roland de Corneille, Roy Eckardt, Edward Flannery, Robert Handy, William Harter, George Lindbeck, Franklin Littell, Vincent Martin, John Oesterreicher, Bernhard Olson, Donna Purdy, John Sheerin, Theodore Stylianopoulos. Leonard Swidler

Consultants: Hans Eberhard von Waldow

Guests: Harriet Littell, Josephine Casgrain

Staff: Kurtis Naylor, William Norgren, Ann Patrick Ware

Dr. Littell, Chairman, noted that regrets had been sent by Coert Rylaarsdam, John Pawlikowski and Walter Harrelson. He explained the absence of Dr. Nasrollah Fatemi, who, though scheduled to produce a paper for this meeting on "A Muslim Theology of the Land," was attending an international conference in Liberia.

Dr. von Waldow made some preliminary remarks about his paper: the impossibility of handling the scriptural evidence chronologically because of the difficulty of identifying the sources and of locating all the sources in the history. According to his view, there was no Israel prior to the occupation of the land with any theology of the land. Everything which was said in the OT about the theological importance of the land was written after the occupation.

Oesterreicher: How is it possible that there was no Israel prior to the occupation of the land? Who occupied the land if there was no Israel?

von Waldow: Some tribes.

Oesterreicher: Did the tribes then form a confederation and become Israel?

von Waldow: No. I would say some Aramaic, semi-nomadic tribes living in the Sinai peninsula, in the East Jordanian area or in the south, or belonging to the Aramean people - these tribes invaded the arable lands peacefully in the change of culture from a semi-nomadic to an agricultural way of life, formed a confederation and became Israel.

Harter: How self-conscious was the conceiving of accommodation to Cannaanite religion?

von Waldow: I'm reminded of my own experience when I came to this country five years ago. I had lived in Brazil and Germany where we had the big meal at noon. In this country there was no choice; we just couldn't continue with the old ways in this society. However, the Israelites had two ways to proceed: either they could just adopt the Canaanite idea, God owns the land, and relate this to Yahweh, Yahweh owns the land;

or they could say, Yahweh is our traditional God, the God of our fathers, but as far as our life in the fields is concerned, we worship the other God. This would lead to a kind of polytheism, and this is what you find discussed in the Book of Hosea.

de Corneille: You gave a kind of preamble on your views about how the people got into the land, but that doesn't really affect your point here.

von Waldow: True, but I want to make clear why I do not start with the promise of the land. The idea of the promise of the land is not prior to the occupation. Rather, it comes later as an effect of theological reflection. The idea of the Promised Land is a result of the occupation.

Stylianopoulos: This seems to me to be a very important point. If promise comes after the fact, as an interpretation of the fact, this not only points up the gap between theology and history but also weakens the theological basis for making any new claims to the land.

von Waldow: The Israelites, I would say, believed "This land was given to us by Yahweh." The best way to express this kind of belief was to say that it was promised land.

Oesterreicher: A succession of events without interpretation is not yet history. Interpretation is a part of history. If Israel interpreted its history in the form of a promise given by Yahweh, this has validity.

von Waldow: The whole OT is presented under the category of promise and fulfillment.

Barth: How could they know it was given by God if God did not mean it was given by the promise and then fulfilled?

von Waldow: What was the religion of those semi-nomads before they occupied the land? It was called the religion of the god of the fathers, and one of the major elements of this religion was the desire to own arable lands and thinking, "We would like to own land like that" and "We would like to be a great people like that." Now this wish was fulfilled, and since all was attributed to Yahweh, the categories explained it.

Littell: Is the question of Israel's calling to be separated historically and textually from the question of the land? Are these simply bedouins who have no other sense of identity or existence from that of any other bedouin tribe? What do you do with Moses and Sinai and the covenant? Or is this a separate issue from the question of the land?

von Waldow: I said this is a beginning here. Everything is related. The idea of the land must be seen in relationship to the covenant. God gave the land to the people who had received the covenant, but you do not necessarily have to perceive the covenant in connection with Moses, or with Sinai. While the priestly code does associate it with Sinai, the Deuteronomistic literature does it with Horeb.

Littell: But if we are talking of texts and historical materials, my understanding was that the negative verbs in the Ten Commandments were among the oldest materials. But then you have a people who have a sense of chosenness, vocation, calling, covenant which it seems to me is dangerous to separate entirely from the issue of the land.

Barth: "That you live long in the land that the Lord gives you." That's in the Ten Commandments.

von Waldow: Yes, but this is interpretation. "You must not"--that is among the oldest material, but all the rest is interpretation. The first step to interpret the land theologically was done by adopting a Canaanite idea. Yahweh is the owner of the land. This idea was developed, and when you have the term nahalat--inheritance--then you have automatically the term ger. This is a person who does not belong to the tribe, who is a resident alien. The idea, Yahweh owns the land, was continued with the other idea, Israel is the resident alien on Yahweh's property. This establishes an indirect relation between Israel and the land. Israel does not own the land; she is just living there as a tenant.

What shows Israelite religion to have been superior and unique is that it was possible to introduce into this concept of Israel and the land the category of history. All of a sudden this Canaanite idea, God owns the land, became in the Israelitic concept the idea, God owns it and God gives it in history. In the Canaanite concept the only relationship between God and the land was that the baal provided fertility, and in return the worshipping people would bring their sacrifices in order to ensure fertility for the next season. Now the idea of the promise of the land could be developed. God gives the land in an historical act, and the next step is that this land is identified. As far as fertility is concerned, this can happen anywhere. But when God gives the land to a historical people, you have to identify the land. Now the land, Palestine, enters the picture. The Promised Land in the original concept is West Jordania, not East Jordania. Only in a later development when because of a lack of room on the West Jordanian side, some tribes moved over to the East Jordanian side and lived there, then the concept was corrected and the East Jordanian side was included in the concept of the land.

When Israel believed that the land was given to her, that meant conversely that Israel did not take it on her own. Rather, Yahweh gave it to Israel in historical action. When Israel tried to occupy the land all by herself she didn't succeed.

Oesterreicher: Was it given in perpetuum?

von Waldow: We cannot say in perpetuum because a historical act happens only once. But we can say it was given to Israel forever.

Barth: Would you agree to translate nahalat, instead of inheritance, by perpetual property, given by right instead of taken? Because if it is God's nahalat, he did not inherit it from anyone. It is the perpetual property of God.

Why should it not be the same for Israel? "Inheritance" is just another way to say "by law." It is not an inheritance because no one had to die.

de Corneille: Isn't there also here a concept of the idea of the children of Israel? Each God has his people. Some of them descended from heaven. You think of Edom or Moab. We don't have this quite in the concept of Israel, descendents of the God who begets his children, but isn't there an idea here that because they are Yahweh's children, that is the inheritance he gives them?

von Waldow: Sometimes we have the term that Israel herself is called the inheritance.

de Corneille: In this same sense, that tribes each thought of themselves as the inheritance, the more universal idea of Yahweh is a later development.

Oesterreicher: I think of the places in which Israel is called the special possession of Yahweh.

von Waldow: To proceed. As soon as Israel develops the idea: God gave the land to us in a historical act, then you have the other problem, that this land was prior to that act, owned by other people. So the former owners of the land enter the picture, and this was a terrible problem for the Israelites, because they actually never owned the land alone and completely. The Canaanites were always around. It is really interesting to see in the OT the several attempts to settle this problem. Why are the Canaanites still here in our Promised Land? One rationalistic answer is that they have chariots of iron. Or, they are there to teach the generations of Israel to know war. Or, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you, that is, to keep some hunters there. These are the rationalistic answers. Then there are theological answers. The Canaanites are there to test whether you will obey the law of God. Then David came up with a political solution. He just made them Israelite citizens, second-ranking citizens, because they didn't have to pay taxes; they had to provide hard labor. In the eschatological outlook, there you have the solution. Later on, in Ezekiel 40-48, we find that when the land is redistributed in the eschatological age, then they will be full citizens.

Harter: Professor, would you spend a little more time on the whole question of the eschatological outlook? To what extent was there a hope for the future in the earlier stages that gradually things would evolve into a more complete society, closer to God, a society realizing more fully his intentions within the world? To what extent was this present?

von Waldow: May I postpone this question a little? We can consider this when I go into the contributions of the prophets. I do not think we have this eschatological aspect in the historical books.

Harter: One of the reasons I raise it is that on Page 6 you say, "In such language the land of Israel becomes almost a kind of paradise. It did not bother the Israelites that the reality fell considerably short of that." I'm wondering if that might not be a little quick.

You don't think there is any sense of tension there between the struggling reality and the potential?

von Waldow: No, I don't think so. This is the ancient near-Eastern style of praise, that with this kind of overstatement you really express your intention to praise. Read the Song of Songs. I do not think that the usual average girl in Israel was that beautiful.

de Corneille: I wonder whether an objection would be wrong here, Mr. Chairman. Any group tries to rationalize what it does in the view of God, that is to say, when Englishmen came to America they took away the land from the Indians and said, "This is our land." In Canada we have to face the fact that we have large numbers of Indians who are on reservations. We have the same problem as the Israelites with the Canaanites still around. The two founding races of this nation we call English and French, and yet the founding people live in reservations where we have put them and kept them. In Canada we don't even think it through. The Israelite tried to think it through very deeply. There was the idea, God gave this land to me, that he had to see that it was not just conquest. He saw that there was a scandal of particularity, and in this particular situation he was involved. There is really a contribution here that far surpasses in its meaning what we do in our modern time. We pass on. They dwelt with this idea and tried to see what its meaning was in terms of God's relationship to their situation.

Now we in this age have a second problem, that in the universalistic kind of social concept that we have, the idea of particularity is an offense. Why should God give this people the right to take over the land from someone else? What an idea, that God gave that to them! After all, the Canaanites had as much right to it. A reaction like that is colonialism, and we can't quite come to terms with this. The point is that we have this trouble, and at the same time as Christians we have no trouble at all in accepting this particularity of God's selection of Jesus, a Jew, in a particular place and time with a once-and-for-all-time message. We can accept that without any problem: God acting in perpetuity through Jesus Christ and its eternal validity, but we can't accept how the Jew sees that perpetuity to a particularism which he understood was God's relationship to his land: he and his land and his god.

Eckardt: I am somewhat disturbed by your "either-or" at the top of Page 9: "Either there is a people of God, Israel, related to Canaan; or there is just another powerful ethnic minority group trying to invade the territory of a foreign nation." Are these really the only alternatives?

Stylianopoulos: May I just interject to say that to me sometimes the degree of ultimacy that you attach to the people of God and Canaan almost lapses into a mythological category. On Page 11, you say, "To fulfill its destiny Canaan needs Israel." In my mind there are certain things that could be said here to clarify the problem. The degree of ultimacy you attach to Canaan and the link between it and the people of God somehow undercuts the universal element in the people of God. Could not the people

of God have settled Madagascar (which sounds absurd) and nevertheless had some revelation there? Do we not perhaps attach too much importance to the land of Canaan? Is this a statement of the faith of Israel or is this your statement as a historian or theologian?

von Waldow: Everything I am saying here is my understanding about the religion of Israel. That's the way I think the OT says it.

Littell: We have two questions. One of them is: What is a legitimate and sound reading of the record? The other is: Do we like it? Perhaps it would be fairer to Professor von Waldow to confine our questions to points of understanding rather than to get too quickly into questions of interpretation.

von Waldow: (continuing with point 3 on page 9) - What happened in Israel when they occupied the arable land is not unique. It happened before and it happened later. "But the theological reflection of the OT tradition clearly indicates that Israel firmly believed this land was given her by an act of her God.... A promised land taken by force would be self-contradictory."

Harter: By that you mean a promised land taken without recognizing that Yahweh was behind whatever force was used? That is, autonomous force not a admitting the power of God behind it?

von Waldow: Yes. "In her cult Israel confessed that the promise of the land was fulfilled...yet the original inhabitants were not completely expelled. The result was tension between fulfillment...and a 'not yet totally.' "

Harter: At this point I'd like to raise the question I raised earlier. At what point are we chronologically with this "not yet totally"? Was this a quite early feeling, this not-yet-totally feeling, or was this something which was reflected upon later?

von Waldow: I think this was pretty early. It appears for the first time in the book of Exodus. I'm not too optimistic about defining the historical background of some biblical passages. What I am saying is that the problem arose from the very beginning. As soon as you say that land is given to us and the former owners are still around you are in trouble.

Harter: Wouldn't this introduce the possibility of some kind of eschatological view already very early?

von Waldow: This depends on what you consider an eschatological view to be.

Harter: That's what I asked you earlier.

von Waldow: I made a very plain statement here avoiding the use of the word eschatology. I just say this left open the possibility for further acts of Yahweh in the future.

Harter: It wasn't something that was that developed, but nevertheless there was an openness here...

von Waldow: Yes, openness for the expectation that Yahweh might act in the future.

Harter: So it might be the roots of something that might later flower to be an eschatology?

von Waldow: Yes, I would accept that. (Reads on: "Our investigation has reached a point where another question should be introduced. Are these biblical ideas in any way applicable to the situation in the Middle East where the Jews have returned to the country which in the Bible is called " 'the promised land'?" Everything depends on whether we say that this Israel under the leadership of Golda Meir is the people of God.

Harter: When you say "present situation in Palestine," you're not using the word invidiously?

von Waldow: No, just as a geographical term.

Eckardt: But there is no such place. Don't you mean Israel?

von Waldow: I mean the geographical area between the Sinai desert and the Euphrates river. Call it the Middle East. (Continued reading last paragraph of 4, page 9.)

Eckardt: This is where I think we must come back to the "either-or" in lines 3-4 of this same page. There are many people today to whom the "either" makes no sense. I myself can't get very enthusiastic about it but there are also detractors of Israel for whom this makes no sense, who take the second alternative, namely, this is simply another powerful ethnic group trying to invade the territory of a foreign nation. It seems to me that the difficulty in your either-or is that you're arguing from theology to politics. I'm suggesting that once the theology drops out, as I think it must, then it would seem that the political right falls away. Is that an unjustifiable conclusion? I take it that you are implying that the validity of the independent sovereignty or integrity of the State of Israel today is a theological one.

von Waldow: I do not say that. I leave it open. I say it is a statement of faith to say "Israel is, the Israelis are still the people of God." Then, what is going on in the Middle East would have theological implications. Or if I do not make such a statement of faith, then this is just another minority group trying to invade another country.

Eckardt: But the point of view that the Israelis take is that they are not a foreign ethnic group trying to invade another country; that is to say, presumably the basis on which the Israelis argue is an historical one, not a theological one, although there are some territorial fundamentalists among them, but very few. For the most part, I understand the Israelis to be saying that their political claims rest on a historical claim or a historical right. I guess all that I'm asking you is whether this is another viable possibility beyond the two alternatives that you mention? This is a yes-or-no question.

von Waldow: I am reluctant here because what I do not like is the confusion between political things and/or historical statements and statements of faith.

Eckardt: But the major argument of most Israelis is that they are perfectly willing to cast aside the theological questions and to discuss the matter on purely historical grounds. Now are you raising questions as to whether the historical claims on the part of Israelis to their land--by historical I mean possessed of a continuity of some 3000 or so--are not licit claims? Is that what you're saying?

von Waldow: I would think so.

Eckardt: It's not a licit claim?

von Waldow: What is licit?

Eckardt: It's an illicit claim? I don't mean legal. Is it legitimate?

von Waldow: Here I would be rather reluctant. History does not set what is right and wrong.

Lindbeck: I do not think that Professor von Waldow understands the implications of what he is saying. As I understand the discussion, you seem to be saying that unless one argues for the legitimacy of the return to Canaan on theological grounds, one has to say it's illegitimate.

von Waldow: Those are the only two alternatives. Let me give an example. I'm German. My homeland is East Germany. Germans occupied this area about 600 years ago. They took it from the Slavs. Do those 600 years establish a legitimate right that the Germans could claim this country today as their own? I would say definitely not. If so, the question comes: How long do you have to live in a country and what about the 600 years the Slavs lived there? Don't they have a right?

Exkardt: What is the moral basis of the claim of any people to be where they are?

Littell: I think it is clear that Professor Eckardt and Professor von Waldow are using the term "historical right" in a different context. Professor von Waldow is telling us that historical right is a theological issue.

von Waldow: Against this background I would say that unless the Israelis introduce theological reasons, I do not see any legitimate claim on that land. As soon as you enter the theological sphere, they are right, definitely right. We cannot separate Israel from the land.

Stylianolopoulos: I want to say something about the nature of the paper and therefore the nature of the discussion. I have no quarrel with the descriptive statement of the faith of Israel and I agree with what you're saying, with some minor differences. However, in my mind, both in the discussion and in the paper we have to be clear whether we are talking on the descriptive level or on the normative level when we try to get criteria for present decisions and legitimate valid premises. When we talk

historically or scientifically, we are talking quite differently from when we are making statements of faith. If the present Israelites make those claims of faith, then this would be in continuity with your own premises. But for the larger discussion, we should keep very clear when descriptively stating the faith that we are trying to draw out of that description valid, eternal, legitimate premises. There is a philosophical issue here that is very important.

