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RNA News Letter
c/o C. Fouke
231 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10016
February 23, 1981

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
Director, Interreligious Affairs
American Jewish Committee
165 E. 56th St.
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum:

Here is the January-February 1981 Religion Newswriters Association News Letter, with the second column in the series by prominent persons in religion on religion newswriting as they have observed and experienced it.

I am expecting a telephone call from you to talk about your submitting a column for the series. It seems we catch each other either out of town or in meetings! I hope we will have made contact before this letter reaches your desk.

Thank you for your interest and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carol Fouke

Carol J. Fouke, Editor

NEWS LETTER

RELIGION NEWSWRITERS ASSOCIATION

"The object of the Association is to advance the professional standards
of religious journalism in the secular press."

Vol. 26 No. 1

January-February

1981

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1981 MEMBERSHIP MEETING TO BE JUNE 6-7, LOS ANGELES; CONTEST FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

By RUSSELL CHANDLER
Los Angeles Times
RNA First Vice President
and Supple Board President

RNA's 1981 membership meeting will be June 6-7 in Los Angeles, the weekend before the Southern Baptist Convention meets in L.A. June 9-11. Los Angeles was the overwhelming choice of the 50 to 60 RNA members who expressed their preference for the meeting site in a poll taken late in 1980; that site had more votes than all of the other choices combined, and about three times as many votes as the second choice (May 19-28 meeting of Presbyterians in Houston).

The site choice was announced at the February 16-17 meeting in Denver of the RNA Supple Board and RNA Executive Committee. Present at the meeting were RNA President BEN KAUFMAN (Cincinnati Enquirer); CHANDLER; Second Vice President LOUIS MOORE (Houston Chronicle); Secretary VIRGINIA CULVER (Denver Post); Treasurer BILL SIMBRO (Des Moines, Iowa, Register and Tribune), and newly volunteered Supple Board member JERRY HAMES, editor of the Canadian Churchman, Toronto, and an RNA associate member.

Convention arrangements are to be made by CHANDLER and JOHN DART (Los Angeles Times); MOORE is handling convention program arrangements. Details will be published in the March-April issue of the RNA News Letter.

REGARDING 1980 CONTEST ENTRIES: The Supple Board sifted through a record number of entries. The heavy contest response was perhaps because of increased prize money and the eligibility of previous winners, both new features this year. There were 37 Cas-sels submissions, three of which were disqualified; 50 Schachern entries, with one disqualified, and a prodigious 69 Supple entries, eight of which had to be eliminated.

Disqualified entrants (or, more probably, their editors or public relations surrogates who compiled the entries for them) did not follow the contest rules, several of which were new this year. Among specific reasons for disqualification: too many or too few entries; sending a whole page so that it was impossible to tell which story was being entered in the contest; a Cassels entry from a newspaper with a circulation exceeding the 50,000 limit; entries from the Unification Church's News World, which we judged was not a secular publication.

The finalists, thought by the screeners to represent the best religion news writing in RNA contests in recent years, are, in alphabetical order:

LOUIS CASSELS MEMORIAL AWARD: CONNIE BEALS, Bellevue, Wash., Journal-American; MAREN S. BINGHAM, Mesa, Ariz., Tribune; BRENDA DICKERSON, Friendswood, Texas, Journal; SCOTT FAGERSTROM, Vancouver, Wash., Columbian; SHEILA GOCKSTETTER, Sandusky, Ohio, Register; JULIE B. HAIRSTON, Lynchburg, Va., News and Daily Advance; RITA HALIBURTON, Waco, Texas, Tribune-Herald; KEITH LAWRENCE, Owensboro, Ky., Messenger-Inquirer; ROBERT LOOMIS, Elyria, Ohio, Chronicle Telegram, and STEVE MAYNARD, Walla Walla, Wash., Union-Bulletin.

HAROLD SCHACHERN MEMORIAL AWARD: Journal-Bulletin, Providence, R.I.; Newsweek, New York, N.Y.; Republic, Phoenix, Ariz.; Spectator, Hamilton, Ont.; Time, New York, N.Y.; Times, St. Petersburg, Fla.; Tribune, Mesa, Ariz., and Tribune, Tampa, Fla.

JAMES O. SUPPLE MEMORIAL AWARD: MICHAEL CLARK, Memphis, Tenn., Commercial Appeal; JOHN DART, Los Angeles Times; RICHARD DUJARDIN, Providence, R.I., Journal-Bulletin; JAMES FRANKLIN, Boston Globe; MARJORIE HYER, Washington Post; RICHARD OSTLING, Time; HELEN PARMLEY, Dallas Morning News; LILLA ROSS, Jacksonville, Fla., Times-Union, and KENNETH WOODWARD, Newsweek.

The finalists' submissions will be sent to the judges (three for each category) to determine the winners; awards will be presented at the RNA awards banquet in Los Angeles June 6.



The screening board had some good laughs over humor in the news of religion; we also were impressed with novel story ideas, good investigative reporting and depth of coverage. The bottom paragraph of one Cassels entry indicated it was the religion writer's "talk delivered at Toastmasters' Club 37 last Monday." A catchy Cassels entry lead: "Jesus scooped Nick the Greek from a garbage can littered with lost souls." Readers in Texas might have been startled by the story declaring that "Jesus has returned and is walking the earth"--in El Paso. Some double-take headlines included "Jesus is Coming (To a Theater Near You)," "Local Anglers Snub Moon-Linked Tuna Tourney," "Basic Conflict Hits Gothard Institute" and "Minister's Vision in Glass Built With Mottos and Millions" (Robert Schuller's Crystal Cathedral).

One Supple entrant, DENISE ROBILLARD of the Montreal, Que., Le Devoir, threw the Supple Board members--her submissions met the rules perfectly, but all the stories were written in French! (Mon Dieu!) PAUL DUNPHY of the Northampton, Mass., Daily Hampshire Gazette, did an enterprising piece on how much money churches take in each week through bingo and charity games. A recurring theme in all three contest categories was, of course, the "New Christian Right," its rise to power, its influence and its critics. Jerry Falwell, James Robison, Bailey Smith and others figured prominently in the stories. MIKE CLARK of the Commercial Appeal in Memphis, Tenn., home of right-wing organizer Ed McAteer, had a particularly thorough (and early) seven-part series on the Christian Right, complete with a glossary of terms. Other recurring stories in this year's submissions: the Creation-Evolution debate, Sunday schools and their state of health (or illness), evangelists (particularly the TV types) and women in various roles of ministry.

