



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

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

Series E: General Alphabetical Files. 1960-1992

Box 79, Folder 5, Biographical material, 1971-1989.

Bio

*International Jewish Committee*  
*on*  
*Interreligious Consultations*

FROM: GUNTHER LAWRENCE  
(212) 686-8670

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS (IJCIC)

AMERICAN SECRETARIAT:  
Synagogue Council of America  
327 Lexington Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016  
Tel.: (212) 686-8670

EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT:  
World Jewish Congress  
1 Rue de Varembe  
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland  
Tel.: (022) 34 13 25

CONSTITUTENT AGENCIES:  
American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10022

B'nai B'rith  
1640 Rhode Island Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036

The Israel Interfaith  
Association  
P.O.B. 7739  
Jerusalem 91.077, Israel

Synagogue Council of America  
327 Lexington Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016

World Jewish Congress  
1 Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016

NEW YORK -- The International Jewish Committee for Inter-religious Consultations (IJCIC) has elected by unanimous vote Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee as its chairman. He succeeds Rabbi Mordecai Waxman of Great Neck, L.I., who served as Jewish spokesman during the meetings with Pope John Paul II and Vatican authorities in Rome on September 1, and later in Miami, September 11.

IJCIC is the coordinating body of major Jewish religious and communal groups in their relationships with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, and other international religious bodies.

The member agencies of IJCIC are the American Jewish Committee, B'nai B'rith International, the Synagogue Council of America, the Israel Interfaith Committee, and the World Jewish Congress.

Founded in 1969, IJCIC has been centrally involved in implementing programs with the Vatican Secretariat on Religious Relations with the Jewish People, headed by Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, President. Parallel programs are carried on by IJCIC with the World Council of Churches in Geneva, the World Lutheran Federation, the Anglican Communion in London, the All-African Council of Churches, and Eastern Orthodox churches.

For 25 years, Rabbi Tanenbaum served as national inter-religious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, pioneering in advancing relationships with Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Greek Orthodox, Black Church, Hispanic, and Muslim bodies.

He was the only rabbi invited as guest observer at Vatican Council II, and participated in the first official audience of world Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City. Rabbi Tanenbaum, who has been an active member of IJCIC since its founding, played a key role as one of the nine-member delegation of IJCIC leaders who met with Pope John Paul II and Vatican authorities in Vatican City and Castel Gondolfo on

August 31-September 1.

In a recent national poll, Rabbi Tanenbaum was designated as "one of the ten most influential and respected religious leaders in America." A cover story in New York magazine described Dr. Tanenbaum as "one of the foremost Jewish ecumenical leaders in the world today."

The new IJCIC chairman has had a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugee and hunger problems, and foreign relations concerns. He has served as a member of the prestigious Human Rights Research Committee of the Foreign Policy Association's Study of Priorities for the 1980s and as consultant to the Council of Foreign Relations. He is a member of the executive board of the International Rescue Committee, the Overseas Development Council, the Bretton Woods Committee, the National Peace Academy, and the American Jewish World Service.

At the invitation of the International Rescue Committee, he joined delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out three separate fact-finding investigations of the plight of the Vietnamese "boat people" and Cambodian refugees, which contributed to the saving of tens of thousands of lives of Indochinese refugees. He has organized many relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including the Black Jews of Ethiopia, Lebanese, Nigerians, Ugandans, Haitians, Afghanis, Central Americans, and Polish refugees.

Rabbi Tanenbaum serves as a member of the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust, and is a founder and former co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has directed the landmark religious research studies examining intergroup content in Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish teaching materials in the United States, Italy, Spain, French-speaking countries, Germany and South America. These studies have been the basis of the revision of negative stereotypes in the textbooks produced in the 1970s.

A religious historian and authority on Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations, he has written and lectured extensively on the history, theology, and sociology of Judaism and Christianity. Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author, editor, or co-editor of seven books, among them, "Twenty Years of Catholic-Jewish Relations," (Paulist Press), "Evangelicals and Jewish in Conversation," and "Evangelicals and Jews in an Age of Pluralism," (Baker Book House), "Speaking of God Today - Jews and Lutherans in Conversation," (Fortress Press), "The Greek Orthodox-Jewish Consultation," "The International Colloquium on Religion, Land, Nation, and Peoplehood," and "Vatican II - An Interfaith Appraisal," (University of Notre Dame Press).

A prize-winning weekly radio commentator over WINS-Westinghouse, he has served as a consultant to the NBC-TV nine-hour special "Holocaust" and earlier was consultant to the New Media Bible project.

He has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe, Israel, and South America, and at numerous national and international conferences.

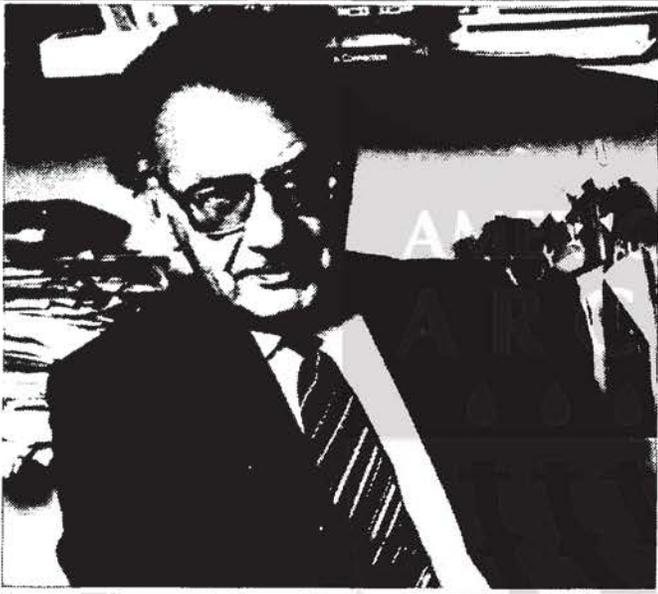


## Program Corporation of America

599 West Hartsdale Avenue, White Plains, New York 10607  
914-428-5840 1-800-8-SPEAKER (1-800-877-3253)

### Presenting

## Dr. Marc Tanenbaum



**One of the most influential religious leaders in America, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum is an internationally known authority in the field of human rights, ecumenical relations, social justice, foreign relations concerns and problems of world hunger and refugees. Rabbi Tanenbaum served as director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee and is a pioneer in forging links among Jews and Roman Catholics, mainline Protestants and Evangelicals. He is widely regarded as one of the foremost experts in Jewish - Christian - Muslim relations and was the only Rabbi present during Vatican Council II. A weekly commentator on radio for 25 years and a regular advisor to the television networks, Rabbi Tanenbaum is probably the best known rabbi among Christians in the United States.**

Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum, International Relations Consultant of the American Jewish Committee, has a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugees, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns.

Formerly the AJC's national interreligious affairs director, Rabbi Tanenbaum was designated

in a recent national poll as "one of the ten most influential and respected religious leaders in America." A cover story in *New York* magazine described Dr. Tanenbaum as "one of the foremost Jewish ecumenical leaders in the world today."

In 1987, he was elected unanimously as Chairman of the prestigious International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) which represents World Jewry in relations with the Vatican and other world religious bodies. In May 1988, Rabbi Tanenbaum was awarded the "Interfaith Medallion" of the International Council of Christians and Jews for his "historic contributions" to advancing interreligious understanding over the past 25 years.

Dr. Tanenbaum has served as a member of the Human Rights Research Committee of the Foreign Policy Association's Study of Priorities for the 1980s. In recent years, he has testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on "Moral Imperatives in the Formation of American Foreign Policy." He has also testified before Congressional committees on world refugee and world hunger problems, and played a key role in organizing White House conferences on Foreign Aid and Energy Conservation.

During the Civil Rights struggle, Rabbi Tanenbaum was program chair of the historic National Conference on Race and Religion in Chicago, February 1963. Providing the first national ecumenical platform for Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., the conference was important in mobilizing support for the crucial March on Washington the following August.

Dr. Tanenbaum participated in demonstrations in Birmingham, Selma, and elsewhere in the South. In addition, he led the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization, an ecumenical coalition promoting community organization and economic development in urban areas, and organized Operation Connection, where religious, civil rights, business and industry leaders sponsored major job-training programs which helped people form businesses in 14 inner cities.

President Jimmy Carter invited Dr. Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among ten national religious and academic spokesmen to discuss "the State of the Nation" at the Camp David summit meetings in 1979. He was also appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust.

At the invitation of the International Rescue Committee, he joined delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out three separate fact-finding investigations of the plight of the Vietnamese "boat people" and Cambodian refugees, which contributed to the saving of tens of thousands of lives of Indochinese refugees. He has organized many relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including Kurds, Lebanese, Nigerians, Ugandans, Ethiopian Jews, Haitians, Afghans, Central Americans and Polish refugees. He is a board member of the International Rescue Committee, the Overseas Development Council, the United Nations Association, the Bretton Woods Committee, the National Peace Academy, and the Bayard Rustin Institute. He is a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which aids oppressed Jews and Christians in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Rabbi Tanenbaum also played a key role in the rescue of Ethiopian Jews.

In March 1979, he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals.

Dr. Tanenbaum is a founder and leading member of the joint liaison committee of the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), and of a similar body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, and participated in the first official audience of World Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City. He was also the first Jewish leader to address 4,000 delegates attending the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in July 1983.

He served as consultant to the NBC-TV nine-hour special "Holocaust" and earlier was consultant to the special "Jesus of Nazareth." He is an award winning weekly commentator over the WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System, and appears frequently on major network programs.

He has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe, Israel, and Latin America, and at numerous national and international conferences. Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author or editor of several published books and of numerous articles dealing with Jewish - Christian relations, human rights, and foreign affairs.

---

## TOPICS

---

- **Jewish - Christian - Muslim Relations**
- **World Refugees**
- **World Hunger**
- **Vietnamese Boat People**
- **Holocaust and its Implications for Modern Society**
- **The Middle East Peace Process**
- **International Relations**
- **East - West Relations**
- **Evangelical - Jewish Relations**
- **Roots of Anti-Semitism**
- **State of World Jewry: Status of the Jews in the World**
- **The Vatican, Jews and Israel: Myths and Realities**
- **The Problems and Prospects of Israel**
- **Black - Jewish Relations**
- **American Democratic Values**
- **Religious and Ethnic Pluralism**

RESPONSE OF RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, ON RECEIVING "INTERFAITH AWARD" OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 1988  
AT THE GRAND HYATT HOTEL, NEW YORK CITY

---

This would be a meaningful and moving moment in my life under normal circumstances. Given my recent hospitalization, this event -- the receiving of the prestigious "Interfaith Award" of the International Council of Christians and Jews in the midst of your presence -- assumes a very special, even a rare quality of grace.

I must confess that an element of its specialness derives from the fact that this is one of the few events in my life that I did not have to arrange myself. That adds to why I am so touched and grateful for today. Sir Sigmund Sternberg, one of the most distinguished leaders of British Jewry and a statesman of the Jewish People, and the International Council of Christians and Jews, perhaps the most representative body devoted to the improvement of relationships between Christians and Jews internationally, quite spontaneously informed me several months ago that I had been selected for this distinction in recognition of my more than 25 years of service in the advancement of Jewish-Christian understanding. That spontaneity lends the luster of authenticity to this tribute.

With your permission, I should like to take just a few moments to reflect on some of the meaning of this occasion and award to me. It is most effectively synthesized for me in the writings of Dr. Ernest Becker, a brilliant but neglected cultural anthropologist. In his book, The Denial of Death, Dr. Becker states that human beings do not in fact fear death. What people fear is dying in insignificance. That is the real terror of death. He proposes that all of us -- at least most of us -- have a need to live our lives in a way that makes a difference, significant lives that give meaning to human existence. That is our immortality, Becker writes.

2)

All our art, literature, music, culture, even religion are ways of making a statement, leaving a landmark that we have not simply endured as animal life endures, but that we have lived lives of purpose and meaning. In short, Becker asserts, each of us has a powerful need to make a difference through our living, to help ennoble the human condition. That, he says, is true immortality.

As I have thought about my past 27 years with the American Jewish Committee, I experience feelings of deepest gratitude for AJC's having made possible opportunities for living a life of such high meaning, enabling contributions to be made in many areas of importance to the Jewish People and to society at large -- in some cases contributions, I trust, of lasting, even transforming value.

In retrospect, it is remarkable that AJC's lay leaders and professional leadership supported activities literally in every decade during which I have been associated with AJC, that helped change the course of history for the better.

In the 1960s, AJC made possible the participation of my beloved colleague and mentor, Zachariah Shuster, and my precious teacher, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, both of blessed memory, and myself, in Vatican Council II. The Council was a transforming event which has radically changed the course of 1900 years of Catholic-Jewish relations, much of it now for the better. In the 1970s, we were able to pioneer with Dr. Billy Graham and the Southern Baptist Convention in opening a new world of Evangelical-Jewish relations which continues to this day.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, AJC enabled my taking part in four separate International Rescue Committee missions to Southeast Asia that literally resulted in the saving of thousands of lives of Vietnamese Boat People and Cambodians, and led to the resettlement of a half-million hapless refugees in the United States. Earlier in the mid-1960s, we were able to engage in similar life-saving roles in the Nigerian-Biafran conflict, and then in Ethiopia, and in the drought-ridden Sahelian zone of West Africa.

3)

In the 1980s, we were able to make significant gains with major European countries -- both West and East -- particularly in West Germany through the excellent work of William Trosten and his predecessors, as well as in Latin America, led by Jacobo Kovadloff and Sergio Nudelstejer, that require further serious, responsible cultivation. And now in 1988, we are beginning to explore the possible importance to Jews and Israel of Japan and the Pacific Rim in light of their powerful geo-political and economic presence in America and in the world.

While these were the dramatic and historic highlights, we conjured with those challenges while concentrating much of our energies on the priorities of Israel, Soviet Jewry, endangered Jewish communities in Ethiopia, Iran, Syria, Yemen, Central America and elsewhere. We visited Oberammergau several times to bring about changes in their Passion Play. We implemented religious textbook studies, and we sought to combat teaching contempt against Jews and Judaism in cooperation with friends such as Mme. Claire Huchet-Bishop, a great Christian lady who graces us with her presence.

I will never be able to thank adequately, Dr. John Slawson and Bert Gold, who put up with my idiosyncracies and *meshugas*, my specialized *shtetl*, but also gave me the freedom and support to do what I thought had to be done in our common interest. They instilled in me one crucial motto -- which is the motto of AJC at its best -- be effective, know the facts and do it right.

Ted Ellenoff, Leo Nevas, our AJC officers, our eminent former presidents, our professional colleagues -- for me especially those in interreligious affairs and international relations -- our chapter leaders, our area directors -- that is the moral and human framework without which none of this history could have been made, decade after decade. And I am confident that under Ira Silverman's leadership as Executive Vice President that tradition of significant accomplishment will continue and expand.

4)

In truth, I feel deeply that this award is to be shared with the American Jewish Committee, the ICCJ, and those thousands of extraordinary Christian and Jewish leaders who collaborated with us throughout the United States and in other parts of the world to bring about this "revolution of mutual esteem." There are few greater personal satisfactions for me today than that of being embraced as friend and colleague by these Christian and Jewish leaders in virtually every major city in the United States and in many parts of the world.

There is a Hebrew phrase *acharon, acharon chaviv* -- "the last is the most beloved." My magnificent, beautiful, and brilliant wife, Georgette, has saved my life in many ways. It is difficult to imagine that any human being can give more to another than my wife has given to me. During our years together, Georgette has made me possible.

Sir Sigmund, ICCJ, AJC, and my family of friends, for this memorable day, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

MHT:RPR

88-550

*Der Präsident  
der  
Bundesrepublik Deutschland*

Bonn, den 26. Juni 1989

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
165 East Street  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
USA

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum,

Let me thank you for your book "Speaking of God Today" and your friendly dedicating words that I found both inspiring and encouraging. Yours is a very learned book and I am looking forward to study it in greater leisure. I feel deeply grateful for all ecumenical efforts such as yours.

With respect and appreciation I remember the evening at the University Club, your friends from the American Jewish Committee and the prayer pronounced by you. It is impressive and moving to witness the unfolding of such a generous dialogue. May it carry us into a better future.

Yours sincerely,

*Richard Weisbach*

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

### DR. MARC H. TANENBAUM

Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum, Director of International Relations of the American Jewish Committee, has a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugee, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns.

Formerly the AJC's national interreligious affairs director, Rabbi Tanenbaum was designated in a recent national poll as "one of the ten most influential and respected religious leaders in America." A cover story in New York magazine described Dr. Tanenbaum as "the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today."

Dr. Tanenbaum has served as a member of the prestigious Human Rights Research Committee of the Foreign Policy Association's Study of Priorities for the 1980s. In recent years, he has testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on "Moral Imperatives in the Formation of American Foreign Policy." He has also testified before Congressional committees on world refugee and world hunger problems, and played a key role in organizing White House conferences on Foreign Aid and Energy Conservation.

President Jimmy Carter invited Dr. Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among ten national religious and academic spokesmen to discuss "the State of the Nation" at Camp David summit meetings in 1979. He was also appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust.

At the invitation of the International Rescue Committee, he joined delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out three separate fact-finding investigations of the plight of the Vietnamese "boat people" and Cambodian refugees, which contributed to the saving of tens of thousands of lives of Indochinese refugees. He has organized many

relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including Lebanese, Nigerians, Ugandans, the Falashas of Ethiopia, Haitians, Afghans, Central Americans and Polish refugees. He is a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which aids oppressed Jews and Christians in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In March 1979, he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals.

Dr. Tanenbaum is a founder and leading member of the joint liaison committee of the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), and of a similar body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, and participated in the first official audience of World Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City. He was also the first Jewish leader to address 4,000 delegates attending the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in July 1983.

He served as consultant to the NBC-TV nine-hour special "Holocaust" and earlier was consultant to the special "Jesus of Nazareth."

He has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe and Israel, and at numerous national and international conferences. Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author or editor of several published books and of numerous articles.

rpr

9/83

83-700-50

May 4, 1989

The Templeton Prize  
P.O. Box N-7776  
Nassau, Bahamas

Dear Sirs:

1. I wish to nominate RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM of the AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, 165 East 56 Street, New York, NY 10022 for the award of the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion.
2. CURRICULUM VITAE: (Please see Appendix I attached.)
3. PUBLICATIONS: (Please see Appendix II attached.)
4. REASONS FOR MY NOMINATION - Rabbi Tanenbaum has been a unique force over three decades - longer than any other living personality in the world Jewish community - in seeking to motivate members of God's human family to model their lives in imitation of His holiness and moral virtues in their daily relations with one another. He has dedicated his life to realizing these Biblical values in three primary areas:

- A. "How can you love God whom you cannot see if you hate your fellow man whom you can see?" That Biblical injunction, shared both by Christians and Jews (as well as Muslims and other high religions) has been a central faith conviction of Rabbi Tanenbaum's since his childhood in a Jewish religious school in Baltimore. He has felt that the contradictions between the lofty and noble professions of love, charity and forgiveness proclaimed by Judaism and Christianity (and other religions) and the historic practices of prejudice and hostility - racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Christianity, anti-Islam, apartheid - have led to widespread alienation of whole generations, especially young people, from the Church, the Synagogue, and the Mosque. Belief in God has been compromised or weakened for millions by cynicism which perceived religious institutions and some of their major leaders as agents of moral hypocrisy.

In the mid-1950s, Rabbi Tanenbaum, following his ordination at the Jewish Theological Seminary as a Conservative Rabbi, began a systematic effort to reach out to the major Christian leaders and churches in the United States in order to establish together that religion was at its core a force of love and reconciliation that is worthy of commitment.

Since 1952, Rabbi Tanenbaum pioneered almost single-handedly in establishing warm and mutually respectful relations with virtually every major branch of Christendom - mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics, Evangelical Christians, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic Church. He has numbered among his friends and collaborating colleagues over decades religious leaders who have shaped America's spiritual ethos - the Rev. Dr. Billy Graham; Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen; Cardinals Bernardin, Law, O'Connor, Quinn, Shehan, Archbishops May and Keeler, and most of the members of the Catholic hierarchy; the late Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr (with whom Tanenbaum wrote a small book on *Religion and International Cooperation*); Dr. John Bennett; Archbishop Iakovos; Archbishop Manoogian; Rabbis Abraham Joshua Heschel, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveichik, and Rabbi Louis Finkelstein

(with whom Rabbi Tanenbaum collaborated during Vatican Council II which he attended as the only rabbi serving as "official observer" at the request of the late Cardinal Augustin Bea.)

To provide substance and support for his work of reconciliation and building mutual respect, Rabbi Tanenbaum supervised the milestone studies of interreligious content in religious textbooks used in the educational systems of Jews (Dropsie University study), Protestants (*Faith and Prejudice*, Yale Divinity School), Catholics (*Catechetics and Prejudice*, St. Louis University), and French, Spanish, and Italian textbooks (Paulist Press.) The studies and extensive programs for implementing their findings have resulted in the virtual removal of every hostile or negative references of major religious groups about each other, and the introduction into teaching materials of positive, affirming portrayals of each religious group's beliefs and practices.

In his commitment to help build up "the Family of God" based on mutual knowledge and reciprocal respect, Rabbi Tanenbaum traveled in the 1960s through the 1980s to every major city in the United States, Western and Eastern Europe, Latin America, parts of Africa, and the Middle East where he lectured and organized networks of Christians, Jews, and frequently Muslims through seminars, dialogues, institutes, academic conferences. His accomplishment was characterized by a Roman Catholic priest, president of the Papal University Pro Deo in Rome, as "a revolution in mutual esteem."

For his ecumenical and Jewish-Christian labors he has received fifteen honorary doctorates from major Christian and Jewish universities and seminaries. In 1988, Sir Sigmund Sternberg conferred on him the "Interfaith Medallion" of the International Council of Christians and Jews.

New York Magazine (January 1979) in a cover story characterized Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today." Similar evaluations have appeared in numerous secular, Christian, and Jewish publications in many parts of the world (*Newsweek*, *Time*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *National Catholic News Service*, *Religious News Service*, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, *Commentary* magazine.) A Christian Century poll designated Rabbi Tanenbaum "as one of the ten most respected and influential religious leaders in America," following Dr. Billy Graham, the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, President Jimmy Carter, Dr. Martin Marty, among others.

On May 4, 1989, Rabbi Tanenbaum was invited to deliver the keynote address at the National Day of Prayer at the Pentagon.

**B. "The Sacred dignity of Human Life Created in the Image of God."**

This central Biblical conviction in the Torah and the Gospel which mandates reverence for each human life as sacred has governed Rabbi Tanenbaum's beliefs that these are not simply liturgical phrases but prophetic commands to seek to uphold the dignity and to preserve the lives where possible of every human being. Believing that "the spark of God is found in every human soul," and inspired by the model of Mother Theresa, among others, the Rabbi has devoted a large measure of his energies to easing the plight and suffering of countless refugees and those afflicted by hunger and poverty in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

In 1967, he was the first Jewish leader to organize a massive effort in the Jewish community to help save the lives of tens of thousands of Christian Ibos during the Nigerian/Biafran conflict. In 1978, he was the first Jewish representative to join a mission of the

International Rescue Committee which visited every refugee camp in Southeast Asia where some 250,000 Vietnamese boat people, Cambodians, and ethnic Chinese had drowned in the South China Sea. That mission of Christians and Jews, followed by three subsequent missions, resulted in President Jimmy Carter's issuing an executive order to the Seventh Fleet stationed in the Philippines not to allow any refugee boats to founder in the surrounding waters. As a result of these efforts, the drowning of the Vietnamese boat people virtually came to an end.

For Rabbi Tanenbaum, that work of mercy was the fulfillment of the Rabbinic teaching that "He who saves a single life is regarded as if he had saved an entire world." It was also shaped by the rabbi's response to the Nazi holocaust, and the Levitical message, "You shall not stand idly by while the blood of your brothers and sisters cry out to you from the earth." (Rabbi Tanenbaum serves on the President's Commission on the Holocaust.)

Rabbi Tanenbaum then helped organize the American Jewish World Service in 1984, an international disaster relief and development organization of the Jewish community. AJWS now serves in 27 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America helping impoverished peoples, regardless of religion, become self-sufficient. The motto of AJWS is founded on Maimonides' teaching that "the highest form of *zedakah* (justice and charity) is to help your neighbor become independent and self-reliant." (As a result of our work of mercy and compassion in South India, the Dalai Lama has invited the organization of a Buddhist-Jewish dialogue.)

In the 1960's Rabbi Tanenbaum was the foremost Jewish leader in helping organize cooperatively with Christian leaders community organization and self-development projects in fourteen inner city ghettos (The Coalition of Conscience.) In 1963, he served as program chairman of the historic National Conference of Religion and Race in Chicago which provided the first national ecumenical platform for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a result of the moral conviction that emerged at that assembly, the decision was made to organize the March on Washington in August 1963.

In 1984, Rabbi Tanenbaum was the first Jewish leader to join with Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and Muslim leaders in mobilizing a major effort to respond affirmatively to the needs of 35,000 homeless people in New York and some 2,000,000 in the United States. This coalition of religious leaders played a decisive role in affecting the conscience of city, state, and national leaders in responding to the heart-breaking destitution of the homeless.