Harter: We have a problem because theological statements are being made about historical realities. In a certain sense we are separating history and geschichte.

von Waldow: The third point. So far I have developed that Israel believed the land was given to her. This gift brings a responsibility to Israel. Israel was supposed to do everything necessary to keep and to maintain this gift and not to lose it. This brings us to the idea of worship. On the level of the Deuteronomic tradition the land is a land where Yahweh is worshipped. Jerusalem is a chosen place, an elected place. There is no other place in the world where Yahweh can be worshipped. The land, Canaan, is the only place in the world where the chosen people of God can worship Yahweh. The law is given to Israel as a rule of life for her stay in the promised land. However, here we must clarify things a little. It is important to say that the land Canaan is not given to Israel as a recompense for compliance with the law of Yahweh. Rather, it is the other way around. If Canaan is the land where Israel is to comply with the law of Yahweh, then Israel needs that law in advance, so that she can enter the promised land. That is why, according to Deuteronomy, the law was given on Mount Nebo, the doorstep of the promised land.

de Corneille: Do you find this formula "return if Israel repents" out of some other source than the prophetic books?

von Waldow: I can refer you to 1 Kgs 8, the dedication prayer of Solomon, and Dt 30:1ff. The passage from Kgs is Deuteronomistic, i.e., exilic in origin.

Harter: You say, "Without God's gift to the land Israel would have no reason to respect His law" (top of p.12). What do you do with the exodus? Wouldn't that be a reason to respect the law: He brought us out of Egypt? Even without a land?

von Waldow: But how can you conceive of the idea of Israel without a land? Without land everything is up in the air.

Harter: You obviously have an extremely questioning approach to the historical reality of Sinai.

von Waldow: Well, I consider it pretty late, as a theological tradition.

Harter: Would you question whether there were tribes wandering in the desert from Egypt?

von Waldow: Ah, you are referring now to the red line on the map in your Bible?

Littell: No, he is raising the question which I raised earlier. To what degree can you separate the earlier idea of chosenness (Exodus, Sinai, etc.) from the question of the land?

von Waldow: The idea that Israel is a chosen people in a covenant with God — all this developed right after the settlement in Canaan. Their ancient traditions were used to express such feelings: Exodus, Sinai, the patriarchs. Now we should talk about the contribution of the prophets. Their contribution to the whole concept is that they resumed the interpretation of the law tradition, the ethical aspect: Israel behaving like the people of God in the Promised Land. They simply state (to generalize) that Israel did not comply with the law of God, and therefore God is going to throw them out. And now comes the eschatological aspect: as part of the eschatological recreation of the world, or new aura in the world, Israel may return. And here especially deutero-Isaiah is essential, because he announces that the beginning of the eschatological age is here. The exodus from exile parallels the exodus from Egypt. We go back and Yahweh himself is king. This is the eschatological fulfillment and it is happening right now, he says, because the force who is doing this is already around. It is Cyrus of Persia.

Barth: "Return" has two meanings, a geographical meaning, return from the exile; and a theological meaning of repentance, return to Yahweh. Now in Jeremiah you have the theological term, return to Yahweh; in deutero-Isaiah you have the other. Are these ever so closely conflated as you do it in the paper?

von Waldow: This is the Hebrew term shub. One of the classical passages is Isaiah: return to Yahweh. But the other term, return from the exile, you wouldn't expect in a book like Isaiah so far prior to the exile. Even in Jeremiah. I think here you have it in Chapter 3, where he is talking about the northern kingdom; "They may return." But in deutero-Isaiah the same word was clearly used for return from the exile.

Participants' Questions

Littell: Let's list the most important points that we want to discuss with Professor von Waldow.

Handy: Three people this morning mentioned universalism. Sometime during the next hour I'd like a comment from Professor von Waldow as to whether or not there was a tension in the material he examined between the idea of Yahweh as lord of history and therefore owner of all lands of the world, and the specific gift of Canaan to the people of Israel. Does a tension between the particular and the universal show itself in the material you examined, and when does it begin?

Oesterreicher: I suggest that we talk about the question that Roy posed, the theological claim, the conditio sine qua non of Israel's free settlement(?)

Naylor: I was fascinated by the struggle of a nomadic desert group to become agrarian. What relationship does that have to that agrarian society trying to become technitronic or technological or urban? What categories can we find there?

Littell: The theological question would be: Do the working concepts which are in the setting described still apply in the technological age? This is part of a larger question: To what extent does the tradition apply in a technological age?

Olson: Would it be legitimate to ask from the three questions which the author presents in the key paragraph on page 9, the third one: Can a direct line be drawn from Old Testament Israel to New Testament Judaism, then to all the different fractions of later world Judaism, and finally to the Israel of our day? I would like to ask, if this line cannot be drawn historically, as he says it cannot, whether we Christians are not in a pretty bad situation? Do we have any claim to continuity either?

Littell: The immediate analogy arises, what direct line is there between the apostles and us?

Flannery: I would broaden the requests of Roy and John and Bernie to have Professor von Waldow defend that whole last paragraph of point 4 plus his "either-or."

Littell: Of course, critical to the question is another: Do Jews today still represent the people of God? This puts us up against the Christian teaching that Jews disappear into limbo as soon as the New Israel appears.

Barth: The question of the connection of these two meanings of the term "return" may be culminated by saying, if the Jews repent (return in the one sense) they may return in the other.

Littell: That's related to the point which Professor Eckardt makes in his book about the double standard.

Stylianopoulos: Is a descriptive statement of the OT and its theology sufficient for a Christian theologian on this larger question that we are discussing? Or is that in fact a statement of the community of Judaism?

Littell: Aren't you raising the much more fundamental question: What does this tradition speak to us as Christians?

Stylianopoulos: Yes, that too.

Littell: The methodological question, the real theological question is: How seriously do we as Christians take something that is presented to us in the Jewish tradition?

de Corneille: A further question: To what degree is Christian tradition involved in taking seriously that canon which is part of the Christian bible called the OT? To what degree does he wish to be a Marcionite and eliminate it from his thinking because it is more convenient?

Littell: Are you prepared to settle for some form, however critically handled, of heilsgeschichte? Particularly because so much of the contemporary criticism is directed against it.

Discussion of Questions

Now the first question is on the concern of particularism and universalism. I'd like to say that on the basis of a newsletter that I've gotten out on Christian-Jewish relations I received over 300 letters, and the most constant question is this offence of particularism, that is, why a nation in an age when we're trying to get out of nationalism, why a particular people in a time when we're trying to have a universal brotherhood?

von Waldow: The question of universalism and heilsgeschichte belong together. Our exegetical situation today poses a problem. What exegetes are doing in our day is this: they pick a text, then they exeget the text, but what is more or less forgotten is the context. It doesn't make too much sense to take a text and say, "This belongs to the Yahwist work in the Pentateuch." This is not enough. Rather, we should read the whole context and ask, What is the intention of the Yahwist? What is the intention of the priestly code? We should try to get the message of the whole thing.

Oesterreicher: What is the intention of the redactor, the compiler?

von Waldow: What is the intention of the composer of the Pentateuch? It was he who put things together. The trouble with literary criticism is that we take everything apart and are not able to put it together again theologically. So let me begin with the first chapter of the primeval history. Here we are shown mankind in sin. This is Genesis, chapter 10. We have the list of the nations, the descendants of Adam and Eve. Now the whole of mankind is, as Augustine said, massa perditionis. Now out of this massa perditionis one nation, Israel, in order to save this massa perditionis is elected. And now when we go through the OT we see the history of this tool which God has chosen to save lost mankind. So I would say from the very beginning of the OT there is a universalistic aspect. What Israel is to do is to bring the salvation of God to the massa perditionis. This mission is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. This is what we believe as Christians. So to consider the importance of Israel in a particularistic framework would be completely wrong. The book of the OT where this is nicely expressed is deutero-Isaiah.

Littell: Does the new Israel completely supplant the old Israel or is there a continuing providential purpose in the life, present and future, of these people as well as the Christian Church?

von Waldow: Now comes the problem in the NT and here I talked with Markus about that last night. Paul, Romans 9-11, is the passage you are referring to. He uses pictorial language, the olive tree, but unfortunately he wasn't too good at growing roses. According to our Christian tradition,

according to the NT, we would say: We are the people of God today. However, this does not mean that Israel is excluded. Rather, we plus Israel, we are the people of God. The only trouble is that neither we Christians nor Israel live up to that destiny.

de Corneille: I'd like to make a clarification because I'm afraid the terminology is getting a bit complicated. On the subject of particularism you pointed out that in the framework of the OT there is the idea of priestly nation which becomes wholly set apart as salvation for the whole of mankind. Now, most people today think this is a dirty trick. The Christian has always thought this was meaningful for the preparation of the coming of Jesus Christ. He could accept that. But in our universalistic idea today we don't like the idea that anyone specifically was picked out to do something for the whole group. That's undemocratic to be selected, called for, chosen, made apart. This is what we mean in our vernacular today by particularism. In other words, you said there's nothing particularistic about it; it's for the whole of mankind. Well, I understand that language, but that isn't what the language today means when we say universalism and particularism. We would say, in fact, that it was particularistic for God to have chosen a particular people to save mankind and to be his chosen, the one selected to do this task. This is where I think it's very important to ask you to clarify your language because this is precisely what bothers people. These universalistic liberal types cannot accept the fact that Israel was appointed by God to be a holy people set apart, given a special land, a special relationship to Torah. God's law was given to them to live by; other people didn't have to live by that law. The Christian understands by his bible (and all the OT typology is absolutely essential to all this) that Jesus is the New Israel in its fulfillment, or at least he identifies himself with his people by going through the Red Sea, by being baptized, by going into the wilderness for forty days--the whole typology. He again is a particular man in a particular place to save the whole of mankind, the new Adam. This is particularistic too, and this bothers the universalists. That's why they have a hard time accepting the gospel now.

Littell: Why is this any less an offense, Christian particularism, than the particularism of the Jewish people?

Oesterreicher: I daresay that this problem is a bit phony. What are they talking about when they talk about universal brotherhood today? We're all in favor of the young nations of Africa. None of these liberals propose that there should be one Africa. They're all in favor of the young nations having their independence and their sovereignty. And all these universalists have not come to the point--maybe some of them are world federalists -- but Europe still refuses to become the United Nations of Europe. It is not a real problem. It is a problem for the ideology of certain liberals who themselves believe in their own particularism. They are the elite, they are the avant-garde.

Flannery: I notice that several of us, including Professor von Waldow, are using the term New Israel, if not also true Israel. Am I wrong in believing

that these phrases do not exist anywhere in the Old or New Testament at all, but rather came in the middle of the first century, and that they're rather products of a certain anti-Judaism which had already come into the Church which we retroject in interpreting the Scriptures? I don't think you'll find in the Scriptures this idea that the Church is the new Israel.

von Waldow: First of all, I didn't say that. Isn't this the question: Where is the scandalon? This particularism that Israel is elected and is singled out, is this the real scandalon? Isn't the real scandalon here that we must say that God acts in history? And this implies, like it or not, a historical time -- you can date the time when Rameses II was pharoah in Egypt or Jesus Christ was crucified when Pontius Pilate was procurator. So I would say all this is part of the one concept, God acts in history. This Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. This is the real scandal, and our problem with the rejection of Israel is just part of that. Either we accept that God acts in history or the other alternative, we re-mythologize. And I am less than enthusiastic about that.

Martin: We have to go back to recent history, to a post-medieval society. Christian society was experienced as a universal society, and non-Christian people were regarded as pagans, barbarians who would sooner or later have to become Christians. Then came the Enlightenment, a philosophy which could deal with non-Christians, through the concept of natural law. But don't talk about the particularism of the Jews. It's an entirely different problem. There is no other particularism which is like Jewish particularism. It's unique, and the Jews know very well that they are not just like the British or the French. There is the Jew and the goy. It's absolute, radical, and there's no answer to it, except in religious terms. You will never find a philosophy to explain it.

de Corneille: I was just raising the question of Christian particularism. We can live with this, and yet we can't live with the particularism of God in history.

Martin: It's because at a moment it became universal. The whole civilized society was Christian.

Littell: It was still relative in the sense that they just didn't know about the others.

Stylianopoulos: The real issue is whether the Christian particularism qualifies or puts in a particular light Jewish particularism. On a certain level, they are particularisms, but I think you are handling the question too generally. The question in my mind is whether or not, whatever is the substance of Christian particularism, it in some sense puts in a pecular light Jewish particularism. That's one issue. But the larger problem really is our sources. Some of us engaged in NT studies are critical of the insufficiency of a descriptive NT theology for today. We say, "That's not good enough. You can't just take it descriptively and use it today as a valid statement of what theology is." Then when we come to the Jewish side, we take the descriptive theology of the

OT, and say, "Yes, apply it today." I don't want to be misunderstood. For my own reasons I favor very much the State of Israel. But I find it very difficult to get theological legitimation for this because of the problem of methodology: understanding the OT as a description and yet drawing legitimate theological premises from it.

von Waldow: As exegetes we should always take our stand in the NT. I am a Christian and that is why the OT is interesting. Without being a Christian, I wouldn't be an OT scholar. My Jewish colleague doesn't take his stand in the NT as I do. I look back through the cross of Jesus Christ, back into the OT and see some perspectives which my Jewish colleague does not see.

Littell: Then you would accept the proposition that Christian particularism does qualify Jewish particularism?

Stylianopoulos: But the larger question in my mind is: To what degree can a descriptive statement of the OT be taken as a legitimate premise today? Whether you call it theological or historical doesn't matter. The question is whether or not you take it as a legitimate premise supporting the return of Israel to their land.

Littell: But the method-question and the application are different issues. Are we using a method in the application of the OT which we do not also use in the study of the NT?

von Waldow: I am not uncomfortable with this differentiation. I would rather say, I believe in Jesus Christ. That's what makes me a Christian theologian. I take my stand right in the middle of the NT. And I look back into the OT through the cross of Jesus Christ. What I discover here I try to apply to our present situation.

Littell: But then either I am not understanding Father Stylianopoulos' point or he is not saying the same thing that you're saying.

Stylianopoulos: I think what you're saying now is another issue, a very important issue, to be sure, but the primary issue, at least as I know it here (and I do not claim to know it that well) is this: Contemporary NT scholarship, at least among Protestants but also to some degree among Roman Catholics, has a tendency to say that it is insufficient to state descriptive NT theology as a valid theology today. It seems to me that at least we should take the same critical attitude when we view OT theology.

von Waldow: What do you mean by descriptive?

Stylianopoulos: Descriptive in the sense of stating the faith of the early Christian community: Can it be said that this is a once-for-all statement of all theology or not?

von Waldow: I say that it is legitimate to take biblical categories and apply them to the situation of today.

Stylianopoulos: The question is a methodological one. Personally, I would accept the descriptive faith-statement that the Jews are particular, and that they continue even after the Church to have this quality of the people of God, but I have great trouble, for larger philosophical and ethical reasons, when you tie them to the land in this mythological way and say that the land portion is constitutive to the promise. On a descriptive level it is constitutive, obviously; but on the larger more sophisticated theological, philosophical--whatever you awant to call it--level, I would be prepared to argue that the land as such is not constitutive to their being particular witnesses to God.

Oesterreicher: You don't argue that on the basis of Scripture; you argue that on the basis of your sophisticated stand that considers the land and all that goes with the land.

de Corneille: He is satisfied with a real tree but he doesn't like a mythological garden.

Littell: Let's take one point at a time. Is it true that there's a sharp dichotomy between our use of the OT and our use of the NT? Are we guilty as charged? Professor von Waldow says no, at least he doesn't intend to be. We have to settle that. Is it true that the NT theologian say that you can't establish the sitz-im-leben and then make it relevant. Therefore you have to take some other stance. What Father Stylianopoulos is saying is that we are applying a literal seriousness to our use of the OT which the scholars do not generally apply to what they're saying in the NT. He has a very sound point.

Flannery: I'd like to ask Father this question. It's agreed, I believe, that the land was constitutive of the history of Israel at one time. It isn't now, you seem to be saying. I'd like to know when it dropped out and precisely how or why. There's a breaking point somewhere. There's a certain dualism here where you have to interpret the Old differently from the New. The land would be a good catalyzer here. It dropped out of its constitutiveness. When and how and why?

Stylainopoulos: Isn't it a question of who thinks it's constitutive?

Swidler: When you say that descriptively you can accept it, that means that the Jews, at least the biblical writers, understood it to be so. Yes or no?

Stylianopoulos: Yes.

Swidler: Yes, that's right. We can look at the documents and they so understood it. Do I today think it is so? You can answer that question yes or no on varying grounds. You're one who would say no.

Stylianopoulos: Yes, but my reasons...

Flannery: Could you on Christian grounds? That is, can you say that it was only the understanding of the writers, but that you as a Christian don't have to believe that this was true or factual? It was only their idea. He said, answer yes or no. I'm asking whether these things which the

sacred writer believed were true or not. How far can you go in undercutting them so that you can deny practically all that they say and yet say that you're a Christian or a Jew, for that matter?

Stylianopoulos: I think that confuses the issue a little bit. I would be prepared to argue theologically, quite apart from the NT, that even within the OT world there are theological premises that would push for such universalism that would cast this tying the people as God's witnesses to the land in a rather ambiguous light, such premises are God as creator of the whole earth and, as stated, God as the lord of history. I would tend to argue that what is constitutive is really the witness of God's people to God, and that the land comes in as a kind of secondary element. Certainly they have to have some land. I don't know if even that is allowable actually.

Harter: I'd like to hear what Professor von Waldow would say to that because I think that the whole thrust of his paper is to go against you in that last remark.

von Waldow: The only thing I can say is that you did not completely misunderstand my paper. (Laughter) First of all, I do not differentiate between being on Christian grounds and being on biblical grounds. This is the same, as far as I am concerned. When you say, "from a more sophisticated point of view," what do you mean by that?