TRYING TO KILL MOSQUITOES WITH A SLING-SHOT: MALCOLM BOYD GUEST COLUMN

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of copyrighted guest columns special to the RNA News Letter by prominent religious figures on religion writing as they have observed and experienced it. Malcolm Boyd is an Episcopal priest, author of 19 books, poet, critic and social commentator. He presently lives in Los Angeles where he is completing book number 20 for publication in 1981, authoring screenplays, and reviewing books for The Los Angeles Times.

A public figure in religion, I have long observed religion news reporting. Too, I've experienced it.

I was "the coffeehouse priest" engaged in controversy with a bishop in Colorado about basic issues of evangelism; an early Freedom Rider and civil rights activist confronting the question of the church's involvement in the socio-political arena; the author of a best seller--"Are You Running With Me, Jesus?"--and 18 other books that aroused sharp reactions and triggered questions; "the nightclub priest" reading prayers--and responding to live questions from very lively men and women--in San Francisco's "hungry i"; a chaplain-at-large to university students traveling to hundreds of campuses in the U.S. and Canada; identified with "the underground church" and editor of a book on the subject; an antiwar activist arrested twice during peace masses inside the Pentagon; an interfaith ecumenist who led Christian pilgrimages to Jerusalem's Western "Wailing" Wall on two successive Christmas Eves, and a gay Christian who took off the mask of his sexual orientation.

Looking back, I believe that my coverage as a public figure in religion has been, for the most part, fair, objective and professional. However, I noticed flaws: a tendency to "label"; a preference given to "Establishment" religion news as over against "anti-Establishment" religion news, and a curious inclination to settle for "image" instead of digging deep into personality/issues to find a real person and share this with the public.

My image was larger than life. The Christian Science Monitor observed "He is the saint of action" while the Cleveland Plain Dealer noted "(His) manner suggests the turbulent waves of the storm breaking over man, church and the American life." Whew! The New York Times Magazine perceived "A spectacular example of the church's new thrust into secular life--a latter-day Luther or a more worldly Wesley."

Hold your breath! The cacophony continues. Taking a close look at me, the Toronto Star saw "a Marlon Brando kind of face above a clerical collar." The Los Angeles Times observed "(He) draws flack like a lightning rod draws zaps." Life named me one of "the 100 most important young people in the United States" and a member of the "Take-Over Generation." (Needless to say, we didn't.) Said the Philadelphia Bulletin, "Not only has he been 'where the action is,' he has, in fact, often been the action." Gee whiz!

Robert Frank's photograph of me taken for Mademoiselle (which named me a "Disturber of the Peace" with Federico Fellini, James Baldwin, William F. Buckley Jr. and Norman Mailer) appeared also on the cover of "Are You Running With Me, Jesus?" What a pure image it created! For a mass audience, there I was: sophisticated but sincere, tense-eyed but with a soul, a swinger on the saintly side. And, not there at all. That's when I felt lonely, scared, unknown.

My favorite press comment of all time appeared in the Toronto Globe and Mail: "Trying to interview Father Boyd is like trying to kill mosquitoes with a slingshot." But at that point, who could blame me if pure image responded to questions addressed to pure

image? The reporter was not at fault. Everything was out of control. The interview took place in a taxicab speeding toward an airport. How appropriate. The situation conformed to my image of the moment. Speeding . . . running

I am critical of two media encounters during that period. The first had to do with a news magazine. Someone called from the magazine to double-check a quote from me that was going into its next issue. She included an identifying description of me that read "the nightclub priest." But the "hungry i" wasn't a "nightclub" in the sense that the word evokes pictures of the old Trocadero or the Las Vegas Strip. It was a meetingplace for new ideas; Lenny Bruce had appeared there. I really wasn't "the nightclub priest" at all--at least, I didn't think so. I was awfully serious about the theology that underlay what I was attempting to do. In my view, this was contemporary evangelism that was both sophisticated and deep.

I asked the news magazine staffer if "nightclub" could not be replaced by a more accurate word. After all, in the "hungry i" I read a bitter, realistic prayer about Hiroshima and victims of torture; I was not doing a glib, plastic smiling, audience-pleaser bit at all. But she explained why "nightclub" would remain in print: "We like the image it conveys," she said.

The second encounter was with a well-known religion writer in the secular press. His paper was a distinguished one. He had interviewed me a score of times. Yet another meeting between us was scheduled during a book promotion tour I was on. I showed up at the paper and we talked. At the conclusion of the interview I handed him a copy of my new book. He reacted angrily, as if I were "commercial" instead of "pure." Had I been transformed by the wicked witch of the West into just another Bible salesman before his eyes? My previous interviews with him had as often as not occurred during other book promo tours, and he had alluded in print to those other religious tomes.

His overreaction puzzled me. Unlike either the Graham organization or the Campus Crusade for Christ, with their respective public relations personnel, I had no p.r. staff at all. I simply lugged along a copy of my new book, the subject of which was not unrelated to the interview. I found something hypocritical in his treatment of me. I detected a double standard. For I was neither an "Establishment" bishop-type, on the one hand, nor an "evangelist" with an empire/staff, on the other. I was a bit of an "outsider," a "rebel," if you will, on the religion scene. What was I being punished for? I never found out. The interview did not run. I never saw, or heard from, the reporter again.

But an issue was raised that is far more important than a single personality. Time and time again, I've seen "Establishment" religion news duly noted--and handled in an easy, uncontroversial way which can communicate serenity and acceptance to a reader; while, on the other hand, "anti-Establishment" news sometimes needs the prod of a street demonstration (with its implication of "rocking the boat") even to get in print. Surely, this communicates its own imagery. In other words, the Establishment is news; those standing outside it are often required to make news.

In this discussion of flaws in the coverage of religion in the secular press, I have another: coverage of concerns of gay people within institutional religion. It is not adequate. What's the matter? Are reporters "embarrassed" by the subject? Do they feel that being painted with the brush of coverage may hurt them with their religious "constituency"? Is the subject "too far out"? Quite seriously, do they fear endangering their relationship with "religious leaders"? The latter may well be "embarrassed" by news of gay Christians and/or Jews. For reasons of finances and protocol, they may fervently wish the subject to be swept under a great chancery rug. It is gay Christians who comprise today's "underground church."

Yet hasn't the press generally tended to follow, not lead? Remember when blacks were not "covered"? And, when black writers on the staff were non-existent? I remember very well.

Lastly, I find a major weakness in coverage of religion in the secular press. With a few striking exceptions, it is the absence of investigative reporting. When religious news is simply bland and conventional, not hard news, the "church page" remains the graveyard of the paper.