C. "Universal Fraternity and the Kingdom of God."

Central to Rabbi Tanenbaum's religious belief system has been Maimonides' teachings regarding the Messianic Age and the Kingdom of God. Through God's Providence with man (and woman) as co-partner in the work of completing creation, an overarching moral and spiritual objective has been that of seeking to bring an end to "war, hatred, jealousy, and bloodshed," and to usher in a period of "universal love, compassion, justice, and peace." Through such actual transformation of the human condition, Maimonides taught, we will know that the Kingdom has begun.

That deeply-held conviction has motivated Rabbi Tanenbaum to write several volumes and numerous essays and monographs, as well as to organize dozens of academic and theological seminars, for the development of a systematic theology of pluralism. (See his paperback, *Religious Values in An Age of Violence*, his essay on "Judaism, Ecumenism, and Pluralism" *Speaking of God Today - Jews and Lutherans in Conversation, Evangelicals and the Jews in*

*an Age of Pluralism.)*

Beginning with an "International Colloquium on Judaism and Christianity" at Harvard Divinity School in 1966, Rabbi Tanenbaum has worked systematically to develop a theology of "unity in the midst of diversity" that encourages the profoundest commitments to one's faith while respecting the diversity other faith commitments. (See his Publications list, Appendix II.)

In 1970, he organized a world conference of religious leaders from Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Shintoism, and African religions at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The Truman Peace center published the proceedings which became a milestone work in developing a doctrine of world religious pluralism and co-existence.

In 1971, he helped organize a conference in Jerusalem on "The Bible and Black Africa." Some 75 christian and Muslim leaders from most African nations joined with Jews in exploring how religiously to overcome the religious, racial, and ethnic strife in the African continent which has resulted in so much group hostility, fanaticism, and human destruction.

In 1984, Rabbi Tanenbaum served as co-chairman with the leaders of the Brazilian conference of Catholic Bishops in organizing a Pan-American Conference of Christians and Jews in the Sao Paulo which brought together leaders from every South American country and North America in seeking to advance religious pluralism and human rights.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has been a foremost leader in the cause of religious liberty, freedom of conscience and human rights. He was a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which supports religious liberty and human rights for Jews, but also for Pentecostal, Evangelical Baptists, Russian Orthodox, and Catholics in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Thus, the core teaching and belief in the sacred dignity of every human being as a child of God is translated into daily reality.

For his three decades of leadership in the cause of religious pluralism and human dignity, St. Mercy College in Bridgeport Connecticut, conferred on Rabbi Tanenbaum an honorary doctorate in 1985, terming him "The Human Rights Rabbi of America."

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

### "APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES"

by Louis Auster

It happened on a Christmas eve during the height of the Depression. His mother, an Orthodox Jewish woman, deeply devoted to her Jewish faith, was standing behind the counter in their small grocery store in South Baltimore. She was wrapping red and green ribbons around a number of Christmas baskets filled with meats, cheeses, breads, and other foodstuffs.

"What are you doing making Christmas baskets, Mom?" the bespectacled teenager asked in astonishment. A student in a traditional Jewish parochial school, he knew that Christmas was a major Christian holiday and that devout Jews observed Chanukah but did not participate in Christmas observances.

The Russian-Jewish immigrant mother responded to her son, Marc, in her Yiddish-accented speech:

"My son, I have just heard that our Christian neighbors down the street are so poor that they will not have anything to eat for their Christmas dinners. It would be terrible if Mrs. Kirby, Mrs. Wingate, Mrs. Eder and their families would go hungry on their religious holiday."

And this traditional Jewish mother, herself a refugee from poverty and pogroms in the Ukraine, took her son by the hand and together they walked through the frigid December night air handing out Christmas baskets to their less fortunate Christian neighbors. That became an extraordinary image in his youthful mind -- two Orthodox Jews acting as if they were Santa Claus bringing Christmas cheer and hope to their Irish, Italian, German, and Polish neighbors, Catholics and Protestants alike.

Now, some fifty years later, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum -- whom New York magazine has characterized as "one of the foremost Jewish ecumenical leaders in the world today"--reflects on the meaning that formative youthful experience had on his remarkable career as the generally-recognized pioneer in the movement to improve understanding and mutual respect between Christians and Jews:

"How my mother -- and father -- behaved, their daily actions toward other human beings, whether Christians or Jews, blacks or whites, had a greater impact on me than almost anything they said or taught," Rabbi Tanenbaum said.

"With absolutely no theological training, equipped only with simple, pious faith as traditional Jews, they taught me some of the most profound religious and moral lessons by which I have lived my professional and personal life. They became for me an inspiring model of how it was possible to be deeply committed to one's own faith and at the same time to respect the different religions of other people."

Rabbi Tanenbaum believes that his childhood with his parents in a poor, working class neighborhood in South Baltimore that was predominantly Christian and multi-ethnic, prepared him for living in a religiously pluralistic world as much as his university training. "Despite the inevitable strains that accompanied our common struggle for survival in the Dépression," he said, "my parents lived their deeply-felt Biblical and Prophetic convictions that all human beings are children of God and are to be treated with equal dignity."

It was also an article of faith with Abraham and Sadie Tanenbaum that the best way for their three children to serve God was by loving and caring for their fellow-human beings, whatever their religion or race.

Those central values of Biblical humanism were tested in the powerful crucible of his parents' suffering as victims of religious bigotry and persecution in Czarist Russia where anti-Semitism was rampant. "My parents seemed to embody for me the 2,000 year Jewish experience of exile and redemption -- the misery and grandeur of existence, the hope that triumphs ultimately over despair," the tall rabbi declared.

The alchemy of those life-affirming religious values in tension with the tragic sufferings of the Jewish people stamped an indelible message on the consciousness of Rabbi Tanenbaum - the precious value of every human life. As a result of the trauma of the Nazi holocaust, in which one-third of the Jewish people were savagely destroyed, and in the face of the horrifying knowledge that much of the civilized world stood idly by as spectators, Rabbi Tanenbaum said that "we Jews have learned one permanent universal lesson for human survival. It is the lesson I was first taught in the Book of Leviticus, paraphrased as: 'You shall not stand idly by while the blood of your brothers and sisters cry out to you from the earth.'"

Over and again Rabbi Tanenbaum has given concrete expression to that moral commandment. In 1967, during the Nigerian-Biafran struggle, he took the lead in organizing the American Jewish Emergency Relief Effort for the victims of that civil war. In cooperation with Catholic Relief Services and Church World Service, he helped mobilize 21 major Jewish organizations who raised in several months nearly a million dollars for providing desperately-needed medicines, food, clothing and shelter for hundreds of thousands of Nigerians who might otherwise have died in the African bush.

In the early 1970s, when drought struck the Sahelian zone of West Africa, he joined the Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame University, Cardinal Terence Cook of New York, and the Evangelical World Relief Group. This small group of religious leaders went to the U.S. Congress and persuaded Congressional leaders to make available several tons of food, much of which was being stored in silos as surplus, to the thousands of starving Africans.

"Tens of thousands of human beings are living today," the Rabbi reflects, "because a group of religious leaders took seriously the values of the Torah and Gospel and acted on those beliefs."

In the wake of the African tragedy during which thousands had died, among them many children, Rabbi Tanenbaum helped organize and became co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on World Hunger.

In 1978, he was invited by the International Rescue Committee to join a select group of fourteen prominent American leaders to carry out a fact-finding mission among the Vietnamese boat people, ethnic Chinese, Laotians, Hmong tribesmen and Cambodians. That Citizens Committee on Indochinese Refugees included such prominent Americans as James Michener, the novelist; the late William Casey, head of the CIA; Ambassador Cecil Lyons, former U.S. envoy to Chile and Sri Lanka; Leo Cherne, president of IRC; Bayard Rustin, the black civil rights activist; Msgr. John Aherne, representing the U.S. Catholic Church; and Dr. Kenneth Cautheen, a Protestant theologian.

The citizens group visited every refugee camp in Southeast Asia -- from Hong Kong to Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Singapore. On the waters of the South China Sea, he saw starving Vietnamese refugees drowning. "To this day, I still have trouble sleeping some nights. I just keep seeing those people in the boat. One old Chinese woman reminded me of my mother. I have never felt more human or more Jewish than when I literally helped pull people out of those turbulent waters. The belief that 'Man is created in the sacred image of God' was seldom more real to me and to my Christian colleagues."

The Citizens Committee brought back fourteen recommendations which they personally presented to President Jimmy Carter, the then Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, Security head Zbigniew Brzezinski, and to the Majority and Minority leaders of Congress. Twelve of their recommendations were adopted as the foreign policy of the United States. President Carter agreed to order the U.S. fleet to rescue refugees, and as a result, the drowning of Vietnamese boat people had virtually come to an end. (Some 250,000 of these refugees are estimated to have drowned since 1974 in the South China Sea before this mission was undertaken.)

Rabbi Tanenbaum has since gone to Southeast Asia on three subsequent missions that have resulted in relieving the suffering and hunger of the Indochinese refugees. On his last mission in 1980, he joined actress Liv Ullman, novelist Elie Wiesel, Winston Churchill III of England, and hundreds of European physicians, religious and civic leaders on a "March for Survival" for Cambodian refugees. They accompanied truckloads of urgently-needed medicines, vitamins, and food for the Cambodians, who had lost half their population under the ruthless, Nazi-like regime of Pol Pot.

The Communist rulers of Cambodia refused to allow the trucks across the borders because they came from Western democracies. "I saw first-hand," Rabbi Tanenbaum said, "Communist totalitarianism at work. They refused to allow us to bring life-saving supplies to their pitiful survivors because they thought this would be seen as a propaganda victory for Western democracies. Their soldiers threatened to shoot us if we dared come across the border. When I came back to America, I kissed the soil of this country. Far too often we take this democracy, its freedoms, and the generosity of the American people for granted and we do so at our peril."

Since then, he has continued to be active with the U.S. Coordinator for Refugees, and the various world refugee bodies in trying to save the lives or bring relief to the twelve million refugees who haplessly wander on the face of the earth -- including Somalians, Afghans, Haitians, Ugandans, the Falasha black Jews of Ethiopia, Poles, Russians, and Latin Americans.

For his thirty-five years of leadership in interreligious affairs, human rights, world hunger, global refugee problems, and the pursuit of peace, Rabbi Tanenbaum has been awarded fifteen honorary doctorates by major Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and Jewish institutions of higher learning. His latest honor came from Sacred Heart University in Bridgeport, Conn., which termed him "The Human Rights Rabbi of America."

In 1979, the rabbi was one of the ten religious and academic leaders invited by President Carter to discuss the "State of the Nation" at Camp David. The same year, he conferred with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and West German parliamentary officials on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals.

His pathbreaking service as leader, thinker, spell-binding lecturer, and writer in Jewish-Christian relations led to Rabbi Tanenbaum's being selected in 1978 in a nationwide poll of religion editors of America's newspapers as one of the ten "most respected and influential

religious leaders of the United States." He ranked fourth after Dr. Billy Graham, President Jimmy Carter (as Baptist lay leader), and Dr. Martin Marty, the Lutheran historian-theologian.

"In many ways, my work in Jewish-Christian relations was a conversion of spirit," the rabbi mused. In addition to the image of his mother fixing Christmas baskets for their Christian neighbors, he carries an earlier image in his head that was much less favorable toward Christians and Christianity.

About the age of three, he recalls, his father told him, his older brother Erny, and younger sister Sima, a true story of what happened to his family on a Good Friday in their Ukrainian village. A Russian Orthodox priest became so exercised in preaching about the "Christ-killing" Jews during the Passion liturgy, that he climaxed the religious service by leading the congregation in a pogrom against the Jewish villagers in Dimidivka. The priest and his congregation, now a howling, threatening mob, forced all the Jewish villagers, about 200 people, to come to the edge of the village lake. In their terrified presence, the priest forced Marc's uncle, Aaron, a poet from Odessa who was visiting his family for Passover, to walk into the lake until the waters covered his head. The Russian Orthodox priest, his pectoral cross glistening in the sun, raised his staff and shouted, "We offer up this Jew as a ransom for the Jews' murder of our Lord and Savior." Uncle Aaron drowned, and Marc was never to see his face.

"My very earliest encounter with Christians led me to believe they were enemies of my people," Rabbi Tanenbaum reflects with sadness. When he and his father would walk to the Synagogue on the Jewish Sabbath or other holy days, they would cross the street if they passed a church. A church had become a place of threat and danger to Marc and his family. As he was to read years later in the writings of the Jewish novelist, Israel Zangwill, "the People of the Cross had made the Jews the cross among the peoples."

"I was haunted for some years by the contradiction that the Church presented -- it proclaimed its message as the Gospel of Love, but in the experience of my people, my own family, it had become the Gospel of hatred," Rabbi Tanenbaum stated. "It took years of study of the history of Jewish-Christian relations," he said, "and above all, my coming to know Christian men and women who were warm, loving, caring people that converted me from earliest childhood fears and suspicions of Christians and Christianity. I now have hundreds of Christian friends in many parts of the world to whom I would entrust the lives of my family."

Rabbi Tanenbaum began his first serious, systematic study of "the troubled brotherhood" of Christianity and Judaism as a Conservative seminary student at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York where he majored in religious history. There he came to the philosophical conviction which has governed his career: "History must not be a hitching post to the past, but rather a guiding post to the future."

After he was ordained as a Rabbi in 1950, and received his Doctor of Divinity degree in 1975, he worked for two years as a journalist, editor of a publishing house, publicist, and wrote a novel about his Baltimore childhood experiences.

He was then invited to become the executive vice-president of the Synagogue Council of America, the umbrella group of the major Rabbinic and Jewish congregational bodies. During that ten-year experience, he established the first ongoing religious and social justice programs with liberal Protestant groups. "In the 1950s," Rabbi Tanenbaum reports, "liberal Protestants were the only Christian groups open to dialogue with Jews. Before Vatican Council II,

Catholics were forbidden to dialogue with other Christians as well as Jews, and Evangelicals simply were absent from the national religious scene."

Liberal Protestants and Jews then had much in common, he added, and Jews owed them much. They were the first to undertake the revision of Christian Sunday School materials with a view toward removing anti-Jewish references, such as the terrible "Christ-killer" canard, the stereotypic references to the Pharisees as hypocrites, and the damaging notion that Christianity had displaced Judaism as "the New Israel" -- all the venomous ingredients that had fed for centuries certain Christian teachings of contempt for Jews and Judaism.

The mainline Protestants were also in the forefront of upholding the separation of church and state and religious pluralism which made it possible for Jews to come to the American dialogue table as first-class citizens, by right and not by sufferance. Their common commitment to Prophetic ethics also led Protestants and Jews to join hands in the civil rights struggle and other humanitarian causes for civic and ecumenical improvement of American society.

It was during that early period of the Jewish-Christian dialogue in America that Rabbi Tanenbaum served as program director of the historic National Conference on Race and Religion in Chicago. That unprecedented meeting in 1963 provided the first national ecumenical platform for the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, and paved the way for the March on Washington, which became the turning point in the civil rights movement.

At that time, President Eisenhower appointed Rabbi Tanenbaum as vice-chairman of the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth, and of the 1961 White House Conference on Aging. The later conference laid the groundwork for our present national concern for senior citizens.

When the late Pope John Paul XXIII convened the Second Vatican which lasted from 1962-65, the ecumenical and interreligious landscape was decisively transformed, and Rabbi Tanenbaum was also at the center of that historic development. In addition to the other major Vatican Declarations on Religious Liberty and Ecumenism, Pope John had charged the late German Jesuit, Cardinal Augustin Bea, with responsibility for drafting a Vatican Declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations.

In 1960, Rabbi Tanenbaum was called to the American Jewish Committee, the pioneering human rights and human relations agency in this country. As its national director of interreligious affairs, Rabbi Tanenbaum supervised a series of religious self-studies of Catholic textbooks at the Jesuit St. Louis University (as well as Protestant self-studies at Yale Divinity School and Jewish textbook studies at Dropsie University in Philadelphia.) Cardinal Bea in 1962 invited the American Jewish Committee to submit the findings of the St. Louis study which documented the image of Jews and Judaism in Catholic school teaching materials and in the church's liturgy.

The studies, conducted by three Roman Catholic nuns, demonstrated how serious were the anti-Jewish references in Catholic religious, literature, and social science teaching materials. Based on those findings, Cardinal Bea's Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity drafted the landmark Vatican Declaration on Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*). That statement was adopted virtually unanimously by the 2,500 Council Fathers and was promulgated as official Church Teaching by Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1965.

Cardinal Bea and Cardinal Lawrence Shehan of Baltimore, then President of the American Catholic Bishops Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, invited Rabbi

Tanenbaum to be a delegate-observer at Vatican Council II. He was the only Rabbi present and played a significant role in helping draft the final Vatican Declaration which has transformed Catholic-Jewish relations in America and throughout the world.

That Vatican Declaration acknowledged the "common spiritual patrimony" which links Christians to Jews, repudiated anti-Semitism "by anyone and at any time," rejected the "Christ-killer" charge against Jews, and called for "Biblical studies and fraternal dialogue" that would lead to "mutual respect and friendship" between Christians and Jews.

"*Nostra Aetate*" became the magna carta of Catholic-Jewish relations," Rabbi Tanenbaum observed. In 1975, the Vatican Secretariat issued a set of guidelines that mandated the translation of the Declaration's principles into practical action -- revision of textbooks and teaching materials, changes in liturgy, preaching, teacher training, and joint social action between Catholics and Jews.

"A virtual explosion broke out and between 1965 and the late 1970s when Catholic-Jewish relations dominated the interreligious scene. It was if a dam that had been pent up for 1,900 years had suddenly erupted. There were so many Catholic-Jewish conferences, seminars, and dialogues held throughout America, that the Jewish community was confronted with an unprecedented crisis -- we didn't have enough Rabbis and Jewish scholars to go around, so we were bussing them around all over the country," Rabbi Tanenbaum said smilingly.

With obvious satisfaction, Rabbi Tanenbaum declared, "More progress has been made in overcoming misunderstanding between Catholics and Jews during the past two decades than during the past 1,900 years." One convincing sign of that progress, he noted, is that not a single Catholic textbook published today contains anti-Jewish references. And the same is true of Protestant textbooks. And Jewish textbooks have been revised so that they do not contain anti-Christian references.

The latest phase in the Jewish-Christian relationship is that between Evangelicals and Jews, and there, too, Rabbi Tanenbaum has been the pioneering leader and Jewish spokesman. Beginning in the late 1960s, the rabbi was on a lecture tour in the South and he underwent a genuine culture shock. He experienced first-hand the emerging "New South" with its abundant signs of economic, political, social, educational, and religious change.

None of the pervasive images of Southerners as "rednecks," "crackers," "Bible-thumpers," an illiterate and indolent people that was found in so much of our national cultural and literary traditions had any real relationship to the vital, burgeoning society and people he encountered. Much of the South he met had become since World War II middle-class, white-collar, educated, and technologically sophisticated. Those forces help explain the emergence of President Jimmy Carter, Dale Bumpers, Reuben Askew, and Congressman James Wright, rather than the other way around.

Evangelical religion is part and parcel of that extraordinary transformation, the rabbi believes. Finding that Evangelical Christians were becoming the fastest growing religious group in the United States, Rabbi Tanenbaum felt that it was essential for the moral and spiritual health of America that Evangelicals become full partners in the American religious mosaic.

In 1965, he met with Dr. Billy Graham and after a three-hour conversation they became fast friends, a friendship which has thrived since then. Over the years, Dr. Graham demonstrated repeatedly his firm friendship for the Jewish people by openly combatting anti-Semitism, rejecting organized missions to the Jews, and by expressing his theological belief

that the covenant between God and the Jewish people is, as the Bible says, "everlasting, forever." (Deuteronomy 7.)

Rabbi Tanenbaum tells heart-warming stories of how Dr. Graham has helped him rescue Jewish families from the Soviet Union, and speaks enthusiastically of his great and devoted support of Israel.

In 1968, the rabbi organized the first national conference of Southern Baptist and Jewish religious leaders at the Louisville Theological Seminary. Based on the success of that precedent-shaking meeting, dialogues between Southern Baptist and other Evangelicals and Jews have been held every year in virtually every part of the United States. Rabbi Tanenbaum has, in fact, co-edited with Evangelical scholar Dr. Marvin Wilson of Gordon-Conwell Seminary the landmark book, "Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation," published by the Evangelical publishing house, Baker Books.

Seated in a modest office in mid-Manhattan behind a desk piled with correspondence from the four corners of the earth, numerous publications, and schedules of pending engagements throughout America and overseas, Rabbi Tanenbaum is surrounded by walls covered with awards and autographed photos of distinguished religious and civic leaders, many of whom have become personal friends -- Pope John Paul II, Presidents from Eisenhower Jimmy Carter, to Ronald Reagan, Dr. Billy Graham, Cardinals Bernardin, Cooke, O'Connor, The Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, Elie Wiesel, Archbishop Iakovos, Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel, Nelson Rockefeller, Coretta Scott King, Liv Ullman, and many others. Around him are shelves filled with books among which are six that he wrote or edited.

These photos and books are mementos of thirty-five years of an intense commitment to the dignity of human life and to the unflinching belief that human beings can change for the better. "I have had many gratifications and peak experiences in helping to mold the unfolding history of Jewish-Christian relations in our lifetime. But few achievements have given me as much satisfaction as the knowledge that I helped create networks of Jews and Christians who have come to know each other as persons -- with shared fears and hopes -- rather than as stereotypes and caricatures. And they have learned not only to live and let live, but to live and help live. That is the glory of America today."

Beyond that, Rabbi Tanenbaum added, "We Jews and Christians have now learned how to make pluralism work. We have learned how to instruct a new generation of Catholics, Protestants, Evangelicals and Jews in how to be faithful to one's own doctrines and traditions and at the same time to develop authentic respect for the faith and religious commitments of others. That extraordinary achievement, which is taken for granted by far too many, may well be the most valuable 'export' which we have to share with other nations and non-Western religious communities."

In 1987, Rabbi Tanenbaum was elected unanimously as chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), which represents world Jewry in relations with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and other international religious bodies. In 1988, he was the recipient of "The Interfaith Medallion" of the International Council of Christians and Jews.

Perhaps more than any other Jewish leader he embodies and has been the catalyst for much of this progress made in ecumenical and humanitarian efforts during the past three stormy decades. He has been described as "the Henry Kissinger of the religious world who is as politically agile as he is theologically sophisticated." He has also been called "the Abba

Eban of American Jewry for his prophetic eloquence that brings audiences of thousands to their feet in standing ovations."

But clearly Newsweek magazine may have come closest to the mark when it portrayed Rabbi Tanenbaum in these words -- "He is the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles."

- Louis Auster is a free-lance writer in New York.

Tanenbaum.EL1/EL  
October 25, 1988

88-550





# THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 • PLaza 1-4000

---

MARCH 1989

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES

the designation of

**RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM**

as International Relations Consultant

following his retirement as

Director of International Relations

Communications should be addressed to  
him at:

45 East 89th Street, Apt. 18F

New York, NY 10128

(212) 831-2952

# Rabbi ends long career in interfaith relations

By ADON TAFT  
Herald Religion Writer

Some would call it a strange quirk of history: A rabbi who has worked for 30 years to improve Jewish-Christian relations in the world spent the first third of his life filled with fear of Christians and hostility toward their religion.

But Marc Tanenbaum calls it "the grace and providence of God." At 63, he has just retired as national director of interfaith relations for the American Jewish Committee.

Tanenbaum was the only rabbi who served as an official visitor at the Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church in Rome from 1962-1965. He was one of the principal designers of the historic *Nostrae Aetate* document in which Pope Paul VI in 1965 repudiated anti-Semitism, rejected the Christ-killer charge against Jews and called for dialogue between the church and Jewish leaders.

Though he'll remain as a consultant to the AJC in retirement, he'll be turning his efforts now toward a subject of concern to South Florida — the refugees of the world. But he leaves behind a legacy of building bridges between Jews and Christians, a career that reflected his own spiritual journey.

Tanenbaum's early years were colored by a tragic story of anti-Semitism told to him by his father when Tanenbaum was 4. The family, immigrants from the Ukraine in Russia, lived in Baltimore, where they ran a small grocery store in a poor section of the city.

On Saturday afternoons, after services in the Orthodox synagogue, Tanenbaum's father would reminisce about life in a small Jewish village in the Soviet Union. It was on one of those occasions when the older man told of a Good Friday



when the priest in a nearby Russian Orthodox Church stirred the congregation with a message about how the Jews killed Christ. He then led them to the Tanenbaum home.

With the angry mob behind him, the priest summoned the family out of the house. Among them was Aaron, an uncle visiting from Odessa for the Passover holiday. The priest singled Aaron out and, with the entire Jewish population looking on, the mob forced Aaron into a lake. He

drowned as the priest proclaimed, "We offer up this Jew in ransom for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

"For a long period of time, I felt Christians and Christianity were the enemy of my faith and my people," Tanenbaum recalls.