Stylianopoulos: All I mean to say is that just like in the NT, in the OT we have stratification of theologies and premises, and they cannot all be taken at the same level. Sometimes these levels may be contradictory and in tension with one another. I'm saying that the theological premise of God as creator and the theological premise of God as lord of history militates against tying land and people in such absolute terms in which actually at other levels the faith-statements tie it.

de Corneille: Also adding to that, is it also true that it militates against tying a single man, like a guy named Jesus...

Stylianopoulos: That complicates it unwarrantedly.

von Waldow: But actually that is of the same category. What we must do is read the OT in context as a whole, and then we will discover that the idea of creation is not a central idea in OT theology. Rather it came in late, and it doesn't play an important role. But take some crucial texts of the OT, for instance, a liturgical creed. What does Israel confess when they recite a creed? Deut. 26:5-11. They confess historical acts. "My forefather was a wandering Aramean. He went down to Egypt. There they became a great nation. God brought us out and he brought us into <u>this land.</u>" And now what's all the activity about? "And now we return thanks and offer our first fruits to God in return for that." Look, nothing but historical categories. Now take our apostolic creed. It does the same thing. Just a list of historical acts. This fact, that God acts in history, is one of the essential things in our Christian faith.

Stylianopoulos: Precisely what you have just said may be such a time-caught element of the Jewish credo that it doesn't bring out fully the universal elements in that faith which give the most noble dimensions to the idea of God. Here is a parallel: I was brought up with the great hope that the Greeks might some day recapture Constantinople, and that somehow we could not come to our complete glory or validity as a church or as a people, unless we did that. In the Russian tradition certain conservative groups are even hoping to restore the czars so that Russian Orthodoxy can come into full bloom. It strikes me that this is the same kind of argument which doesn't really do justice to the universal.

Oesterreicher: I want to thank Professor von Waldow for the statement that God the creator is not primary in OT theology,but it is of great importance and significance that the redactor or the compiler of the Pentateuch, in which all these things are made of the people and the land, thought it necessary to have a preface to that whole book, that is the story of creation, which was written after all the other things were written or handed down in tradition. That shows that at least to him the problem of conflict between universalism and particularism was evident.

de Corneille: I think we have really got now to the crucial problem of the Christian churches' theological approach to Israel. I'm glad that it was brought out in this way through Father's comments because I believe that the problem which the Christian faces because of the Greek influence upon Christianity has been to minimize this world, to talk in very abstract terms about a spiritual world rather than a real one. This has some kind of support in terms of universalisms or humanisms which see man as a person separate from his acual situation in terms of his relationship to his geographical location, his life, the things he does. This actual situation is considered to be an inferior one. I don't think this is genuine Christianity. It is a heretical later change of the fundamental Hebrew-Christian, biblical concept of man. The Jew always acts as a corrective to us when we are tempted by this situation. He sees no way of separating people, land, Torah. This is why he always been a social-action person who has been far more interested in reform of our actual situations than have Christian church leaders. This is because the Jew has often seen a direct theological connection between what you do, where you are, the land you're on and the things you pray.

Swidler: It has been said and argued, by Jewish scholars among others, that the concern for social issues isn't particularly Jewish in the sense of going back to the prophets but is an example of 19th century liberalism. I think if you look at the history of the Jewish people in Western Europe, you will find that there is a certain basis for that kind of argument.

de Corneille: I don't agree with you at all. The Jew in Western Europe was in no position to do anything. In certain situations when he was free, he certainly did act.

Swidler: A logical possible error is post hoc, ergo propter hoc. I think over-painting the virtues of the Jew is a disservice to the Jew. First of all, it seems to me that there's a confusion in the use of the terms particularism and universalism. When we talk about universalism and particularism concerning Judaism, I think what is normally understood by that is that Judaism is a religion for the Jews as a particular nation, as a particular group of people, whereas when the claim is made that Christianity or Islam is a universalistic religion, it is meant that not only is it available to but supposedly for all people in a way that is different from one that is attached to a particular group of people by nationality or birth or something of the sort. In that sense, one says that Judaism is particularistic whereas Christianity is universalistic. Now when you use the term particularism to say that Christians are particularistic too, then you mean they have a particular person on whom they base everything, namely, Jesus.

Harter: In what way, from a historical point of view, does Jesus function differently for Christianity than the land functions for Israel?

Swidler: I didn't say anything about the land. When we use the word particularism for Judaism we mean it in the sense in which I just described it. This is common parlance. When you use the word particularism referring to a Christian particularism, you mean that Jesus was a particular person who existed in a historical situation. We have no difficulty in accepting this kind of Christian particularism. There are two different kinds of particularism. Our problem is that we use the same word for two different realities that have a certain affinity but not identity.

de Corneille: I think you're missing the key analogy. The idea of Israel as a holy nation, selected and set apart for the salvation of mankind is the exact thing on which Jesus builds his whole reputation and purpose, of acting for the whole human race. This is particularism, speaking theologically. It is an exact analogy. One is built on the other.

Swidler: The Christian normally in tradition has felt a compulsion to attempt to christianize all peoples.

de Corneille: Jews have too. That shows how little we know about Judaism.

Swidler: That's true for several centuries but that's not true universally.

Littell: The paper itself dealt with the eschatological perspective, and Professor von Waldow should have a chance to come back in if he wants to.

von Waldow: Nineteenth century OT theology said that one of the shortcomings of the religion of Israel was that kind of nationalism, that kind of particularistic limitation. I think this is totally wrong. Right in the middle of the OT we have the book of deutero-Isaiah. I would consider the book of deutero-Isaiah the highlight of OT theology. There is nothing the OT has to add to what we have in Is. 40-55. The idea here is that Israel is a tool of God set apart to save all mankind.

This is developed in two concepts: one, Israel as a nation; and the other, the so-called servant of Yahweh. When you say the servant of Yahweh is Israel, there's something right about this. Israel is selected, Israel is forgiven in the book of deutero-Isaish, led back into the promised land in order to be something for the whole of mankind, to save all the nations of the world.

de Corneille: Don's we say the Magnificat all the time, a simple expression of song and praise which is, in fact, Mary saying that the light has come to the gentiles? This is the fulfillment, the extension of biblical expectation that Jesus, message, person and everything else, only makes sense in the light of this total context.

Littell: As you can see, we have opened several issues which are worthy of longer discussion. There is one point which I would like the privilege to throw in. If Israel has a continuing mission in this partnership, if it is not true that the old Israel is cut off and destined to disappear into limbo, then is it up to us Christians to redefine Israel's mission? Should we rather say that Israel has the right to define her own mission in God's providential history, just as we Christians expect to do in our own case? The danger, I think, of your affirmation, which is a Christian affirmation, is that you read the whole Hebraic tradition through the cross. We now say to the Jews, "You have your place in history; we have fixed it. Either we cut it off entirely or else it has some subsidiary meaning." But is this a spiritually valid relationship between the Christian Church and the Jewish people?

von Waldow: The problem is that we define our position under the cross of Jesus Christ, and the Jews do not. My christian view is that we as Christians, insofar as we have received salvation, the forgiveness of Christ, can make the claim that we are the people of God. We, I think, are making such a claim constantly. The only trouble is that we don't live up to it.

Littell: Do you say "the people" or "one of two people"?

von Waldow: Members of the same people.

Littell: Then a very sharp question arises which was brought out in a recent conference discussing a paper of Emil Fackenheim. If we really draw the knife in terms of our failure to live up to our claims as Christians and we don't bar what we should confess as Christians, isn't it true that in the last forty years the Jewish people have lived much closer to the theologia crucis than have the baptized? In other words, the traditional statement of the Protestants, including the liberal Protestants, who reject all particularity, church or Jewish, is that we represent the theologia crucis as against the theologia gloriae of the Latin Church and of the Jews. Now can any Christian say that today?

Discussion of Hervormde Kerk Document

Littell: Now we have rejoinders from members of the working party on the declaration of Hervormde Kerk. I believe that we should give some attention to those at this time. Roy, do you want to lead off and make any points that you think we haven't gotten into sufficiently yet?

Eckardt: Since the second question given on the list before wasn't really dealt with, a comment that I might make on the Dutch Church document might be in that direction. I think the professor here is in more or less the same boat, if I may say so, as the Dutch Church document. I think that in this document we have Christians who are playing the role of prophets to the Jews. The demand is being made that Israel be a church rather than a people. I think that we have to face up to the implications of this kind of reasoning. Theology sometimes makes strange bedfellows, and I find myself sympathizing, in terms of some of the comments which have been made today, with people who are opponents of Israel and who, as far as I can see, are never going to accept Israel on the theological grounds that have been delineated in both these documents. Maybe that's the position we'll come out with butwe have to realize the implications of it.

Littell: Forgive me for not coming back to that point on our list. Why don't you say what you think to be a reasonable third alternative to either the theological justification or the alternative of sheer politics.

Eckardt: There would be two sides to what I would say. First, I just don't see how we can ground political claims on theological judgments. As I say, we have to realize the implications of our position. I feel that the implication of the professor's position, if we face up to it, is that there will simply not be any peace in the Middle East, because the opponents of Israel are not going to accept Christian theological presuppositions by way of accepting the claims of Israel. That's one side. The other side is that the only way, it seems to me, that we can go at this thing is to secularize the whole business by saying that Israel is making no claims to existence or to sovereignty or to independent political integrity that isn't being made by many other nations. And what are these grounds? There are all kinds of grounds. I think the main one is historical. To me historical analysis is the way that we can get around the impossible attempt to found political claims on theological judgments.

Flannery: Doyou see these two positions as mutually exclusive? Is it not possible to believe on a theological level, in your own private conscience or in your own particular theological group, that this has theological significance; and then on the other side, in the external forum, you argue entirely on political and juridical grounds?

Eckardt: What Alice and I tried to do in our book is to build a sort of architectonic structure where the historical foundation is the basic one, and to some extent the moral one, that is, the stewardship of the land. These things are basic, and at this level one can engage in polemic and apologetic. But when one goes to the third story, so to speak, to the level of faith, then he ceases to argue politically but he engages in celebration. One can celebrate the gift of the land, somewhat along the lines that Heschel does in his book on Israel. You're right. Maybe I don't talk enough about the theological convictions I have because I find myself always getting into this situation of having to try to authenticate Israel on other grounds. As far as I can see, if you take away the first and second stories in this "house of Israel," so to speak, then the third story, the level of faith, is just left up in the air without any real foundation, and it will come crashing to the ground. So that's why I don't talk that way.

Olson: Roy, I agree with what you have to say, but in discussing the claims of the State of Israel and the right of Israel to exist there are many people who oppose Israel very strongly on what they claim to be purely historical or empirical grounds. They refuse to admit that there is any theological conviction that undergirds their position or that motivates them. I feel that perhaps one of the things that we very much need to do is to see how we can surface these hidden claims and examine them on theological grounds, not mixing the theological with the historical; but the problem is that so many of these people do not want to admit that their theological position really determines what they claim on historical and juridical grounds.

Eckardt: Are you thinking of Christians?

Olson: Yes.

Eckardt: Christians are usually in the boat--if you'll forgive me--that our friend here is in, of somehow insinuating that the church has taken the place of Israel and that therefore when one applies this in the practical realm, he no longer has a political basis for arguing to the validity of Israel. At best he has a theological basis and even this is suspect.

Swidler: It's the other way around: no theological basis but perhaps a political one.

Eckhardt: No, I took it from his paper that he is trying to establish Israel on theological grounds. The only other alternative is some kind of power-politics grounds.

von Waldow: I just asked the question, deliberately leaving it open. What I did was to consider the entity called Israel in the light of our Christian faith. I did not try to comment on the situation in the Middle East today. If I were to do that, I would say that I consider the people of Israel heirs of the people of God. This is a proposition of faith which is part of our Christian belief. However, I would not try to justify theologically what they are doing there. Instead now I must raise some serious questions. Can I accept it as a Christian interpretation of the events in the Middle East that God has led them back into that country? Did they repent? The whole matter of the return of Israel to the holy land, is this the beginning of the new eschatological age? If I can answer all these questions with yes, then I must say all this is politically right.

Eckardt: You remember that I asked the question before, what is the moral basis on which we can argue the right of any people to exist in a land. You didn't answer it, and to me that's the issue. Forgive me, I'm not trying to get out of discussing my own paper by turning it over to you, but I think the problems in the Dutch Church document are similar to the points you made before. I still want an answer to that question. If we cannot ground the independent sovereignty of any nation on theological grounds--there I would agree with you--on what grounds do we do it? What is the moral basis of political sovereignty?

von Waldow: Isn't this a question of trying to establish the right of homeland theologically?

Eckardt: Do you believe in political sovereignty, yes or no?

von Waldow: What do I say? I cannot say on theological reasons...

Eckardt: We've already excluded theological reasons. How do you do it?

von Waldow: It is really hard to give a general answer which can be applied to anything. I speak as a German. The German Christians tried to make the right of homeland part of the Christian religion, I experienced how disastrous this was.

Eckardt: That's what I'm opposing also.

Oesterreicher: They didn't establish the right of homeland; they established the right to expansion.

von Waldow: Yes, but it began with Blut-und-Boden Theologie blood-and-soil theology, all that nonsense.

Eckardt: I know what you cannot accept, but I want to know what you do accept. In my critical analysis of the Dutch document I take a similar position, that we cannot use theological arguments in order to establish political claims. But now I'm asking you, please, help us, what is the basis for political sovereignty that will avoid the sins of the German Christians but will also avoid the theologizing of politics?

Flannery: Let's put it more directly. Do you believe, Professor, that the State of Israel has a right to exist?

von Waldow: Yes.

Flannery: On what basis?

von Waldow: On the grounds that they can exist there. They are there.

Eckardt: Forgive me, but in this paper that's what I would be against. Every argument for the political independent sovereignty of the Israelis is an argument for the independent political sovereignty of the Palestinian Arabs. The Israelis have absolutely no right to that land that doesn't belong to some other people as well. This is why I supported the partition of Palestine. If we can't have a double standard at one point, then we mustn't have a double standard at another point.

von Waldow: Couldn't we here speak in political terms? I agree that we cannot confuse the categories. Speaking in political terms, I would say the same thing I said this morning when I talked about our German situation. I cannot accept a statement like "East Germany is part of Germany because Germans lived there 600 years."

History does not establish a right. This country is lost. Now it belongs to Poland. I cannot reverse history. I accept this as a fact. The same thing applies to Israel. Israel is there. I cannot reverse history. I cannot eject all the Jews into the sea.

Eckardt: If this is so, we have lost all possibility of conversation with the Arabs. If you once try to justify Israel's existence purely on the basis that she is <u>there</u>, naked political power has put her there, then you people had better face up to the fact that we are lost. The Arabs will say, "I'm sorry, this is not a morally valid argument." And I will agree with them 100 per cent.

von Waldow: I haven't finished yet. I would justify the existence of Israel because it is there. Now the question is, How can we support the existence of Israel without completely killing the claims of the Arabs? Because they are there too. However, on the other side, I would not accept an Arab claim like, "We own this land because we have been here 600 years, or whatever, and now it's ours." Such statements don't work. They just create war. The Arabs have their right, the Israelis have their right, and now let us try to find a way. I am much interested as a Christian to find some solution that works, because I believe that there's something special about the Israelis.

Stylianopoulos: At this point I feel, as I did earlier, that in the final analysis we should not be too happy with separating what we call theological-historical-social-cultural-whatever. When we begin to use these terms, e.g., political, there's an ambiguity in our thinking which would be clarified if we simply stated the content of the argument rather than labeling it. If we proceed on that basis, without concern about labeling it, in my own mind we would come close to saying--and I personally would be prepared to argue--that indeed the professor is correct, that very possibly arguments out of the past cannot serve as legitimizing premises for the existence of Israel as a state. Rather what is needed are arguments from the present and the future. The fact that they're <u>there</u> is indeed rather strong ground for the validity. As for the moral issue, this arises out of the future rather than out of the present: namely, no more slaughter. That is the moral urgent question.

Eckardt: Then the Israelis are guilty of a basic injustice.

Stylianopoulos: On both sides.

Eckardt: No, no. The Arabs say: they have taken away our land. Let's not talk about the future. Let's get rid of them.

Stylianopoulos: You misunderstand me, I think. There's a moral obligation on both sides for a settlement of the issue, which is really an open issue. But I think the moral obligation comes in on the side of peace and an avoidance of slaughter on both sides.

Eckardt: Why should people be moral who feel that a basic injustice has been done to them?