Religious news needs to be seen more clearly--and recognized on the city desk and in the editor's office--as news. So, ferret it out, dig it up, expose it to the light. Let the facts speak for themselves.

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RNA CONSTITUTION UPDATING PROJECT: AN UPDATE

LOUIS MOORE (Houston Chronicle), RNA second vice president, has the project of updating the RNA Constitution. That project was described in the September-October 1980 News Letter, and copies of RNA's 1959 Constitution and 1960 Bylaws--the latest Moore could find--were included for members' comments. Since then, Moore has located a 1970 Constitution; the 1960 Bylaws still are the latest he has found. Moore writes:

"The updating of the RNA Constitution continues. I am still gathering information for the project. Article XII of the current constitution says any amendment to the constitution and Article XI says any amendment to the bylaws must be presented to the membership at least 30 days before the annual meeting. Thus, if you have any changes you would like to propose, please submit them in writing to me before April 1 (with a carbon copy to the News Letter editor) so we can get them in the newsletter prior to the convention."

Copies of the 1970 Constitution and 1960 Bylaws are available from Moore at the Chronicle, 801 Texas Ave., Houston, TX 77002.



PEOPLE WE KNOW . . .

JAMES T. ROBISON, former religion writer at the Chicago Tribune, joined the Santa Ana, Calif., Register January 12 as managing editor. He had been working at the St. Louis Globe-Democrat as assistant managing editor/features and, before that, daily features editor. Robison notes that The Register is the nation's 36th largest daily with a daily circulation at about 240,000 and Sunday circulation at 265,500, and is the third fastest growing daily in the country. Robison praised the talent, leadership and financial resources "to work with in building the paper," and added that "we will not let religion languish as a beat at The Register. You can count on that." The Register offices are at 625 N. Grand Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92711.

KATHRYN TRIMBLE THEUS, religion news writer at the Alexandria, La., Daily Town Talk, is on leave of absence from that post this year to study at the University of Maryland for her M.A. in journalism, specializing in religious journalism. She is giving particular attention to the history of American religion and to the American Jewish experience; Theus also is working 20 hours a week as a graduate assistant, editing the International Communications Bulletin and counseling undergraduates in academic planning. Her address is 6002 Springhill Drive #102, Greenbelt, MD 71301.

"PRO-LIFE" VS. "ANTI-ABORTION" TERMINOLOGY: RNA MEMBERS COMMENT

Editor's Note: RNA President Ben Kaufman, in the November-December 1980 News Letter, asked members to share how they have handled "pro-life" vs. "anti-abortion" terminology in their stories. He noted that the communications committee chairman of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops had berated him for saying "anti-abortion" instead of "pro-life." Here are some members' views on that subject.

STEVE HILL, Tampa, Fla., Tribune and Times: In light of the fact that--as I'm sure we've all experienced--we're going to get flack from either side of the abortion issue for how we refer to the various factions, I've adopted a sort of compromise policy. If a story or portion of a story is dealing with anti-abortion efforts, I ordinarily refer to them as "pro-life" and then follow with "anti-abortion" in parentheses immediately after. If I'm writing about pro-choice groups, I usually refer to them as "pro-choice," with "pro-abortion" in parentheses immediately following. In that way, I can use their own chosen terminology, but still make certain that readers cut through the semantics to get the definition. It may be wishy-washy, but I've had no trouble with it.

LILLA ROSS, Jacksonville, Fla., Times-Union: The policy at the Times-Union is "anti-abortion" rather than "pro-life." Until last year, reporters used the two terms interchangeably. We changed because the editors decided that pro-life is a term that assumes a value judgment--that all pro-abortion advocates are opposed to life. Anti-abortion is considered more neutral. Of course, the problem arises when anti-abortion groups insist on using "pro-life." When a newspaper changes its terminology to neutral terms, we are quickly accused of pro-abortion bias. It's a no-win argument.

HARRY COOK, Detroit, Mich., Free Press: At the Free Press we generally say "anti-abortion" because that's what most so-called "pro-life" groups are all about. Single issue groups seem invariably to be against rather than for something.

CARL CARTER, Birmingham, Ala., News: "Pro-life" remains so poorly defined that I hesitate to use it without some explanation of what I mean in that context. For the pro-lifers or anti-abortionists, depending on whether Ben Kaufman or the Catholics are talking, the term means "for the life of the baby." Or at least, I suppose it means that. On the other hand, Sojourners uses the term "life" more inclusively, so that one also has to be against military buildup and for various environmental causes to be termed "pro-life." The question is whether we are going to don our gowns and decide, or whether we will use the terms of our sources and explain to our readers what they mean by them. In other words, if I insist on calling a group "anti-abortion" when it calls itself "pro-life," I am putting my own opinion into the story. If I think the title is dishonest, I can always say the group terms itself "pro-life," though some prefer to call it "anti-abortion" because of the narrowness of its goals.

RICHARD OSTLING, Time, New York, N.Y.: I suppose the Catholic bishop is right in objecting to the "anti-abortion" label, but the reason we have to say "pro-life" does not result from the sensitivities of the "pro-lifers" but of the other side. If we say "anti-abortion," the parallel would be to call the other side "pro-abortion," a designation it vehemently rejects. Linking "anti-abortion" with "pro-choice" is unfair, since a "pro" label does give a movement a favorable flavor in print (which is precisely why these labels were invented). So we're stuck with "pro-choice" and "pro-life." Maybe this is O.K., in that a good rule of thumb is to call people what they want to be called. That's how I personally decide whom to call a "Fundamentalist." The shift from "Negro" to "black" also comes to mind. In using our "pro" labels for both factions, however, we would do well to remind readers occasionally that the one side is not necessarily "pro-life" except on the abortion issue, and that the "choice" the other side desires is the destruction of human fetuses and embryos for any reason.

PAULA HERBUT, Philadelphia, Pa., Bulletin: I use "anti-abortion" for the anti-abortion groups and "pro-choice" for the opposite side, i.e. the side calling for individual choice on the matter. I think these are the most accurate terms and the least biased terms.