He had little contact with Christians because he attended a Jewish parochial school and Yeshiva University, with a short respite during which he studied literature at Johns Hopkins University

'For a long period of time, I felt Christians and Christianity were the enemy of my faith and my people.' But Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum turned the anguish of anti-Semitism into a ground-breaking force for building a relationship between Jews and Christians.

When he went to the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, Tanenbaum concentrated on the study of the literature and history of the intertestament period. He hoped to gain some understanding of the roots of anti-Semitism "and to work out some of my feelings of hatred toward Christianity." He came across a book by an Anglican, James Clark, which dealt with the history of the schism between the early Christian church and Judaism. It dis-

cussed the origins of anti-Semitism in the church.

"I was surprised and encouraged to find that a great Christian scholar was as concerned as I was," Tanenbaum says. "That meant that there were sincere and concerned Christians."

He describes this discovery as a life-changing experience that drove him to look for those kinds of Christians to pursue an interfaith dialogue. "I began to take Christian people seriously and to have a profound respect for their Christian faith," the rabbi says. "The consequence of that openness elicited reciprocal respect and trust."

Fifteen years before the Vatican proclamation, Tanenbaum, then the executive vice president of the Synagogue Council of America, began discussions with mainstream Protestants at the National Council of Churches.

"It was the only interfaith dialogue possible at the time because Roman Catholics were forbidden to take part not only in interfaith but inter-Christian discussions," says the rabbi. "And evangelicals were not even on the scene yet."

But in the late 1960s, after visiting evangelist Billy Graham in his North Carolina home and striking up a personal friendship, Tanenbaum launched a dialogue with evangelicals as well.

A national dialogue held at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., in 1968 "became a genuine breakthrough," he says. Leading academic and religious leaders in the Southern Baptist denomination, the largest Protestant denomination in the country, met with leaders of the Jewish community.

"That began an extraordinary mutual respect and appreciation for each other's traditions, each other's

religious institutions, as well as for evangelicals and Jews as persons" that spread to every region of the United States, Tanenbaum says. It led to numerous books and college and seminary conferences that have cemented those relations.

His efforts ultimately forged a relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, which was, perhaps, the culmination of his work. "I'll never forget standing in St. Peter's Basilica on Oct. 18, 1965, when Pope Paul VI introduced the text of *Nostrae Aetate*. The one image that kept coming back to me was of my uncle Aaron being shoved to death in the lake.

"I kept saying to myself, 'God, if only my father could be here now and see the end of the cycle.'"

Tanenbaum's caring extends beyond Christian-Jewish relations. He has worked, necessarily more quietly, with Moslem scholars in this country and a broad to develop a dialogue with adherents of that faith.

He also has been involved with efforts to help 14 million refugees around the world, particularly in Southeast Asia, Africa and parts of Latin America.

"Helping to organize the first Jewish relief effort for refugees of the Nigeria-Biafra conflict in 1968 was the most transforming experience of my life." It gave him a world-view beyond the Jewish-Christian concerns of his earlier years. He later worked to help the Vietnamese boat people and got involved in the problems of hunger and human rights in Ethiopia, Uganda and South Africa.

He now plans to concentrate on two books, one on Jewish-Christian relations in America and a second on the plight of refugees, which he sees as part of "a terrible epidemic of dehumanization spreading through the world today."

THE ATLANTA  
**JEWISH TIMES**

*A Continuing Tradition Since 1925*

**Jeff Rubin**

Assoc. Publisher

**Fran Rothbard**

Managing Editor

**Vida Goldgar**

Editor

**Lee A. Saxton**

Sales Manager

**Eschol A. Harrell**

Production Manager

*Published by Sun Publications, Inc.*

*also publishers of The Kansas City Jewish Chronicle*

**Stan Rose**

Chairman and Publisher

**Steve Rose**

President and Co-Publisher

**Mailing Address: P.O. Box 250287, Atlanta, Georgia 30325**

**Location: 300 Atlanta Technology Center, Suite 365**

**1575 Northside Dr., N.W., Atl., Ga 30318 Phone (404) 355-6139**

**(404) 355-9388 Fax Number**

© 1988 Sun Publications, Inc. All rights reserved

## Editorial

### *Tanenbaum steps down*

Marc H. Tanenbaum, for 27 years the American Jewish Committee's rabbi-in-residence, is retiring. His public service on behalf of American Jewry goes back another eight years.

In a presentation which took place Sunday at the AJC's National Executive Council meeting in Boston, Rabbi Tanenbaum was cited for his "historic contributions in building bridges of understanding and respect between all major branches of Christendom and Jewish communities in many parts of the world" and for his leadership role in world refugee, hunger and human rights programs.

Since 1983, Tanenbaum has been director of AJC's International Relations Department and from 1960 to 1983, he was national director of interreligious affairs. In 1987, he was unanimously elected chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, which represents world Jewry in its relations with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and other international religious bodies.

As AJC's representative he was an observer at Vatican Council II and played major roles in behalf of refugees in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

Tanenbaum, who visited Atlanta a number of times over the years, has many friends in both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities. His commentaries have frequently appeared in these pages, as well.

Although he is stepping down from the post he has held in recent years, Rabbi Tanenbaum is not totally relinquishing Committee involvement. As AJC's international consultant, he will continue to be involved in several projects he has initiated, including programs concerned with the Vatican and with Austria. However, he will be devoting more time to writing, lecturing and teaching.

The Jewish community's interreligious and interracial relationships have been strengthened over the years by the work of Rabbi Tanenbaum. His dedication to the ideal of human rights and human relations is a beacon for those who follow.

We wish him well.

## DR. MARC H. TANENBAUM

Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum, International Relations Consultant of the American Jewish Committee, has a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugee, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns. He has served as director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee from 1983-1989.

Formerly the AJC's national interreligious affairs director, Rabbi Tanenbaum was designated in a recent national poll as "one of the ten most influential and respected religious leaders in America." A cover story in *New York* magazine described Dr. Tanenbaum as "one of the foremost Jewish ecumenical leaders in the world today."

In 1987, he was elected unanimously as Chairman of the prestigious International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) which represents World Jewry in relations with the Vatican and other world religious bodies. In May 1988, Rabbi Tanenbaum was awarded the "Interfaith Medallion" of the International Council of Christians and Jews for his "historic contributions" to advancing interreligious understanding over the past 25 years.

Dr. Tanenbaum has served as a member of the Human Rights Research Committee of the Foreign Policy Association's Study of Priorities for the 1980s. In recent years, he has testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on "Moral Imperatives in the Formation of American Foreign Policy." He has also testified before Congressional committees on world refugee and world hunger problems, and played a key role in organizing White House conferences on Foreign Aid and Energy Conservation.

President Jimmy Carter invited Dr. Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among ten national religious and academic spokesmen to discuss "the State of the Nation" at Camp David summit meetings in 1979. He was also appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust.

At the invitation of the International Rescue Committee, he joined delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out three separate fact-finding investigations of the plight of the Vietnamese "boat people" and Cambodian refugees, which contributed to the saving of tens of thousands of lives of Indochinese refugees. He has organized many relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including Kurds, Lebanese, Nigerians, Ugandans, Ethiopian Jews, Haitians, Afghanis; Central Americans and Polish refugees. He is a board member of the International Rescue Committee, the Overseas Development Council, the United Nations Association, the Bretton Woods Committee, the National Peace Academy, and the Bayard Rustin Institute. He is a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which aids oppressed Jews and Christians in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In March 1979, he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals.

Dr. Tanenbaum is a founder and leading member of the joint liaison committee of the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), and of a similar body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, and participated in the first official audience of World Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City. He was also the first Jewish leader to address 4,000 delegates attending the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in July 1983.

He served as consultant to the NBC-TV nine-hour special "Holocaust" and earlier was consultant to the special "Jesus of Nazareth." He is an award winning weekly commentator over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting, and appears frequently on major network programs.

He has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe, Israel, and Latin America, and at numerous national and international conferences. Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author or editor of several published books and of numerous articles.



# AJWS Connection

*Linking AJWS leaders nationwide*

January 31, 1989

## AJWS UPDATE ON AFRICA

The month of December saw one AJWS team travel to Ethiopia for demonstrations of the Volcani grain cube, and another, to Zimbabwe and South Africa for assessments of current AJWS projects and investigation of opportunities to assist rural communities with grain storage, dry-zone water supply, and agricultural production.

**ETHIOPIA** -- Dr. Bob Snow, Director for Program Planning and Development, and Dr. Jonathan Donahaye, Israeli inventor of the Volcani grain cube, arrived in Ethiopia to hold demonstrations for the five relief and development agencies which to which AJWS donated 141 grain cubes. As Ethiopia is experiencing its first bumper harvest in years, there is urgent need for effective grain  
(continued inside)

## AJWS PRESS CONFERENCE AT SOVIET EMBASSY

On December 28, Chairman Lawrence S. Phillips presented checks totalling \$80,000 to



Soviet Ambassador Yuri V. Dubinin and Archbishop Torkam Manoogian of the Armenian Church of America, for reconstruction and relief aid to victims of the December 7 earthquake in Armenia. Pictured (l. to r.) are Henry Morgenthau III, Archbishop Manoogian, Ambassador Dubinin, and Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum.

American Jewish World Service

729 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116 (617) 267-6656

# NEWS FROM THE Committee



The American Jewish  
Committee

Institute of Human Relations  
165 East 56 Street  
New York, New York 10022  
212 751-4000

Morton Yarmon  
Director of Public Relations

The American Jewish Committee protects the rights and freedoms of Jews the world over; combats bigotry and anti-Semitism and promotes human rights for all; works for the security of Israel and deepened understanding between Americans and Israelis; defends democratic values and seeks their realization in American public policy; and enhances the creative vitality of the Jewish people. Founded in 1906, it is the pioneer human-relations agency in the U.S.

ANNUAL MEETING  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
OCTOBER 27-OCTOBER 30, 1988  
THE WESTIN HOTEL  
COPLEY PLACE  
10 HUNTINGTON AVENUE  
BOSTON, MA 02116  
(617) 262-9600

PRESS ROOM: DEFENDER ROOM  
(Seventh Floor)

## CONTACTS:

Press - Joyce Kaplan  
Janice Hyman

Broadcasting - Haina Just

FOR RELEASE AFTER 10 A.M.,  
SUNDAY, OCT. 30, 1988

BOSTON, Oct. 30...The American Jewish Committee today presented a farewell citation to Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum in honor of his 27 years of "pathbreaking service" to the Committee and his 35 years of dedicated leadership on behalf of American Jewry.

The citation was presented to Rabbi Tanenbaum by Leo Nevas, chairman of AJC's Board of Governors, at the closing session of AJC's Annual National Executive Council Meeting, which was held Oct. 27-30 at the Westin Copley Place Hotel here.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has been director of AJC's International Relations Department since 1983, and from 1960 to 1983 he was the agency's national director of interreligious affairs.

Since 1987 Rabbi Tanenbaum has also held the chairmanship -- to which he was unanimously elected -- of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), which represents world Jewry in its relations with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, and other international religious bodies.

On January 1, 1989, Rabbi Tanenbaum will become the AJC's international consultant, relinquishing direction of the department he headed from 1983 through 1988. As international consultant he will continue to be involved in several projects he has initiated, such as programs concerned with the Vatican and with Austria, but he plans also to devote a larger measure of his time to writing, lecturing, teaching, and working in the areas of world refugee concerns, hunger, and human rights.

In accepting his citation, Rabbi Tanenbaum said: "As I have thought about my 27 years with the American Jewish Committee, I experience feelings of deepest gratitude to AJC for having made possible opportunities for living a life of high meaning and for making contributions in many areas of importance to the Jewish people and to society at large -- in some cases, contributions that, I trust, have been of lasting and even transforming value."

Among the AJC experiences the rabbi pointed to were his acting as guest observer, as AJC's representative, at Vatican Council II; "lifesaving" work in behalf of refugees in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America, and "decades-long struggles against anti-Semitism, racism, and dehumanization."

"I look forward with optimism and enthusiasm to a new career that will enable me to do what I have been diverted from by my activist life," he said, "namely, writing several books which I have had to postpone, extended lecturing, and teaching at a university in the near future."

Rabbi Tanenbaum said he will serve out his term as chairman of IJCIC through December 1988, and

- more -

Theodore Ellenoff, President; Leo Nevas, Chair, Board of Governors; Robert S. Jacobs, Chair, National Executive Council; Edward E. Elson, Chair, Board of Trustees  
Ira Silverman, Executive Vice-President

Washington Office, 2027 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington DC 20036 • Israel Hq.: P.O. Box 1538, Jerusalem 91410, Israel  
South America Hq. (temporary office) 165 E. 56 St., New York, NY 10022-2746

CSAE 1707

will preside as co-chairman, with Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, president of the Vatican Secretariat on Religious Relations with the Jews, at a forthcoming conference on "Anti-Semitism in the Christian West and the Shoah [Holocaust]." The conference is to be held in Zurich February 20-24, 1989.

Mr. Nevas, in awarding Rabbi Tanenbaum the citation, paid tribute to the rabbi for his "historic contributions in building bridges of understanding and respect between all major branches of Christendom and Jewish communities in many parts of the world." Mr. Nevas also expressed appreciation of the rabbi's "pioneering role over the past 25 years in providing singular leadership in world refugee, hunger, and human rights programs." Rabbi Tanenbaum, said Mr. Nevas, has made "permanent contributions to enriching the intellectual and moral leadership of the American Jewish Committee, and all of us remain in his debt for years to come."

The plaque presented to Rabbi Tanenbaum reads: "To Marc Tanenbaum for his exceptional contribution to enhancing understanding of the Jewish people in the interreligious and international communities."

The American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. Founded in 1906, it combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people everywhere.



THE ATLANTA  
**JEWISH TIMES**

A Continuing Tradition Since 1925

## Editorial

### *Tanenbaum steps down*

Marc H. Tanenbaum, for 27 years the American Jewish Committee's rabbi-in-residence, is retiring. His public service on behalf of American Jewry goes back another eight years.

In a presentation which took place Sunday at the AJC's National Executive Council meeting in Boston, Rabbi Tanenbaum was cited for his "historic contributions in building bridges of understanding and respect between all major branches of Christendom and Jewish communities in many parts of the world" and for his leadership role in world refugee, hunger and human rights programs.

Since 1983, Tanenbaum has been director of AJC's International Relations Department and from 1960 to 1983, he was national director of interreligious affairs. In 1987, he was unanimously elected chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, which represents world Jewry in its relations with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and other international religious bodies.

As AJC's representative he was an observer at Vatican Council II and played major roles in behalf of refugees in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

Tanenbaum, who visited Atlanta a number of times over the years, has many friends in both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities. His commentaries have frequently appeared in these pages, as well.

Although he is stepping down from the post he has held in recent years, Rabbi Tanenbaum is not totally relinquishing Committee involvement. As AJC's international consultant, he will continue to be involved in several projects he has initiated, including programs concerned with the Vatican and with Austria. However, he will be devoting more time to writing, lecturing and teaching.

The Jewish community's interreligious and interracial relationships have been strengthened over the years by the work of Rabbi Tanenbaum. His dedication to the ideal of human rights and human relations is a beacon for those who follow.

We wish him well.



## Templeton Award

REASONS FOR MY NOMINATION - Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum has enlarged both the Christian and Jewish understanding of God by bringing those intrinsically related yet long estranged traditions into mutual concourse.

To a greater extent than any person in contemporary history he has opened these great and seminal heritages to one another, enabling the lights of each to enlighten and magnify the other.

His influence and activities in religion spanning more than thirty years (30) in the United States and Western Europe has produced a view of the Judeo-Christian ~~heritage~~ alliance in academic, publishing and community endeavor that has provided a deepened, more authentic and informed faith in both branches of it.

Through his work and impact on them, he has pioneered an awareness in our time that both these traditions originate as one faith and ~~that~~ that they remained rooted in it developing from it insights from which each enhances the other.

This is an historically monumental religious advance, overcoming the falsehoods, hatreds, and horrors that previously marked the relationships of Jews and Christians through the centuries. The new comity engendered by Rabbi Tanenbaum's work stands as an overwhelming ~~and~~ contribution to humanity in its religious maturing.

It has augmented the understanding both of Jews and Christians of their own faiths, of one another, and of the inclusive richness of God's revelations.

Rabbi Tanenbaum also has been in the forefront of applying shared convictions in allaying the ills of the world. His leadership has brought Jews and Christians together in working for civil rights, racial justice, in caring for refugees such as the Vietnamese "boat people," working for human rights and ~~improving~~ the lot of the homeless, poor and hungry.

Among those most knowledgeable on the impact of religious figures, the religious news specialists in a 1978 Christian Century poll named Rabbi Tanenbaum among "the ten most respected religious figures!" ~~In America~~

# I Remember Matriarch Sadie

BY RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

When the Biblical Matriarch, Sarah, founding mother of the Jewish people, died at the ripe age of 127 years, the great Biblical commentator, Rashi, said that "all her years were equal in goodness."

How could that be, considering the fact that Sarah suffered hunger, kidnapping by Pharaoh, was childless for 90 years, and saw her only son Isaac almost sacrificed? The rabbis answered that Sarah, the most righteous of women, accepted every hardship she experienced with love and the

optimistic words, "Gam zu letovah — this is also for the good." That is why all her years were considered good.

Mother Sarah was a special consolation to my family as we struggled to find meaning in the death of our mother, Sadie Tanenbaum, Feb. 28. She was born 80 years ago in a Ukrainian shtetl, grew up in the midst of Russian poverty and pogroms. At age 15, she risked crossing the oceans in search of a better, freer life in Golden America.

Together with my father, she struggled through the Depression years, sustaining her family by incredible hard work in a ma-and-pa store in Baltimore. Like

most wonderful mothers of that immigrant generation, she was impassioned about her duties — to her husband, to her children's health and education, to her orthodox Judaism and to other people in need. Despite all the economic hardships, Mom found exuberant joy in living. She loved to sing in Russian and Yiddish, recite poetry, and cook constantly for her family. Like Matriarch Sarah, she was a spectacular woman of faith and hope, and the Tanenbaum family will never be the same without her.



# Two Rabbis Leave Legacy of Change

By ARI L. GOLDMAN

Forty years ago, Marc H. Tanenbaum and Wolfe Kelman were roommates at the Jewish Theological Seminary in Manhattan, where they were studying to be Conservative rabbis. Now both men are retiring from long-held positions after two remarkable and influential, but very different, careers in the American rabbinate.

Although neither man ever led a congregation, their work had a great impact on the American rabbi.

Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is 63 years old, made a career in the field of Christian-Jewish relations, becoming a pioneer in forging links among Jews and Roman Catholics, main-line Protestants and Evangelicals. A weekly commentator on radio for 25 years and a regular adviser to the television networks, Rabbi Tanenbaum is probably the best known rabbi among Christians.

Rabbi Kelman, who is 65, has worked primarily within the Jewish community, often in a behind-the-scenes role. He helped build Conservative Jewry into the largest of the three major branches and shepherded some of its most radical changes, like the admission of women into the rabbinate.

## 'Enlarged the Role'

"Wolfe and Marc enlarged the role of the rabbinate," said a Reform leader, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. "They helped the American rabbi break out of the traditional mold of congregational functionary to one who leads in the larger community."

Not everyone has appreciated their activism. Over the years, Rabbi Tanenbaum came under attack from some traditionalist elements of the Orthodox community for his eagerness to engage in theological dialogue with Christians. A cartoon in the Yiddish press in the 1960's showed Pope Paul VI holding a leash with Rabbi Tanenbaum at the end of it. Both he and Rabbi Kelman have become accustomed to being addressed as "Mister" rather than "Rabbi" by traditionalist Orthodox Jews.

Both Rabbi Kelman and Rabbi Tanenbaum came from Orthodox homes and attended Orthodox yeshivas. As young men, however, they began to challenge what they saw as Orthodox insularity and inflexibility and enrolled at the Jewish Theological Seminary, the educational center of Conservative Judaism.

Conservative Judaism respects the authority of Halakha, traditional Jewish law, but believes that it can change as it confronts modern issues like technology, feminism and pluralism.

## Professor's Disciples

At the seminary, both students became disciples of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, professor of Jewish ethics and mysticism, who would

## Seminary roommates forged new roles and alliances.

later go to the Vatican to talk to Pope Paul VI and march with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, Ala.

"Heschel taught us that no religion has a monopoly on holiness," Rabbi Kelman said.

In an interview at his Upper East Side apartment, where he munched on a cinnamon stick, a vestige from his cigar-smoking days, Rabbi Tanenbaum said he was "the least likely person" to get involved in the area of Christian-Jewish relations.

As a child in Baltimore, he heard stories from his immigrant parents about the persecution they had suffered as Jews, often at the hands of the church in Czarist Russia. "My father would cross the street so as not to walk in front of a church," he recalled.

As a student at the seminary, Rabbi Tanenbaum began to delve into the roots of anti-Semitism among Christians. He said that he was driven to reconcile how "a church that preached a gospel of love could have turned it into a gospel of hatred and destruction when it came to Jews."

## Observer at Vatican II

What he found, he said, was an "ignorance that was staggering" between the faiths.

Since his ordination in 1950, interfaith work has been his passion, first as executive vice president of the Synagogue Council of America and, since 1960, in various roles for the American Jewish Committee. He retired from the committee earlier this year and will continue to serve as a consultant to the organization.

The high point of Rabbi Tanenbaum's four decades in Christian-Jewish relations was the Second Vatican Council, which, in 1965, produced the landmark document "Nostra Aetate." The document repudiated anti-Semitism "by anyone at any time." Rabbi Tanenbaum, an official observer to Vatican II, was the only rabbi who attended.

While the 1960's were dominated by Catholic-Jewish contacts, the focus in the 1950's was on Jewish-Protestant dialogue, and in the 1970's, talks were initiated between Jews and Evangelicals and the Eastern Orthodox.

On the mantel in Rabbi Tanenbaum's apartment are scenes from his journey. There are pictures of him with religious leaders like Pope John Paul II, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Rev. Billy Graham.

At Rabbi Kelman's office, the only framed picture is one of his parents,

Rabbi Zvi Yehuda and Mirl Kelman. His father died when he was 13, and his mother, left with six children, stepped into the role of community leader in Toronto, dispensing religious and personal guidance.

"It was her example that made me believe women could function as rabbis," Rabbi Kelman said, acknowledging that his mother, who remained Orthodox throughout her life, might not approve of his conclusion. The Orthodox do not ordain women.

After his ordination in 1950, Rabbi Kelman became executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly, the rabbinical arm of Conservative Judaism. He retired from the position earlier this month after almost 40 years in office. He will remain at the seminary to direct the Louis Finkelstein Institute of Religious and Social Studies.

The 1950's turned out to be a decade of phenomenal growth for the Conservative movement, as the suburbs exploded with new development. Conservative synagogues were being built so rapidly that the movement couldn't meet the demand. Many Conservative synagogues hired Reform and Orthodox rabbis instead.

Membership in the Rabbinical Assembly grew from 300 rabbis in 1951 to 1,200 today. Over that period, Rabbi Kelman presided over what he calls "the professionalization of the rabbinate," working to insure rabbi job security, housing, pensions and insurance. Rabbis' salaries now range from \$50,000 to \$100,000.

Rabbi Kelman declined to take credit for being anything more than a facilitator. "The status of rabbis improved because of the hundreds of good rabbis out there," he said.

BILLY GRAHAM  
MONTREAT, NORTH CAROLINA 28757

November 16, 1989

Dear Sir John,

It has been far too long since our paths have crossed, and I am glad for this opportunity to write you.

Someone recently showed me the document prepared on my good friend Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum and submitted to you for consideration for the Templeton Prize. I wish I had thought to write you long before they did! I can think of no one more deserving of this award, and I heartily commend him to you for consideration.

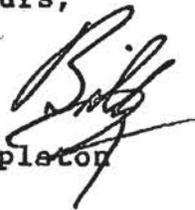
Not only has he been a good personal friend to me for many years, but has been a tremendous help in my ministry. I count on him for advice and counsel and we have worked quietly together behind the scenes a number of times in projects of deep concern to us both, unknown to the general public.

He is worthy of such an honor not only for his great leadership in the Jewish community, but as a concerned religious world leader. The presentation sent to you already speaks for itself and there is really nothing left for me to say about him! I would like nothing better than to see him nominated.

I leave this weekend and will not be back home until just before Christmas. Therefore I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you and yours a happy Thanksgiving and merry Christmas, and the prayer that as we go into a new decade the Lord will continue to richly bless you.

With warmest Christian greetings, I am

Cordially yours,



Sir John Templeton  
Box N7776  
Lyford Cay  
Nassau, Bahamas

cc Rabbi Tanenbaum

315



## Editorial

### *Tanenbaum steps down*

Marc H. Tanenbaum, for 27 years the American Jewish Committee's rabbi-in-residence, is retiring. His public service on behalf of American Jewry goes back another eight years.

In a presentation which took place Sunday at the AJC's National Executive Council meeting in Boston, Rabbi Tanenbaum was cited for his "historic contributions in building bridges of understanding and respect between all major branches of Christendom and Jewish communities in many parts of the world" and for his leadership role in world refugee, hunger and human rights programs.