Swidler: If you've been robbed, you don't ask the judge to even it up. You want your property back.

de Corneille: I must say that I'm not entirely sold on any one simplistic approach. It seems to me that the value of the paper which has been presented to us is to help us to see what some Christians and some Jews see as being a theological faith-view which has an effect on reality. I believe some Jews and some Christians see in the kind of paper presented by our speaker the value of looking at what the OT means in a faith-situation to some people. Now I believe that has effect on attitudes, to some degree, depending on what values people give to God speaking through the Bible, God speaking in history. Some of us might arrive at the conclusion that our speaker did, that this has no effect on the future of Israel; others might come to a very contradictory conclusion, that in fact it has a great deal to say about God's eternal faithfulness to commitments that he makes, that this has an ongoing validity for all time, just as his commitment to Christ. Now the second point is this: I think Christians have a right to look at this from the other side of the cross, saying, "I try to understand what this means to a Jew, and I try to see what this means to me as a Christian." The Christian, thirdly, though, has to look at the moral theology involved in the problems of Arabs and Jews in that situation, of Christians, of agnostics in that situation, in Israel and in the Lebanon and around all about. I don't think the Christian can find a way out by just saying, "I'll opt for looking at it internally from the Jewish side, or I'll opt for looking at it from the other side of the cross."--Moral theology is also a part of his viewpoint. I don't believe you can separate politics from theology. In fact, the problem in Germany was the German Christian party, which was a blood-and-soil mythologizing, the Marcionite tendency to get rid of the OT as a value. But that was not the only factor. One of the factors at work was a certain Lutheran tradition, at least as understood by the Lutheran Church in its statements in the time of Hitler, that saw a separation of church and state roles whereby, as long as the church was not interfered with by the Nazi regime, then it would do its own thing and be separated from the political problems. I don't believe that a Christian can talk about God in history, and then suddenly pull out, as von Waldow has, and say, "Now as far as that is concerned, theology doesn't apply here at all. It's brute force. Who's there is there." That's the one point I can't see the logic to, because it seems to me that moral theology draws us to take into account Muslim theology about the land, Jewish theology about the land, Christian theology about the land and the moral problems of human beings who are suffering. The historical right of the Jews to be in Israel is something which is very simple to study. The Jews have always been in Israel, and they have an historical right, but that isn't the only thing either.

Handy: We keep going to two extremes, neither of which is right. On the one hand, it is true that we should not try to base political conclusions on theological grounds. Whatever we do, whether we're Christian or Jews or Muslims or secularists, our interpretation of either history or politics is influenced by out perspective. The Christian is bound to see history, perceive history and do history, however methodologically pure he tries to be, differently from someone from another perspective. He does politics differently because he's a Christian. Now this is not basing political conclusions on theological grounds alone, but it is saying that he who is a Christian perceives reality differently from someone who may not be. He who is a Jew perceives reality somewhat differently. You cannot escape from that position of faith.

von Waldow: I am really grateful to you that you brought the problem up. Actually you have helped me now to see where the cavity is in the truth. I would define it now this way. I am, as you know, a man who grew up after the Enlightenment as you did. This means that I cannot or would not try to describe politics or to explain history in other terms than scientific terms. This is the way we grew up, this is the way we act. On the other side, as an OT scholar, find one of the fundamental statements in the OT is that God acts in history. This doesn't mean just the <u>past</u> history, exodus from Egypt, exile, and things like that. History is still going on, and we are part of it. Whoever says "God acted in history" must continue "and he is still acting in history." Now I am in trouble.

Stylianopoulos: I am excited by the last point, and it seems to me the issue is, How do we discern where God acts in the present? We can all affirm that he acts in history, but the important thing is where do we discern that action. Professor von Waldow's earlier eagerness to dissociate theology and politics is another form of saying that it's difficult to reach into the past and find necessary reasons, to say the "may be" is a "must." As far as I'm concerned, the present crystallization of Judaism around the state of Israel <u>may be</u> a sign of the consummation, but I think history is mute and ambiguous enough not to make this <u>may be</u> into an <u>is</u>. Therefore, the moral imperative to action in the present and the future comes precisely on moral grounds, namely, some of those earlier stated. I'm sure there are others, including the question of rectification and justice on both sides.

Barth: I should like to address a question to Roy Eckardt. You state, at the bottom of p. 5: "...a biblicist theologization of politics means immorality." That is a pretty strong statement to make. Probably you might have put it the other way around also: a politicization of biblical theology is an immorality?

Eckardt: Easily as much. On p. 3 I mention how the Dutch Church reacted against the terrible separation of theology from politics in the 1930's and 1940's. This is the last thing that I would be ready to do. However, then I go on to say that just because this is the case, it doesn't follow that they have distinguished responsibly biblical covenantal obligations from today's political moral situation. It's this problem that particularly concerns me.

Barth: What you do is this, you condemn these Dutchmen, saying that it's the old anti-Semitism coming up. It's pretty strong here, you know? I believe that this politicization of the Bible, or the other way around, can work this way and that way. It worked this way in the Confessing Church struggle, and it worked that way in the Crusades. You throw out the baby with the bath by imputing biblical authority and quoting it; you say down with it and let's be almost secularists. Now a question about these secularists. I see behind your way of arguing the old Lutheran two-reign doctrine. That under the one God, we have here the Gospel side with faith, and under the same God, we have here God's left hand, where we argue politically. Now I understand that Reinhold Niebuhr and other people apparently influenced you in this direction. But we had to fight that against Hitler, you know? This assumption that there is a secular reign which simply can claim a relative autonomy, under the same God, Creator against Redeemer they called it--we had to fight that. It is one of the gifts of the Jewish people to us, that there is just one Lord: "God, give thy justice to the king." Let me end with a very personal confession. I came into this whole concern for Israel by study of Ephesians and discovering a sort of contrast between Ephesians on one hand, and Romans and Galatians on the other. It happened to me as one individual. Maybe I am an idiot but through biblical study I have had to take position that these Israelites have a right to political security, to live in dignity and to recover their heritage. It happened right here through the Bible. Why are you so intolerant as to condemn poor fellows like me as immoral anti-Semites?

Eckardt: You got into this business on sacred grounds; I got into it on purely profane grounds, namely, I needed a topic for my PhD dissertation. I went to see Reinhold Niebuhr about it and here you have some of the somewhat dubious results. I would just make two comments now. First, I think one has to take on one opponent at a time. The assignment was to criticize the Dutch Church document. If it were necessary to criticize the German Christian movement, then one would do that. In the second place, I think there is something in Reinhold Niebuhr's theology that helps to face up to the point that you've made. To me justice is an instrument of agape, and it seems to me that this gives a lever that one can begin to use in order to adjudicate such difficult moral questions as we're trying to face up to.

Littell: Father Vincent, do you have a good point in your paper that we've been missing?

Martin: Most of the facts that we discussed this morning are particularly exilic or pre-exilic texts before torah was an important aspect of Judaism. The question in my mind is, to put it extremely bluntly, How is God to lie out of his promises? I mention in my paper that many of the texts which we have on the land are parallel to texts we have when God solemnly promised to David that his son would always be on the throne of David. The whole OT is a promise of the permanence of the temple, the holiness of her members. The temple has disappeared. I don't think that theologically it is fair to study the land and abstract it from the totality of the other elements which make up Judaism. In rabbinic tradition the temple is more important than the land. In the yeshiva in Jerusalem there are all kinds of students studying all that surrounds the sacrifices, and I am pretty sure that they are going to repeat the temple, repeat the sacrifices.

de Corneille: The land is seen, in fact, as the temple in a certain sense. When you look at the liturgy of the haggadah you know perfectly well that it is the steps to it. The temple cannot be thought of without the land.

Martin: I still say that in Judaism the law is as important as the land. The monarchy was extremely important. Sociologically speaking, the configuration of factors has changed through the years. At certain moments some factor was more evident than another. In this context we can ask ourselves what is the meaning of promise, when the promise has not been fulfilled for the monarchy and the promise has not been fulfilled for the temple and the promise even for the law--Reform Judaism says that the law does not oblige. If some of the basic factors of Judaism have passed away, my question is, Why does one factor, the land, have to remain when the others have disappeared?

Flannery: I think, Father Martin, that you don't realize how replete, how saturated both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Talmud and the Jewish liturgy and secular writings are with the land. I believe the Talmud is one-third concerned with the land. I would tend to say that the Hebrew Scriptures have that theme throughout from the very first page. I would say that it is one of the main motifs of the entire revelation. For you to downgrade it in favor of the monarchy or the temple is to see it out of proportion, is to diminish its proportion in the revelation.

Martin: St. Paul doesn't mention it in the letter to the Romans, in his famous text.

Harter: He mentions the covenant and the promises.

Flannery: I'm keeping to the Hebrew Scriptures or writings.

Martin: The famous work of Solomon Baron, which was developed thirty years ago, had as its whole meaning that Israel has transcended the land. Now when a mind like Solomon Baron before 1948 could have written such a chapter...Nobody knew Jewish history like Solomon Baron.

Oesterreicher: It is exactly the same thing with the temple. The rabbis taught that the prayer of the heart takes the place of the sacrifices of the temple. Now that they are back in Israel the question poses itself anew.

If I may put a question to Professor von Waldow in regard to his statement that God still acts in history, which most of us would accept. But the question was always very ambiguous, what criteria are there for accepting that the rejuvenation of the people of Israel is an act of God in history? I propose some very concrete criteria. The Arabs who are Muslims, and therefore part of what you might consider a universalistic religion, the Arabs are preoccupied with their own problems and nothing else. But little Israel, particularist Israel, devotes a great deal of its time and effort to aid the young African and Asian nations, and incidentally they do not call it aid but international cooperation. To me this is a religious act; to me this is a sign that even those who call themsleves irreligious are religious. To me this is a criterion that God is at work here, that the land is not just the promised land but the land of promise.

von Waldow: According to my understanding of the Bible, their promise, given by God, is a promise and still holds true. Everything which has been given in the OT as a promise has still some value today. What the OT shows us is that sometimes the fulfillment of a promise is delayed or interrupted. Take such exciting events as Abraham who is to sacrifice his own son, or the patriarchs in the promised land. They <u>were</u> there, and all of a sudden they left it. A dramatic thing happens. Jacob dies; his bones are brought to the promised land. Then at least his bones are there again. Then comes the exile. They owned the land but they leave it. Again the return. You were referring to II Sam.7, Nathan's prophecy. It is said there will be a king of the throne of David. There <u>will be</u> a king. All this has some meaning today.

Martin: How can you have a king of the house of David when the house of David has disappeared?

von Waldow: I don't know.

Martin: When the Messiah comes back, but today? Or if you accept that the promise to David has to be interpreted in a different way.

von Waldow: I am not the one who fulfills the promises of God, so I do not care that there is no king of the house of David now in Jerusalem. Golda Meir certainly is not. Now my Christian belief comes in. Something will happen. The only thing I can say is that I'm closely watching.

Martin: It doesn't matter. As I have mentioned before, the whole problem is that of ownership. Who owns the land? That is the whole question. Where is the validity of ownership of Israel? Even the ulpan in Jerusalem made Genesis an interpretation of the promise to Abraham and my teacher said, "This is the basis of our right to this land." This is taught in the ulpan in Jerusalem. "This is our birthright. The ownership of the land is in this text." The whole point of my paper was to prove that we have to approach the problem in secular terms, from the viewpoint of modern theology, from the viewpoint of ethics, in terms of justice and service, and not from the viewpoint of faith and order. My conviction is that if you want as theologians to approach the problem in terms of faith and order, then you have to answer this problem of the validity of the promise to David. Let's make a distinction between the purely descriptive and pragmatic approach, the approach in terms of ethics, morality, international law--the only one on which we can dialogue--and the strictly theological approach.

von Waldow: But that all depends on the question, on what grounds do you discuss the matter? Let us say, as a Jew, worshipping in the synagogue, now on religious grounds, I could say, "This land is given to us." Then I would be following the theological pattern. On the political level, I would use other categories. The problem then is how to bring the political reality together with my religious belief. History tells us that we are always in trouble when people try to bring their religious beliefs about by means of force.

Littell: The chairman is in a quandary. There are seven people who want to get into the discussion, and we are already seven minutes beyond the time allotted. I think that we must turn to the question of the future of the working party.

Harter: A point of order. Will we have a chance before the meeting ends to bring to the rest of the group those things which stemmed out of the discussions we had on the Hervormde Kerk document?

Littell: You see, that's the question. We have a statement from Mr. Harter--it's not a committee statement. We also have a committee statement, and we have three other statements, two of them by people who are not here. I think we will have to come back to this.

Future of the Working Party

The working party was appointed two years ago to work for two years. The working party has now run out of both time and money. The question is, Are we to meet again? If so, how are we going to manage it? Fortunately some members of the working party have been able to do other business at the same time and in the same place so that we have been able to keep our expenses very reasonable. I think it's averaging about $300 a shot. Sister Ann Patrick, do you want to say a word about our situation?

Ware: Simply this: We have exhausted our funds for this year and have no assurance of any funds for next year. When we say that the meeting is costing about $350, that's just our share. That isn't counting the part paid by the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations. Most of that, as you know, is for travel. There are several possibilities about how we might proceed for the future but I think we'll have to do it without reliance on the kind of money Faith and Order had available last year and up to the present time.

Littell: I would assume that the group should report through the chairman and the secretary to Dr. Espy, and to Father Flannery's institute which has been supporting us, and I would like also to assume that we would lay upon Dr. Espy and the General Board that, considering the importance of the subject which we are discussing and the quality of the papers and the discussions which we have had, the $1000 or $1200 a year at the most which is involved is very minimal. That, at least, we ought to lay on the consciences of the brethren. What else ought we to do?

de Corneille: Could I ask a question? Could this question be addressed to the officer of the National Council of Churches who is present as to what this outlook and opinion are about the concern and commitment, involvement and intentions of the NCC might be if such a communication were sent. What is the lay of the land in reality there about this group continuing, about how they see its importance in Christian-Jewish relations? What priorities, if any; where does it rank?

Littell: I think it is fair to say that we've had the full support of Dr. Norgren and his team, and we also received a most cordial treatment in presenting a report, with Dr. Marshall in the chair, at the meeting of the commission which oversees this and other working parties.

Norgren: In the Faith and Order Commission there is great interest in this subject, though there are some who have varying opinions on the substance of the matter, as you might expect. The Council, as a whole, is going through difficult times in terms of budget cuts. Whenever money is now provided for something, even a thousand or

two, means removal of something else. I think we should build as strong a case as we can for this cause and its value, and confront the Council as a whole with the issue at this time. I have no way of knowing what the outcome would be but I would suppose that with the considerable anxiety there is everywhere, even among people not too familiar with this particular subject, for relationships with the Jewish people, particularly after Rabbi Tanenbaum's blast recently, there might be some willingness to consider it seriously. I think it would be irresponsible not to make some proposals. What would be most helpful would be to determine where we are in this project in terms of the subject, and what we would like to discuss. There's a second question of where we are in direct Christian dialogue with the Jews, and whether the NCC ought to enter into that sphere too.

Ware: Do you think that there would have to be a different plan from simply keeping this as a part of the Faith and Order operations? The kind of thing that we're talking about now would be a support that might come from selective member churches who might contribute to this project and this project alone. But if it is to come out of F&O resources there's no possibility of that for the future, is there?

Norgren: We're talking now about sources that would come out of general funds which would have to be requested.

Littell: Father Flannery, what is our relation to your operation?

Flannery: It's rather close, I would say. It's understood that we would take care of the Catholic end of it.

Ware: And then we split the general expenses.

Flannery: Yes, and these have been rather small so far. If it were to continue on this same basis, we could go on. I would see no difficulty unless there were a large increase in percentage.

Littell: Then our real problem is the NCC side. It seems to me that we have come together enough and reached agreement deep enough as to the importance of the issue. At least that should be laid upon the consciences of the leaders of the United Presbyterian Church, The United Methodist Church, The United Church of Christ, and so forth, as well as Ed Espy, the General Secretary and David Hunter, his associate. We still have areas where we have a lot of head-knocking to do before we reach some form of words which is generally acceptable. On the other hand, certainly the moral earnestness which is obvious in the discussions when you have seven or eight people eager to get in on important points would indicate that this is a terribly serious issue. As far as I'm concerned, I think there's no problem more ancient in Christian theology and history than the relationship of the Christian Church and the Jewish people, and no litmus test is available as to the

seriousness of Christian intellectual discipline which is better than that. If it would be appropriate, I would think that we ought to lay our concerns before the General Secretary and also before the leaders of the denominations. Certainly no one could keep Roy and me from doing that with the Methodist bishops. Should we draw up a statement and agree that we will approach our denominational leaders, or should we send the same thing to the denominational leaders that we send to the General Secretary?

Norgren: One of the purposes of the NCC is to coordinate. I think we should draw up a statement. It just happens that next week the F&O executive committee is meeting and could try to project this statement to the budget and program team of the Council through the General Secretary. That's the body that disposes of general funds. At the same time the Council is faced with cuts in staff and program, including areas like social justice and peace. You can see, then, that there will be severe pressures, so I think that it ought to be a good statement. I think the other two places to go, foundations and the denominations, ought to be considered too.

Olson: Would it help if an organization such as NCCJ guaranteed to underwrite the cost of at least this meeting?

Littell: How about the October meeting?

Olson: My budget year ends at the end of September. Would it help to pick up the NCC tab for this meeting so that you could hold a meeting in October?

Ware: If we can safeguard those funds it will. (To Norgren) Can you promise to do that?

Norgren: That's a tricky question. I don't know what I can promise now.

Oesterreicher: Can Dr. Olson put that money in some account to be used later?

Olson: If I make a general commitment to underwrite the cost of one meeting will that help us?

Littell: In the meantime we would be able to go ahead with this request to the denominations and the Council. That sounds wonderful to me.