GRANT HARDEN, San Jose, Calif., Mercury News: To date, I've been reasonably successful in keeping the whole issue of abortions off the religion pages, although I can see the handwriting on the temple wall. I tell both sides that limited space prevents me from using the religion pages as a forum for "moral issues" and refer them to the metropolitan desk. Neither do I allow Jews to use the pages to promote (or denigrate) Zionism or ERA advocates to champion their cause on the grounds that there are moral sides to every issue and the religion pages are not where they should be debated. To every rule there are exceptions and when I have to deal with the question of abortion and there is a religious aspect that dominates, then I use the definition proffered me--"pro-life" or "anti-abortion"--depending upon which side is going the ox. A sort of rule of thumb: If I cover it (the event) and there is the proper amount of kneeling and praying involved then it might make the religion pages; if there is a paucity of the latter, then I offer it to the Metro Desk to use elsewhere in the paper. A third of the stories I wrote in 1980 on religion appeared off the religion pages, either because they had a news value deserving better play (or had a time element) or were on subjects that did not meet the criteria I have just described.

NADINE SCOTT, Honolulu, Hawaii, Star-Bulletin: I do not use "pro-life" any more than I would use "anti-life." "Pro-life" is only permissible if it is in the proper name of an organization, or a direct and non-avoidable quote. I like "anti-abortion" and "pro-abortion."

LOUIS MOORE, Houston, Texas, Chronicle: I have very firm opinions about abortion, but try to keep them out of my copy as much as possible. I believe, without apology, that a newspaper has a responsibility to present all sides of an issue, even when the editor (or religion editor) believes strongly on one side or the other of an issue. Thus, I have tried to balance our coverage of the religious dimensions of the abortion issue. But this has not been easy, because the anti-abortionists do not want the issue treated fairly. They want editorial support for their position. Any story (even the smallest Collection Plate announcement that seems to the anti-abortionists to promote the pro-choice groups) reaps instant negative response. At the Houston Chronicle we use the term "anti-abortion" instead of "pro-life." The anti-abortionists do not like the term, but we've stuck with it throughout the 1970s, despite some pretty hostile attacks. We also use the term "pro-abortion" instead of "pro-choice." I personally feel that "pro-choice" is a more accurate term.



RNA MEMBERS GET AROUND: MEETING ON GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN RELIGION

A fair number of RNAers attended a conference February 11-13 on the outskirts of Washington, D.C., titled "Government Intervention in Religious Affairs." Jointly sponsored by the National Council of Churches, the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Synagogue Council of America, the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., the National Association of Evangelicals and the Southern Baptist Convention, the two and one-half day information session brought together 300 representatives of about 90 percent of organized U.S. religion to discuss church-state and First Amendment concerns. RNAers seen there by RNA First Vice President RUSS CHANDLER (L.A. Times) were JAMES FRANKLIN (Boston Globe), BETTY BRENNER (Flint, Mich., Journal), KEN BRIGGS (New York Times), DICK OSTLING (Time), GEORGE CORNELL (AP), DAVE ANDERSON (UPI), ADON TAFT (Miami Herald), JIM CASTELLI (Washington Star) and associate members LESTER KINSOLVING and ELLIOTT WRIGHT.

RNA'S 1980 YEAR-END POLL: A RECAP

The role of the religious New Right (Moral Majority and other groups) in helping elect Ronald Reagan as president and in defeating several liberal senators was chosen by the Religion Newswriters Association as the most significant religious news development of 1980. Results of that year-end poll of RNA members were disseminated via Religious News Service and the wire services in late December; they also were available on request from pollster BILL THORKELSON of the Minneapolis Star.

Thorkelson writes that he received questionnaires back from 67 members (all RNA members as of December 1 were sent poll forms), but that seven came after the deadline and were too late to be tabulated. So the findings represented returns from 60 members of some 110 polled.

The poll listed 40 religion stories of the past year, and several members commented that it was harder than ever to narrow the list to 10, Thorkelson reported in the news story announcing poll results. "The role of the religious New Right" was the first choice of nearly all 60 respondents, he said. Thorkelson listed 14 other top stories as they were ranked by members:

2. The resurgence of fundamentalist Islam in Iran and other Middle East countries.
3. The Fifth World Synod of Bishops in Rome dealing with the family which reaffirmed the Catholic Church's position on contraception and divorce and the attempt of U.S. bishops (at the synod) to deal with dissent to the papal encyclical on birth control.
4. The resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan and anti-Semitism.
5. The battle over biblical inerrancy in the Southern Baptist Convention.
6. The controversy over the remarks of Bailey Smith, Southern Baptist president, that God does not hear the prayers of a Jew.
7. The assassination of Archbishop Romero of El Salvador while he was celebrating Communion and the continuing violence in that country which has taken the lives of thousands, including four U.S. women.
8. Protests over the Vatican-ordered removal of Hans Kung, controversial Swiss theologian, from the Roman Catholic faculty at Tubingen University in West Germany and his later triumphal tour of the United States.
9. The controversy over the "electronic church" and whether it is hurting local congregations.
10. The election of a woman bishop by the United Methodist Church, the first in any major U.S. denomination.
11. The reopening of many churches in China and the indication that the Communist government is ready to give religion greater freedom.
12. The Vatican's order to priests to withdraw from politics and the intervention of Cardinal Humberto Medeiros in the Massachusetts campaign.
13. The Vatican's decision to permit dissident Episcopalians and their married priests to join the Roman Catholic Church and to bring elements of their Anglican tradition with them.
14. The travels of Pope John Paul II, first to Brazil where he bolstered the position of the Brazilian bishops on human rights and later to Germany where he sought to improve ecumenical relations.
15. Labor unions in Poland gain concessions from Polish government, including agreement it will permit the Polish Catholic Church to begin regular weekly broadcasting of Sunday Mass.

The wire story about the poll's results "brought at least one inquiry about RNA and how to join," Thorkelson reports. He adds, "The reason I volunteered to do the project is that I am annually interviewed on an hour-long local television religious show which deals with the major religion news events of the past year. Two other local journalists also participate."

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: SECULAR SAINT, SCHOOLS, SBC, AND SO FORTHE . . .