Since 1983, Tanenbaum has been director of AJC's International Relations Department and from 1960 to 1983, he was national director of interreligious affairs. In 1987, he was unanimously elected chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, which represents world Jewry in its relations with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and other international religious bodies.

As AJC's representative he was an observer at Vatican Council II and played major roles in behalf of refugees in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

Tanenbaum, who visited Atlanta a number of times over the years, has many friends in both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities. His commentaries have frequently appeared in these pages, as well.

Although he is stepping down from the post he has held in recent years, Rabbi Tanenbaum is not totally relinquishing Committee involvement. As AJC's international consultant, he will continue to be involved in several projects he has initiated, including programs concerned with the Vatican and with Austria. However, he will be devoting more time to writing, lecturing and teaching.

The Jewish community's interreligious and interracial relationships have been strengthened over the years by the work of Rabbi Tanenbaum. His dedication to the ideal of human rights and human relations is a beacon for those who follow.

We wish him well.

*The New York Board of Rabbis*



*Cordially invites you to the*

**AMERICAN JEWISH  
RABBI ISRAEL AND LIBBY MOWSHOWITZ CONFERENCE  
ARCHIVES**

*Wednesday morning, April 29 at 10:30 A.M.*

*at*

*The New York Board of Rabbis  
10 East 73rd Street  
New York City*

*At which time the Mowshowitz Prize will be presented to*

**RABBI MARC TANENBAUM**

*Rabbi Tanenbaum will deliver the Lecture*

**"Why Jewish-Christian Relations?"**

**RSVP: (212) 879-8415**

*Luncheon Meeting for Officers and Board of Governors at 12:00 Noon*

# Labor Zionist Alliance

ציוניסטישער ארבעטער פארבאנד

6328 N. California Chicago, IL 60659 973-3924



איגוד פועלי ציון

HONORARY PRESIDENT  
Rabbi Ernst Lorge\*

PRESIDENT  
Bina Nadler

VICE-PRESIDENTS  
Dvora & Lou Aldort  
Sarah Arenberg  
Daniel Greenberg  
Gloria Patt

SECRETARY  
Chaikey Greenberg

TREASURER  
Abe Unterman

PAST PRESIDENTS  
Alfred Fink\*  
Simon Golden  
Leon Goldwater  
Daniel Greenberg  
Dr. Reuben Hurwitz\*  
Sol Kotzin  
Rabbi Ernst Lorge\*  
Herman L. Patt  
Dr. Herman M. Pomrenze\*  
Max Schnitmann  
Ben Sosewitz  
Peretz Tauman\*  
Dr. Jack Zackler\*

EXECUTIVE BOARD  
Gil Elenbogen  
Rabbi William Frankel  
Charlotte Freides  
Sam Friedman  
Marilyn Golden  
Simon Golden  
Leon Goldwater  
Nancy Kahan  
Blanche Kirshenbaum  
Harry Kirshenbaum  
Sheldon Langendorf  
Jeffrey Mallow  
Herman L. Patt  
Leonard Robins  
Florence Romirowsky  
Stanley Rosen  
Lillian Rubenstein  
Max Schnitmann  
Lee Silverglade  
Moshe Stein  
Peshke Stein  
Fagel Unterman

April 9, 1992

Dr. Marc Tanenbaum  
45 East 89th Street Suite 18 F  
New York, New York 10128

Dear Dr. Tanenbaum:

As the time draws closer to May 17, I thought I would bring you up to date on our arrangements, thus far, for your lecture.

An initial "Save the Date" mailing (copy enclosed) was sent to the membership of the sponsoring groups plus notification to relevant Jewish organizations, asking them to publicize the event. In addition, invitations and publicity materials are being prepared for timely distribution.

We would greatly appreciate knowing your travel plans as soon as possible so we can arrange for your transportation, hotel accommodations, etc. If you have this information prior to April 27, please contact me at my home:

5719 No. Cicero Ave., Chicago, Il. 60646  
Tele: (Day or evening) (312) 725-7330

Should you need to contact our committee subsequent to April 27, please be in touch with:

Michael Lorge  
8939 No. Karlov Ave., Skokie Ill. 60076  
Tele: (Home) (708) 674-0344  
(Office) (312) 641-1300

Once again, we look forward to your being with us for what we know will be a most stimulating and interesting afternoon. As Pesach approaches, we all wish you a most heartfelt "Chag Sameach!"

Sincerely,

Daniel Greenberg, Planning Committee  
Lorge Memorial Lecture Series

DG/r1  
Encl.

\*Deceased

Education (Degrees, Diplomas, etc.):

השכלה, חינוך (תארים, דיפלומות, וכד')

Bachelor of Science, Yeshiva University, 1945

Ordained Rabbi, Jewish Theological Seminary, 1950

Master's Hebrew Literature, Doctor of Divinity,  
both Jewish Theological Seminary

- 15 honorary doctorates, Jewish and Christian Institutions

Former private positions:

תפקידים בעבר:

Editor, Henry Schuman Publishers, 1951-1953

Contributing Writer, Time Magazine, 1950-51

Former public positions:

Executive Vice-President, Synagogue Council of America, 1951-

National Interreligious Affairs Director, American Jewish Comm., 1960-

Director of International Relations, American Jewish Comm., 1984-89

Memberships, Professional Associations, Affiliations, etc:

ארגונים וולונטאריים, וכד':

Rabbinical Assembly; Synagogue Council of America;

New York Board of Rabbis

-

הישגים מיוחדים, עבודה יצירתית, פירסומים (במדע, ספרות, אמנות, מוסיקה, עבודה  
Achievements, Contributions, Creative Works (in Science, Literature, Art, Music, etc):

- For 30 years, pioneering leader in Jewish-Christian relations;

- Author or editor of seven books on Jewish-Catholic, Jewish-Protestant, Jewish-Evangelical, Jewish-Orthodox relations;

- Weekly Columnist, Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA)

- Prize-winning weekly broadcaster WINS-Westinghouse

Broadcasting Network

- Author, several hundred articles, monographs on  
Jews, Judaism and Social Justice, World Affairs

Prizes, Awards, Honours

פרסים, ציונים לשבח, תוארי כבוד, אותות הצטיינות:

- Selected as "one of ten most respected and influential religious leaders in America" in U.S. nationwide poll

- 15 honorary doctorates from Christian and Jewish institutions  
- International Interfaith Achievement Award, Intl Conference of Christians and Jews

Side by side with work in Jewish-Christian relations, have been involved since the 1960s in world refugee, world hunger and human right issues

Address:

כתובת:

45 East 89 Street, Suite 18 F

New York, N.Y. 10128, U.S.A.

Signature Marc H. Tanenbaum  
חתימה

ADVANCE ORDER

To WHO'S WHO IN ISRAEL AND JEWISH PERSONALITIES ABROAD, Publishers Ltd.  
P.O.Box 11245, Tel-Aviv 6112, Israel.

Herewith I order 1 copy(ies) of the above Biographical Encyclopedia (including the entry) at the special price of \$70.- each copy by pre-payment.

WHO'S WHO IN ISRAEL  
& JEWISH PERSONALITIES ABROAD  
the 22nd BIENNIAL EDITION  
1992-93

I enclose a check of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to your order.

I shall remit to you a check of \$85.- upon receipt of the book.  
(Kindly mark either of the two alternatives)

Please mail the book to:

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

45 EAST 89 ST. (18 F)

New York, N.Y. 10128

Date June 26, 1991

Signature Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Please write clearly)

Marc H. Tanenbaum  
SUITE 18F  
45 EAST 89TH STREET  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10128



baum  
respec  
cribed  
"  
an Rig  
es for  
; Com  
re For  
onal c  
ey rol  
tion.  
ish le  
:ate of  
as a m  
caust  
gator  
stigmat  
which  
es. He  
Lebar  
; Ce  
ation  
Chris  
hmidt  
limita  
mitt  
hal Je  
y with  
nd pe  
n Pau  
les at  
July  
and e  
onal b  
terna  
hed t

B10

RESPONSE OF RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, ON RECEIVING "INTERFAITH AWARD" OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 1988  
AT THE GRAND HYATT HOTEL, NEW YORK CITY

---

This would be a meaningful and moving moment in my life under normal circumstances. Given my recent hospitalization, this event -- the receiving of the prestigious "Interfaith Award" of the International Council of Christians and Jews in the midst of your presence -- assumes a very special, even a rare quality of grace.

I must confess that an element of its specialness derives from the fact that this is one of the few events in my life that I did not have to arrange myself. That adds to why I am so touched and grateful for today. Sir Sigmund Sternberg, one of the most distinguished leaders of British Jewry and a statesman of the Jewish People, and the International Council of Christians and Jews, perhaps the most representative body devoted to the improvement of relationships between Christians and Jews internationally, quite spontaneously informed me several months ago that I had been selected for this distinction in recognition of my more than 25 years of service in the advancement of Jewish-Christian understanding. That spontaneity lends the luster of authenticity to this tribute.

With your permission, I should like to take just a few moments to reflect on some of the meaning of this occasion and award to me. It is most effectively synthesized for me in the writings of Dr. Ernest Becker, a brilliant but neglected cultural anthropologist. In his book, The Denial of Death, Dr. Becker states that human beings do not in fact fear death. What people fear is dying in insignificance. That is the real terror of death. He proposes that all of us -- at least most of us -- have a need to live our lives in a way that makes a difference, significant lives that give meaning to human existence. That is our immortality, Becker writes.

2)

All our art, literature, music, culture, even religion are ways of making a statement, leaving a landmark that we have not simply endured as animal life endures, but that we have lived lives of purpose and meaning. In short, Becker asserts, each of us has a powerful need to make a difference through our living, to help ennoble the human condition. That, he says, is true immortality.

As I have thought about my past 27 years with the American Jewish Committee, I experience feelings of deepest gratitude for AJC's having made possible opportunities for living a life of such high meaning, enabling contributions to be made in many areas of importance to the Jewish People and to society at large -- in some cases contributions, I trust, of lasting, even transforming value.

In retrospect, it is remarkable that AJC's lay leaders and professional leadership supported activities literally in every decade during which I have been associated with AJC, that helped change the course of history for the better.

In the 1960s, AJC made possible the participation of my beloved colleague and mentor, Zachariah Shuster, and my precious teacher, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, both of blessed memory, and myself, in Vatican Council II. The Council was a transforming event which has radically changed the course of 1900 years of Catholic-Jewish relations, much of it now for the better. In the 1970s, we were able to pioneer with Dr. Billy Graham and the Southern Baptist Convention in opening a new world of Evangelical-Jewish relations which continues to this day.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, AJC enabled my taking part in four separate International Rescue Committee missions to Southeast Asia that literally resulted in the saving of thousands of lives of Vietnamese Boat People and Cambodians, and led to the resettlement of a half-million hapless refugees in the United States. Earlier in the mid-1960s, we were able to engage in similar life-saving roles in the Nigerian-Biafran conflict, and then in Ethiopia, and in the drought-ridden Sahelian zone of West Africa.

3)

In the 1980s, we were able to make significant gains with major European countries -- both West and East -- particularly in West Germany through the excellent work of William Trosten and his predecessors, as well as in Latin America, led by Jacobo Kovadloff and Sergio Nudelstejer, that require further serious, responsible cultivation. And now in 1988, we are beginning to explore the possible importance to Jews and Israel of Japan and the Pacific Rim in light of their powerful geo-political and economic presence in America and in the world.

While these were the dramatic and historic highlights, we conjured with those challenges while concentrating much of our energies on the priorities of Israel, Soviet Jewry, endangered Jewish communities in Ethiopia, Iran, Syria, Yemen, Central America and elsewhere. We visited Oberammergau several times to bring about changes in their Passion Play. We implemented religious textbook studies, and we sought to combat teaching contempt against Jews and Judaism in cooperation with friends such as Mme. Claire Huchet-Bishop, a great Christian lady who graces us with her presence.

I will never be able to thank adequately, Dr. John Slawson and Bert Gold, who put up with my idiosyncracies and *meshugas*, my specialized *shtik*, but also gave me the freedom and support to do what I thought had to be done in our common interest. They instilled in me one crucial motto -- which is the motto of AJC at its best -- be effective, know the facts and do it right.

Ted Ellenoff, Leo Nevas, our AJC officers, our eminent former presidents, our professional colleagues -- for me especially those in interreligious affairs and international relations -- our chapter leaders, our area directors -- that is the moral and human framework without which none of this history could have been made, decade after decade. And I am confident that under Ira Silverman's leadership as Executive Vice President that tradition of significant accomplishment will continue and expand.

4)

In truth, I feel deeply that this award is to be shared with the American Jewish Committee, the ICCJ, and those thousands of extraordinary Christian and Jewish leaders who collaborated with us throughout the United States and in other parts of the world to bring about this "revolution of mutual esteem." There are few greater personal satisfactions for me today than that of being embraced as friend and colleague by these Christian and Jewish leaders in virtually every major city in the United States and in many parts of the world.

There is a Hebrew phrase *acharon, acharon chaviv* -- "the last is the most beloved." My magnificent, beautiful, and brilliant wife, Georgette, has saved my life in many ways. It is difficult to imagine that any human being can give more to another than my wife has given to me. During our years together, Georgette has made me possible.

Sir Sigmund, ICCJ, AJC, and my family of friends, for this memorable day, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

MHT:RPR

88-550

Bio

MARC H. TANENBAUM  
International Consultant  
American Jewish Committee

45 East 89th Street  
New York, NY 10128

212-831-2952 FAX: 212-876-8351

DATE:- August 2, 1989

TO: Mr. Ari Goldman, N.Y. Times

FAX #- 556-4607

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES  
INCLUDING COVER SHEET- 5

MESSAGE AREA

Ari, Appreciate your call. look forward to  
seeing you on Monday. A group of friends nominated  
me for an international award; they prepared  
the enclosed document. Thought it might be  
helpful as framework for our talk. Best! Marc

IF THIS BOX IS CHECKED, PLEASE FAX BACK TO CONFIRM RECEIPT  
OF THIS FAX.

RESPONSE AREA

---

---

---

---

---

THE ABOVE FAX WAS RECEIVED GARBLED. PLEASE RESEND FAX.

---

4. REASONS FOR OUR NOMINATION - Rabbi Tanenbaum has been a unique force over three decades - longer than any other living personality in the world Jewish community - in seeking to motivate members of God's human family to model their lives in imitation of His holiness and moral virtues in their daily relations with one another. He has dedicated his life to realizing these Biblical values in three primary areas:

A. "How can you love God whom you cannot see if you hate your fellow man whom you can see?" That Biblical injunction, shared both by Christians and Jews (as well as Muslims and other high religions) has been a central faith conviction of Rabbi Tanenbaum's since his childhood in a Jewish religious school in Baltimore. He has felt that the contradictions between the lofty and noble professions of love, charity and forgiveness proclaimed by Judaism and Christianity (and other religions) and the historic practices of prejudice and hostility - racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Christianity, anti-Islam, apartheid - have led to widespread alienation of whole generations, especially young people, from the Church, the Synagogue, and the Mosque. Belief in God has been compromised or weakened for millions by cynicism which perceived religious institutions and some of their major leaders as agents of moral hypocrisy.

In the mid-1950s, Rabbi Tanenbaum, following his ordination at the Jewish Theological Seminary as a Conservative Rabbi, began a systematic effort to reach out to the major Christian leaders and churches in the United States in order to establish together that religion was at its core a force of love and reconciliation that is worthy of commitment.

Since 1952, Rabbi Tanenbaum pioneered almost single-handedly in establishing warm and mutually respectful relations with virtually every major branch of Christendom - mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics, Evangelical Christians, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic Church. He has numbered among his friends and collaborating colleagues over decades religious leaders who have shaped America's spiritual ethos - the Rev. Dr. Billy Graham; Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen; Cardinals Bernardin, Law, O'Connor, Quinn, Shehan, Archbishops May and Keeler, and most of the members of the Catholic hierarchy; the late Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr (with whom Tanenbaum wrote a small book on *Religion and International Cooperation*); Dr. John Bennett; Archbishop Iakovos; Archbishop Manoogian; Rabbis Abraham Joshua Heschel, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveichik, and Rabbi Louis Finkelstein

(with whom Rabbi Tanenbaum collaborated during Vatican Council II which he attended as the only rabbi serving as "official observer" at the request of the late Cardinal Augustin Bea.)

To provide substance and support for his work of reconciliation and building mutual respect, Rabbi Tanenbaum supervised the milestone studies of interreligious content in religious textbooks used in the educational systems of Jews (Dropsie University study), Protestants (*Faith and Prejudice*, Yale Divinity School), Catholics (*Catechetics and Prejudice*, St. Louis University), and French, Spanish, and Italian textbooks (Paulist Press.) The studies and extensive programs for implementing their findings have resulted in the virtual removal of every hostile or negative references of major religious groups about each other, and the introduction into teaching materials of positive, affirming portrayals of each religious group's beliefs and practices.

In his commitment to help build up "the Family of God" based on mutual knowledge and reciprocal respect, Rabbi Tanenbaum traveled in the 1960s through the 1980s to every major city in the United States, Western and Eastern Europe, Latin America, parts of Africa, and the Middle East where he lectured and organized networks of Christians, Jews, and frequently Muslims through seminars, dialogues, institutes, academic conferences. His accomplishment was characterized by a Roman Catholic priest, president of the Papal University Pro Deo in Rome, as "a revolution in mutual esteem."

For his ecumenical and Jewish-Christian labors he has received fifteen honorary doctorates from major Christian and Jewish universities and seminaries. In 1988, Sir Sigmund Sternberg conferred on him the "Interfaith Medallion" of the International Council of Christians and Jews.

New York Magazine (January 1979) in a cover story characterized Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today." Similar evaluations have appeared in numerous secular, Christian, and Jewish publications in many parts of the world (*Newsweek*, *Time*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *National Catholic News Service*, *Religious News Service*, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, *Commentary* magazine.) A Christian Century poll designated Rabbi Tanenbaum "as one of the ten most respected and influential religious leaders in America," following Dr. Billy Graham, the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, President Jimmy Carter, Dr. Martin Marty, among others.

On May 4, 1989, Rabbi Tanenbaum was invited to deliver the keynote address at the National Day of Prayer at the Pentagon.

B. "The Sacred dignity of Human Life Created in the Image of God."

This central Biblical conviction in the Torah and the Gospel which mandates reverence for each human life as sacred has governed Rabbi Tanenbaum's beliefs that these are not simply liturgical phrases but prophetic commands to seek to uphold the dignity and to preserve the lives where possible of every human being. Believing that "the spark of God is found in every human soul," and inspired by the model of Mother Theresa, among others, the Rabbi has devoted a large measure of his energies to easing the plight and suffering of countless refugees and those afflicted by hunger and poverty in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

In 1967, he was the first Jewish leader to organize a massive effort in the Jewish community to help save the lives of tens of thousands of Christian Ibos during the Nigerian/Biafran conflict. In 1978, he was the first Jewish representative to join a mission of the

International Rescue Committee which visited every refugee camp in Southeast Asia where some 250,000 Vietnamese boat people, Cambodians, and ethnic Chinese had drowned in the South China Sea. That mission of Christians and Jews, followed by three subsequent missions, resulted in President Jimmy Carter's issuing an executive order to the Seventh Fleet stationed in the Philippines not to allow any refugee boats to founder in the surrounding waters. As a result of these efforts, the drowning of the Vietnamese boat people virtually came to an end.

For Rabbi Tanenbaum, that work of mercy was the fulfillment of the Rabbinic teaching that "He who saves a single life is regarded as if he had saved an entire world." It was also shaped by the rabbi's response to the Nazi holocaust, and the Levitical message, "You shall not stand idly by while the blood of your brothers and sisters cry out to you from the earth." (Rabbi Tanenbaum serves on the President's Commission on the Holocaust.)

Rabbi Tanenbaum then helped organize the American Jewish World Service in 1984, an international disaster relief and development organization of the Jewish community. AJWS now serves in 27 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America helping impoverished peoples, regardless of religion, become self-sufficient. The motto of AJWS is founded on Maimonides' teaching that "the highest form of *tzedakah* (justice and charity) is to help your neighbor become independent and self-reliant." (As a result of AJWS' work of mercy and compassion in South India, the Dalai Lama has invited the organization of a Buddhist-Jewish dialogue.)

In the 1960's Rabbi Tanenbaum was the foremost Jewish leader in helping organize cooperatively with Christian leaders community organization and self-development projects in fourteen inner city ghettos (The Coalition of Conscience.) In 1963, he served as program chairman of the historic National Conference of Religion and Race in Chicago which provided the first national ecumenical platform for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a result of the moral conviction that emerged at that assembly, the decision was made to organize the March on Washington in August 1963.

In 1984, Rabbi Tanenbaum was the first Jewish leader to join with Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and Muslim leaders in mobilizing a major effort to respond affirmatively to the needs of 35,000 homeless people in New York and some 2,000,000 in the United States. This coalition of religious leaders played a decisive role in affecting the conscience of city, state, and national leaders in responding to the heart-breaking destitution of the homeless.

C. "Universal Fraternity and the Kingdom of God."

Central to Rabbi Tanenbaum's religious belief system has been Maimonides' teachings regarding the Messianic Age and the Kingdom of God. Through God's Providence and with man (and woman) as co-partner in the work of completing creation, an overarching moral and spiritual objective has been that of seeking to bring an end to "war, hatred, jealousy, and bloodshed," and to usher in a period of "universal love, compassion, justice, and peace." Through such actual transformation of the human condition, Maimonides taught, we will know that the Kingdom has begun.

That deeply-held conviction has motivated Rabbi Tanenbaum to write several volumes and numerous essays and monographs, as well as to organize dozens of academic and theological seminars, for the development of a systematic theology of pluralism. (See his paperback, *Religious Values in An Age of Violence*, his essay on "Judaism, Ecumenism, and Pluralism" *Speaking of God Today - Jews and Lutherans in Conversation, Evangelicals and the Jews in*

*an Age of Pluralism.)*

Beginning with an "International Colloquium on Judaism and Christianity" at Harvard Divinity School in 1966, Rabbi Tanenbaum has worked systematically to develop a theology of "unity in the midst of diversity" that encourages the profoundest commitments to one's faith while respecting the diversity of other faith commitments. (See his Publications list, Appendix II.)

In 1970, he organized a world conference of religious leaders from Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Shintoism, and African religions at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The Truman Peace Center published the proceedings which became a milestone work in developing a doctrine of world religious pluralism and co-existence.

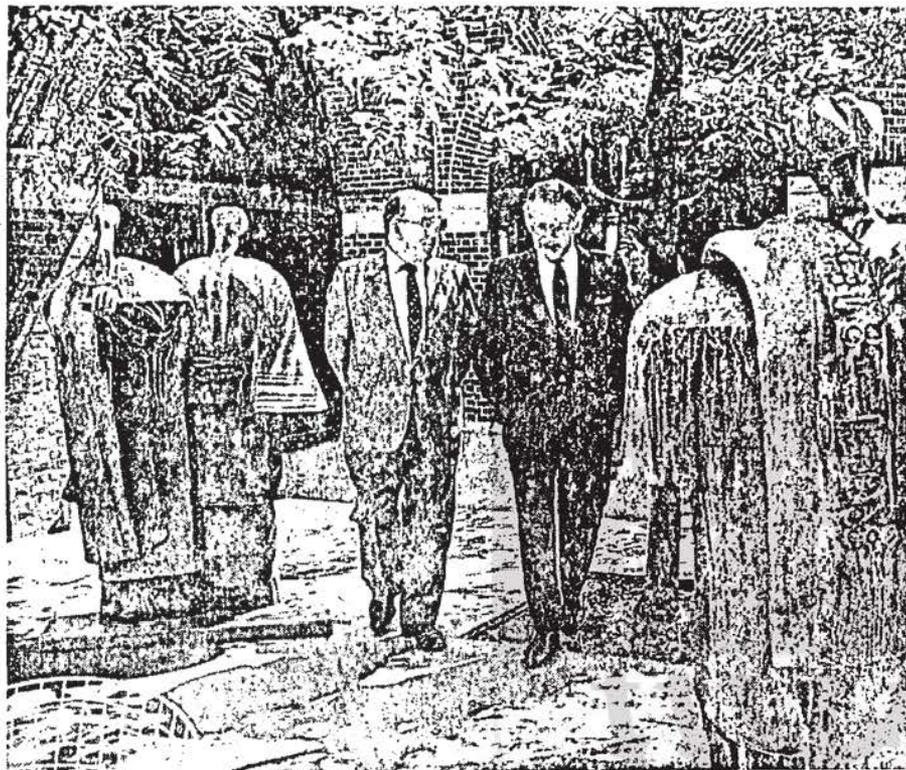
In 1971, he helped organize a conference in Jerusalem on "The Bible and Black Africa." Some 75 Christian and Muslim leaders from most African nations joined with Jews in exploring how religiously to overcome the religious, racial, and ethnic strife in the African continent which has resulted in so much group hostility, fanaticism, and human destruction.