There are two considerations connected with this. As you know, we have resisted every pressure to do the immediate. This problem has taken centuries to create and to become as serious as it is. Therefore, we will soberly and seriously move in with no insistence that everything's got to be done immediately. The other question--and I don't see the commission functioning efficiently unless it can function the way it has in the past--is the fact that we have some papers and materials which are very good, if I may say so. I think that we might even consider putting out a volume of essays and critiques to move out beyond the information which we have sent to the seminaries and graduate schools of religion to draw them

into the working party's interaction. Another thing is, if we are to continue beyond these two years, wouldn't there be some wisdom in re-grouping? We have some members of the working party who haven't attended, not people who have excused themselves because of conflict, which always happens, but who are inactive and need perhaps to be replaced. I served as chairman of the working party for four sessions and I think we ought to consider getting a new chairman.

de Corneille: One of the factors I hope we can discuss, not in order to affect the discussion about the continuation of this specific group, has to do with the total problem of the lack of priority in the relationship of the church with Judaism. The whole question of the Church in its discussion with people of other faiths, the discussion with those who do not believe in the Christian faith, of Judaism being that which is at hand, which affects the Church uniquely. The priority is so low and has all the time been very low. This is true among Protestant denominations especially. We want to survive ourselves, for from this can grow fellowship and by its very survival we can look at this problem. We should be concerned, though, because this involves the relationship of the Church to the Jewish people. Maybe we should each pay in our own money and have a meeting to put our heads together to face up to this problem. I think we should bring in OT scholars particularly because somehow I think they understand the relevance of this question to the Christian faith.

Martin: Is there a certitude that we will keep secretarial help?

Ware: That's not certain yet. However, Father Flannery's office might consider that.

Martin: The National Council of Churches in England has done the work we are doing, a working party of only seven people. And they have published a booklet of 33 pages, which is a remarkable piece of work. My suggestion is to send to every member this booklet and then to have a few local chapters, where people don't have to travel too far, like Yale, Columbia, Chicago, small groups of from four to seven people, who would carefully read this statement of the National Council of Churches in England and say, "We cannot admit it because of one, two..." or "It is not complete because of one, two..." If we try to formulate clearly the topics which need to be discussed, and there will be a kind of agreement that these are the very crucial topics--I was mentioning, for example, the validity of the promise, the secular character of the problem, etc.--why couldn't we have such groups meeting four times a year or even monthly instead of our meeting twice a year? Each group would really study a specific question, publish a very short paper and send it to the other groups. There would be real study going on. Perhaps in three or four years time we could meet together. The chairman would still have to advise the work, choose the people who would be in the groups.

Littell: But, Father Martin, you don't need a chairman or a working party at all to do that. It's a very good idea, but that can be staffed from an office. In fact, we ought to do it anyway. We ought to do it on

the Quaker statement. That was what we thought we were doing on the Hervormde Kerk statement. The real question we are asking is, Shall we try to survive as a working party, not, How we can augment or improvise in case disaster overtakes us.

Are we agreed now that we have funds to ensure at least one more meeting, that we will approach the Council and the denominations for support?

Could we perhaps pick a date?

Oesterreicher: I have to leave but I do want to say that I hope we can continue. In case a new chairman is proposed, I want to be counted as voting that the new chairman be the old chairman.

(October 15, Friday, was chosen as the next date. LaGuardia will be investigated as possible site.)

Littell: What about the regrouping? Do you want to entrust this task to Father Flannery, Sister Ann and me?

Harter: If anyone has recommendations I'm sure we could feel free to mention them to you.

Littell: We don't want to lop anyone off. With your permission we will ask those who have not been with us for some time if they will either activate themselves or be deactivated from the list.

The other question is the chairmanship. I don't think this is a hereditary post, even for discussing the role of the patriarchs. I enjoy it but I do think it would be useful to have somebody else's style and voice as chairman.

Barth: I've gotten used to his voice.

Harter: We're going through a period of clarifying things and you know everything that's happened. I think shifting at this point would be risky.

Barth: End of nominations.

Littell: I appreciate the fact that my closing off discussion at certain points has not been met with resentment. All right, I will do it then until we see what our future is.

Flannery: I move that you succeed yourself for a period of two years.

Eckardt: Would it be politic in the statement that we draw up to get more funds to emphasize that even though our concern is, to be sure, relationships between Christianity and Judaism, that nevertheless we are not going about this thing in any kind of provincial or narrow way, but rather that there are wider implications? For example, for the relationship with Islam. We still haven't got anybody. I hope that we can. I was very disappointed to hear this today. I'm speaking strategically, you understand, not theologically; politically rather than theologically. We should

make the approach as broadly based as possible rather than giving the impression that we're just concerned about something that's narrow, even though we know that it's not narrow. The reason I'm not sure of myself here is that it might seem to be opening the door to something that we've been trying to avoid.

Littell: We will begin immediately to work on getting a Muslim to deal with the subject of the land. We agreed on that. The trouble is that there aren't that many Muslim theologians around, particularly that we can discuss this with.

Lindbeck: Is it worthwhile to widen the mandate of the search committee, if that should be necessary, to look at the possibility of getting a non-Muslim to explain the Muslim point of view.

Littell: It would be too bad if we couldn't find a Muslim.

de Corneille: I take it that you're going to be making a presentation to the National Council asking for their support and that this seems to be taking care of our needs for the moment. I wonder whether we couldn't deal with the question I raised before. The reason we're in this trouble is because the priority of the Jewish question for the churches is so low.

Littell: But we're also saying that it is wrongly so low. If we become a committee on the importance of interreligious discourse, then we've broadened out before we've even reached some understanding on some terribly important points.

de Corneille: But we need some kind of action.

Littell: I would be grateful, Roland, if you would write me a letter, or Sister Ann, which we could send out to the members of the commission indicating what you think would be appropriate for the working party to do. I thought publication might widen the argument. But would you indicate what implementation you would propose? That would at least get us on the track.

de Corneille: I don't think I know the American scene well enough to be able to come up with suggestions really useful.

Littell: For the first time in 30 years I've seen a group of thinking theologians devote themselves seriously to a problem which has been untouched.

Norgren: Perhaps we could gather a small group just to deal with this problem.

Harter: It's very hard to know how to move till we see what the NCC does with our request. There is no other ongoing operation of the NCC which is even dealing with this subject.

Meeting adjourned 5 PM.

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MINUTES OF ISRAEL STUDY MEETING
LaGuardia Airport, New York City
October 15, 1971

CONFIDENTIAL

The meeting opened at 10:45 with the following present:

Participants: Markus Barth, Roy Eckardt, Edward Flannery, Robert Handy, Walter Harrelson, William Harter, George Lindbeck, Franklin Littell, John Oesterreicher, Bernhard Olson, John Pawlikowski, Donna Purdy, Leo Rudloff, John Sheerin, Rose Thering.

Guests: Josephine Casgrain, Alice Eckardt.

Consultant: John Townsend

Staff: Ann Patrick Ware

Regrets sent by Roland de Corneille, Coert Rylaarsdam and George Williams were noted.

A letter of resignation from the study by Preston Williams was read.

The chairman, Dr. Franklin Littell, in his opening remarks submitted some points for meditation (Appendix A).

He announced that Dr. Hassan Hanafi, now of Temple University and formerly of the University of Cairo and of the Sorbonne, has agreed to give the paper on "A Muslim Understanding of the Land" at the Spring meeting.

Future of the Study

A. P. Ware summarized the situation: The study was originally set up so that Christian scholars, having clarified some of the controverted issues within their own household, might enter into dialogue with Jews. At the time the study was inaugurated no terminal date was set. We are now beginning our third year (i.e., two meetings a year) and through the benevolence of Bernhard Olson's office can complete that year with another meeting in the Spring. But the group must decide (1) whether a terminal date should be set for this phase of the study; (2) whether the study ought then to move into the direction originally planned, i.e., Jewish-Christian dialogue, or in some other direction; (3) whether it is ready to publish any of its materials or conclusions. She added that under present conditions, the Commission on Faith and Order cannot foresee further financing of the study.

John Pawlikowski said that he could virtually assure the group of support from funds designated for social concerns by his order (Servites) for one more year.

Participants were then asked to declare themselves on the subject of the study's continuing beyond the three meetings now financially assured. Thirteen thought it ought to continue and offered suggestions for changes in procedure, viz., meet more often; spread out in influence; sum up from time to time expressing areas of agreement and disagreement; build up corpus of materials and work toward some combination of archives and publishing; become independent of sponsoring agencies.

Three thought the study ought to be brought to a close when it has finished another year's work. M. Barth said that it has proved that no significant differences exist between Protestants and Catholics on the subjects discussed. The study should continue only if it can become a setting in which Jews, Muslims and Christians can converse. Professors Handy and Lindbeck agreed with this position.

There was general agreement that the study should proceed along its present lines for three more meetings. The problem of what publishing should be done, if any, was deferred to a later point in the meeting.

The Townsend Report

The chairman called on Dr. John Townsend of Philadelphia Divinity School for his progress report on the subject, "Land Promises in the NT" (Appendix B).

Townsend (concluding): Whatever you can say positively that Jesus or Paul might not have said, I don't think that you can find confirmation of the land-promises in every part of the NT as a whole. At least the Stephen speech seems to be quite negative about it. I'm in the middle of my research; I have not yet finished my reading. May be the conclusion will be that we cannot be definite.

Oesterreicher: You didn't mention "theirs are the promises" in Romans 9, which of course includes the land-promises. And this is in the present tense. Two Catholic translations into English of late, the so-called Jerusalem Bible and the New American Catholic translation, put all these things in the past, which I think is a senseless procedure for any translator to do.

Townsend: When I said Romans 11, I really meant Romans 9-11, and this is the kind of thing I have to go into more.

Oesterreicher: Would you at least acknowledge the possibility that the words "theirs are the promises" imply that the promises of the Land continue?

Townsend: At least until the eschaton.

Oesterreicher: Certainly not beyond that. (Laughter)

Townsend: But remember that Paul expected the eschaton at least sometimes in his own lifetime. Paul is ambivalent. In one place he says, "You are the Christians." In another he deals with Israel as having a very special place.

Harter: In Romans isn't Paul's expectation of the imminent eschaton declining?

Townsend: If he wrote it near Corinthians, and he seems to have. Usually Romans and the two Corinthian epistles are dated rather close to each other, and it's in Corinthians that he's telling some older ladies that the eschaton is upon us and maybe you ought to think twice about marriage.

Oesterreicher: I have a second question. Is it possible to interpret in our context the beautitude, "The meek will inherit the land?"

Townsend: I haven't gone into that yet. I'm very pessimistic about trying to say what Jesus might or might not have meant by it. Although I'm pretty sure that Jesus said about 80 per cent of the sayings attributed to him, I'm not sure which 80 per cent. Furthermore, maybe he put it in one context or another. Besides, this would have to be dealt with in the context of Matthew's theology.

Oesterreicher: Unless I am mistaken, I believe Friedrich Marquart whom you mentioned at the beginning of your paper tends to interpret this positively.

Townsend: Yes he does. I wish he had done more exegetical work on this. He seems to speak more in generalizations than in careful exegesis.

Oesterreicher: Maybe Markus can tell us something since I think Marquart got all his inspiration from Karl Barth.

Barth: My father has nothing specific on the land; at least, I didn't find it. While I have the floor, may I thank you very much for that paper? Do you know that W.D. Davies has a paper on "Jerusalem and the Land in the Christian Tradition?" It has not been printed yet and therefore is not widespread. May I just read where he ends up so that you may know how important these things are which we have heard? Davies says these riches of Abraham--cattle, gold and what not--are all indications of the spiritual riches which were to be inherited when Christ would come. His paper ends precisely that way, with spiritualization. For the holiness of place the NT has substituted fundamentally the holiness of the person, he says; Jesus Christ, the Holy One, the Sanctifier at whatever place you may find around the globe. I believe this goes even far beyond Philo, because Philo retained all that spiritualization and allegorization and yet staked his life on concrete things.

As for Paul, I believe that in addition to individual quotations, that is the promises and the "Israel of God," a major point is the collection for Jerusalem. The collection has not been given its due right in interpretation except maybe by Munck (The Salvation of the Gentiles). Paul, the top Judaeo-Christian you can imagine (he is not an anti-Jewish Christian; he is the Jewish Christian par excellence), Paul turns to Jerusalem for the times of celebration; he shaves his head, he stakes his life all for Jerusalem, for being in the Temple. Jerusalem has for Paul a very eschatological meaning. The collection is not made, as Munck has pointed out, primarily for charitable reasons, though he says that the poor are the poor of the saints in Jerusalem (and the poor is a nobility-term, elect remnant of God's people that begins in the psalms). The collection is made for that center of God's manifestation to which all the gentiles according to the prophets (Micah and Isaiah specifically) shall eventually bring their riches. So when Paul organizes on Sundays and other days that regular collection and assembles delegates who will bring coffers to Jerusalem, I think that indicates that his apostolic mission of expansion was never without very intensive orientation back to Jerusalem. I believe that this is a little signal, at least, which makes it quite explicit that Paul did not forget that. I do not believe that he wanted to establish Jerusalem as a sort of "true Rome." I believe it had much more to do with the Temple in Jerusalem, that place of manifestation and faithfulness of God without which the Christian message could not be preached and Christ could not be believed.

Townsend: The collection does seem to be obviously more than just helping the poor in Jerusalem but I'm not sure exactly what the significance is. I'd love to tie it in with Munck's theory that when you bring the collection up to Jerusalem, it's going to show that the gentiles are therefore being saved, the Jews are going to be jealous, and this will convert all the Jews. But this seems a bit hypothetical to me.

As far as the spiritualization is concerned, it is true, that the later you get, the more you get the meaning spiritualized. But think of this, that there is a parallel spiritualization within Judaism, especially after 132. I've done some work on the expectations of the rebuilding of the Temple within Judaism, and up to 132 there's always the strong feeling that it can be done. After that time the feeling gradually erodes so that any rebuilding is going to be done by God. I suggest that in Revelation when the author speaks of a new Jerusalem coming to earth, rather than spiritualize it, he makes it bigger. I don't think that author would make our distinctions between myth and history. It seems to me that what we have is not so much a spiritualization but an expansion so that Jerusalem would encompass the whole earth, and everyone gets in, Jew and gentile.

Spiritualization is one way to deal with promises that prove embarrassing. This is found in the Fourth Gospel in the speech between Pilate and Jesus, not over land but over kingship, which has something to do with land. I would see this as a post-70 development within Christian theology when then (and even earlier) to say very much unspiritualized about land-promises in a gentile world will get you in a heap of trouble. This is why I tried, as much as I could, to get back before 70.

Littell: We ought to underline doubly the point you're making about Jerusalem because particularly in our circles of Protestantism the tendency is to spiritualize the meaning out of existence, and it is a watershed whether you move in the direction of spiritualization or whether you move in the direction of that which was revealed in Jerusalem filling then the whole earth.

Pawlowski: Ellis Rivkin in his study on the Pharisees (you have to be a little bit careful of Rivkin in that he's coming out of the Reform tradition and that may color some of his desires) has an article in the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion called "The Internal City" and that's a clue to what he feels the Pharisees did for Jewish tradition. There is a tendency to say that the Jewish tradition cannot be locked solely to the land; it can live with deep faith in diaspora. There's also a universalization: other people who do not live in the land can begin to share in this. Then there's the question, to what extent did this influence Jesus, the early Church, Paul, etc.

Flannery: Isn't there a direct reference to the land from which you can draw a negative argument in that episode from the Synoptics where the disciples ask Jesus, "When will the kingdom of Israel be restored," and he does not repudiate the idea but only says that it is not for us to know the time?

Townsend: I think he's referring to the eschaton there. It's hard to say about Jesus. To what extent was he a revolutionary? I don't know exactly what he was expecting. If I had to make a guess, I think probably in some very real sense he expected a legion of angels to come and do something. We don't think in these terms but in the first century people did.

Flannery: But these would be Jews within the ministry of Jesus who would not yet have been spiritualized or have learned allegorization. (Of course, they could from their own Jewish tradition.) But I think at that stage of history this is what the Jews, the disciples thought, not what Jesus might have thought. When they said the kingdom of Israel, I should have thought they meant the kingdom of Israel.

Townsend: It is a matter of date and of form criticism. Incidentally there were a few rabbis who in the early eighteenth century practiced form criticism in the classical sense, long before any Christian ever thought of it.

Pawlikowski: The point I'm trying to make is that spiritualization could be a bad word here. I think there was a movement within the pharisaic tradition away from a limited geographic understanding of the land. It wasn't to move away from involvement in concrete affairs or concern about land, but--maybe universalizing is a better word.

Lindbeck: You have lumped together under the promises of the land the business of occupancy and freedom from Roman occupation. If you're going to make a distinction, it would seem to me that the promise of the land would include at least occupancy. It would be absurd to think that this promise was spiritualized since that would be an anti-Jewish act, before 70 at any rate. The promise of God includes at least the occupancy of the land. It's hard for me to visualize how any early Christian could have thought otherwise, because the Jews were in occupancy.

Townsend: The reason that I threw in the anti-Roman bit is because this would be an argument against spiritualization. You don't have to be anti-Roman to believe in the land.

Oesterreicher: I think that spiritualization is a very ambiguous word. Does it mean only spiritual significance or does it mean that it doesn't have only material significance but also and above that spiritual significance? And that spiritual significance about Jerusalem you find in pre-rabbinical Jewish literature. The apocalyptic literature is full of it. Paul and the author of the Apocalypse took their ideas about the heavenly Jerusalem from the apocalyptic books. That's a Jewish idea before it becomes a Christian idea.

Townsend: But the heavenly Jerusalem doesn't contradict an earthly Jerusalem.

Oesterreicher: No. In the Christian tradition it seems to, but it doesn't.