By BEN KAUFMAN
Cincinnati Enquirer
RNA President

- * Join me, next January 19, as I face the White House celebrating the Saint's Day of a new secular saint, Paul Bloom. He is the Department of Energy special counsel who, on his last day of work in the Carter Administration this past January 19, gave \$4 million to the needy for winter heating aid (\$1 million to each of four religious groups for distribution). I don't know Paul Bloom, but I wish I did. I can imagine the delicious feeling of distributing money gouged by oil company overcharges to the needy, and knowing the Reagan Administration would try to take it back. As I say, he has the makings of a secular saint.
- * Is anyone else interested in taking a close look at what is taught in colleges, universities and seminaries about religion reporting? I'd be interested in hearing from members who know of courses being taught, and maybe we can do something with the information that will benefit our specialty.
- * The RNA Executive Committee (officers), at their meeting February 16-17 in Denver, voted to give Memphis State University the RNA archives, in accord with the offer from Dr. John DeMott, professor of journalism there. DeMott managed the archives while he was at Temple University in Philadelphia, taking them with him to Memphis when he moved to MSU this past year. DeMott said Dr. Gerald Stone, chairman of the MSU journalism department, "is agreeable to our department serving as the home of RNA's archives and also serving as a base for other activities of the association."
- * On the Southern Baptist Convention gathering June 9-11 in Los Angeles, LOUIS MOORE (Houston Chronicle) gives us a word of warning: There are powerful forces at work within the SBC to heal some of the moderate-conservative breaches, so don't oversell the bitterness and conflict when you go for travel money to the RNA gathering the preceding weekend. On the other hand, if there is a quiet moment in L.A., Southern California is rich in unusual religion stories



ABOUT THE RNA NEWS LETTER . . .

First, a "benediction" to the many members who sent in clippings of their stories, news items about RNA members and friends, and comments on how they have handled abortion movement terminology. Do keep sending along tearsheets you'd like to share with the membership through the News Letter, particularly if you have not done so for the past few issues (or have not had your clip included to date). Sharing of members' clips has been established as a regular News Letter feature. Also, do keep sending your ideas for columns, opinion roundups, etc. Next deadline: April 1.

Publication of this issue of the News Letter was delayed approximately two weeks so that news out of the Supple Board/RNA Executive Committee meeting in Denver February 16-17 could be announced promptly rather than delayed until the March-April issue in early April. That news, of contest finalists and of 1981 meeting site, is reported in the first few pages of this issue.

COMMENTS, PLEASE: A broad topic on which discussion could span several N-L issues is that of the "shape" of RNA itself. Do we, the membership, want RNA to be a tightly organized professional association, an exclusive club, a loose grouping of friends who gather annually to drink, or . . . ? Is there a "tension" within RNA over the association's shape? Is that a healthy tension, or a conflict to resolve? How has RNA changed in these respects over its history? Comments from a spectrum of the membership--from founding members to newer members--are welcome. (Ed.)

Experts stress Catholicism's influence in Poland

By JIM ASKER
Post Reporter

If Poland somehow escapes Soviet-led military intervention, a large part of the credit may be due the Roman Catholic Church, Polish-American leaders and scholars here and in other cities said this week.

The church in Poland is the strongest of any European nation, making it the only Eastern Bloc country where the communists have allowed another institution to have moral authority, they said.

So far in the current Polish crisis, the church has staunchly defended the free labor unionists. But it has also struggled to keep a lid on unrest, lest it reach the point that the Soviets feel compelled to intervene, the observers said.

The American followers of Polish affairs, including two Houston-area refugee professors, see enough similarities to Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Hungary in 1956 to feel an invasion by Russians or their surrogates is almost inevitable.

But they also see key differences that indicate the communist giant will have at best a difficult time accomplishing its political goals and at worst will suffer a bloody nose militarily while wrecking relations with the West.

There is only one way the Soviets can come out ahead now, said Witold J. Lukaszewski, a native of Poland and associate professor of political science at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville.

IF WESTERN NATIONS react to Soviet intervention with the sort of ambivalence they did after the invasion of Afghanistan, Lukaszewski said, the communists will have shattered the credibility of the alliance and rendered Western Europe an "appendage to the Eurasian giant."

"That, in itself, becomes a worthwhile goal," he said of Soviet thinking. "If a split in the Western alliance appears in the offing, they'll invade."

Lukaszewski, who left Poland for Siberia before World War II when Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin gave him "an invitation that was not to be declined," de-

scribed the Catholic Church's influence in Poland as "very strong."

"It, of necessity, has had to play the role of broker (between workers and communists) to make sure the situation would not get out of hand," he said.

Polish Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski has tried to keep the church, of which 80 percent to 90 percent of Poles are members, in a position of endorsing the claims of worker activists but opposing strikes and violence, Lukaszewski said.

The Rev. Janusz Ilnatowicz, a University of St. Thomas theology professor, said the church's strong position in Poland dates all the way back to the Reformation. He said Protestantism failed to take root there, because it was decreed that as long as the Polish king would always be a Catholic, citizens' religion would be a private matter.

"THERE WAS NO bitterness. People stayed Catholic because they wanted to," he said. And during centuries of persecution by Russians, Prussians and Germans, the church became "the only place where the old national identity was protected."

"To strike at the church is to strike at the very heart of the country," Ilnatowicz said. The Soviets learned that lesson when Stalinist efforts to cut the church's influence largely failed. By last summer, the communists allowed weekly broadcasts of church services to begin.

The Rev. Leonard Chrobot, president of St. Mary's College in Orchard Lake, Mich., an academic center for Polish-Americans, describes Wyszynski as a "powerful man (who has) plotted a careful course of cooperation with the government, as long as it would help."

Another powerful Polish Catholic is, of course, Pope John Paul II, the former cardinal in Krakow. He has prayed and given moral support for dissidents and agreed to meet next month with free union leader Lech Walesa.

"(John Paul) did a terrific job of walking on eggs," said Edward Dykta of the pope's relations with Polish communists when he lived there.

But when asked what the pope can do now, Dykta, secretary-general of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, a

Chicago-based fraternal benefits life insurance association, said only, "Pray."

IENATOWICZ SAID HE has been surprised the Soviets have not already invaded and attributes the peace to the free unionists' political smarts. He said he personally knows two of the members of the advisory committee of intellectuals to have "very good minds."

Two main differences between Poland in 1980 and past Eastern Bloc movements, he and other Poland watchers said, is that Poland's movement is broader based and it has so far been able to avoid violence.

If a Soviet-led Warsaw Pact incursion does occur, the experts agree, there will be a blood-bath of resistance, with parts of the Polish military even fighting against the Russians.

No one doubts the Soviets will win any armed confrontation, but Lukaszewski doubts the Russians will be able to accomplish with guns and tanks what he sees as essentially political and social goals. The Huntsville political scientist said Poland could become the Soviet Union's Vietnam.

Another factor which bodes well for the Poles is the Soviet desire to get a new Strategic Arms Limitations agreement and aid for the troubled Polish economy from the United States, observers said.

Aloysius A. Mazewski, president of the Chicago-based Polish National Alliance of the United States and North America, said Poland currently has \$670 million in U.S. credits and requested a \$3 billion loan several weeks ago.

He said Polish-Americans, of which there are an estimated 12 million, are helping by sending packages of food to relatives in Poland. He said his 306,000-member group hopes to announce soon an arrangement to distribute more food through the Catholic dioceses there.