In 1984, Rabbi Tanenbaum served as co-chairman with the leaders of the Brazilian conference of Catholic Bishops in organizing a Pan-American Conference of Christians and Jews in the Sao Paulo which brought together leaders from every South American country and North America in seeking to advance religious pluralism and human rights.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has been a foremost leader in the cause of religious liberty, freedom of conscience and human rights. He was a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which supports religious liberty and human rights for Jews, but also for Pentecostal, Evangelical Baptists, Russian Orthodox, and Catholics in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Thus, the core teaching and belief in the sacred dignity of every human being as a child of God is translated into daily reality.

For his three decades of leadership in the cause of religious pluralism and human dignity, St. Mercy College in Bridgeport Connecticut, conferred on Rabbi Tanenbaum an honorary doctorate in 1985, terming him "The Human Rights Rabbi of America."



Rabbis Wolfe Kelman, left, and Marc H. Tanenbaum, who are both retiring, walking through the grounds of the Jewish Theological Seminary in Manhattan, where they were roommates 40 years ago.

(If you missed the August 18 issue of The New York Times, this article about Marc H. Tanenbaum will be of interest.)

## Two Careers Redefined Rabbis' Role

By ARI L. GOLDMAN

Forty years ago, Marc H. Tanenbaum and Wolfe Kelman were roommates at the Jewish Theological Seminary in Manhattan, where they were studying to be Conservative rabbis. Now both men are retiring from long-held positions after two remarkable and influential, but very different, careers in the American rabbinate.

Although neither man ever led a congregation, their work had a great impact on the American rabbi.

Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is 63 years old, made a career in the field of Christian-Jewish relations, becoming a pioneer in forging links among Jews and Roman Catholics, main-line Protestants and Evangelicals. A weekly commentator on radio for 25 years and a regular adviser to the television networks, Rabbi Tanenbaum is probably the best known rabbi among Christians.

Rabbi Kelman, who is 65, has worked primarily within the Jewish community, often in a behind-the-scenes role. He helped build Conservative Jewry into the largest of the three major branches and shepherded some of its most radical changes, like the admission of women into the rabbinate.

### 'Enlarged the Role'

"Wolfe and Marc enlarged the role of the rabbinate," said a Reform leader, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. "They helped the American rabbi break out of the traditional mold of congregational functionary to one who leads in the larger community."

Not everyone has appreciated their activism. Over the years, Rabbi Tanenbaum came under attack from some traditionalist elements of the Orthodox community for his eagerness to engage in theological dialogue with Christians. A cartoon in the Yiddish press in the 1960's showed Pope Paul VI holding a leash with Rabbi Tanenbaum at the end of it. Both he and Rabbi Kelman have become accustomed to being addressed as "Mister" rather than "Rabbi" by traditionalist Orthodox Jews.

Both Rabbi Kelman and Rabbi Tanenbaum came from Orthodox homes and attended Orthodox yeshivas. As young men, however, they began to challenge what they saw as Orthodox insularity and inflexibility and enrolled at the Jewish Theological Seminary, the educational center of Conservative Judaism.

Conservative Judaism respects the authority of Halakha, traditional Jewish law, but believes that it can change as it confronts modern issues like technology, feminism and pluralism.

### Professor's Disciples

At the seminary, both students became disciples of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, professor of Jewish ethics and mysticism, who would

### Seminary roommates became national leaders.

later go to the Vatican to talk to Pope Paul VI and march with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, Ala. "Heschel taught us that no religion has a monopoly on holiness," Rabbi Kelman said.

In an interview at his Upper East Side apartment, where he munched on a cinnamon stick, a vestige from his cigar-smoking days, Rabbi Tanenbaum said he was "the least likely person" to get involved in the area of Christian-Jewish relations.

As a child in Baltimore, he heard stories from his immigrant parents about the persecution they had suffered as Jews, often at the hands of the church in Czarist Russia. "My father would cross the street so as not to walk in front of a church," he recalled.

As a student at the seminary, Rabbi Tanenbaum began to delve into the roots of anti-Semitism among Christians. He said that he was driven to reconcile how "a church that preached a gospel of love could have turned it into a gospel of hatred and destruction when it came to Jews."

### Observer at Vatican II

What he found, he said, was an "ignorance that was staggering" between the faiths.

Since his ordination in 1950, interfaith work has been his passion, first as executive vice president of the Synagogue Council of America and, since 1960, in various roles for the American Jewish Committee. He retired from the committee earlier this year and will continue to serve as a consultant to the organization.

The high point of Rabbi Tanenbaum's four decades in Christian-Jewish relations was the Second Vatican Council, which, in 1965, produced the landmark document "Nostra Aetate." The document repudiated anti-Semitism "by anyone at any time." Rabbi Tanenbaum, an official observer to Vatican II, was the only rabbi who attended.

While the 1960's were dominated by Catholic-Jewish contacts, the focus in the 1950's was on Jewish-Protestant dialogue, and in the 1970's, talks were initiated between Jews and Evangelicals and the Eastern Orthodox.

### Mother's Example

On the mantel in Rabbi Tanenbaum's apartment are scenes from his journey. There are pictures of him with religious leaders like Pope John Paul II, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Rev. Billy Graham.

At Rabbi Kelman's office, the only framed picture is one of his parents,

Rabbi Zvi Yehuda and Mirl Kelman. His father died when he was 13, and his mother, left with six children, stepped into the role of community leader in Toronto, dispensing religious and personal guidance.

"It was her example that made me believe women could function as rabbis," Rabbi Kelman said, acknowledging that his mother, who remained Orthodox throughout her life, might not approve of his conclusion. The Orthodox do not ordain women.

After his ordination in 1950, Rabbi Kelman became executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly, the rabbinical arm of Conservative Judaism. He retired from the position earlier this month after almost 40 years in office. He will remain at the seminary to direct the Louis Finkelstein Institute of Religious and Social Studies.

The 1950's turned out to be a decade of phenomenal growth for the Conservative movement, as the suburbs exploded with new development. Conservative synagogues were being built so rapidly that the movement couldn't meet the demand. Many Conservative synagogues hired Reform and Orthodox rabbis instead.

Membership in the Rabbinical Assembly grew from 300 rabbis in 1951 to 1,200 today. Over that period, Rabbi Kelman presided over what he calls "the professionalization of the rabbinate," working to insure rabbis job security, housing, pensions and insurance. Rabbis' salaries now range from \$50,000 to \$100,000.

Rabbi Kelman declined to take credit for being anything more than a facilitator. "The status of rabbis improved because of the hundreds of good rabbis out there," he said.

### Rockefeller Mansion Wins Zoning for Use as Museum

NORTH TARRYTOWN, N.Y., Aug. 17 (AP) — The North Tarrytown Board of Trustees approved a zoning change on Wednesday night that will allow John D. Rockefeller's home to become a museum.

But it will be at least a year before the public can tour the four-story Georgian mansion in the Pocantico Hills area, said Robert Snyder, president of the Greenrock Corporation, which manages the Rockefeller family's estates.

The 86-acre property is part of the 250-acre Rockefeller Park, which was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976. The mansion houses an art collection and has an outdoor sculpture garden and a coach barn.

Other points of view on the Op-Ed page seven days a week. The New York Times

## Dr. MARC H. TANENBAUM



Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum, Director of International Relations of American Jewish Committee, has a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugee, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns.

Formerly the AJC's national interreligious affairs director, Rabbi Tanenbaum was designated in a recent national poll as "one of the ten most influential and respected religious leaders in America." A cover story in *New York* magazine described Dr. Tanenbaum as "the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today."

Dr. Tanenbaum has served as a member of the prestigious Human Rights Research Committee of the Foreign Policy Association's Study of Priorities for the 1980s. In recent years, he has testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on "Moral Imperatives in the Formation of American Foreign Policy." He has also testified before Congressional committees on world refugee and world hunger problems, and played a key role in organizing White House conferences on Foreign Aid and Energy Conservation.

President Jimmy Carter invited Dr. Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among ten national religious and academic spokesmen to discuss "the State of the Nation" at Camp David summit meetings in 1979. He was also appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust.

At the invitation of the International Rescue Committee, he joined delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out three separate fact-finding investigations of the plight of the Vietnamese "boat people" and Cambodian refugees, which contributed to the saving of tens of thousands of lives of Indochinese refugees. He has organized many relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including Lebanese, Nigerians, Ugandans, the Falashas of Ethiopia, Haitians, Afghanis, Central Americans and Polish refugees. He is a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which aids oppressed Jews and Christians in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In March 1979, he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals.

Dr. Tanenbaum is a founder and leading member of the joint liaison committee of the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), and of a similar body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, and participated in the first official audience of World Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City. He was also the first Jewish leader to address 4,000 delegates attending the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in July 1983.

He served as consultant to the NBC-TV nine-hour special "Holocaust" and earlier was consultant to the special "Jesus of Nazareth."

He has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe and Israel, and at numerous national and international conferences. Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author or editor of several published books and of numerous articles.



**MARC H. TANENBAUM**  
**Interreligious Leader**

International Relations Consultant of the American Jewish Committee and former AJC National Interreligious Affairs Director, Dr. Tanenbaum was the only rabbi present during Vatican Council II, which adopted the historic declaration condemning anti-Semitism. Rabbi Tanenbaum is a leading figure in the international human rights movement and the author of seven books dealing with Jewish-Christian relations, human rights, and foreign affairs.

**Religious Fanaticism: The New Threat to Civilization • Jews and Christians in the 1980s: Problems and Prospects • The Vatican, Jews, and Israel • Israel, the Palestinians, and the Christian World**

**HERBERT TARR**  
**Author/Humorist**

Author of bestselling novels *The Conversion of Chaplain Cohen* and *Heaven Help Us*. Rabbi Tarr, a Doctor of Divinity, has appeared on more than 200 TV and radio shows, including Johnny Carson, Today, and Barbara Walters, and been profiled in many newspapers, including *The New York Times*, *New York Post*, *San Francisco Chronicle* and *Miami Herald*. His latest novel is *Hannah: The Pleasure of Her Company*. Rabbi Tarr was invited to read his work to Moscow's Seminar of Dissident Soviet Scientists (friends of Andrei Sakharov).



**I Am a Christian Who Was Ordained a Rabbi: So Help Me God! • Jewish Humor: What's So Funny? • Judaism in America, or Heaven Help Us • Righteous Gentiles and Righteous Jewish: What's the Difference?**



**NECHAMA TEC**  
**Writer/Associate Professor**

Nechama Tec, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Connecticut, Stamford, survived the war in Poland by passing for a Christian. Her memoirs, *Dry Tears: The Story of a Lost Childhood*, document those years. Since 1977 her research and writing have focused on who the Christians were who helped Jews, and what motivated them to risk their lives for Jews. She is the author of *When Light Pierced the Darkness: Christian Rescue of Jews in Nazi Occupied Poland*. Oxford University Press will publish her most recent book in Fall 1989.

**An Autobiographical Account of Her Years as a Child During the Holocaust in Poland • Christian Rescue of Jews in Nazi-Occupied Poland • Identity Change/Anti-Semitism**

*"A quarrel is like a stream of water: once it opens a way, it becomes a wide path."* — Talmud



**YAAKOV THOMPSON**  
Rabbi

The first convert to Judaism to be ordained as a Conservative rabbi, Yaakov Thompson is rabbi of Congregation Bnai Israel, Fair Lawn, N.J. He is known for his ability to communicate through his own experience what it means to be a Jew by choice. Rabbi Thompson received his Doctor of Hebrew Literature degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary where he currently serves as assistant professor of Bible. He has contributed to numerous journals and is now writing his spiritual autobiography.

**From Convert to Rabbi: My Encounter with Judaism • We Are All Jews by Choice • Judaism, Psychology, and Happiness: An Approach to Meaningful Living • Why Be Jewish, Why Act Jewish? • The Meaning of Observance Today**

**IVAN L. TILLEM**  
Political Consultant

Ivan L. Tillem is senior advisor to Mayor Koch, Senator Albert Gore, Jr. and many other politicians. He is an investment banker (chairman, Pacific Financial Corporation), an attorney, a professor at Yeshiva University, editor and compiler of the 700-page *Jewish Almanac* series, a philanthropist, and the youngest man ever elected to the board of trustees of Yeshiva University.

**Tikkun Haolom: The Jewish Responsibility To Fix The World • How Jews Can Have An Effect In The Political Realm • Ethiopian Jewry And How To Help Them • The Relevance Of Judaism**



AMERICAN JEWISH

ARCHIVES

אבות אברהם

אברהם יצחק יעקב

## Alan Kopit, Side-By-Side with the Secretary of Defense

"After a year in Washington, I have abandoned a good number of my old beliefs about the way government works, particularly in the area of national defense. My year as a White House Fellow proved to be a real revelation." On October 24 Alan Kopit, an AJC Board member, described some of his more unusual experiences and travel opportunities as Special Assistant to two Secretaries of Defense: Casper Weinberger and Frank Carlucci.

Alan was one of 12 White House Fellows selected from over 1000 applicants for this prestigious twelve-month program which began in 1964 and aims to encourage exceptional and successful young professionals to consider public service. The program includes work experience at the highest levels of government, continuous educational opportunities via private and informal meetings with important personalities on the Washington scene; and travel, both domestic and international, to meet with world leaders and visit foreign centers of power.

Alan's transformation began with his first assignment. He was one of three people assigned to write a complete overview of the Defense Department. Not having had a military background, he was forced to fa-



(L-R) Alan Kopit, Armond Budish

miliarize himself with the different services, the variety of weapons systems and the location and uses of military bases in the U.S. and around the world. "I learned that weapons systems need maturing," he said, "and that takes place over time, by constant alteration of flaws as they become known." In the question period he indicated that **sometimes members of Congress fail to see a weapons system as a whole whose parts require adjustments.** This is part of what feeds the tension between Congress and the Executive Branch.

Alan also edited reports on Soviet military power and international arms acquisitions.

"The year gave me the insight to the workings of our government that few jobs can match."

At the conclusion of his service, Alan was presented with the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Service, only the second Fellow in 24 years to be presented this prestigious award.

## Dr. Ruth R. Miller Honored by Cleveland Chapter

The AJC Distinguished Human Relations Award was presented to Dr. Ruth R. Miller at the 1988 Appeal for Human Relations brunch, Sunday, November 6, at Park Synagogue East. Bob Gries, in presenting this Award, observed that Ruth Miller exemplified all that is best in service and concern for the individual and for the welfare of the community. "Ruth is the outstanding Jewish woman in Cleveland. She cares passionately about people and about issues. There is no greater honor, than for AJC to honor Ruth Miller."

In accepting the Distinguished Human



Bob Gries presents the Distinguished Human Relations Award to Dr. Ruth Miller

Relations Award, Ruth explained that "I am only doing what every member of my family expects of me and of each other. How we deal with one another becomes a way of life and is an ongoing process. When there are two difficult choices that seem to be of equal value, and a decision has to be made, it is not always necessary to say 'yes'. However, it is important to listen and then do the best you can."

Rabbi Philip Horowitz shared a moving vignette which occurred while on their recent trip to the Soviet Union. It further explained Ruth Miller's commitment to promises she made.

The keynote speaker was Aaron Miller, Ruth's son and a Middle East analyst with the State Department. He stated that peace in the Middle East presents a challenge and an opportunity. "The U.S. government will never abandon its principle goal and will continue to search for ways to assist Israel and her neighbors, including the Palestinians, in the creation of conditions for a permanent solution. Achieving peace in the region will take a long time. The U.S. must first try to cultivate an environment that will allow the principal parties to move towards an equitable accommodation and remain patient



Aaron Miller with Ruth Miller

but firm with Israel. The U.S. will continue to expand its contacts with the Arabs, including the Palestinian community. This will all take a great deal of diplomacy and time. In the end, the future of the Middle East is up to those who live there."

Barbara Kest announced gifts already contributed in honor of Ruth Miller and encouraged others in the audience to add their pledges to those already committed. This fund-raising event on behalf of AJC was a warm, personal tribute to a woman who has worked tirelessly on behalf of her community. Contributions will continue to be accepted for the 1988 Appeal and/or in honor of Dr. Ruth R. Miller.

Bob Gries and Ken Rogat co-chaired the 1988 Appeal for Human Relations.



(L-R) Cong. Dennis Eckert, Sally & Bob Gries, Diane & Art Stupay, Barbara Kest, John Hexter, Sandy Eckert, son Eddy

## NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED

We extend a warm welcome to these new members:

Richard and Staci Block  
Michael and Diane Ellis  
Judge Stuart Friedman  
Rabbi David and Susan Gelfand  
Warren and Debby Goldenberg  
Lawrence and Charlotte Gould  
Dr. Maureen Hack  
Daniel Hershman  
Zev and Cheryl Kessler  
Andrew and Joan Kohn  
Cyndie O'Bryon  
Harry Singer  
Harvey and Suzanne Wolfe

## REMEMBRANCE FUND

Stanley M. Fisher in memory of his wife Boots Fisher.

Marjorie Heller in memory of Earl Franklin's mother.

Mr. and Mrs. John Hexter in memory of Pearl Green.

Hexter Family in memory of Fay Frutkin and in honor of Earl Franklin's milestone birthday.

Dr. and Mrs. Frank Plotkin in memory of Boots Fisher.

Mr. and Mrs. Lee Powar in honor of Dottie and Garry Curtiss.

## Germany and Israel

At the November 16 Open Board meeting, Germany and Israel were the subjects of two special presentations. Immediate past president Barbara Kest reported on her recent visit to Germany as part of the AJC's ongoing exchange program, and our newest member, Joan Kohn (formerly from Kansas City) spoke of her impressions of Israel as part of a Media Mission sponsored by AJC.

### Germany Revisited

Barbara was a participant in AJC's 1985 Konrad Adenauer Exchange Program. The objective of this program is to build bridges of understanding between the post-war generations of Germans and American Jews. This summer she and 20 other alumni returned for a more in-depth visit.

"It is essential that there be an honest accounting made between the two eyewitnesses' sets of memories; those of the perpetrators and their heirs and those of the victims and their descendants. The perils implicit in assigning collective guilt on all Germans in perpetuity must not be allowed to occur. American Jews have a responsibility to learn about the modern Federal Republic of West Germany," she said. "Most second generation American Jews have learned only about Nazi Germany. The hostility they present is often difficult for young Germans to understand."

On both of her visits she discovered that there is a sincere desire on the part of most Germans to learn more about Jews and Jewish history. German antisemitism had been an integral part of German society for centuries, so we are naturally skeptical that it has been or can be eradicated. "An entire post-war generation was not taught about the evils of the Third Reich and although they grew up in a democracy, this generation became traumatized and alienated when this history was revealed. It has been very difficult for them to deal with the fascist history of their parents and grandparents."

She reported that the Ministry of Education and the AJC are presently at work developing a curriculum on the Holocaust for high school students. Barbara concluded her presentation by describing a few of the sights visited and showing slides of a neglected Jewish cemetery in East Berlin, a museum at Bergen-Belsen and the Jewish Community Center in West Berlin.

As a signal of her commitment to this program, she and Layton have as their house guest a German high school exchange student, who attends Beachwood High school and studies violin at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Her father, a historian, is working on the Holocaust curriculum described above.

### A Media Person's Impression of Israel

Joan was program manager of KCTV-5,

a CBS affiliate in Kansas City, when she was invited to be part of an AJC Communications and Media Mission to Israel. Just before she was to leave on her trip, she and her husband Andrew moved to Cleveland. Formerly an active Board member of the Kansas City Chapter, Joan is already involved and active with the Cleveland Chapter.

This Mission took place the first two weeks in June. Her impressions were described candidly and much of what she said was blunt and to the point. "Israel is a safe place to visit if you are an American Jew. It is not so safe if you are an Israeli. Hatred between Israelis and Arabs is mutual and goes deeper than ever before." Joan viewed internal religious differences as divisive and hostile. "Civil war is unavoidable."

The Palestinians they were scheduled to meet were diplomatic p.r. types educated in America, who espoused peace through negotiations for a homeland in the occupied territories. However, when a group went off with a Palestinian driver and met with Palestinians living near Bethlehem, their concept of a homeland included



(L-R) Joan Kohn speaking, Barbara Kest, Hershel Goren, Michael Baron, Robert Fuerst

"strategic territories in Israel". "A worldwide public relations plan" is how she described the intifadah. She spoke to Palestinian mothers and grandmothers about their children and grandchildren stoning their party and others as well. Joan was astounded by the answer: "They are the stone children; if one is wounded, arrested or killed, another will take their place."

Joan's group spent a few nights at a kibbutz. They found this movement weakening. The youth are not as committed to returning to the kibbutz, many kibbutzim are having financial difficulties. Part of their problem is a lack of good sales and/or marketing skills. Joan is now personally committed to doing research to help promote diversification. Meeting with Israeli soldiers, she learned from officers that the rank-and-file soldier does not have the commitment to fight as a soldier from an earlier generation.

Joan described how she went to Israel a "dove" believing in dialogue and peace negotiations. She returned a "hawk" believing Arabs will not be satisfied with a piece of the action, they want the whole thing. She encouraged those who had never been to Israel to visit, those who had been there before to do so again and described "Israel as a good country in a bad neighborhood."

## Director's Community Activities

August–November

### I. Media Contacts:

- Met with Darryl Holland, *Plain Dealer* Religion Editor and columnists Brent Larkin, Michelle Leslie, and members of Editorial Staff
- Met with Roldo Bartimole, *Point of View*, on subject of Black-Jewish relations
- Met with Merle Pollis regarding future programming
- Reviewed wire stories about Jerome Brentar for *The Plain Dealer*

### II. Ethnic Relations

- In consultation with the Catholic Diocese, wrote an Op-Ed article on the "Last Temptation of Christ" for *The Plain Dealer*
- Wrote article on the movie, "Betrayed" for the *Cleveland Jewish News*
- Addressed Catholic High School teachers at Walsh Jesuit H.S. on "Finding Yourself and Your Students in Scripture"
- Spoke to Comparative Religion class at CSU on Judaism
- Addressed entire school at Lordstown High School on the Demjanjuk trial, arranged by Federation in Youngstown

### III. Writing and Speaking

- Involved the participation of Catholic Diocese and Interchurch Council in, Kristallnacht Observance
- Met with City Club speaker, Lithuanian Prisoner of Conscience, Dr. Statkevicius whose speech included references to Jews living under Communism
- Attended Hispanic Forum, "Celebration" with John Hexter
- Met with Bill Liscynsky and Terry Szmagala to begin to prepare for verdict in the Demjanjuk Appeal
- Asked by August Pust, Ethnic Affairs Coordinator for the Mayor, to assist in WCPN conflict
- Attended 70th anniversary of Declaration of Independence of Latvia at the invitation of the American Latvian Association
- With John Hexter, met with Jose Villanueva and Jose Feliciano to discuss January meeting on "English Plus"
- Advised Carl Daniels, director of S.E.E.D. (Superior Education and Employment Development)
- Coordinated and attended Cleveland Conference on Religions. Subject: Women in Seven Religious Traditions
- Arranged meeting between leader in Lithuanian community and a recent Lithuanian Jewish immigrant to find links between the two communities on contemporary issues
- Coordinated meeting of community relations – Jewish defense agencies to discuss community response to the Israeli Supreme Court decision regarding John Demjanjuk

**Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum**, member of the AJWS Board of Trustees and its Executive Committee. He has for many years provided leadership within the American Jewish Community, especially as Director of International Relations of the American Jewish Committee. Rabbi Tanenbaum has testified on refugee and world hunger concerns before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He has organized relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including Lebanese, Nigerians, Ethiopian Jews, Afghanis, Poles and Vietnamese. He is a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has lectured extensively, authored and edited several books and has written essays and monographs on Jewish-Christian relations, religion, social justice, and the world community.



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, has been a pioneering leader and thinker in interreligious relations and social justice movements during the past 30 years. A modern historian, writing recently in Commentary magazine, characterized Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the leading figure among Jewish ecumenists" in fields of interreligious relations and social justice. Newsweek magazine recently devoted its Religion section to an interview with Rabbi Tanenbaum describing him as "the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles...who has been able to solicit support from all factions of the Jewish community." In a cover story entitled "The Ten Most Powerful Rabbis," New York magazine (January 22, 1979) described Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today."

A poll of America's religion newspaper editors published in the Christian Century in January 1978, voted Rabbi Tanenbaum one of the ten most respected and influential religious leaders in America (he was ranked fourth after Dr. Billy Graham, Dr. Martin Marty, and President Jimmy Carter.) Sacred Heart University of Bridgeport, Connecticut, conferred an honorary doctorate on the rabbi - his tenth doctorate - characterizing him as "The Human Rights Rabbi of America."

In February and December 1978, he was invited by the International Rescue Committee to join delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out fact-finding investigations of the plight of Vietnamese "boat people" and Cambodian refugees in Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong. The IRC reports to and meetings with President Carter and heads of other governments contributed to the saving of the lives of tens of thousands of Indochinese refugees.

President Carter invited Rabbi Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among ten national religious spokesmen to discuss "the State of the Nations" at Camp David "summit" meetings on July 10, 1979. The rabbi is the Jewish spokesman at the January 10, 1980, White House Conference on Energy and Conservation.