Report on the NCC Panel on the Middle East

R. Handy gave a report on the NCC Panel on the Middle East of which he is a member.

Background: Before the General Board of the National Council last June an individual proposed a resolution on the status of Jerusalem and the treatment of non-Jews in Israel and occupied territories which represented one certain set of interests. He protested the annexation of East Jerusalem, for example, and wanted the General Board to adopt that in a resolution. The General Board said no to the resolution but requested that a panel be set to work to brief the General Board on this matter.

The General Secretary is entrusted with making preparations for consideration of this by the General Board. He has chosen to call a panel, which he chairs; the staff person related to the panel is deputy general secretary, David Hunter.

Membership: See Appendix C of these minutes.

Progress: The group has had one meeting so far, largely informational, a sharing of general perspectives, a briefing by Landrum Bolling. The principal agenda was provided by a paper by Bill Harter on the status of Jerusalem and one by Richard Butler on human rights in the Middle East. The discussion was begun and will be continued in the next meeting. Denis Baly has responded at length to Bill Harter's paper on the status of Jerusalem. The next meeting is scheduled for October 19. Dick Butler and Bill Harter presented a progress report to the General Board at its New Orleans meeting, September 10-11.

The mandate of the panel is to prepare some kind of report for the General Board at its meeting in February, 1972, at Charlotte, N.C. There is considerable polarity of perspective within the Middle East panel itself so it should produce a rather interesting engagement. Members of the panel have reiterated their intention to work cooperatively with other Christians who are directly involved with this problem as well as with Jews and Moslems.

Sharing of Information

Holy Land Seminars: F. Littell reported that there is enough interest at Temple University to think of establishing a place in Israel where people in theology, church history and related disciplines can send their graduate students or spend sabbaticals just as biblical and archaeological people have been doing.

Seminar on America and the Holy Land: Plans are in the offing for the Seminar on the Holy Land, jointly conducted by R. Handy and Moshe Davis, to be held during a summer in Israel, with the hope that a small consortium of American seminaries will be willing to join Union Theological and Jewish Theological Seminaries as co-sponsors. (Cf. Robert T. Handy, "Studies in the Interrelationships between America and the Holy Land: A Fruitful Field for Interdisciplinary and Interfaith Cooperation," Journal of Church and State 13, 2 [Spring 1971], 283-301.)

Church Struggle and the Holocaust: Wayne State, Temple and probably the University of Washington are joining to hold a seminary on the Church Struggle and the Holocaust which will involve three weeks in Germany of discussions with Church Struggle people, those involved in restitution loss, etc.; and four weeks in Israel of archaeological-biblical site-visiting and discussions with people from the Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Yad Vashem, and church representatives. Present plans are to sponsor such a seminary every two years, beginning next summer.

Seton Hall Menorah Institute envisions a trip of 25 to 30 teachers to Israel for visiting and lectures. The Institute also looks toward cooperation with the newly emerging University of Lucerne on a small symposium of exegetes and theologians on the Covenant.

American Historical Association will have an afternoon of papers on the Church Struggle, Catholic and Protestant experience of the Nazi period.

American Society of Church History will have an afternoon on the same general theme.

Wayne State Conference will be held in March; invitations to be issued shortly.

London Hebrew University and the Alfred Wiener Library will sponsor in July a conference of Christian and Jewish scholars on The Holocaust.

Members of The Israel Study agreed to circulate materials among themselves. Faith and Order Secretariat will provide mailing list.

Drafting Committee

The convictions of the working party in the form of a message to the churches will be prepared by a committee of three and circulated to the whole body for addition, critique, etc. Committee is formed by John Sheerin, chairman, Bill Harter and John Oesterreicher. Barth proposed that the statement be short rather than long. Oesterreicher proposed that it be done in thesis form with the development of each thesis worked out in subsequent pages, thus one page of theses with five to eight pages of back-up material following.

Publishing

The question of publishing papers, critiques and minutes of the study was raised. No agreement could be reached either that the materials should be published or that they should not. The conclusion was that if any member of the study group wanted to put together a book built on the papers and discussions of the working party, he or she should proceed.

The report of the study which is to be presented to the F&O Commission in March may very well contain the statement of the drafting committee (message to the churches) and whatever other material is needed for this interim report. A summation of the entire work of the study should be made at the end of the first phase, i.e., after three more meetings.

Future Financial Support

A committee was appointed to draw up a prospectus formulating plans for the working party's life a year and a half from now: Ann Patrick Ware, convener, B. Olson, R. Eckardt and F. Littell. Suggestions were made to seek foundation help and to strengthen contacts with Johan Snoek's and Cornelius Rijk's agencies.

Reports of Sub-Committees on Dutch Reformed Church Statement

Rylaarsdam-Pawlikowski Recommendation: Some sort of common statement should be the goal of this working party; a subcommittee should be appointed to prepare it; Dutch Church statement could be used as a starting point.

Eckardt-Harter Recommendation:

1. Group should move in the direction of a statement but neither the Dutch nor the Quaker statement is a good place to begin. In making a statement, two sets of factors should be kept in mind. Practical: Statement should register gropingness, tentative quality, non-final aspect; should allow place for minority position; would have to grapple with terms (anti-Jewish or antisemitic); should question whether what we are doing is dangerous for Jews or not (good intentions not enough). Theological: Dutch statement did not deal sufficiently with attitude toward biblical authority, i.e., never clear whether NT was taken seriously and everything had to be based on what NT said, or whether theological construct was being put together which occasionally referred to NT among other things. Perhaps middle ground has to be found between fundamentalism and modernism, and Dutch document does not do this adequately.

2. A second issue to be grappled with is a dichotomy between faith and history. To what extent are these interrelated instead of two separate realms?

3. The category of the demonic might be a very useful tool to take more seriously, because the demonic permits the recognition of guilt without putting it all on the shoulders of two or three individuals or any one single group. The other side of the coin can be dangerous, that is, it can take away individual responsibility. Still the category of the demonic is a theological tool that can have great potential.

4. Whatever we do we mustn't end up playing with Israel as a set of symbols.

Discussion of Rylaarsdam Paper

Msgr. Oesterreicher assumed the chair to lead the discussion and called upon George Lindbeck to start.

Lindbeck: As someone who is not at all involved in OT studies, I found the OT material splendid, admirably lucid and persuasive. I couldn't be at all sure, however, that it was right, since I don't have a basis for quarreling with it. But when it came to the NT material, the treatment of Church history, the development of doctrine since the NT period, my reactions were the reverse. For someone who had made all kinds of discriminations within the OT materials, different kinds of views and theologies, it came as an astonishment to discover that the same person was treating the NT as if it were a single bloc, as if there were no variation in the eschatological and historical outlooks of the NT. I found it utterly baffling (once again speaking as one who is not especially involved in NT studies) how anyone could talk about the NT as completely eschatological in the way R uses the term. My reaction was that he was describing all of the NT as if it represented the kind of view that Paul was polemicizing against in Corinth; it sounded as if he were making the NT more completely eschatological than Bultmann's view of John.

Then on the basis of this reaction, which may be unfair to R since he deals very briefly with the NT materials, this reaction was intensified when it came to his scattered comments on what happened to Christian thought after the NT period. He said that it has taken us 1900 years to begin overcoming the difficulty which the extreme eschatology of the NT has left us with. I would have thought that what R is calling eschatology, that is, Christ as the end of history in such a way that nothing at all happened between the time of Christ and the parousia, became even more intense after the biblical period. After all, it wasn't until Augustine that the millennium is identified with the period of the Church, and that identification continued as the generally accepted view down through most of the remainder of Church history. I would have supposed that what one would have had to say is that it's only recently that we have begun escaping from extreme eschatologizing, and that it is not so much to be found in the NT as in the post-NT period of Church history.

In the light of these comments the problematic that the NT leaves us with does not seem to me to be as radical as R wants to make it. The final paragraph of the paper, suggesting how this viewpoint facilitates the guaranteed possibility of fruitful interchange between Christians and Jews, was so brief and enigmatic that I really don't know what it's saying.

From the viewpoint of a systematic theologian it might be possible to say that the only developed systematic treatments of Christianity how available which take account of the kind of problematic we're speaking of, that is, which interpret Jesus Christ in the framework of what in R's categories would be called a more historical and less completely eschatological perspective, the only christologies now available which do this are those of Moltmann and Pannenberg. I tend to think that the sort of problem R is talking about has not as dramatically different a character as he seems to want to make out, but that it is a real problem. And I would add that it does demand a change in our classical christology, I do think that this is a program for the future rather than something for which one can say there are available solutions.

Oesterreicher: I don't remember anything about the origin of the paper, but even though the last paragraphs are very short and for George Lindbeck enigmatic, I think the real purpose of the paper is not that of a scholarly exercise or just of OT exegesis but to prepare a basis for a true dialogue between Christians and Jews.

Pawlikowski: I had much the same feeling that George Lindbeck did, but with a few differences. The analysis of the relationship between the two covenants is highly dependent on OT materials with which I don't have a scholarly familiarity, but granted that it's a true presentation, it has some insights for me. However, I was troubled as to whether this was intended to be the analysis of the basis of the problem of trying to present christology in the context of a Christian-Jewish dialogue. If the presentation of the relation between the two covenants is an accurate presentation, I think it helps to enlighten a possible reason why Christianity lost interest in the here-and-now and concentrated on the eschatological. However, the Exodus and the Mosaic Covenant were in a sense eschatological. The difference between the Davidic and the Mosaic seemed to lie in the sense of responsibility for this world. If the early Church understood Christ as the end-time, that the Messianic age had come, no matter which of the eschatologies you had, the sense of responsibility for the world could have been lost.

As a statement of an overall theology, as a basis for discussing the relationship of Christianity and Judaism from the standpoint of christology, I find the paper terribly incomplete. I think it is too simplistic to say that the whole answer to the christology of the NT is rooted in the fact that the Church accepted a Davidic rather than an Exodus understanding of eschatology. That may be a part of it, but I'd say a small part. It doesn't help us positively to come to grips with what the unique element is. I certainly wouldn't want to say that Christianity was a totally new religious perspective, that it embodies every single insight that man has to have for religious understanding, but I would certainly want to say that it embodies something new and terribly crucial. I think this is the type of thing we have to ferret out as we have to try to see the unique elements in Judaism. The paper does not help me terret out those unique elements I might bring to a dialogue with a Jewish scholar. I find it, therefore, of very limited use from the standpoint of dialogue. As an analysis of what happened in the OT I presume it's accurate.

Harrelson: I really don't find it accurate. I find it highly suggestive but far from accurate. The really great thing, it seems to me, is that the Israelite prophets came along and were able to say, "Yes, Zion." That is one way of affirming the presence of God with his people. Yes, let the mythological dimensions emerge, let them stand there, but let them also show their concrete import for the life of the people here and now in this world. The songs to which he refers do use imagery of chaos, imagery of the primordial creation and all of that, but they do it with a bent toward the historic. We can't identify who the enemy is behind Psalm 46 or 48, but we know that some historical enemies also are in view as that psalmist wrote what he wrote. These are not just the primordial enemies knocking him over. And the relation between the Israel covenant and the covenant with David is so interwoven in, for example, Isaiah, in the book of Micah, as well as in Zechariah and some of the later passages, that it just does not help us too much sharply to distinguish these and to see that they stand in Israel, the one predominating and the other always threatening and constituting a kind of polarity.

What I rather see is OT literature coming to its end with a very striking sort of knife-edge development. There is, it seems to me, the true polarity. The true polarity lies in the question, Can we believe with the prophets that the new age is pressing in upon this present age and is strangely interwoven with it, and that the call from God is a call to decision here and now, and to entering

in upon the new life, the life that God has for his people which awaits them right now; or do we have to say, either in despair or in a rage or in some other mood, this old age has got to go in order that the new shall come, radically different, radically unlike the present one? That's where the polarity lies, it seems to me, between a prophetic eschatology that's leaning toward the apocalyptic orientation and the more full-blown apocalyptic orientation that benefits from the prophetic.

Frankly, if I turned to the NT I would say the same thing. The NT community is precisely in that position, and that's where the points of connection between Judaism and Christianity are for me. I see in Jesus the apocalyptic prophet, the prophet who's pulled by the conviction that the end of the age is at hand and who sees himself caught up in that last day and who at the same time is beneficiary of the David-imagery, the Zion-imagery as well as the Exodus-imagery. I see the early Christians using all of that imagery, tempted to triumphalism, tempted to a kind of servile servanthood in some of its statements, but really facing the same kinds of religious questions and existential reality that the old Israelite community faced. So I think I would want to say, not the two covenants so much as the question of the extent to which prophecy is being pulled in to a two-ages notion in which there is radical discontinuity and the extent to which one sees the two ages interpenetrating.

Harter: I find that the second paragraph here might have been radically expanded. To me what is missing is a more adequate treatment of the messianic age and what is involved in it. The concept of the messiah as it prevailed in intertestamental Judaism and in the first century was a synthesis of these two elements. Indeed, the expectation was that in the messianic age, among other things, the messiah would have authority to revise the law and would introduce communion, community and shalom. Consequently these functions were integrated in that figure. I'd like to see how R would handle the actual function of the Jewish messiah as it was conceived in that period in terms of each of these elements, and I think this would tie in closely with possible interpretations.

Oesterreicher: Do you wish to say that this is <u>the</u> Jewish image of the messiah?

Harter: No, there is no one <u>only</u> image of the messiah, but that is a major image of the messiah which, it seems to me, synthesizes these two streams.

Oesterreicher: You mentioned revising the law, he would bring a new law. I thought that this is one school of thought, even among the rabbis.

Harter: The authority to reinterpret the law, the authority to supersede previous laws in formulating the economy of the new kingdom.

Lindbeck: What evidence?

Barth: What W.D. Davies says in <u>The Torah and the Messianic Age</u> plays up a few Talmudic passages and gives them a direct overweight (which they don't have), but there are a few passages about the messiah proclaiming a new law. Whether that means a different law is a very difficult question. It may be a new proclamation of the law, like Josiah, when it is actually the old law but reinforced. Still Davies gives it this other interpretation.

Oesterreicher: I think Davies would not speak quite in the same manner today as he did, at least I have heard it said that he disavows this sin of his youth.

Harrelson: But the intertestamental literature, not a part of the Hebrew and not a part of most Christian scripture, does not contain any such thing, to my knowledge. What one has, rather, are those tremendously moving texts speaking of the fantastic difficulty of keeping <u>torah</u> and a kind of holding on fast to faith in God in the midst of an inability to believe in injustice. Second Esdras is, of course, most powerful, and there are others.

Harter: How would you handle the Teacher of Righteousness, in this regard?
Oesterreicher: This discussion is becoming too specialized.
Harter: I feel that what Dr. Harrelson calls suggestive has really got great potential for being helpful because even though these two strands may have never been so purely driven apart as R asserts, it helps us not only in terms of the biblical concepts but very much today, in that you have such a dichotomy existing between those who are really interested in social ethics in the Church and those who are interested in celebration, which is a repristinization of the victory over chaos, as it were. There should be the tools here for a way of understanding why those two trends in the modern church have gone askew from one another and perhaps for putting them back together.
Oesterreicher: Yes, but unless I misunderstand his paper completely, this paper's intent is not to solve a inter-Christian problem but to serve as the basis for dialogue between Christians and Jews.
Harter: He does point out the ways in which these two different formulations have come down in church history, and one of his main points is that we have gradually recovered the historical, but I'm not sure we have. We may have entered into a new period of anti-historicity. I think his suggestions have a lot more to give us than may appear at first reading.
Barth: May I try to present the thing in a softer perspective which brings out the hidden agenda which seems to be on the author's mind? We have the traditional distinction between Old Covenant and New Covenant, identified with Old Testament and New Testament. Obviously Professor Rylaarsdam wants to fight that. We have in addition the Lutheran dichotomy as a key to scripture, law and gospel. Sometimes I think if it was OT-NT, the Jews are the law, we are the gospel. He wants to fight that. We have further Martin Buber and the two-house theory and Rosenzweig, and he wants to offer an alternative, saying, "There is the communal and here is the individual; there the historical and here the eschatological spiritualized." Obviously he has that in mind.

Now the ingenious stroke performed in this paper is that R wants to say right through the whole OT and the life of Israel and right in the midst of the NT and early church history and the whole church history, there are at all times two covenants. So instead of making neat divisions between Israel and the Church, Old and New Testament, he wants to say both testaments agree here in the dialectical tension. We have nothing to say against Jews in the form of superiority; rather we are all together in the same boat.

What comes out in performing this ingenious stroke is a dubious concept of eschatology, because sometimes R means apocalypticism, the end of time; sometimes it means what the prophets said, an extreme deed in time here and now. But it is dubious. Second, it is dubious because in the process of carrying it out a very dim light falls on the whole of christology. I happen to know that Prof. R is of the opinion that christology as such, with the weight it was given in the NT and in the Church, is dangerous. Maybe we Christians ought to retract a little bit from that in order to come more into contact with Jews. That's the agenda which is hidden.

Now the paper is ingenious because it tells us we have grown on the same route, we suffer the same problems; this is dialectic, this is paradox (he calls it somewhere). Then there is this miraculous sentence which says, because it's paradox, therefore it's a solid foundation of history. I don't know whether R

got it from young Niebuhr, Resurrection and Historical Reason, where the truly historical is paradoxical. My difficulty with this paper is that I do not see how he can be justified in biblical terms. The Abraham covenant was also somehow linked up with the David covenant in specific tradition. Then later the Zion mythology takes up the amphictyony mythology which existed first, so there are tie-ins everywhere. This typology with individual vs communal is, it seems to me, entirely artificial.