Although the church has a vital role in Polish affairs, most of the observers said the final critical factor in whether there will be an invasion will be the Polish Communist Party. The party must be able to maintain Soviet confidence that it remains in control, they said.

1-8-81 Are Legislators Worth Prayer? Group Thinks Not

By VIRGINIA CULVER
Denver Post Religion Editor

Are politicians worth praying for? If so, is it worth spending tax dollars for the prayers?

One organization thinks not, and it has raised opposition to the Colorado Legislature's policy of paying several hundred dollars a year for prayers at the beginning of each daily session.

The payment is in salaries and fees to the House and Senate chaplains, and Jane Kathryn Conrad, spokeswoman for the "Humanist Quest for Truth," has asked that the lawmakers stop spending the money.

In a letter to the Legislature, she said the procedure violates the tenet of separation of church and state, based on a federal court ruling Dec. 24, 1960, in Lincoln, Neb.

Her letter wound up in the hands of

Lyle Kyle, director of the Colorado Legislative Council, who told The Denver Post he isn't sure if or how he is going to answer Mrs. Conrad.

Kyle said he discussed the matter with Senate President Fred Anderson, R-Loveland, and House Speaker Bev Bledsoe, R-Hugo, and the two men had indicated both houses will continue to pay for spiritual aid.

Anderson said he doesn't believe the Nebraska case applies here.

"I think (paying chaplains) is perfectly proper, and it's been historically accepted. We don't plan any changes. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that legislatures have the plenary power to establish their own rules."

Bledsoe wasn't available for comment.

In what is considered a landmark case, U.S. District Judge Warren E. Bohm of Lincoln ruled it was legal for

the Nebraska Legislature to have a chaplain, but unconstitutional, on the basis of separation of church and state, to pay the chaplain. The Nebraska Legislature has had the same chaplain for 16 years, said Ron Bowmaster, deputy director of research for the legislature. He was being paid \$316 a month.

Nebraska has appealed the December ruling to the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals, Bowmaster added.

The Nebraska suit was brought by State Sen. Ernest Chambers and the American Civil Liberties Union.

The Colorado Senate hires a chaplain for the session each year and will pay that person \$405 this session, for about five months of work, which includes praying at the opening of each session.

The Colorado House hires clergy

persons on a daily basis, paying \$13.50 per day, or per prayer. Figuring a clergyman or rabbi can be held to a two or three-minute prayer, that comes out to better than the fabled plumber's hourly pay.

Sometimes a member of the clergy isn't available, and on those days, in the words of one Statehouse observer, "They'd have one of the pious House members pray, which is particularly nauseating." But on those days the House is saving money — it doesn't pay its own to pray.

Meanwhile, Kyle is waiting for a transcript of the Nebraska case and acknowledges he will have to "sit down and discuss" the matter with those who are being prayed over.

Other reports on activity at Legislature. Pages 3, 4.

1-15-81

By VIRGINIA CULVER
Denver Post Religion Editor

"Yes, Virginia, politicians are worth praying for."

That is what the Almighty was told last week during a prayer over the Colorado state Senate.

The prayer, by Dr. Paul H. A. Noren, well-known Lutheran pastor, was in response to an article in The Denver Post on Jan. 8 about a local group of humanists which has requested the Legislature to stop paying its chaplains.

The Post article asked whether politicians are worth praying for and whether tax dollars should be used to pay for the prayers.

Noren and Rabbi Stanley Wagner have been named chaplains for the Colorado Senate this session and will be paid \$403 a month for their daily intercessions with God in behalf of the Senate. The House hires its spiritual petitioners on a daily or weekly basis. They are paid \$13.50 a day.

Noren and Wagner were asked how they felt about being paid. Wagner, the first rabbi ever named a Senate chaplain in Colorado, said he would pray for the Senate regardless of whether he received what he termed a modest honorarium.

Noren replied, "I read your story. Would you like to hear my prayer?" It seemed only fair.

His opening line to the Senate was, "Father of us all, 'are politicians worth praying for?' or how should we answer this question posed on page one of last evening's newspaper by Virginia Culver, Denver Post Religion editor."

"Speaking for myself," Noren continued, "it is principle rather than pay that brings me to these chambers day after day."

"But we beg the question, Lord. Is the issue not, rather, whether this is 'one nation under God,' whether our founding fathers were right in setting for us the example of acknowledging Divine Providence, whether the father of our country was in violation in bending his knees before the Almighty in that harrowing winter at Valley Forge, whether those basic instruments of our beloved land were wrong in recognizing a Power above and beyond Earth?"

"Do not over sentimentalize, oh Lord when we pray that we neither forget our roots nor purposefully sever ourselves from them."

"Yes, Virginia, politicians are worth praying for. There are still eternal verities that need to be held before each of us each day. So we pray, Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget."

IN ASKING the Legislature to cease paying its chaplains, the humanists had cited a December 1960 ruling in a U.S. District Court in Nebraska, which said paying for praying in the Legislature is unconstitutional. The case is being appealed by the state of Nebraska.

Senate President Fred Anderson, R-Loveland, and House Speaker Bev Bledsoe, R-Hugo, told The Post both houses will continue paying for their daily conversations with God until the Nebraska appeal is ruled on.

Noren, now retired but still working for the church, was pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church for 15 years until he moved in 1968 to Mt. Olivet Church in Minneapolis, Minn., the largest Lutheran church in the country.

Wagner, rabbi of B.M.H. Synagogue, 560 S. Monaco Parkway, is also a professor and director of the center for Judaic studies at the University of Denver.

Politicians 'Are Worth Praying For'

NEWS ABOUT RNA MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: TED F. HUTTON, Kent-Ravena Record-Courier, Kent, Ohio; HENRY ROBINSON, Asheville, N.C., Citizen-Times; PAUL H. DUNPHY, The Daily Hampshire Gazette, Northampton, Mass.; MARCIA EDWARDS, Asbury Park Press, Asbury, N.J., and ELAINE BENO, The Register, Santa Ana, Calif. Hutton noted that he is allocated 20 percent of his working time for religion news coverage ("not nearly enough," he said); he also serves as assistant city editor. Robinson said he covers religion full time and that his is a newly created position; Dunfy spends 25 percent of his working time covering religion news in a post that was set up in September 1979, and Beno spends 60 percent of her working time covering religion.