Recently he served as the American Jewish consultant to the NBC-TV nine-hour "special" dramatizing "The Holocaust" and earlier was consultant to the NBC-TV "special" "Jesus of Nazareth." President Carter appointed Marc Tanenbaum to serve on the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust and as co-chairman with Senator John Danforth for the National Holocaust observances. In March 1979 he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals and other murderers. Rabbi Tanenbaum was invited by West German government authorities to head a delegation in 1978 that consulted with Oberammergau officials on the revision of that Passion Play for the removal of anti-Semitic contents.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is a founder and co-secretary of Joint Vatican International Jewish Consultative Committee and of a similar liaison body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, where he was widely consulted by Catholic and Protestant authorities during the deliberations that led to the Vatican Declaration on Non-Christian Relations which repudiated anti-Semitism and called for fraternal dialogue between Christians and Jews. In March 1979, he participated in the first official audience of world Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City, and he was an official delegate welcoming the Pope at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York during his triumphal visit in October 1979.

One of America's most effective and popular lecturers and orators, Rabbi Tanenbaum has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe, and Israel and at numerous national and international conferences. He has served as visiting professor at the Graduate Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, and has lectured at Cambridge University, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Graduate Theological Union, Notre Dame, Catholic University, Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the U.S. Air Force University and the U.S. Army College.

Rabbi Tanenbaum was appointed in May 1976 to serve as chairman of the Jewish-Christian Relations Commission of the New York Board of Rabbis, which is comprised of 1,000 Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform rabbis and is the oldest and largest rabbinic organization of its kind in the world.

Under his direction the American Jewish Committee has involved major Jewish scholars and religious leaders in national academic institutes and seminars with every major branch of Christendom - Roman Catholic, mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, Greek Orthodox, and Black Churches, with similar programs in every major city in the United States. Rabbi Tanenbaum has also served as co-chairman of the first international colloquium on "Religion, Land, Nationalism, and Peoplehood," held at Hebrew University in 1970 which involved the participation of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, African religions, as well as Christians and Jews. He also served as co-chairman of the first International Colloquium on Judaism and Christianity held at Harvard Divinity School in 1966. He also helped organize a congress of African leaders on "The Bible and Black Africa" in Jerusalem, and served as co-chairman with Prof. C. Eric Lincoln of the first national consultation on Black-Jewish Relations at Fisk University.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has directed the landmark religious research studies examining intergroup content in Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish teaching materials in the United States, Italy, Spain, French-speaking countries, Germany and Latin America. These studies have been the basis of the revision of virtually all negative stereotypes in the textbooks produced in the 1970s.

A major force in the promotion of social justice and human rights, Rabbi Tanenbaum helped organize the American Jewish Emergency Relief Effort for Victims of the Nigerian-Biafran Conflict; has aided refugees from Uganda, Sierra Leone, Ireland, Cyprus and Lebanon, Bangladesh; he is national co-chairman of the Interreligious Coalition on World Hunger; and national co-chairman of the Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry. He was also a founder and program chairman of the historic National Conference on Religion and Race, which has been regarded as a turning point for the promotion of civil rights in the 1960s. He has served on various Presidential, White House, and United Nations commissions on children and aging, race relations, and food and population problems.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has been frequently invited to serve as a Jewish spokesman before various Congressional and Senate Committee hearings - the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee on "Moral Aspects of American Foreign Policy" (Jan. 1976); Senate Special Hearings on World Hunger and America's Food Policy (Dec. 1974); the House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearings on Jerusalem, and the Joint Congressional Hearings on the Helsinki Accords with regard to "Religious Liberty and Minority Rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe." He has lectured on moral issues before members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces, the U.S. Army, Navy Chaplain Corps, U.S. Marine Corps, and the Air Force Academy. He also served on the 1980's Project on Human Rights of the Council on Foreign Relations, and as a member of the steering committee of the American Revolutionary Bicentennial Committee's Citizen Dialogue.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author and co-editor of "Speaking of God Today," "The Jerusalem Colloquium," "Our Moral Resources for International Cooperation" (in collaboration with Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr), "Religious Values in an Age of Violence," "Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation" Scripture, Theology and History," "Greek Orthodox and Jewish Dialogue," "American Religious Values and the Future of America." His essay on the "Holy Year and Its Origins in the Jewish Jubilee Year," published by the Vatican Commission on the Holy Year in 1975 has appeared in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch and Japanese. He is also the interreligious academic consultant to the New Media Bible.

His other written works include A Guide to Jewish Traditions and Holy Days (Epic Records); co-authorship with Prof. Leonard Swidler of Jewish-Christian Dialogue (published by National Council of Catholic Men and Catholic Women). Rabbi Tanenbaum's essays and monographs on Jewish-Christian Relations, and on religion, social justice and world community have been published in such volumes as Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal (published by the University of Notre Dame Press and Association Press); Torah and Gospel (Sheed and Ward); The Star and the Cross (Bruce Publishing Company); Concilium, The International Review of Theology which published an essay of Rabbi Tanenbaum's on "How Modern Jews Celebrate Their History," and "Humor in the Talmud," in English, French, German, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. He has also contributed several articles on Catholic-Jewish relations published in Collier's Encyclopedia; as well as to numerous scholarly, religious, and general journals both here and abroad.

For program materials on Jewish-Christian Relations write to:

Interreligious Affairs Department  
The American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, New York 10022  
212-751-4000 Ext. 201

ADVISORY BOARD\*



International Center for Christian-Jewish Relations

ARCHIVES

\* In Formation

Note:

Robert Strauss and Ambassador Jean Kirkpatrick have been asked to participate. Also, Arch Bishop William H. Keeller, of Baltimore, has agreed to be a special friend.

## RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum has a long and distinguished career in Christian-Jewish relations, international human rights, world refugees, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns. He has served as director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee from 1983-1989.

In a recent national poll, Dr. Tanenbaum was named "one of the ten most influential and respected religious leaders in America." A cover story in New York magazine described him as "one of the foremost Jewish ecumenical leaders in the world today."

In 1987, he was elected unanimously as Chairman of the prestigious International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) which represents World Jewry in relations with the Vatican and other world bodies. In May 1988, Rabbi Tanenbaum was awarded the "Interfaith Medallion" of the International Council of Christians and Jews for his "historic contributions" to advancing interreligious understanding over the past 25 years.

President Jimmy Carter invited Dr. Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among ten national religious and academic spokesmen to discuss "the State of the Nation" at Camp David summit meetings in 1979. He was also appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust. In March 1979, Dr. Tanenbaum was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals.

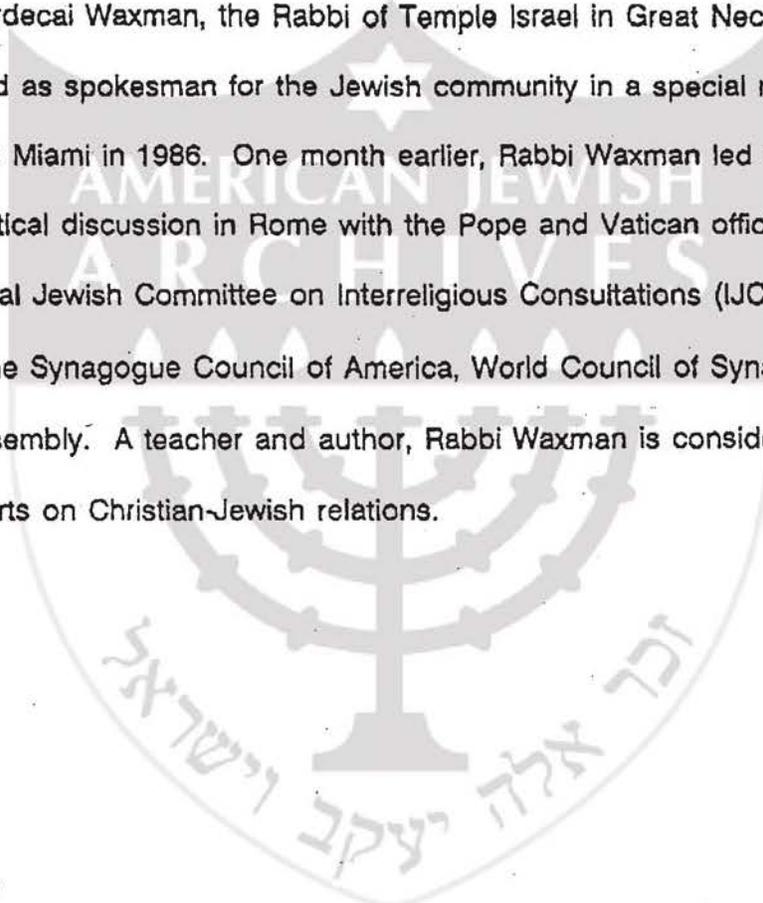
## AMBASSADOR MEIR ROSENNE

Ambassador Dr. Meir Rosenne served from 1983-1987 as Israel's Ambassador to the United States and from 1979-1983 as his country's representative to France. A graduate of the Sorbonne, he is considered one of the world's leading experts on international law. Dr. Rosenne participated in all of the lay negotiations, including Camp David, that produced the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. An early pioneer for Soviet Jews, he championed their cause in the 1960s as Israel's representative to the Human Rights Commission and led the way in mobilizing the first Conference on Soviet Jewry in 1964. At present, he is the president of the Development Corporation for Israel (Israel Bonds).



## RABBI MORDECAI WAXMAN

Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, the Rabbi of Temple Israel in Great Neck for almost half a century, served as spokesman for the Jewish community in a special meeting with Pope John Paul II in Miami in 1986. One month earlier, Rabbi Waxman led a delegation of nine conducting critical discussion in Rome with the Pope and Vatican officials as chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC). He has been president of the Synagogue Council of America, World Council of Synagogues and the Rabbinical Assembly. A teacher and author, Rabbi Waxman is considered one of the foremost experts on Christian-Jewish relations.



## RABBI JOSEPH B. EHRENKRANZ

Rabbi Joseph B. Ehrenkranz for forty-three years has been the spiritual leader of Congregation Agudath Sholom, the largest Orthodox synagogue in Connecticut. He has been honored frequently for his work on behalf of Israel and Christian-Jewish relations. Rabbi Ehrenkranz attended the recent meetings in Rome with Pope John Paul II and participates in the semi-annual dialogue conferences with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. He was lauded for his initiation of a 1978 Middle-East peace mission at the invitation of the late President Anwar Sadat. In 1982, Rabbi Ehrenkranz had a Yeshiva University chair in Pastoral Counseling endowed in his name and was honored the same year as a "distinguished alumnus".

## ELIE WIESEL - Special Friend

For over twenty-five years, Elie Wiesel has spoken for and testified on behalf of the generation that lived through the Holocaust and the generation that perished. During those first post war years he was silent, because, "so heavy was my anguish, that I vowed not to speak, not to touch upon the essential, for at least ten years--long enough to unite the language of humanity with the silence of the dead."

When Elie Wiesel broke that silence, his was a singular and lonely voice, jarring conscience, reviving memory and challenging the nations which stood by, impervious to the anguished cries for help and deliverance. Today, Holocaust studies, centers for research, interfaith memorial commemorations and education programs abound in our universities, public schools, churches and synagogues and in many Christian parochial schools.

"AUTHOR, TEACHER, WITNESS" - are the words inscribed on the medal presented to Elie Wiesel by the President of the United States, "in recognition of his humanitarian efforts and outstanding contributions to the world literature and human rights." Considered *the conscience* of the Jewish people, Wiesel was honored with the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986.

## A P R O P H E T F O R O U R T I M E

by LOUIS AUSTER

It happened on a Christmas eve during the height of the depression. His mother, an Orthodox Jewish woman deeply devoted to her Jewish faith, was standing behind the counter in their small grocery store in South Baltimore. ~~Quite unexpectedly,~~ she was wrapping red and green ribbons around a number of Christmas baskets filled with meats, cheeses, breads, and other foodstuffs.

"What are you doing making Christmas baskets, Mom?" the sandy-haired, bespectacled teenager asked in astonishment. ~~As~~<sup>As a</sup> student in a traditional Jewish parochial school, he knew that Christmas was a major Christian holiday and that devout Jews observed Chanukah but did not participate in Christmas observances.

The Russian-Jewish immigrant mother responded warmly and instantly to her son, Marc, in her Yiddish-accented speech:

"My son, I have just heard that our Christian neighbors down the street are so poor that they will not have anything to eat for their Christmas dinners. It would be terrible if Mrs. Kirby, Mrs. di Falco, Mrs. Eder and their families would go hungry on their religious holiday."

And this devout Jewish mother, herself a refugee from poverty and pogroms in the Ukraine, took her son by the hand and together they walked through the frigid December night air handing out Christmas baskets to their less fortunate Christian neighbors. What an extraordinary image that became in his youthful mind - two Orthodox Jews acting as if they were Santa Claus bringing Christmas cheer and hope to their Irish, Italian, German, and Polish neighbors, Catholics and Protestants alike.

Now, some forty years later, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum - whom New York magazine has characterized as "the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today" - reflects on the meaning that formative youthful experience had on his remarkable career as the generally-recognized pioneer in the movement to improve understanding and mutual respect between Christians and Jews:

"How my mother - and father - behaved, their daily actions toward other human beings, whether Christians or Jews, blacks or whites, had far greater impact on me than almost anything they said or taught," Rabbi Tanenbaum said.

"With absolutely no theological training, equipped only with simple, pious faith as traditional Jews, they taught me some of the most profound religious and moral lessons by which I have lived my professional and personal life. They became for me an inspiring model of how it was possible to be deeply committed to one's own faith and at the same time to respect the different religions of other people."

*turn on print*

Rabbi Tanenbaum believes that his childhood with his parents in a poor, working class neighborhood in South Baltimore that was predominantly Christian and multi-ethnic, prepared him for living in a religiously pluralistic world more than did all his university training. "Despite the inevitable strains that accompanied our common struggle for survival in the dpression," he said, "my parents lived their deeply-felt Biblical and Prophetic convictions that all human beings are children of God and all are to be treated with equal dignity."

It was also an article of faith with Abraham and Sadie Tanenbaum that the best way for their three children to serve God was by loving and caring for their fellow-human beings, whatever their religion or race.

Those central values of Biblical humanism were tested in the powerful crucible of his parents' suffering as victims of religious bigotry and persecution in Czarist Russia where anti-Semitism was rampant. "My parents seemed to embody for me the 2,000-year Jewish experience of exile and redemption - the misery and grandeur of existence, the hope that ultimately triumphs over despair," the tall, muscular rabbi declared.

The alchemy of those life-affirming religious values in tension with the tragic sufferings of the Jewish people stamped an indelible message on the consciousness of Rabbi Tanenbaum - the precious value of every human life. As a result of the trauma of the Nazi holocaust ~~during~~ ~~during World War II~~ in which one-third of the Jewish people were savagely destroyed, and in the face of the horrifying knowledge that much of the civilized world stood idly by as spectators, Rabbi Tanenbaum said that "we Jews have learned one permanent universal lesson for human survival. It is the lesson I was first taught in the Book of Leviticus, paraphrased as: 'You shall not stand idly by while the blood of your brothers and sisters cry out to you from the earth.'"

Over and over again Rabbi Tanenbaum has given concrete expression to that moral commandment. In 1967, during the Nigerian-Biafran struggle, he took the lead in organizing the American Jewish Emergency Relief Effort for the victims of that civil war. In cooperation with Catholic Relief

Services and Church World Service, he helped mobilize 21 major Jewish organizations who raised in several months nearly a million dollars for providing desperately-needed medicines, food, clothing and shelter for hundreds of thousands of Nigerians who might otherwise have died in the African bush.

In the early 1970s, when drought struck the Sahelian zone of West Africa, he joined the Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame University, Cardinal Terence Cook of New York, and the Evangelical World Relief Group. This small group of religious leaders went to the U. S. Congress and persuaded Congressional leaders to make available several tons of food, much of which was being stored in silos as surplus, to the thousands of starving Africans.

"Tens of thousands of human beings are living today," the Rabbi reflects, "because a group of religious leaders took seriously the values of the Torah and Gospel and acted on those beliefs."

In the wake of the African tragedy during which thousands had died, among them many children, Rabbi Tanenbaum helped organize and became co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on World Hunger.

In 1978, he was invited by the International Rescue Committee to join a select group of fourteen prominent American leaders to carry out a fact-finding mission among the Vietnamese boat people, ethnic Chinese, Laotians, Hmong tribesmen and Cambodians. That Citizens Committee on Indochinese Refugees included such prominent Americans as James Michener, the novelist; William Casey, now head of the CIA; Ambassador Cecil Lyons, former U.S. envoy to Chile and Sri Lanka; Leo Cherne, president of IRC;

Bayard Rustin, the black civil rights activist; Msgr. John Aherne representing the U.S. Catholic Church; and Dr. Kenneth Cautheen, a Protestant theologian.

The citizens group visited every refugee camp in Southeast Asia - from Hong Kong, to Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Singapore. On the waters of the South China Sea, he saw starving Vietnamese refugees drowning. "To this day, I still have trouble sleeping some nights. I just keep seeing those people in the boat. One old Chinese woman reminded me of my mother. I have never felt more human or more Jewish than when I literally helped pull people out of those turbulent waters. The belief that "Man is created in the sacred image of God" was seldom more real to me and to my Christian colleagues."

The Citizens Committee brought back fourteen recommendations which they personally presented to President Jimmy Carter, the then Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, Security head Zbigniew Brzezinski, and to the Majority and Minority leaders of Congress. Twelve of their recommendations were adopted as the foreign policy of the United States. As a result, the drowning of Vietnamese boat people has virtually come to an end (some 250,000 of these refugees are estimated to have drowned since 1975 in the South China Sea before this mission was undertaken.)

Rabbi Tanenbaum has since gone to Southeast Asia on three subsequent missions that have resulted in relieving the suffering and hunger of the Indochinese refugees. On his last mission in 1980, he joined actress Liv Ullmann, novelist Elie Wiesel, Winston Churchill III of England, and hundreds of European physicians, religious and civic leaders on a

"March for Survival" for Cambodian refugees. They accompanied truckloads of urgently-needed medicines, vitamins, and food for the Cambodians, who had lost half their population under the ruthless, Nazi-like regime of Pol Pot.

The Communist rulers of Cambodia refused to allow the trucks across the borders because they came from Western democracies. "I saw first-hand," Rabbi Tanenbaum said, "Communist totalitarianism at work. They refused to allow us to bring life-saving supplies to their pitiful survivors because they thought this would be seen as a propaganda victory for Western democracies. Their soldiers threatened to shoot us if we dared come across the border. When I came back to America, I kissed the soil of this country. Far too often we take this democracy, its freedoms, and the generosity of the American people for granted and we do so at our peril."

Since then, he has continued to be active with the U.S. Coordinator for Refugees, Ambassador Eugene Douglas, and the various world refugee bodies in trying to save the lives or bring relief to the twelve million refugees who haplessly wander on the face of the earth - including Somalians, Afghans, Haitians, Ugandans, the Falasha black Jews of Ethiopia, Poles, Russians, and Latin Americans.

For his thirty years of leadership in interreligious affairs, human rights, world hunger, global refugee problems, and the pursuit of peace, Rabbi Tanenbaum has been awarded fifteen honorary doctorates by major Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and Jewish institutions of higher learning. His latest honor came from Sacred Heart University in Bridgeport, Conn., which termed him "The Human Rights Rabbi of America."

In 1979, the rabbi was one of the ten religious and academic leaders invited by President Carter to discuss the "State of the Nation" at Camp David. The same year, he conferred with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and West German parliamentary officials on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals.

His pathbreaking service as leader, thinker, spell-binding lecturer, and writer in Jewish-Christian relations led to Rabbi Tanenbaum's being selected in 1978 in a nationwide poll of religion editors of America's newspapers as one of the ten "most respected and influential religious leaders of the United States." He ranked fourth after Dr. Billy Graham, President Jimmy Carter (as Baptist lay leader), and Dr. Martin Marty, the Lutheran historian-theologian.

"In many ways, my work in Jewish-Christian relations was a conversion of spirit," the rabbi mused. In addition to the image of his mother fixing Christmas baskets for their Christian neighbors, he carries an earlier image in his head that was much less favorable toward Christians and Christianity.

About the age of three, he recalls, his father told him, his older brother Erny, and younger sister Sima, a true story of what happened to his family on a Good Friday in their Ukrainian village. A Russian Orthodox priest became so exercised in preaching about the "Christ-killing" Jews during the Passion liturgy, that he climaxed the religious service by leading the congregation in a pogrom against the Jewish villagers in Dimidivka. The priest and his congregation, now a howling, threatening mob, forced all the Jewish villagers, about 200 people, to come to the edge of the village lake. In their terrified presence, the priest

forced Marc's uncle, Aaron, a poet from Odessa who was visiting his family for Passover, to walk into the lake until the waters covered his head. The Russian Orthodox priest, his pectoral cross glistening in the sun, raised his staff and shouted, "We offer up this Jew as a ransom for the Jews' murder of our Lord and Savior." Uncle Aaron drowned, and Marc was never to see his face.

"My very earliest encounter with Christians led me to believe they were enemies of my people," Rabbi Tanenbaum reflects with sadness. When he and his father would walk to the Synagogue on the Jewish Sabbath or other holy days, they would cross the street if they passed a church. A church had become a place of threat and danger to Marc and his family. As he was to read years later in the writings of the Jewish novelist, Israel Zangwill, "the People of the Cross had made the Jews the cross among the peoples."

"I was haunted for some years by the contradiction that the Church presented - it proclaimed its message as the Gospel of Love, but in the experience of my people, my own family, it had become the Gospel of hatred," Rabbi Tanenbaum stated. "It took years of study of the history of Jewish-Christian relations," he said, "and above all, my coming to know Christian men and women who were warm, loving, caring people that converted me from earliest childhood fears and suspicions of Christians and Christianity. I now proudly claim hundreds of Christians as close, devoted friends to whom I would entrust the lives of my family."

Rabbi Tanenbaum began his first serious, systematic study of "the troubled brotherhood" of Christianity and Judaism as a Conservative seminary student at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York where

he majored in religious history. There he came to the philosophical conviction which has governed his career: "History must not be a hitching post to the past, but rather a guiding post to the future."

After he was ordained as a Rabbi and received his Doctor of Divinity degree in 1950, he worked for two years as a journalist, editor of a publishing house, publicist, and wrote a novel about his Baltimore childhood experiences.

He was then invited to become the executive vice-president of the Synagogue Council of America, the umbrella group of the major Rabbinic and Jewish congregational bodies. During that ten-year experience, he established the first ongoing religious and social justice programs with liberal Protestant groups. "In the 1950s," Rabbi Tanenbaum reports, "liberal Protestants were the only Christian groups open to dialogue with Jews. Before Vatican Council II, Catholics were forbidden to dialogue with other Christians as well as Jews, and Evangelicals simply were absent from the national religious scene."

Liberal Protestants and Jews then had much in common, he added, and Jews owed much to them. They were the first to undertake the revision of Christian Sunday School materials with a view toward removing anti-Jewish references, such as the terrible "Christ-killer" canard, the stereotypic references to the Pharisees as hypocrites, and the damaging notion that Christianity had displaced Judaism as "the New Israel" - all the venomous ingredients that had fed for centuries certain Christian teachings of contempt for Jews and Judaism.

The mainline Protestants were also in the forefront of upholding the separation of church and state and religious pluralism which made it possible for Jews to come to the American dialogue table as first-class citizens, by right and not by sufferance. Their common commitment to Prophetic ethics also led Protestants and Jews to join hands in the civil rights struggle and other humanitarian causes for civic and economic improvement of American society.

It was during that early period of the Jewish-Christian dialogue in America that Rabbi Tanenbaum served as program director of the historic National Conference on Race and Religion in Chicago. That unprecedented meeting in 1963 provided the first national ecumenical platform for the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, and paved the way for the March on Washington, which became the turning point in the civil rights movement.

At that time, President Eisenhower appointed Rabbi Tanenbaum as vice-chairman of the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth, and of the 1961 White House Conference on Aging. The later conference laid the groundwork for our present national concern for senior citizens.

When the late Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council which lasted from 1962-65, the ecumenical and interreligious landscape was decisively transformed, and Rabbi Tanenbaum was also at the center of that historic development. In addition to the other major Vatican Declarations on Religious Liberty and Ecumenism, Pope John had charged the late German Jesuit, Cardinal Augustin Bea, with responsibility for drafting a Vatican Declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations.

In 1960, Rabbi Tanenbaum was called to the American Jewish Committee, the pioneering human rights and human relations agency in this country. As its national director of interreligious affairs, Rabbi Tanenbaum supervised a series of religious self-studies of Catholic textbooks at the Jesuit St. Louis University (as well as Protestant self-studies at Yale Divinity School and Jewish textbook studies at Dropsie University in Philadelphia.) Cardinal Bea in 1962 invited the American Jewish Committee to submit the findings of the St. Louis study which documented the image of Jews and Judaism in Catholic school teaching materials and in the church's liturgy.

The studies, conducted by three Roman Catholic nuns, demonstrated how serious were the anti-Jewish references in Catholic religious, literature, and social science teaching materials. Based on those findings, Cardinal Bea's Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity drafted the landmark Vatican Declaration on Non-Christian Religions (Nostra Aetate). That statement was adopted virtually unanimously by the 2,500 Council Fathers and was promulgated as official Church teaching by Pope Paul VI on October 28, 1965.