Eckardt: This paper was originally given as a presidential address last May to the Midwest Section of the American Theological Society, so perhaps this context should be kept in mind. Prof. R has stated independently of his paper that he feels that the Hebrew Bible itself provides an historical and objective basis for the Rosenzweig thesis, which bears out what you are saying, although he nowhere states it here. He argues, of course, that there are the two foci in Israel's tradition that precede Christianity by a thousand years. Several of you who can speak much more knowledgeably than I on this have pointed out that there are doubts about this distinction, this two-covenant notion. I would just say from my limited standpoint that I'm not sure how helpful this is in terms of the Jewish-Christian dialogue because once one takes a successionist standpoint in the Christian faith (I don't but many do) then instead of succeeding one covenant, one, so to speak, succeeds two covenants, so in that sense we're back where we started from.

Handy: As a person who doesn't normally work in these fields I found this a useful analytical device. I wonder whether the weakness of this paper as it stands is that R does not take seriously his own third part, that is, where the two covenants get mixed up and confused. He makes his analysis, which obviously as a device has a certain artificiality. But where the paper seemed to me to break down was part three. Precisely one of the most interesting things is that when these two motifs get inextricably involved, here is where the paper breaks down. Is that right?

Harrelson: Yes.

Barth: I think Prof. R would say the point is exactly that there is no synthesis. There is only the see-saw, back and forth, and so we without Israel, there is not a synthesis. We simply amalgamate. But here we are back to Buber. Only in listening to the other and moving back and forth as history carries us can we exist. And therefore the weakness. There is no Hegelian synthesis. To bear, to stand the dialectic tension, that is to be truly human and to live within God who gives us covenants. So I understand him.

Pawlikowski: The problem is, rather than describing the tension as Judaism vs Christianity, the tension exists within both communities, so it doesn't really help.

Handy: He says that. Someone here, talked about the Exodus and the Davidic eschatology, but I got the impression from the paper that a great deal of what we know of eschatology and apocalyptic in NT and in Christian history precisely comes not out of tension but out of mixture of the two covenants. This is what is not clear to me.

Barth: Say we have a salami before us, why not reconstruct the pig and the calf out of the salami? It can't be done. He tries to do that. That's why we have only salamis actually. It's impossible to reconstruct original animals from it.

Oesterreicher: If I may give a few of my views on the paper from the things that have been mentioned here. I agree that it is a stroke of genius, but why two covenants? There are many more than two covenants. The origin of the paper may solve the riddle why R limits himself to these two covenants, but I don't think you can discount the covenant with Noah if you want to establish a basis for a dialogue with Jews. The covenant with Noah plays absolutely no role in

Christian theology but a major role, strangely enough, in Jewish theology. Whether you call that myth or not, you have to take more seriously the covenant with Noah, which is not a covenant with Israel. And you have to take more seriously the covenant with Abraham, who is for the benefit and blessing of all the families of the earth. But this is nowhere to be found in this paper. My complaint is not that he discusses two covenants but that he discusses only two covenants. If we were able to say to our Jewish brethren, "You always talk about the covenant with Noah and the Noahite commandments and that the gentiles are subject only to the Noahite commandments" it would provide a tension between the communal and the individual and also between the universal and the particular.

Littell: It seems to me that there is another contribution, and that is that it hits where we live in terms of developments in contemporary Protestant theology. It's a reminder of the importance of one of the two covenants he is stressing. Creational theology, celebration, liturgy and so on, in effect, either universalizes covenants to the point where they're relativized and become meaningless, or else you are in a situation where the covenant with the Cherokees and the covenant with the Irish and the covenant with each people where it is found becomes equally important with the covenant with Israel and the Church. In a way he is at least sinking in some fairly deep stakes to remind us that these two covenants are important and that you can't live with one without the other. I find it disturbing to have the experts tell us that it's better construct than it is exegesis, but where I live in the liberal Protestant church any covenant would be welcome.

Oesterreicher: Your community doesn't believe in covenant at all?

Littell: Just to use the illustration mentioned earlier, we have a credo to go before the General Conference of the denomination which is pure celebration. It has nothing to do with anything. It totally abandons the whole question of heilsgeschichte, for want of a better word. You defined it in terms of the particular and the universal. My brethren are so eager to treat with complete and sovereign objectivity and equal disdain, perhaps, the Cherokees and the Irish and the Hungarians and the Japanese and the Burmese that they shy away from any history in the sense that church historians engage, at least once in a while, in a dialogue with the past. I regard it not just as a vocational threat but as a real theological issue. When R tells us that Jews and Christians live in the same dialectical ambiguity, he has done something else which seems to me to be useful.

Oesterreicher: But do they?

Flannery: That's not only Protestant. Dom Graham, the Benedictine monk, in his latest book says that Christians generally should pay much less attention to the scriptures.

Oesterreicher: I don't mean to say that we don't have the same problem, but that's a single point of view. Dom Graham speaks only for himself.

Harter: But these people all have an influence, and there are so many people in the churches who don't know what they believe or why in any concrete way.

Oesterreicher: I would like to stick to what I think is the problematic of this paper. Let's not get to the solution of inner-Christian problems. Is this paper of use for the dialogue? That is what it is offered to us for, even though only the two final paragraphs deal with this problem.

Lindbeck: As the paper has been exegeted by Markus Barth (and I found that a brilliant exegesis), it seems to me that the negative thrust of the paper is one that is useful to the dialogue, that is, its contribution toward getting rid of the historic dichotomies between Old and New Covenant. But I must confess that up until now, reading the paper and in the discussion, I don't see any positive contribution toward the foundation for the dialogue.

Oesterreicher: I don't know that it made any contribution. You may have more difficulties than I have, since you are a Lutheran; you may have difficulty in getting rid of that dichotomy between law and gospel. I haven't the slightest difficulty at all. I can say that the so-called Old Testament and the so-called New Testament are both law and gospel.

Pawlikowski: Yes, I want to get rid of that dichotomy too, but I'm not sure that this does it. So there is a tension, but in either one Christianity considers itself the culmination. I think the consensus is that Christianity used both. Christianity--can we speak that generally? Some Christians have interpreted it more in the apocalyptic, others in the exodus and so on. Therefore, I'm not sure it really solves the problem of the Christian assertion that the end-time has come.

Harrelson: I think it helps but I can't use quite these categories for reasons that others have also expressed. Israel among the nations that, it seems to me, is illuminated by an effort to lay weight upon the covenant of God with Israel, which for R incorporates the Abrahamic. It doesn't take care of the Noahite covenant but he does say that Abraham is a kind of extension backward of the fundamental Mosaic covenant. And the covenant with David, then, really represents Israel's entering upon the world of the nations and facing new kinds of understanding. Here a different problem of universalism and particularism arose as Israel had a king like the nations. So it would seem to me that if we could think of Israel among the nations, and then from the Christian side, the Church and Israel, that those may be counterpart terms; so that the Church, flung into the world to declare a universal word, is nonetheless required to be particular because of her relationship inseparably to Israel, God's people, while the Israelite community gets its start with a particular understanding and then finds that the Abrahamic covenant in the tenth century (maybe the ninth) expands the outlook and vision so widely so that the question then becomes, How is this people of God related to all the peoples of earth, whereas in Christian terms, it seems to me, it really works the other way. How can the gospel for the nations also be the gospel of God to his people Israel?

Flannery: Can you say it this way, that what R is trying to do is to show that the Christian problem is an intra-Judaic problem? It does two things: first, it puts Christianity in its proper perspective; secondly, it forces Jews into theological dialogue with us. If we're intra-Judaic the Jew has to talk. In other words, it seems to say that this is to advance the dialogue. So R has a practical purpose and uses scriptural and theological constructs to promote that proposition.

Barth: It is basically a homilectical paper. R wants to say something good and nice, and then he creates a biblical or pseudo-biblical typology for saying it.

Eckardt: This would be against, then, the claim of the Jewish community that Christianity is not a problem for them. Curously, if I'm not mistaken, R has himself said that at other times. But in terms of this paper he comes around to the other position: Christianity does become a problem for the Jews.

Oesterreicher: That is not a statement that could be upheld by history. The rabbis developed their whole theology, if you want to use that term, dropping certain ideas, e.g., that Israel is punished in every generation for the sin of worshipping the golden calf, or developing the theology of the shekinah, in a kind of silent dialogue or a kind of reply, contrast and contradiction, to patristic theology or Christian theology.

Eckardt: I simply meant to suggest that the claim among some Jewish theologians that Christianity is not a problem for them is obliquely criticized in this paper.

Townsend: It's interesting that in the first century a lot of people, including Paul, thought that it was possible to be a Jew and a Christian and didn't see the relationship between the two, that you couldn't be both. A Jew today, if you say that to him, will reply, "Yes, but a lot's happened since the first century." In Sardis in the time of Melito there was a church and a synagogue battling over which is going to represent the influence with the Roman government. Then after Constantine comes a persecution by Jews of the Christian Church. I think while you can say in the first century or in some theoretical way, yes, they're both from the same stem, and yes, you can be both, I think what really holds us apart is not that kind of question, but the question which says, "Look, we've been at each other's throats for a long time and you just can't forget about it." This is why I think the Jew will say, "This is not a problem for us."

Barth: When we try to dialogue with Jews, let's say on the basis of a paper like this, my observation is that even if it were better founded in current OT theology and less artificially typified, we don't communicate with the Jews. We do communicate with the culture of Maimonides or anything taken from Mishnah or Talmud. We do not communicate by immediate reference to the scriptures. Has anyone among you a helpful suggestion to make? This is so well done and so pastoral, certainly not only for our consumption but as an attempt to reopen lines of communication.

Lindbeck: I find myself thinking, as the conversation has proceeded, of a conversation I had last night with our local Buddhologist, who is indeed a very learned man about Buddhism. He taught Buddhism in the Japanese language in Japanese universities, even though he is an American from Brooklyn. At any rate, we were talking about the old business of the formal resemblances in certain schools of Japanese Buddhism in particular to the sola fides and sola gratia of the Reformation, and the question that we were talking about was whether the similarity of formal patterns provided any kind of basis for dialogue between Jews and Christians. I was interested in his response to a quote that I gave him from Karl Barth, that even if one should discover a form of Buddhism whose formal pattern was identical with sola gratia and sola fides of Reformation Christianity, there would still be an infinite difference, because in one case it was Buddha and in the other, Jesus Christ. In other words, it's not the similarity in formal patterns that is the basis of dialogue but the concrete content. I might say that this Buddhologist agreed entirely. I suppose that we're saying in effect that a rabbi would say that it's not the similarity of formal patterns that gives us contact; it's something more concrete.

Recommendations to Seminaries and Graduate Schools of Religion

The final matter raised was whether the working party had recommendations for seminaries and graduate schools of religion. There was some difference of opinion as to whether there were many of these Christian institutions offering anything substantive on The Holocaust. It was agreed that the F&O Secretariat would contact Rabbi Sol Bernards for his list of courses being taught on Judaism in Christian universities.

Next Meeting

The Secretariat will circularize members as to the best date for a Spring meeting. (Subsequently April 21, 1972 was selected as the best date. Meeting place, LaGuardia Airport, New York City.)

Three Selections for Meditation

From a meeting of the Working Group on Christians and Jews of the Oekumenisches Pfingsttreffen (Augsburg 1971):

1. Ecumenical encounters without Jewish participation are incomplete because without the Jewish roots the Christian faith develops wrongly, unbiblically.

2. Training, worship, adult education and theological education will only rightly meet today's challenges when the self-understanding of the Jewish people speaks authentically.

3. Christian witness is expressed in the joint practical effort of Jews and Christians for greater justice, greater value of persons in the fight against oppression and exploitation. Missions to the Jews contradict this biblical assignment.

4. The concrete consequence of ecumenical cooperation between Jews and Christians is expressed also in strategic solidarity with the State of Israel and its people as also in political involvement for peace in the Near East.

Professor Jaroslav Pelikan, chairman, Congress for Luther Research, Concordia Seminary, August 1971: "I have read and indeed I have sometimes repeated most of the conventional defenses of Luther's harsh language about the Jews: his disappointment that they did not accept the gospel now that it had been brought to life; his recognition of the difference between the believers of the Old Testament and the Jews after Christ; his indignation at the distortion of the Bible by rabbinical interpreters, and so forth. Without minimizing the seriousness of any of these considerations I cannot escape the conviction that the time has come for those who study Luther and admire him to acknowledge more unequivocally and less pugnaciously than they have that on this issue Luther's thought and language are simply beyond defense. Any such acknowledgement must be based theologically on a more fundamental conviction, namely, that Judaism is not, as Luther and the centuries before him maintained, a shadow destined to disappear with the coming of Christianity, even though it stubbornly held on, but a permanent part of the wondrous dispensation of God in human history. I do not pretend to know with any finality what this implies for the Christian view of revelation or for the Christian doctrine of Jesus Christ, but I am sure that this generation of Christians and Jews is obliged to look again at the issues which divide them. Christians cannot evade the problem of the continuing validity and unique witness of Israel. And Jews cannot continue to treat as a mere upstart a movement that embodies some of the central insights of the Hebrew Bible."

Words of a Jewish survivor of the Radom death camp to Alexander Donat: "Now all the nations have been shown that you can murder millions with impunity. The question will eventually be asked, if Jews only yesterday, why not Americans or Catholics or Chinese tomorrow? How can Christianity survive the discovery that after a thousand years of its being Europe's official religion Europe remains pagan at heart? And every one of us is a Christ and an SS man, and each day the SS man crucifies the Christ inside us because evil is more militant and aggressive than good, because mankind is frail and fearful, because evil is contagious always but most when it is organized and institutionalized."

Land Promises in the NT

A. Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquand (Die Bedeutung der biblischen Landverheissungen für die Christen ["Theologische Existenz Heute," NF 116; München: Kaiser, 1964], p. 24) begins his discussion of the land promises in the NT, "Land und Landverheissung scheinen auf den ersten Blick gar keine Rolle mehr im NT zu spielen." Such a lack should not be surprising. The fact that the whole NT is in Greek indicates that the various writings in their present forms are addressed, if not to gentiles, at least to Jews who have experienced a certain amount of Hellenization.

B. Since we lack real positive evidence (apart from a few suggestive passages such as Jesus weeping over Jerusalem (Mt. 37-39), any conclusions are likely to be problematic. What I can do however is to show that at least certain parts of the NT are not necessarily incompatible with a Christian accepting the land promises of the Hebrew Scriptures. Most of this study will center on Paul and the Jesus of Synoptic traditions and will concern two questions:

   1. Is the Land of Israel considered to be a matter of importance?

   2. If so, for whom is the land of importance? For Israel kata sarka? For all Christians? For Jewish Christians?

C. Let us look at the second question first, in particular as raised in the epistles of Paul.

   At first glance the question appears settled. Paul explicitly states that it is the Christians who are the true heirs of Abraham and therefore any blessings or promises given to Abraham apply to those "in Christ" who is the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:6-9, 16, 29; 4:21-31; Rom. 4).

D. An author does not always follow his scriptural interpretation where a logic leads. E.g., Philo allegorizes the Temple and its sacrifices, but according to Legatio ad Gaium he was willing to lay down his life in order to preserve the physical temple from being defiled.

E. In the case of Paul fact does always not follow theory. According to Gal. 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female. For all of you are one in Christ Jesus." (c.f. Rom 10:12) But each of these equations he denies or qualified elsewhere, at least for the present age. He does distinguish between male and female (I Cor. 11:2-16, 14:34; Col. 3:18f.) The slave does remain in bondage (I Cor. 7:20-24; Col. 3:22-4:1; Philemon 10-18 [?]). Similarly the Apostle does not erase the distinctions between Israel according to the flesh and the non-Jews before or after conversion. Israel has a special place in God's plan for salvation, whether it is simply a passing reference that faith comes "to the Jew first and also to the Greek," or whether it involves a more sophisticated view such as that depicted by the allegory of the olive tree in Rom. 11. CF. J. Munck, Christ & Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9-11 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967); D. Judant, Les deux Israël (Paris, 1960). See also G. Lindeskog, "Israel in the New Testament," Svensk Exegetisk Arsbok 26 (1961), pp. 59ff.

F. Incidentally it is by no means clear that the expression, "Israel of God," as found in Gal. 6:16 refers to the Christian Church. Rather it seems to refer to the Israelite nation upon whom the Apostle asks mercy as opposed to the Christians upon whom the Apostle calls for peace. See P. Richardson, Israel in the Apostolic Church ("SNTS Monograph," 10; Cambridge: Univ Press, 1969).

Thus we cannot assume that the Apostle regarded Israel and its promises subsumed under the New Covenant. We cannot quote Paul against the land-promises; we cannot quote him for the land-promises either.

G. Turning to the Synoptic Gospels and traditions about Jesus, the picture is even more problematic because of the state of the evidence but is in some sense more explicit because the action is taking place in the Land of the Promises.

H. In the first place there is plenty of evidence that many Jews of Jesus' day tended to take the promises quite literally. Leaving aside any literary evidence, there are three major attempts to gain freedom in less than a hundred years; and one of these attempts took place in Egypt, the supposed hotbed of Jewish liberals and assimilationists (cf. Tcherikover Papyrii). Note that even a relatively isolated group such as at Qumran was probably involved in the fist Jewish revolt, and that a moderate like Josephus was a Jewish general.