MEMBERS' MOVES: DANIEL CATTANU, formerly religion writer at the Omaha, Neb., World-Herald, has taken the religion writing post at the Rochester, N.Y., Times-Union. His full-time religion coverage assignment there includes preparation of a weekly religion column. Cattau said there has been no religion writer at the Times-Union for some 10 to 15 years CHARLES AUSTIN has joined KEN BRIGGS to fill out the religion writing team at the New York Times. He had been religion writer for The Record, Hackensack, N.J., for the past year and a half, and before that had been English editor for the Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, Switzerland; a Religious News Service staff member, and a member of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. news staff JAMES M. JOHNSTON, religion writer for the Milwaukee, Wis., Sentinel, is retiring February 24. He is a long-time RNA member--all best wishes, Jim!



E. JANICE LAW, an RNA associate member and former religion editor of the Houston Chronicle, is an Assistant State Attorney for the 10th Judicial Circuit, a tri-county area of West Central Florida, headquartered in Bartow. She is a criminal trial prosecutor and has tried a number of jury cases. She was sworn in as an attorney and as a member of the Florida Bar in April 1980.

Atty. Law writes: "It would be my very great pleasure to act 'informally' as legal counsel to RNA at no charge whatsoever. My main areas of expertise are communications law and criminal law, but I think I could perform at least adequately in other areas of general law." Atty. Law's current address is 260 W. Van Fleet #14, Bartow, FL 33830.



JO-ANN PRICE BAEHR, a life member of RNA who currently is reporting for the National Catholic News Service, recently had two concurrent exhibitions of her photographs in New York City. One, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, was titled "Faces of Religion," and included 48 black and white prints. The other, at the Interchurch Center, was titled "From Near and Far," and featured flowers spotted on her many travels. A journalist for 30 years, Jo-Ann Price Baehr was religion editor of the New York Herald Tribune from 1951-1965.



DOROTHY DRAIN, religion editor for the Chicago, Ill., Defender since 1975 and a Defender staff member since the late 1940s, died in her sleep January 7 at age 72, The Chicago Catholic reported. With her death, "Chicago's black Catholic community lost a link with its past," The Chicago Catholic said. "As religion editor of the Chicago Defender, Dorothy Agnes Drain had not only reported on the black Catholic scene for many years but had actively--and usually quietly--been a part in shaping that scene" through her active involvement in parish work.

News Letter Editor: Carol J. Fouke, Lutheran Church in America, Department of News and Information, 231 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.
212-481-9666. Deadline for March-April issue: April 1.

RNA News Letter
c/o C. Fouke
231 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10016
February 24, 1981

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
Director, Interreligious Affairs
American Jewish Committee
165 E. 56th Street
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum:

I'm so glad you're willing to do a column for the Religion Newswriters Association News Letter! I think it's an exciting series; Martin Marty's column is enclosed, as you requested, and Malcolm Boyd's column already is on the way to you in a separate envelope. By meeting an April 1 deadline, you will be the third contributor.

Again, the general description of the series is "guest columns by prominent persons in religion on religion writing as they have observed and experienced it." Within that, you have the freedom to develop a topic as you wish, and I'll leave the focus up to you. However, you might want to say something about how the secular press has covered news of Judaism and of Jewish concerns, perhaps touching on your particular sphere of interreligious affairs. Length: 3-4 pages typewritten, double spaced. And please attach a paragraph of biographical information that I can use to introduce you.

As you know, RNA is the professional association for religion news writers for secular newspapers, magazines and wire services. (about 125 members). In your column, we're not looking for flattery but for an honest critique of how religion news has been covered and of how religion writers go about their profession.

You'll notice that I'm copyrighting the series in the name of the RNA News Letter. For the newsletter to hold the copyright, you must agree that the column is "a work made for hire." If you wish any rights to the column, I'll be happy to assign them to you from the start; if I hold the rights and decide to use the columns in the future in, say, a collection, I'll be in touch with you in any case for clearance. Again, thank you!

Carol Fouke

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of guest columns special to the RNA News Letter by prominent religious figures on religion writing as they have observed and experienced it. Martin E. Marty is Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Modern Christianity at the University of Chicago, Associate Editor of The Christian Century and editor of the newsletter Context.

By MARTIN E. MARTY

Now and then RNA members invite me to lunch with their paper's editors. We talk trends, not shop. Suppose a managing editor let me talk shop, what would I ask or say, given 30 minutes? Naturally, I'd be an advocate of space and time for proper religion coverage in the daily press, since despite many gains the subject still is slighted.

First, Mr. or Ms. Editor, have you put the right name on many of the world's discontents? Does "religion" connote to you only a Smorgasbord at the local church, or a holiday service at the synagogue? I'd show him or her my annual "Religion" reports for encyclopedia yearbooks, because these really sound like War reports. Religion linked with cultural-ethnic-tribal issues is the main motor behind most wars in our time, alas. And prophets say that 21st century human groupings and ideological passions may revolve more around religion than nation. Is your paper ready for that? Will your readers understand its unfolding?

Domestically, second, do you think of Religion as something that belongs in a Saturday box? Or have you been as caught off balance as others, and as I, by the way it is the agent of many at-home discontents? People argue about the economy, but when they really fight they fight about values and morals, and these are usually connected with religion. One service the New Christian Right performed this year was to focus such debate, even if it mishandled the themes. Did and does your religion writer get to inform readers about the background to these conflicts?

Religion, alas, makes wars and conflicts worse; it also makes concord richer. Has your paper a handle on the part religion plays in the world we call secular, when it comes to efforts to transform lives? The better part of volunteer hours and volunteer dollars goes into human care through religion. Does that story get told?

By this time, after those two negatives and a positive, it would be time to pour tea or whatever and have a bit of empathy. I'd agree with the Managing Editor that it is hard to get a handle on religion. It used to be easy when one could simply phone the bishop or church president and see how things were going down the block or in his or her bloc. Not now. Every day the religion writer has to watch a celebrity scrape together a clientele and report on who has a following. But is that so different from fields like Entertainment, which papers cover so generously? People make of religion a private affair, so it is harder to cover it institutionally. But newspapers do pretty well at secular private affairs. Despite the difficulties, give your religion writer a chance to grab the slippery stories of consumerist religion, too.

During a second cup, at the 15 or 20-minute mark, the tea and empathy fest would go on as I'd share a second problem the Managing Editor has. One put it well: Religion is either too dull and tame or too exciting and dangerous a subject. People get mad about it. Say something good or bad about the Mormons, and non-Mormons or Mormons will get angry, depending on which way the story went. The Chicago Archdiocese threatens the Sun-Times over rumored stories before they see print. Fundamentalists could scare General Motors off another medium, TV, when it planned an innocuous "Jesus of Nazareth" sequence. Why should the paper buy trouble? Why not? Does it refrain from controversial financial news, community-dividing sports coverage? Perhaps the press could do a

service by neutralizing the barkers-bigger-than-biters who have threatened so often. Still, better conflict than apathy. The problem for religion coverage may be that members of religious groups not involved in a particular story will pass it up, not be envious of it or angered over it. Trust the religion reporter to get the attention of those who've been ignoring religion.