Cardinal Bea and Cardinal Lawrence Shehan of Baltimore, then President of the American Catholic Bishops Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, invited Rabbi Tanenbaum to be a delegate-observer at Vatican Council II. He was the only Rabbi present and played a significant role in helping draft the final Vatican Declaration which has transformed Catholic-Jewish relations in America and throughout the world.

That Vatican Declaration acknowledged the "common spiritual patrimony" which links Christians to Jews, repudiated anti-Semitism "by anyone

and at any time," rejected the "Christ-killer" charge against Jews, and called for "Biblical studies and fraternal dialogue" that would lead to "mutual respect and friendship" between Christians and Jews.

"Nostra Aetate became the magna carta of Catholic-Jewish relations," Rabbi Tanenbaum observed. In 1975, the Vatican Secretariat issued a set of guidelines that mandated the translation of the Declaration's principles into practical action - revision of textbooks and teaching materials, changes in liturgy, preaching, teacher training, and joint social action between Catholics and Jews.

"A virtual explosion broke out and between 1965 and the late 1970s when Catholic-Jewish relations dominated the interreligious scene. It was as if a dam that had been pent up for 1,900 years had suddenly erupted. There were so many Catholic-Jewish conferences, seminars, and dialogues held throughout America, that the Jewish community was confronted with an unprecedented crisis - we didn't have enough Rabbis and Jewish scholars to go around, so were bussing them around all over the country," Rabbi Tanenbaum said smilingly.

With obvious satisfaction, Rabbi Tanenbaum declared, "More progress has been made in overcoming misunderstanding between Catholics and Jews during the past two decades than during the past 1,900 years." One convincing sign of that progress, he noted, is that not a single Catholic textbook published today contains a single anti-Jewish reference. And the same is true of Protestant textbooks. And Jewish textbooks have been revised so that they do not contain a single anti-Christian reference.

The latest phase in the Jewish-Christian relationship is that between Evangelicals and Jews, and there, too, Rabbi Tanenbaum has been the pioneering leader and Jewish spokesman. Beginning in the late 1960s, the rabbi was on a lecture tour in the South and he underwent a genuine culture shock. He experienced first-hand the emerging "New South" with its abundant signs of economic, political, social, educational, and religious change.

None of the pervasive images of Southerners as "rednecks," "crackers," "Bible-thumpers," an illiterate and indolent people that was found in so much of our national cultural and literary traditions had any real relationship to the vital, burgeoning society and people he encountered. Much of the South he met had become since World War II middle-class, white-collar, educated, and technologically sophisticated. Those forces help explain the emergence of President Jimmy Carter, Dale Bumpers, Reuben Askew, and Congressman James Wright, rather than the other way around.

Evangelical religion is part and parcel of that extraordinary transformation, the rabbi believes. Finding that Evangelical Christians were becoming the fastest growing religious group in the United States, Rabbi Tanenbaum felt that it was essential for the moral and spiritual health of America that Evangelicals become full partners in the American religious mosaic.

In 1965, he met with Dr. Billy Graham and after a three-hour conversation they became fast friends, a friendship which has thrived since then. Over the years, Dr. Graham demonstrated repeatedly his firm friendship for the Jewish people by openly combatting anti-Semitism

rejecting organized missions to the Jews, and by expressing his theological belief that the covenant between God and the Jewish people is, as the Bible says, "everlasting, forever." (Deuteronomy 7.)

Rabbi Tanenbaum tells heart-warming stories of how Dr. Graham has helped him rescue Jewish families from the Soviet Union, and speaks enthusiastically of his great and devoted support of Israel.

In 1968, the rabbi organized the first national conference of Southern Baptist and Jewish religious leaders at the Louisville Theological Seminary. Based on the success of that precedent-shaking meeting, dialogues between Southern Baptist and other Evangelicals and Jews have been held every year in virtually every part of the United States. Rabbi Tanenbaum has, in fact, co-edited with Evangelical scholar Dr. Marvin Wilson of Gordon-Conwell Seminary the landmark book, "Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation," published by the Evangelical publishing house, Baker Books.

Seated in a modest office in mid-Manhattan behind a desk piled with correspondence from the four corners of the earth, numerous publications, and schedules of pending engagements throughout America and overseas, Rabbi Tanenbaum is surrounded by walls covered with awards and autographed photos of distinguished religious and civic leaders, many of whom have become personal friends -- Pope John Paul II, Presidents from Eisenhower to Jimmy Carter, Dr. Billy Graham, Cardinal Cooke, Cardinal Bernardin, The Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, Elie Wiesel, Archbishop Iakovos, Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel, Nelson Rockefeller, Coretta Scott King, Liv Ullmann, and many others. Around him are shelves filled with books among which are six that he wrote or edited.

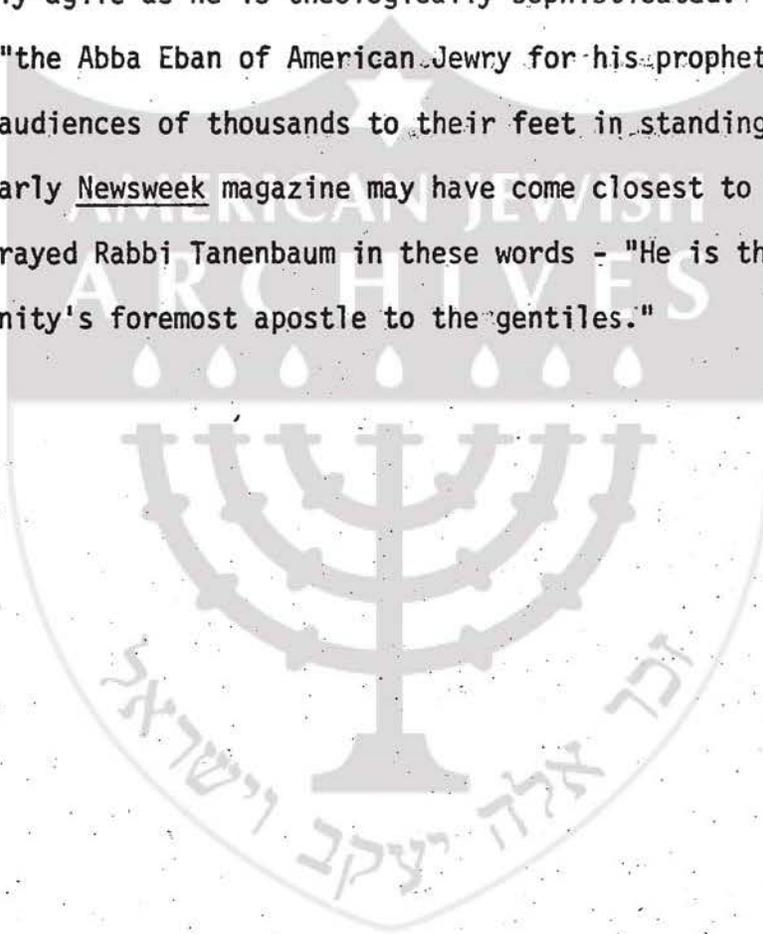
These photos and books are mementos of thirty years of an intense commitment to the dignity of human life and to the unflagging belief that human beings can change for the better. "I have had many gratifications and peak experiences in helping to mold the unfolding history of Jewish-Christian relations in our lifetime. But few achievements have given me as much satisfaction as the knowledge that I helped create networks of Jews and Christians in practically every major city in the United States. Thousands of Americans, Christians and Jews of every denomination, now meet regularly and share common concerns. As Martin Buber wrote, "All real living is meeting."

"That is a development of unprecedented, even historic importance - something that has not happened in any period during the past 1,900 years. Unlike any time in the past, a great many Jews and Christians have come to know each other as persons - with shared fears and hopes - rather than as stereotypes and caricatures. And they have learned not only to live and let live, but to live and help live. That is the glory of America today."

Beyond that, Rabbi Tanenbaum added, "We Jews and Christians have now learned how to make pluralism work. We have learned how to instruct a new generation of Catholics, Protestants, Evangelicals and Jews in how to be faithful to one's own doctrines and traditions and at the same time to develop authentic respect for the faith and religious commitments of others. That extraordinary achievement, which is taken for granted by far too many, <sup>2</sup> may well be the most valuable 'export' which we have to share with other nations and non-Western religious communities."

Perhaps more than any other Jewish leader he embodies and has been the catalyst for much of this progress made in ecumenical and humanitarian efforts during the past three stormy decades. He has been described as "the Henry Kissinger of the religious world who is as politically agile as he is theologically sophisticated." He has also been called "the Abba Eban of American Jewry for his prophetic eloquence that brings audiences of thousands to their feet in standing ovations."

But clearly Newsweek magazine may have come closest to the mark when it portrayed Rabbi Tanenbaum in these words - "He is the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles."



AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum of New York, National Director of the Inter-religious Affairs Department of The American Jewish Committee, is one of the nation's leading rabbis. A modern historian writing recently in Commentary magazine, characterized Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the leading figure among Jewish ecumenists" in the fields of interreligious relations and social justice. Newsweek magazine devoted its Religion section (Nov. 9, 1970) to an interview with Rabbi Tanenbaum describing him "as the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles...who has been able to solicit support from all factions of the Jewish community."

Rabbi Tanenbaum originated and helped organize the American Jewish Relief Effort for Nigeria and Biafra that cooperated with Church World Service and Catholic Relief Services in bringing food, medicines and other supplies to the victims of the Nigerian-Biafran civil war. He also served as first president of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization. He is a founder and Co-Secretary of the Vatican-International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, and is co-secretary of a similar permanent liaison body with the World Council of Churches.

A religious historian and authority on Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations, he has written and lectured extensively on the history, theology, and sociology of Judaism and Christianity. He has lectured before international and national conferences and institutes at Cambridge University, England; the University of Notre Dame; Catholic University; Princeton University; Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion; Woodstock College; St. Mary's College (St. Mary's Kansas); the Graduate Theological Union of the Pacific School of Religion; Fuller Theological Seminary; and Louisville Baptist Theological Seminary. Rabbi Tanenbaum helped organize and participated in the recent historic "International Colloquium on Judaism and Christianity" sponsored by the Harvard Divinity School, in cooperation with The American Jewish Committee. He also helped organize and served as Co-chairman of the first International Colloquium involving Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, and Moslems from the five continents that was held at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Nov. 1970.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has just been elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the St. Louis University Divinity School and is the first rabbi to hold such a position on a Catholic divinity school board.

His written works include A Guide to Jewish Traditions and Holy Days

(Epic Records); co-authorship with Prof. Leonard Swidler of Jewish-Christian Dialogue (published by National Council of Catholic Men and Catholic Women); and Our Moral and Spiritual Resources for International Cooperation prepared under the editorship of Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr for UNESCO. Rabbi Tanenbaum's essays and monographs on Jewish-Christian relations, and on religion, social justice and world community have been published in such volumes as Vatican II; An Interfaith Appraisal (published by the University of Notre Dame Press and Association Press); Torah and Gospel (Sheed and Ward); The Star and the Cross (Bruce Publishing Company); Concilium, The International Review of Theology, which published an essay of Rabbi Tanenbaum's on "How Modern Jews Celebrate Their History," in English, French, German, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. He has also contributed several articles on Catholic-Jewish relations to be published in the forthcoming Encyclopaedia Judaica in Jerusalem; as well as in numerous scholarly, religious, and general journals both here and abroad.

At Vatican Council II, he was the only rabbi in Rome at the time of the Catholic Church's voting on the "Jewish declaration," which repudiates anti-Semitism, and he was frequently consulted by Protestant as well as Catholic leaders. For his contributions to the advancement of Jewish-Christian understanding, he has been awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters degree by St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa; a Doctorate in Religious Education by St. Joseph's College, Philadelphia; and the Medal of Honor of Avila College, Kansas City. Recently he received a citation from the American Bible Society which paid tribute to Rabbi Tanenbaum for "his prophetic contribution through his continuing efforts on behalf of humanity."

Much in demand as a lecturer before Christian as well as Jewish groups, he is also a frequent guest on television and radio programs. He has made numerous appearances on the NBC Television Network's TODAY show, the Huntley-Brinkley program, and has also taken part in ABC Television's discussion program on The Deputy which won an "Emmy" Award, as well as CBS Radio's "World of Religion," and broadcasts of the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. He is often quoted in such widely read publications as Life, Look, Newsweek, Cosmopolitan, and The New York Times. He is also a weekly commentator on WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System and Ecumedia.

He has served on various United Nations and UNESCO affiliated committees. In addition, he has achieved national prominence as Vice Chairman of the White House Conference on Children and Youth, the White House Conference on Aging, and the Religious Advisory Committee of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity; as Consultant to the Children's Bureau; as a member of the White House Conference of Religious Leaders on Race; and numerous other positions with the United States government.

A pioneer in race relations, Rabbi Tanenbaum was a founder and program chairman of the historic National Conference on Race and Religion, regarded by many as the breakthrough in the mobilization of religious forces in the civil rights struggle. In recognition of the Rabbi's contribution to that effort, the President of the National Council of Churches wrote: "The leadership which you gave on this occasion made the difference in the quality and vigor of the whole Conference, and all of us in the National Council of Churches are grateful to you for this great service to our society." He is also chairman of the Planning and Strategy Committee of Operation Connection, a coalition of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Council of Churches, major Protestant denominations, and national Jewish religious and communal bodies. He also originated the Interreligious Consultation on National Priorities in cooperation with the Urban Coalition. He also served on the Mayor of New York's Committee on the Exploitation of Workers.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is the Jewish consultant to the Pius XII Religious Education Resource Center and the Sister Formation Conference. He has worked closely with Cardinal Bea's Vatican Secretariat and with the American Catholic hierarchy to advance Catholic-Jewish understanding and has been active in a similar program of cooperation with the World and National Councils of Churches' Committees on the Church and the Jewish People. Prior to assuming his present position, he served as Executive Director of the Synagogue Council of America.

He is a member of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, the American Academy of Religion, and the American Association of Church Historians.

In acknowledgement of his many significant and pioneer contributions to interreligious and interracial understanding, St. Edward's University, a Catholic institution in Austin, Texas, singled out Rabbi Tanenbaum as the first rabbi in the nation to receive its Coronet Award for "high ethical standards in professional life," thereby contributing to "the strength of America."

A native of Baltimore, Rabbi Tanenbaum, who was born in 1925, holds a B.S. in biological sciences from Yeshiva University and was ordained and received a Master's of Hebrew Literature degree at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He has been a graduate student in English literature and literary criticism at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and the New School of Social Research in New York. He is married to the former Helga Weiss, a psychologist, and has three children, Adena (12), Michael (10) and Susan (5).



# THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 • PLaza 1-4000

---

MARCH 1989

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES

the designation of

**RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM**

as International Relations Consultant

following his retirement as

Director of International Relations

Communications should be addressed to  
him at:

45 East 89th Street, Apt. 18F

New York, NY 10128

(212) 831-2952

THE ATLANTA  
**JEWISH TIMES**

*Advertising Deadline: 10:00 P.M.*

<b>Jeff Rubin</b> Assoc. Publisher	<b>Fran Rothbard</b> Managing Editor	<b>Vida Goldgar</b> Editor
<b>Lee A. Saxton</b> Sales Manager		<b>Eschol A. Harrell</b> Production Manager

Published by Sun Publications, Inc.  
 also publishers of The Kansas City Jewish Chronicle

<b>Stan Rose</b> Chairman and Publisher	<b>Steve Rose</b> President and Co-Publisher
--	---

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 250287, Atlanta, Georgia 30325  
 Location: 300 Atlanta Technology Center, Suite 365  
 1575 Northside Dr., N.W., Atl., Ga 30318 Phone (404) 355-6139  
 (404) 355-9388 Fax Number

© 1988 Sun Publications, Inc. All rights reserved

## Editorial

### *Tanenbaum steps down*

Marc H. Tanenbaum, for 27 years the American Jewish Committee's rabbi-in-residence, is retiring. His public service on behalf of American Jewry goes back another eight years.

In a presentation which took place Sunday at the AJC's National Executive Council meeting in Boston, Rabbi Tanenbaum was cited for his "historic contributions in building bridges of understanding and respect between all major branches of Christendom and Jewish communities in many parts of the world" and for his leadership role in world refugee, hunger and human rights programs.

Since 1983, Tanenbaum has been director of AJC's International Relations Department and from 1960 to 1983, he was national director of interreligious affairs. In 1987, he was unanimously elected chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, which represents world Jewry in its relations with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and other international religious bodies.

As AJC's representative he was an observer at Vatican Council II and played major roles in behalf of refugees in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

Tanenbaum, who visited Atlanta a number of times over the years, has many friends in both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities. His commentaries have frequently appeared in these pages, as well.

Although he is stepping down from the post he has held in recent years, Rabbi Tanenbaum is not totally relinquishing Committee involvement. As AJC's international consultant, he will continue to be involved in several projects he has initiated, including programs concerned with the Vatican and with Austria. However, he will be devoting more time to writing, lecturing and teaching.

The Jewish community's interreligious and interracial relationships have been strengthened over the years by the work of Rabbi Tanenbaum. His dedication to the ideal of human rights and human relations is a beacon for those who follow.

We wish him well.

## DR. MARC H. TANENBAUM

Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum, International Relations Consultant of the American Jewish Committee, has a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugee, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns. He has served as director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee from 1983-1989.

Formerly the AJC's national interreligious affairs director, Rabbi Tanenbaum was designated in a recent national poll as "one of the ten most influential and respected religious leaders in America." A cover story in *New York* magazine described Dr. Tanenbaum as "one of the foremost Jewish ecumenical leaders in the world today."

In 1987, he was elected unanimously as Chairman of the prestigious International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) which represents World Jewry in relations with the Vatican and other world religious bodies. In May 1988, Rabbi Tanenbaum was awarded the "Interfaith Medallion" of the International Council of Christians and Jews for his "historic contributions" to advancing interreligious understanding over the past 25 years.

Dr. Tanenbaum has served as a member of the Human Rights Research Committee of the Foreign Policy Association's Study of Priorities for the 1980s. In recent years, he has testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on "Moral Imperatives in the Formation of American Foreign Policy." He has also testified before Congressional committees on world refugee and world hunger problems, and played a key role in organizing White House conferences on Foreign Aid and Energy Conservation.

President Jimmy Carter invited Dr. Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among ten national religious and academic spokesmen to discuss "the State of the Nation" at Camp David summit meetings in 1979. He was also appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust.

At the invitation of the International Rescue Committee, he joined delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out three separate fact-finding investigations of the plight of the Vietnamese "boat people" and Cambodian refugees, which contributed to the saving of tens of thousands of lives of Indochinese refugees. He has organized many relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including Kurds, Lebanese, Nigerians, Ugandans, Ethiopian Jews, Haitians, Afghanis, Central Americans and Polish refugees. He is a board member of the International Rescue Committee, the Overseas Development Council, the United Nations Association, the Bretton Woods Committee, the National Peace Academy, and the Bayard Rustin Institute. He is a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which aids oppressed Jews and Christians in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In March 1979, he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals.

Dr. Tanenbaum is a founder and leading member of the joint liaison committee of the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), and of a similar body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, and participated in the first official audience of World Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City. He was also the first Jewish leader to address 4,000 delegates attending the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in July 1983.

He served as consultant to the NBC-TV nine-hour special "Holocaust" and earlier was consultant to the special "Jesus of Nazareth." He is an award winning weekly commentator over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting, and appears frequently on major network programs.

He has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe, Israel, and Latin America, and at numerous national and international conferences. Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author or editor of several published books and of numerous articles.



# AJWS Connection

*Linking AJWS leaders nationwide*

January 31, 1989

## AJWS UPDATE ON AFRICA

The month of December saw one AJWS team travel to Ethiopia for demonstrations of the Volcani grain cube, and another, to Zimbabwe and South Africa for assessments of current AJWS projects and investigation of opportunities to assist rural communities with grain storage, dry-zone water supply, and agricultural production.

**ETHIOPIA** -- Dr. Bob Snow, Director for Program Planning and Development, and Dr. Jonathan Donahaye, Israeli inventor of the Volcani grain cube, arrived in Ethiopia to hold demonstrations for the five relief and development agencies which to which AJWS donated 141 grain cubes. As Ethiopia is experiencing its first bumper harvest in years, there is urgent need for effective grain  
(continued inside)

## AJWS PRESS CONFERENCE AT SOVIET EMBASSY

On December 28, Chairman Lawrence S. Phillips presented checks totalling \$80,000 to Soviet Ambassador Yuri V. Dubinin and Archbishop Torkam Manoogian of the Armenian Church of America, for reconstruction and relief aid to victims of the December 7 earthquake in Armenia. Pictured (l. to r.) are Henry Morgenthau III, Archbishop Manoogian, Ambassador Dubinin, and Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum.



American Jewish World Service

729 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116 (617) 267-6656

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, has been a pioneering leader and thinker in interreligious relations and social justice movements during the past 25 years. A modern historian, writing recently in Commentary magazine, characterized Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the leading figure among Jewish ecumenists" in the fields of interreligious relations and social justice. Newsweek magazine recently devoted its Religion section to an interview with Rabbi Tanenbaum describing him as "the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles...who has been able to solicit support from all factions of the Jewish community."

He was the only rabbi present during the deliberations of Vatican Council II from 1962-65, where he was frequently consulted by Catholic authorities and Protestant observers about the substance of the historic Vatican Declaration on Non-Christian Religions which condemned anti-Semitism and called for "fraternal dialogue" and "mutual respect" between Catholics and Jews.

Rabbi Tanenbaum was appointed in May 1976 to serve as Chairman of the Jewish-Christian Relations Commission of the New York Board of Rabbis. The New York Board of Rabbis is comprised of 1,000 Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform rabbis and is the oldest and largest rabbinic organization of its kind in the world. It represents the religious and communal interests of the largest Jewish community in the world and cooperates closely with similar rabbinic organizations in practically every major center of Jewish population in the United States, and in other parts of the world.

Under his direction, the American Jewish Committee has involved major Jewish scholars and religious leaders in national academic institutes and seminars with every major branch of Christendom - Roman Catholic, mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, Greek Orthodox, and Black Churches, with similar programs in every major city in the United States. Rabbi Tanenbaum also served as co-chairman of the first International Colloquium on Religion, Land, Nationalism, and Peoplehood, held at Hebrew University in 1970 which involved the participation of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, African religions, as well as Christians and Jews. He also served as co-chairman of the first International Colloquium on Judaism and Christianity held at Harvard Divinity School in 1966.

He also helped organize a congress of African leaders on "The Bible and Black Africa," in Jerusalem, and served as co-chairman with Prof. Eric C. Lincoln of the first national consultation on Black-Jewish relations at Fisk University.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has directed the landmark religious research studies examining intergroup content in Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish teaching materials in the United States, Italy, Spain, French-speaking countries, Germany and Latin America. These studies have been the basis of the revision of virtually all negative stereotypes in the textbooks produced in the 1970s.

A major force in the promotion of social justice and human rights, Rabbi Tanenbaum helped organize the American Jewish Emergency Relief Effort for Victims of the Nigerian-Biafran Conflict; he is national co-chairman of the Interreligious Coalition on World Hunger; and national co-chairman of the Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry. He was also a founder and program chairman of the historic National Conference on Religion and Race, which has been regarded as a turning point for the promotion of civil rights in the 1960s. He has served on various Presidential, White House, and United Nations commissions on children and aging, race relations, and food and population problems.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has been frequently invited to serve as a Jewish spokesman before various Congressional and Senate Committee hearings - the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee on "Moral Aspects of American Foreign Policy" (Jan. 1976); Senate Special Hearings on World Hunger and America's Food Policy (Dec. 1974); the House Foreign Affairs Committee hearings on Jerusalem. He has lectured on moral issues before members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces, the U.S. Army and Navy Chaplain Corps. He also serves on the 1980s Project on Human Rights of the Council on Foreign Relations, and is a member of the steering committee of the American Revolutionary Bicentennial Committee's Citizen Dialogue.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author and co-editor of "Speaking of God Today," "The Jerusalem Colloquium," "Our Moral Resources for International Cooperation" (in collaboration with Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr), "Religious Values in an Age of Violence," "Scripture, Theology and History: Perspectives of Evangelicals and Jews," has written numerous monographs and essays which have appeared in scholarly journals in many foreign languages (his essays on the "Holy Year and Its Origins in the Jewish Jubilee Year, published by the Vatican Commission on the Holy Year in 1975 has appeared in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch and Japanese). He is also the interreligious academic consultant to the New Media Bible.

One of America's most effective and popular lecturers and orators, Rabbi Tanenbaum has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe, and Israel and at numerous national and international conferences.