I. In spite of the difficulties, I believe that men like Brandon are generally on the right track in concluding that Jesus had revolutionary sympathies, although the arguments for this position leave something to be desired. Obviously it would have some relevance if Jesus were sympathetic toward any freeing of Israel from the Romans. My own approach is twofold. First of all I argue from the title, "Messiah." Because of its rarity in inter-testamental and Jewish literature (apart from the Dead Sea Community) Christians were not required to use it. Therefore, the title was probably used by Christians in the sense it was used in the Hebrew Scriptures, i.e., the title generally implied royalty. With this meaning the title would have made little sense as a title for Jesus adopted in an early Church trying to adapt to Rome. Rather it is more likely that the title was an inheritance of the church from the lifetime of Jesus. Thus it seems likely that during his lifetime Jesus either willing or unwillingly was known as king of the Jews. Moreover, if the title was applied to Jesus in some new, non-scriptural sense, it is difficult to imagine why, since "Messiah" was not a usual title adopted by messianic figures. We must remember also that the title is so closely associated with Jesus that as early as the Pauline Epistles it is already becoming a proper name. Furthermore, the use of such a title in itself would have been more than enough explanation for Rome having crucified its bearer. This much about Jesus can be gleaned from the writings of Paul who had access to men like Peter without even consulting the Gospels.

J. The second part of my approach is directly from the Gospels. There I prefer events rather than sayings because an event has a kind of built-in context, whereas a saying is handed down apart from any specific context and therefore is usually impossible to interpret as part of the life of Jesus. Furthermore, I generally prefer to limit myself to only those accounts which reflect two or three independent strands of tradition, i.e., traditions which appear in John and the Synoptics or which appear in two versions within the same Gospel.

Examples would be the arrest and trial, the feeding miracles, and the temple cleansing. In the arrest Jesus posts armed guards. The feeding miracles suggest that Jesus led men into the wilderness and there performed miracles, an act which both Pilate and his successor regarded as revolutionary in the case of other messianic figures. Of course, whatever Jesus did or intended in cleansing the Temple, any interference in a national shrine was generally regarded as a royal perogative, not only in Palestine, but generally throughout the Ancient Near East.

K. I might also add that the expression Kingdom of God might not be as non-political as is generally thought. (See G.W. Buchanan, The Consequences of the Covenant ["NT Supplement," 20; Leiden: Brill, 1970], pp. 42-90.) Among other things Buchanan shows that N. Perrin's attempt (Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus [New York: Harper, 1967] pp. 57ff.) to demonstrate that the use of Kingdom in the Lord's prayer differs from Jewish usage is unsuccessful. Perrin argues that for Jesus the Kingdom "comes" while for the Jews it "is established." As Buchanan demonstrates, Jewish literature is just as ready to depict the Kingdom of Heaven as coming as being established and uses these and other verbs without discernible difference.

L. If Jesus was involved in freeing the Land of Promise from the Roman yoke, it seems likely that the Land was of some importance to him. Furthermore, in view of the fact that he seems to have limited his ministry largely to the Sons of Israel, it appears likely that he regarded the Land as the special inheritance of Israel kata sarka.

M. Of course not all the New Testament writers held the Land in special esteem. (Revelation, after A.D. 70, pictures the Cosmos centered in a New Jerusalem as the Land of Promise in the age to come.) The Stephen speech goes much further, and implies that the covenant with Abraham did not involve the Land at all. See Acts 7:5f.

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PANEL ON THE MIDDLE EAST

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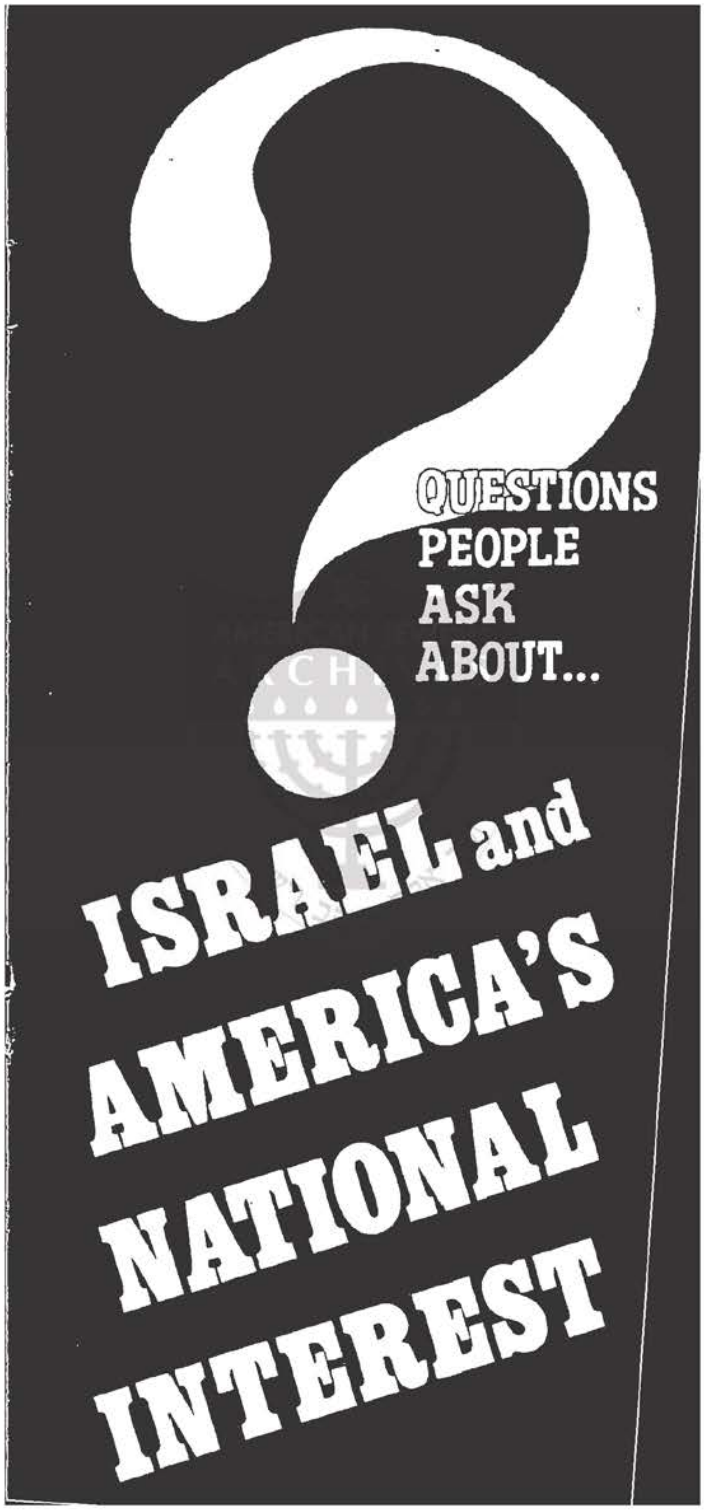
QUESTIONS
PEOPLE
ASK
ABOUT...
ISRAEL and
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
INTEREST

Why does the United States support Israel's right to exist?

America's long history of support for Israel is a unique combination of moral commitment and self-interest.

The U.S. has supported the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine since the close of the First World War and, in 1947, helped to create the state of Israel as a haven for Jews who survived the Holocaust. In 1949, the U.S. endorsed the new state's admission to the United Nations. Every American President since Harry Truman has acknowledged America's commitment to Israel's survival, and every Congress has given overwhelming bipartisan support to that commitment.

In addition, Israel is the most dependable ally we have in the Eastern Mediterranean—a region which the Russians have coveted since the days of the czars. It is the only true democracy in the area, and its strong, durable ties to the U.S. are sustained by a shared religious tradition and a shared devotion to individual liberty and Western parliamentary institutions.

In its turbulent 27-year history, Israel has repeatedly justified America's confidence in its ability and determination to defend itself against attack by vastly superior numbers without asking for — or requiring — the help of American troops.

Wouldn't the rich Arab states be a better ally than Israel for the U.S.?

Though Americans tend to think of "the Arabs" as a united, monolithic bloc, the fact is that there are 20 separate Arab states with significant tribal, ethnic, religious and political differences dividing them.

Some, like Iraq, are militant Marxist regimes; others, like Saudi Arabia, are conservative monarchies. Many, perhaps most, of the present-day rulers have come to power through military or political coups or assassinations, and could topple from power in the same way. In fact, without Israel on the scene, the risk of radical takeovers would be even greater.

In 1970, for instance, during the civil war in Jordan, a precautionary mobilization of Israel's army and air force, coordinated with and requested by the U.S., caused Syria to withdraw the tanks it had sent across the border to aid the Palestinian guerrillas in their effort to topple King Hussein. More recently, Israel's presence in the area has undoubtedly helped deter Syria from intervening on the side of the Palestinians in the Moslem-Christian fighting in Lebanon.

Without a strong Israel, the Middle East could very quickly become a Soviet outpost.

Is American support for Israel responsible for high oil prices?

That was the Arab propaganda line in October 1973, when the Arab states launched their oil embargo and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) hiked oil prices 400 per cent. Since then, however, it has become clear that the embargo was really intended to demonstrate Western dependence on the OPEC countries and to consolidate OPEC power as a price-fixing cartel. (In fact, the big price hike did not originate with the Arab states — though, obviously, they try to get polit-

ical mileage out of it. According to the Senate Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, the impetus came from Iran, which is not an Arab state, and Venezuela, halfway around the globe from Israel.)

Oil prices will remain exorbitant as long as the oil-producing countries enjoy a near monopoly of the world's fuel resources. Stringent conservation measures to reduce oil consumption and the speedy development of alternative sources and supplies of fuel—not U.S. abandonment of Israel—are the only ways to bring down the prices of oil.

Doesn't the U.S. need Arab investments and markets to overcome its recession?

The oil nations are investing their excess profits all over the world, with large amounts going into U.S. Government bonds, money markets, stocks and real estate. The U.S. is also probably the largest supplier of military hardware to Iran, Saudi Arabia and other OPEC countries, and American companies are contracting to supply millions of dollars in goods, services and know-how to the Arab world.

Even the highly publicized Arab boycott of companies doing business with Israel is, it appears, applied capriciously, and often ignored altogether when the Arab states need what such companies can provide.

While the U.S. encourages Arab investments, purchases and business dealings with American firms, Congress is exploring the need for additional legislation to guard against takeover and control by foreign investors of certain strategic industries, and to strengthen protections against discriminatory business practices aimed at American Jews and companies doing business with Israel.

There is no evidence to date that a nation's support or non-support for Israel figures in the

Arabs' investment decisions. In fact, the less developed nations of Africa, which cut off relations with Israel at the bidding of the Arabs, have been among the hardest hit by the Arabs' economic policies.

Shouldn't the U.S. seek closer ties with the Arab world?

The U.S. seeks—and should seek—friendly relations with all nations. Its support for Israel does not make it an enemy of the Arabs; indeed its ongoing friendship for the Arab world has been manifested in billions of dollars in loans and grants-in-aid to the Arab countries, in the sale of vital military equipment, in specialized training in the U.S. of Arab officers and other military personnel and, above all, in its search for political solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict which would permit all the nations in the area to live in peace and work together for their mutual social and economic betterment.

Some Arab countries, it is true, would like the U.S. to demonstrate its friendship for them by turning its back on Israel. But more moderate Arab leaders acknowledge and respect America's commitment to its ally and have moved to cement their own relations with the U.S.

Significantly, Egypt's President Anwar Sadat, during his June 1975 meeting with President Gerald Ford in Salzburg, Austria, made it quite clear that improved American-Egyptian relations did not require the U.S. to give up its "special relationship" with Israel.

How does U.S. aid to the Arab countries compare with U.S. aid to Israel?

According to the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Export-Import

Bank and other sources, Israel and the Arab League nations received the following in economic and military aid from the United States from 1946 to 1973:

U.S. Aid	Arab States	Israel
Economic loans	$2,127,000,000	$2,577,100,000
Economic grants	2,480,000,000	471,000,000
Military loans	422,700,000	1,429,800,000
Military grants	369,300,000	0

The U.S. has also contributed to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) over $577 million (nearly 60 per cent of its total income).

Unlike the Arab states, Israel received no military grants from the U.S. until after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when Congress approved $1.5 billion in grants and $700 million in credits, much of which was used to repay the Defense Department for weapons shipped to Israel during the Arab attack.

Has détente reduced Soviet support for the Arab states?

While the Soviet Union and its allies do not publish foreign aid figures, the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and other Western sources indicate that in the years 1955 to 1974 the Soviet bloc provided more than $13.98 billion in military aid and $5.76 billion in economic aid to Arab League states.

Since 1967, the Soviet Union has supplied Egypt, Iraq and Syria with billions of dollars worth of the most sophisticated military equipment, including surface-to-air missiles never seen in combat before October 1973 and the bridging equipment the Egyptians used to cross the Suez Canal during their Yom Kippur attack.

Moreover, within hours after the Egyptian-Syrian attack was launched, the Russians began a massive resupply effort, bringing an estimated 225,000 tons of the latest military equipment to Syria and Egypt in one month.

In 1974 alone, Syria received more than $2 billion in sophisticated Soviet arms, and Libya has just concluded an arms deal with Moscow estimated by U.S. analysts as in excess of $1 billion. There are an estimated 5,000 Soviet advisers and technicians in the Middle East, and Russian-language materials abandoned by retreating Syrian forces indicate that Soviet advisers played a direct role in the October war.

Does continued American support for Israel threaten to destroy the détente between the U.S. and the Soviet Union?

Détente means a lessening of tensions for the *mutual benefit* of both parties; it cannot be maintained if one side is required to sacrifice its own interests or reaps unilateral gain from the arrangement. The Middle East is therefore an important test of how, and under what conditions, détente can work.

The Soviet Union, which is eager to extend its influence in the Middle East, helped Egypt and Syria prepare for and plan their 1973 attack on Israel. America's airlift of supplies helped Israel repulse that sneak attack—thereby emphasizing to the Soviet Union that it could not exploit détente to obtain a unilateral advantage.

Secretary of State Kissinger has warned that détente must not be used "as a cover to exacerbate conflicts in international trouble spots," and that the Soviet Union "cannot disregard these principles . . . without imperiling its entire relationship with the U.S."

Détente is strengthened, not weakened,

when the U.S. makes it clear that it will continue to act in its own self-interest, as it has in relation to Israel.

What is the UN position on withdrawal from occupied territories?

UN Resolution 242, unanimously adopted by the Security Council on November 22, 1967, in the wake of the Six Day War, explicitly links "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict" to an ending of "all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force."

UN Resolution 338 is the call for a cease-fire in the October 1973 war. Jointly sponsored by the U.S. and the Soviet Union and adopted by the UN Security Council on October 22, 1973, it declares that "immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations [should] start between the parties concerned" to implement "Security Council Resolution 242 in all of its parts," thereby "establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East."

Although Arab spokesmen interpret Resolution 242 as requiring Israel to withdraw from *all* occupied territories *before* the start of negotiations, statements by its framers as well as a careful reading of the text make it clear that the Resolution deliberately omitted the word "all" when referring to "withdrawal from territories." As former Secretary of State William P. Rogers has explained, Resolution 242 did not obligate Israel to make "any withdrawal until there was a final, binding, written agreement that satisfied all aspects of the Security Council resolution."

Why does Israel reject proposals for a bi-national Arab-Jewish state?

Israelis point out that earlier proposals for a bi-national state had long been rejected as unrealistic by most neutral observers, and that this was why the UN Partition Plan envisioned separate Arab and Jewish states in Palestine. (The bulk of the territory allocated for an Arab state was seized by Transjordan and Egypt in 1948.) They also point out that there are 20 independent Arab states already in existence — most of them Moslem by law and tradition — and that Palestinian Arabs constitute two-thirds of the population of Jordan and hold key positions in its government. The experience of European Jewry during the Nazi era, they add, when no Western nation was willing to open its doors to rescue the victims of Hitler's "final solution," underscores the importance of having one nation in the world that is clearly and unequivocally a Jewish state.

"Of course we are a pluralistic society, not homogeneous," former Foreign Minister Abba Eban has stated. "There is a Moslem population and a Christian population. We want the Arabs to keep their language, culture and pride. We want the Christians to keep their identity. The basic aim of the State of Israel is to have one independent state . . . which expresses the Jewish culture, tradition and heritage."

Is the U.S. risking a big-power confrontation if Israel and the Arabs go to war again?

As long as it remains clear that the U.S. will continue to support Israel if she is attacked by her Arab neighbors, such a confrontation is unlikely. Indeed, clear American support is likely to make the Soviet Union more interested in a

peaceful solution to Mideast problems and less inclined to egg the Arab nations on to new military adventures against Israel.

Since World War II there has been ample evidence that conflicts are more likely to erupt where U.S. commitments are vague and undefined — as in Korea — and the Communist world may misjudge what America's response to provocation would be. Wherever the U.S. commitment has been firm and unequivocal — as in Berlin, Greece, Iran, Cuba and, most recently, the Egyptian-Syrian attack on Israel in 1973 — the Soviet Union has been careful to avoid direct military confrontation with the U.S.

On the other hand, if a big-power clash develops for other reasons, and the Soviet Union attempts to deprive Western Europe and Japan of vital oil supplies, Israel can be counted on to give the U.S. access to strategic locations from the Suez Canal to the Indian Ocean. And the big powers know it.

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