Down the home stretch, I'd get a bit personal about personnel with most Managing Editors with a question like this: Why do so many of you pass up the talent in your religion section and turn over coverage of papal visits, comment on Iranian Islam, and similar cosmic events, to amateurs in the field of religion? Some of them bring the freshness that comes with naivete, but others have no background against which to measure events, and are embarrassments to informed readers. And while on that subject, I'd ask why so many religion writers are kept "in a box," with a border around what they have to say. And why does the box appear only on Saturday, when commuters don't buy the paper?

For three decades of my career at the edges of journalism and theology, I have kept hearing how religion would soon become settled and stale, not worth covering. Yet the predictors were wrong. None of them foresaw the Eisenhower era return to institutional religion, the early-Sixties era of hope (Vatican II, civil rights, etc.), the late-Sixties counter-cultural explosion, and least of all the devotional recovery of the Seventies. Who's minding the store as "what's next" is shaping up to surprise us all?

For closers, I'd ask whether the paper's vision of what interests readers matches reader interest. Oh, I know that most of them will not write in to comment on a fund drive or an ordination. But how do I account for the fact that far more citizens weekly go to church than to spectator sports? That they bless and curse, live and die, unite and divide, shape and misshape people in the name of religion? That in a time when "the public philosophy" is almost out of sight, religious groups keep some of its language alive? Do we editors, thanks to the creative skepticism that teaches us suspicion of all stories, find no reason to believe believers when they tell us what matters to them?

Do some of us cover up the traces to the religion "down home," because it overdid itself in shaping us, and now we are put off by it or embarrassed lest someone find its trace? Why is it that for all the ways people think they've left religion behind, once someone brings it up near the water cooler you can get the hottest argument on the floor?

I've condensed a half hour into a few lines, so my tone has to be a bit too knowing, my style too abrupt. Really, I'd have more time than this for managing editors who had time for me. My main argument would be this: Newspapers are responsible for dealing with items according to their intrinsic value. In most other areas they do not let fear of controversy, difficulty of getting and telling stories, or even finding clientele for them be the main barriers to doing them justice. I'm cheered by the greater weight given religion in our days of secularity and pluralism.

And, if I keep the literary device of the cup of tea going, by now I am overcaffeinated and your editor is overdue, so far as deadlines are concerned. I'd thank the Managing Editor and you and I would retire for something more quieting than tea.

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Nov.-
Dec.
1980

ABOUT THE NEXT RNA NEWS LETTER: The January-February 1981 RNA News Letter will feature as the second in this series of guest columns a column by Malcolm Boyd, Episcopal priest and author of 19 books.

The N-L editor seconds Ben Kaufman's suggestions in his president's column pages one and two: Please share any of your clips on the "story of the story" of the Sun-Times and GMS probes of the Chicago Archdiocese, how you've handled the terms "anti-abortion" and



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Jan. 28, 1981

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum:
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th St.
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum:

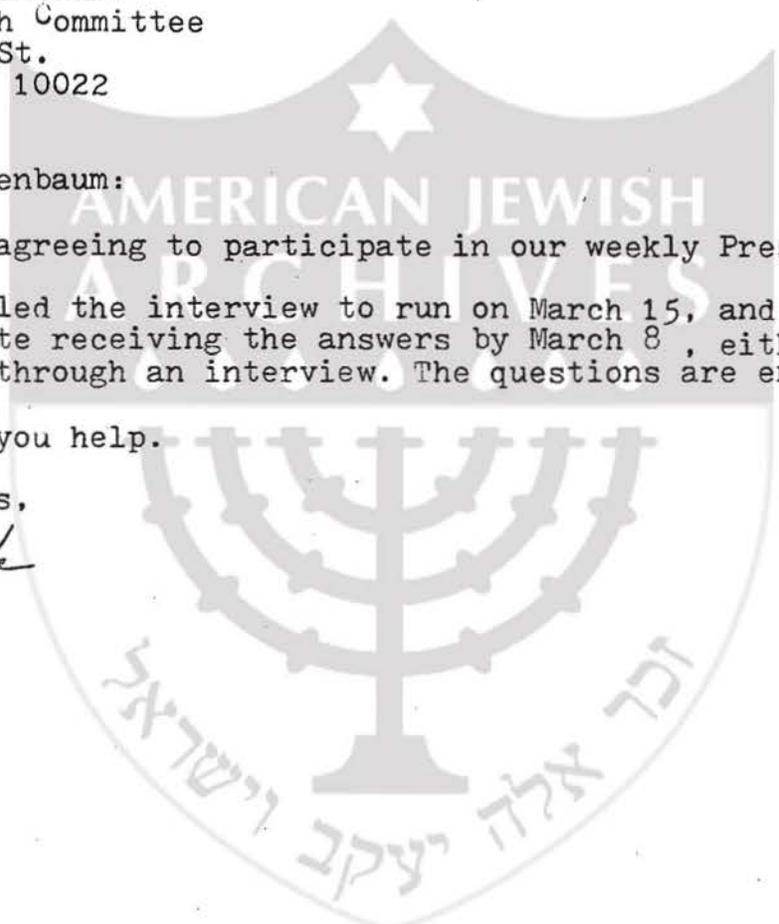
Thank you for agreeing to participate in our weekly Press Conference.

We have scheduled the interview to run on March 15, and would appreciate receiving the answers by March 8, either in writing or through an interview. The questions are enclosed.

My thanks for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Leigh Cook
Leigh Cook



Questions for Asbury Park Press weekly Press Conference

1. How did you become interested and involved in your ecumenical pursuits?
2. What are the issues that should be addressed between religious faiths?
3. What do you consider the biggest hurdles to overcome in fostering religious understanding between Jews and Christians?
4. How did you gain the reputation as the foremost ecumenical leader in the world today?
5. What effects do you think the emergence of the Moral Majority and New Christian Right will have on Protestant-Jewish relations?
6. As an apostle to Christians, do you think major inroads have been made or is there a lingering polarization of the two religions?
7. Are you considered a sort of maverick among conservatives of your own Jewish faith or do they support your efforts?
8. What do you think of interfaith marriages?

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