He has served as visiting professor at the Graduate Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, and has lectured at Cambridge University, Harvard, Yale Princeton, Graduate Theological Union, Notre Dame, Catholic University, Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

He is a prize-winning weekly radio commentator over WINS-Westinghouse, has appeared numerous times on the NBC-Today Show and other major network programs. Rabbi Tanenbaum is also the Jewish feature writer for the National Catholic News Service of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. He holds eight doctorates, honoris causa, from major Christian and Jewish universities and seminaries, and is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, the latest of which is that of the Religious Heritage of America, "for building bridges of understanding between people of all religions, for exercising religious leadership in the struggle for social justice and charity, and for uplifting the true dignity of man under God." (June 1974)

His other written works include A Guide to Jewish Traditions and Holy Days (Epic Records); co-authorship with Prof. Leonard Swidler of Jewish-Christian Dialogue (published by National Council of Catholic Men and Catholic Women). Rabbi Tanenbaum's essays and monographs on Jewish-Christian relations, and on religion, social justice and world community have been published in such volumes as Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal (published by the University of Notre Dame Press and Association Press); Torah and Gospel (Sheed and Ward); The Star and the Cross (Bruce Publishing Company); Concilium, The International Review of Theology, which published an essay of Rabbi Tanenbaum's on "How Modern Jews Celebrate Their History," in English, French, German, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. He has also contributed several articles on Catholic-Jewish relations to be published in the forthcoming Collier's Encyclopedia; as well as to numerous scholarly, religious, and general journals both here and abroad.

In announcing his appointment, Rabbi Judah Cahn declared, "The New York Board of Rabbis is gratified that a person of Rabbi Tanenbaum's outstanding record of achievement, dedication, and service has accepted our invitation to give us the benefit of his singular experience and unique leadership in our program for the promotion of understanding and collaboration between the major Jewish and Christian communities in this great metropolis. At a time when the nation and the city are confronted by such a barrage of moral and civic problems which threaten the very future of our society, we hope that the Board of Rabbis, augmented by the knowledge and skills of able people such as Rabbi Tanenbaum, will be able to make a meaningful and constructive contribution to advancing the welfare of the Jewish community and of our entire society."

*whites out*  
( FOR JWB LECTURE BUREAU )

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, FORMERLY NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS DIRECTOR, AJC

BIO: DR. TANENBAUM IS WIDELY REGARDED AS ONE OF THE FOREMOST EXPERTS IN JEWISH-CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS. A RECENT POLL SINGLED OUT RABBI TANENBAUM AS "ONE OF THE TEN MOST RESPECTED AND INFLUENTIAL RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN AMERICA." IN A COVER STORY NEW YORK MAGAZINE RECENTLY CHARACTERIZED RABBI TANENBAUM AS "THE FOREMOST JEWISH ECUMENICAL LEADER IN THE WORLD TODAY." HE WAS THE ONLY RABBI PRESENT DURING VATICAN COUNCIL II WHICH ADOPTED THE HISTORIC DECLARATION CONDEMNING ANTI-SEMITISM AND CALLING FOR "MUTUAL RESPECT" BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND JEWS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

DR. TANENBAUM IS A LEADING FIGURE IN THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT. HE IS ALSO A PIONEER IN WORLD REFUGEE MOVEMENTS AND WORLD HUNGER, HELPING TO SAVE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF LIVES OF VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE, ETHIOPIANS, NIGERIANS-BIAFRANS, HAITIANS, AND MISKITO INDIANS. HE IS A FOUNDER AND CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS TASK FORCE ON SOVIET JEWRY AND PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE RESCUE OF ETHIOPIAN JEWS. HE RECENTLY RETURNED FROM A MISSION TO SOUTH AFRICA AT THE REQUEST OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN BOARD OF JEWISH DEPUTIES.

DR. TANENBAUM IS THE AUTHOR OR EDITOR OF SEVEN BOOKS DEALING WITH JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HE HAS ALSO AUTHORED HUNDREDS OF ESSAYS AND ARTICLES. HE SERVED AS CONSULTANT TO NBC-TV'S HOLOCAUST MINISERIES, JESUS OF NAZARETH, AND A:D. HIS PRIZE-WINNING RADIO COMMENTARIES ARE HEARD EVERY SUNDAY OVER WINS-WESTINGHOUSE BROADCASTING SYSTEM.

TOPICS:

1. JEWS AND THE WORLD CONDITION
2. RELIGIOUS FANATICISM -THE NEW THREAT TO CIVILIZATION
3. PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
4. JEWS AND CHRISTIANS IN THE 1980s - PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS
5. JEWISH UNITY - CHALLENGES AND THREATS
6. WHITHER SOUTH AFRICAN JEWRY?

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

*Ret. - used to read this for face  
Season - add M.C. King + other  
Material*

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, has been a pioneering leader and thinker in interreligious relations and social justice movements during the past 30 years. A modern historian, writing recently in Commentary magazine, characterized Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the leading figure among Jewish ecumenists" in fields of interreligious relations and social justice. Newsweek magazine recently devoted its Religion section to an interview with Rabbi Tanenbaum describing him as "the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles...who has been able to solicit support from all factions of the Jewish community." In a cover story entitled "The Ten Most Powerful Rabbis," New York magazine (January 22, 1979) described Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today."

A poll of America's religion newspaper editors published in the Christian Century in January 1978, voted Rabbi Tanenbaum one of the ten most respected and influential religious leaders in America (he was ranked fourth after Dr. Billy Graham, Dr. Martin Marty, and President Jimmy Carter.) Sacred Heart University of Bridgeport, Connecticut, conferred an honorary doctorate on the rabbi - his tenth doctorate - characterizing him as "The Human Rights Rabbi of America."

In February and December 1978, he was invited by the International Rescue Committee to join delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out fact-finding investigations of the plight of Vietnamese "boat people" and Cambodian refugees in Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong. The IRC reports to and meetings with President Carter and heads of other governments contributed to the saving of the lives of tens of thousands of Indochinese refugees.

President Carter invited Rabbi Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among ten national religious spokesmen to discuss "the State of the Nations" at Camp David "summit" meetings on July 10, 1979. The rabbi is the Jewish spokesman at the January 10, 1980, White House Conference on Energy and Conservation.

Recently he served as the American Jewish consultant to the NBC-TV nine-hour "special" dramatizing "The Holocaust" and earlier was consultant to the NBC-TV "special" "Jesus of Nazareth." President Carter appointed Marc Tanenbaum to serve on the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust and as co-chairman with Senator John Danforth for the National Holocaust observances. In March 1979 he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals and other murderers. Rabbi Tanenbaum was invited by West German government authorities to head a delegation in 1978 that consulted with Oberammergau officials on the revision of that Passion Play for the removal of anti-Semitic contents.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is a founder and co-secretary of Joint Vatican International Jewish Consultative Committee and of a similar liaison body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, where he was widely consulted by Catholic and Protestant authorities during the deliberations that led to the Vatican Declaration on Non-Christian Relations which repudiated anti-Semitism and called for fraternal dialogue between Christians and Jews. In March 1979, he participated in the first official audience of world Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City, and he was an official delegate welcoming the Pope at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York during his triumphal visit in October 1979.

One of America's most effective and popular lecturers and orators, Rabbi Tanenbaum has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United States, Europe, and Israel and at numerous national and international conferences. He has served as visiting professor at the Graduate Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, and has lectured at Cambridge University, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Graduate Theological Union, Notre Dame, Catholic University, Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the U.S. Air Force University and the U.S. Army College.

Rabbi Tanenbaum was appointed in May 1976 to serve as chairman of the Jewish-Christian Relations Commission of the New York Board of Rabbis, which is comprised of 1,000 Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform rabbis and is the oldest and largest rabbinic organization of its kind in the world.

Under his direction the American Jewish Committee has involved major Jewish scholars and religious leaders in national academic institutes and seminars with every major branch of Christendom - Roman Catholic, mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, Greek Orthodox, and Black Churches, with similar programs in every major city in the United States. Rabbi Tanenbaum has also served as co-chairman of the first international colloquium on "Religion, Land, Nationalism, and Peoplehood," held at Hebrew University in 1970 which involved the participation of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, African religions, as well as Christians and Jews. He also served as co-chairman of the first International Colloquium on Judaism and Christianity held at Harvard Divinity School in 1966. He also helped organize a congress of African leaders on "The Bible and Black Africa" in Jerusalem, and served as co-chairman with Prof. C. Eric Lincoln of the first national consultation on Black-Jewish Relations at Fisk University.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has directed the landmark religious research studies examining intergroup content in Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish teaching materials in the United States, Italy, Spain, French-speaking countries, Germany and Latin America. These studies have been the basis of the revision of virtually all negative stereotypes in the textbooks produced in the 1970s.

A major force in the promotion of social justice and human rights, Rabbi Tanenbaum helped organize the American Jewish Emergency Relief Effort for Victims of the Nigerian-Biafran Conflict; has aided refugees from Uganda, Sierra Leone, Ireland, Cyprus and Lebanon, Bangladesh; he is national co-chairman of the Interreligious Coalition on World Hunger; and national co-chairman of the Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry. He was also a founder and program chairman of the historic National Conference on Religion and Race, which has been regarded as a turning point for the promotion of civil rights in the 1960s. He has served on various Presidential, White House, and United Nations commissions on children and aging, race relations, and food and population problems.

Rabbi Tanenbaum has been frequently invited to serve as a Jewish spokesman before various Congressional and Senate Committee hearings - the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee on "Moral Aspects of American Foreign Policy" (Jan. 1976); Senate Special Hearings on World Hunger and America's Food Policy (Dec. 1974); the House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearings on Jerusalem, and the Joint Congressional Hearings on the Helsinki Accords with regard to "Religious Liberty and Minority Rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe." He has lectured on moral issues before members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces, the U.S. Army, Navy Chaplain Corps, U.S. Marine Corps, and the Air Force Academy. He also served on the 1980's Project on Human Rights of the Council on Foreign Relations, and as a member of the steering committee of the American Revolutionary Bicentennial Committee's Citizen Dialogue.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author and co-editor of "Speaking of God Today," "The Jerusalem Colloquium," "Our Moral Resources for International Cooperation" (in collaboration with Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr), "Religious Values in an Age of Violence," "Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation" Scripture, Theology and History," "Greek Orthodox and Jewish Dialogue," "American Religious Values and the Future of America." His essay on the "Holy Year and Its Origins in the Jewish Jubilee Year," published by the Vatican Commission on the Holy Year in 1975 has appeared in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch and Japanese. He is also the interreligious academic consultant to the New Media Bible.

His other written works include A Guide to Jewish Traditions and Holy Days (Epic Records); co-authorship with Prof. Leonard Swidler of Jewish-Christian Dialogue (published by National Council of Catholic Men and Catholic Women). Rabbi Tanenbaum's essays and monographs on Jewish-Christian Relations, and on religion, social justice and world community have been published in such volumes as Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal (published by the University of Notre Dame Press and Association Press); Torah and Gospel (Sheed and Ward); The Star and the Cross (Bruce Publishing Company); Concilium, The International Review of Theology which published an essay of Rabbi Tanenbaum's on "How Modern Jews Celebrate Their History," and "Humor in the Talmud," in English, French, German, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. He has also contributed several articles on Catholic-Jewish relations published in Collier's Encyclopedia; as well as to numerous scholarly, religious, and general journals both here and abroad.

For program materials on Jewish-Christian Relations write to:

Interreligious Affairs Department  
The American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, New York 10022  
212-751-4000 Ext. 201



# The American Jewish Committee

CINCINNATI CHAPTER • 105 W. Fourth Street • Suite 1008 • Cincinnati, Ohio 45202 • (513) 621-4020

## P R E S S   C O N F E R E N C E

Contact: Marilyn Slome, Area Director  
American Jewish Committee  
621-4020

WHEN: Wednesday, April 15, 1981, 2:30 p.m.

WHERE: Vernon Manor Hotel, Room 721  
400 Oak Street at Burnet

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS DIRECTOR, AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

The most frequently quoted "spokesman" in national publications such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *New York*, Rabbi Tanenbaum gives the so-called "Jewish viewpoint" whenever national and international issues that affect the Jewish community are raised.

Last week in London he met with other Jewish leaders to discuss Catholic-Jewish dialogue with Monsignor Pietro Rossano, Director of the Vatican Secretariat for Relations with Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and other non-Christians.

Rabbi Tanenbaum will speak at an open community forum on "The Challenge of the '80's: Jewish-Christian Perspectives" at

Wise Center, 8329 Ridge Road

Wednesday, April 15, 1981

8:00 p.m.

No Charge, Public Invited

Your coverage at either/or event will be greatly appreciated.

Biographical information attached.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, has been a pioneering leader and thinker in interreligious relations and social justice movements during the past 25 years. A modern historian, writing recently in Commentary magazine, characterized Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the leading figure among Jewish ecumenists" in fields of interreligious relations and social justice. Newsweek magazine recently devoted its Religion section to an interview with Rabbi Tanenbaum, describing him as "the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles...who has been able to solicit support from all factions of the Jewish community." In a cover story entitled "The Ten Most Powerful Rabbis", New York magazine (January 22, 1979) described Rabbi Tanenbaum as "the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today."

A poll of America's religion newspaper editors published in the Christian Century in January, 1978, voted Rabbi Tanenbaum one of the ten most respected and influential religious leaders in America (he was ranked fourth after Dr. Billy Graham, Dr. Martin Marty, and President Jimmy Carter.) Sacred Heart University of Bridgeport, Connecticut, conferred an honorary doctorate on the rabbi - his tenth doctorate - characterizing him as "The Human Rights Rabbi of America".

In March 1979 he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German Parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals and other murderers. Rabbi Tanenbaum was invited by West German government authorities to head a delegation in 1978 that consulted with Oberammergau officials on the revision of that Passion Play for the removal of anti-Semitic contents.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is a founder and co-secretary of Joint Vatican International Jewish Consultative Committee and of a similar liaison body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican Council II, where he was widely consulted by Catholic and Protestant authorities during the deliberations that led to the Vatican Declaration on Non-Christian Relations which repudiated anti-Semitism and called for fraternal dialogue between Christians and Jews. In March, 1979, he participated in the first official audience of world Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City.

[start]

Original documents  
faded and/or illegible



**M**arc Tanenbaum is sitting at his desk. This in itself is a bit unusual. For while his desk can be found in a modest eighth-floor room of the Institute of Human Relations in Manhattan, the office's occupant is quite often elsewhere.

The restless occupant, whose official title is National Director of Interreligious Affairs for the American Jewish Committee, is just back from Geneva and an ecumenical conference. He is preparing to leave momentarily for a UN reception celebrating Israel's Independence Day, before flying to St. Louis the next day.

Behind and around him the walls hang heavy with autographed photos of such friends as President Nixon (for whom and for whose predecessors he has served on committees for children, youth, religion, race, aging and equal employment). Rev. Billy Graham and various cardinals (Bea, Wright, Cooke, Cushing and Spellman) are also there. Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, at 46, has been in the forefront of all major interfaith efforts for 20 years. *Newsweek* described him as "the American Jewish community's foremost apostle to the gentiles . . . who has been able to solicit support from all factions of the Jewish community."

But the smile on the broad face is not a broad one. The eyes behind the horn-rimmed glasses are tired. He tilts back in his swivel chair as he puffs on an Antonio y Cleopatra cigarillo. He feels done in, a bit groggy from "jet lag." But he wants to talk.

"The magic goes out of travel after a time," he says wistfully in his deep, cultivated voice. "There used to be an excitement to it; but after a while it becomes tiring."

Then why does he do it?

His writings and actions have already answered the question: to promote Jewish-Christian ecumenism and international religious co-existence, to emphasize that modern Judaism is a living force and not a fossil. It is his desire to communicate the land of Israel (*Eretz Yisroel*) as a historic homeland, a Promised Land given His people by a God whose promise is unto eternity. Rabbi Tanenbaum wants to further acquaint gentiles with the richness of the rekindled Jewish consciousness—that proud and paradoxical amalgam of heritage, faith, culture and peoplehood which composes Jewishness.

The tall man rises, circles the desk and, after checking with his secretary, Miss Binder, we descend to East 56th Street where he hails a cab to take us to the United Nations reception. ("I haven't had a chance to get a haircut; I must look like Superrabbi," he chuckles.)

Marc Tanenbaum not only feels physically done in but emotionally let down in relation to the drift of Jewish-Christian ecumenism and the attitude of some Christian leaders toward Israel, two topics he considers strongly inter-related.

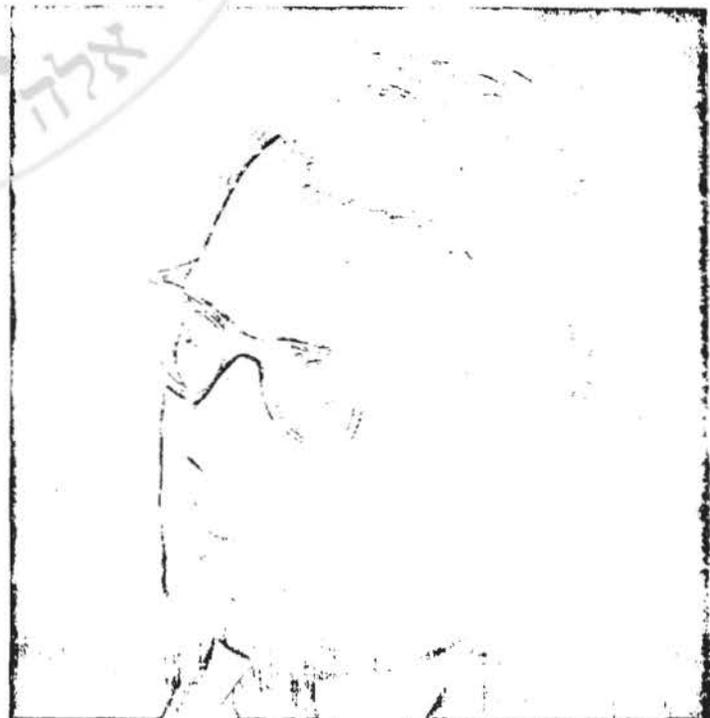
"Israel's been a state for 23 years now," he says, and not without a tinge of pride in the successful efforts of Zionists to promote the dream of returning to the historic homeland. The cab stops for security clearance, then passes through the checkered iron gates and pulls up at the tall slab-like UN Secretariat building.

After the rabbi passes through the reception line, and after paying the requisite courtesies to dignitaries and friends, he stands backgrounded against one of the hall's great picture windows. Behind him the East River is turning to gold in the alchemy of the setting sun. He explains how Jews found Christian churchmen, their former theological allies, to be fair-weather friends once the clouds of tension drifted across the Middle-East scene four years ago.

"We asked no special considerations, just that a double standard not be used. Other emerging nations, especially in Africa and Asia, have been recognized and encouraged. Israel's efforts should be seen as part of this nationalism.

# RABBI MARC TANENBAUM: Ecumenism's Cautious Optimist

*The American Jewish community's foremost "apostle to the gentiles" speaks on anti-Semitism in America today, Christians' attitudes on Israel, Arab refugees, state aid to parochial schools, and other points of controversy.*



All Israel asks is the right to compete.

"Among Christian leaders there were a number of notable exceptions such as Rev. Billy Graham and the late Dr. Martin Luther King, who understood the moral and human problems involved. That's all we asked. And the right of a state recognized by the UN to survive. The failure of Christian institutions to respond on moral and human values alone was a terribly souring experience . . . almost shattering. We had been together in many marches. We were natural allies in causes which saved everyone else's interests. Then . . .

"Well, you can understand how an up-tight Jewish community felt abandoned by their Christian friends—especially their liberal Christian friends from the mainline denominations who were the first to work with us. A few Catholic leaders spoke out, and large numbers of the Catholic masses understood our kinship ties from their own immigrant experience; they knew the significance of 'the old country.' With the evangelical and conservative Protestant community their support was understandable theologically but practically it came as a startling and welcome surprise.

"We asked not agreement with Israel's politics or theological justification but with three million citizens' right to existence free from the threat of destruction. Since then there's been a radical questioning of our alliance. Protestants are going to have to make a real effort to persuade Jews from now on. There was a sense that, when the chips were down, Jews knew they had to rely on themselves."

The gold of the river below turns leaden as twilight creeps across the East Side; and the lights of cars entering and leaving the city turn F.D.R. Drive into a string of electric rubies and diamonds. Tanenbaum's frown fades. "But that notion, like any notion, when pushed to extremes becomes a liability. I do not write off whole communities. Crises become opportunities. I refuse to play the doom-and-gloom game. Right now we are trying to reestablish links with mainline Protestant groups. To rebuild bridges. To maintain the dialogue. In fact the heads of four Protestant denominations were present at our reception for Claire Huchet Bishop on the publication of her book." (Mrs. Bishop served as editor for the English edition of the late French scholar Jules Isaac's *Jesus and Israel*, a classic in ecumenism, scholarship and justice by a man who greatly influenced Pope John XXIII's actions denouncing anti-Semitism. The book distinguishes between the gospel texts and the hateful tradition and myth which has been allowed to grow up around them.)

Occasionally Marc Tanenbaum feels left out. In a syndicated *New York Times* article he pointed out that Jews feel they have not been included in many ecumenical efforts among Christian groups to which they could easily and eagerly contribute. While Christians were drawing together in their press associations, professional organizations, reli-

gious activities. Jewish groups were ignored. In many of these areas of endeavor, especially social action efforts, Jews had already been active and therefore had expertise to offer.

The article drew much response, and Msgr. George C. Higgins, director of the United States Catholic Conference's Division of Urban Life, described Rabbi Tanenbaum as "a friendly and constructive critic . . . and a man of superior intelligence and rare sensitivity," as well as "one who knows more about the strengths and the weaknesses of Catholic efforts in this area than all but a handful of our own Catholic experts." Msgr. Higgins went on to state in his column that "I have long since made up my mind that I will never, under any circumstances, enter into an interfaith social action program which does not provide for equal Jewish representation."



Above: Morton Yarmon, Director of Publicity for the American Jewish Committee (left), and Presbyterian scholar Gerald Strober show Tanenbaum (right) and the author evidence of the progress being made in eliminating anti-Semitism from Christian textbooks and catechetical materials in conformity to Vatican II.

Below: His colleague, Rabbi A. James Rudin, points out to Tanenbaum how, according to an AJC survey, Christian knowledge of and response to the two most important happenings in the history of modern Judaism, the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel, has been rather apathetic, although slowly improving.

**O**n another day, rested but restless, Rabbi Tanenbaum moves from desk to desk conferring with associates. With Judith Banki he discusses the Committee's recent efforts to publicize the plight of Soviet Jewry. At Rabbi Jim Rudin's desk he plans a forthcoming meeting with a group of black ministers. With Rev. Dr. Gerald Strober, the Presbyterian minister who works with the American Jewish Committee, he confers about progress in eliminating anti-Semitism from teaching and catechetical materials.

This day the rabbi feels especially "sat on." Anti-Semitism has been a constant threat and many see it as a growing one after years of unfashionable but not invisible dormancy. The AJC along with other Jewish groups must work continuously to educate people through meticulous scholarship to the dangers and injustice of bigotry—especially when cloaked in faulty theology and warped mythology. Tanenbaum is still stunned by the inability of so many, clergy included, to recognize the anti-Semitism in the recent Oberammergau Passion Play. (The AJC has published a line-by-line analysis exposing the faulty theology and violations of Vatican II's spirit. This is but one of many pamphlets and reprints on prejudice, racism, and anti-democratic actions which can boomerang on anyone at any time.)

He moves to the library where he sits at a table to discuss anti-Semitism. Like a weed it is a foul growth with roots in many areas—historical, economic, political and psychological. Like a cancer it has several causes, appears in various forms and in different places. Like an ember it lies dormant, ready to be fanned to flame by winds of greed and guilt, suspicion and resentment, fear and ignorance. It springs from a mentality and personality which makes its own neuroses the norm and which believes that to be different is to be wrong. Whether in thought, feeling or ideas (prejudice), or in action (discrimination and persecution), it thrives in ignorance and in times of crises. Scapegoats are sought as a simple explanation instead of more complex, less obvious causes.

Rabbi Tanenbaum notes that things have improved in the areas of residential and social discrimination against Jews. And while Jews are still rare in the upper echelons of banking, public utilities and heavy industry (notably automobiles), the situation is better as to jobs in general. Jews have been successful in sports, professions and now politics, as well as such fields as electronics, advertising and show business (where talent rather than social background commands acceptance.)

In the arts—poetry, criticism, painting, music and literature—Jews have made enormous contributions. Rabbi Tanenbaum rattles off a long list of contemporary Jewish writers whose skills and rich tradition have had special appeal in an age of homogenization and alienation.

Jewish traditional respect for learning has enabled three per cent of the total U.S. population to provide more than 10 per cent of all American college teachers. In fact Jews have complained that they've earned through education and economic achievement what other minorities, whose opportunities haven't caught up to their aspirations, demand through political pressure and threat.

Rabbi Tanenbaum recognizes that anti-Semitism has strong roots in the black ghettos where it exists as an easy explanation for urban and racial ills. "The Black Panthers systematically cultivated anti-Semitism for their own purposes," he asserts. "And it was used to oust Jewish teachers in Bedford-Stuyvesant."

Yet he realizes that overstatements can be dangerous and he doesn't wish his observations about anti-Semitism among blacks to be blown out of proportion and become a self-fulfilling prophecy. "Mainline black leaders—Rustin, Randolph, Young, Wilkins, Ennis—have condemned anti-Semitism," says Tanenbaum. "And we are trying to promote communication between black theologians and Jewish

theologians, for we have much in common."

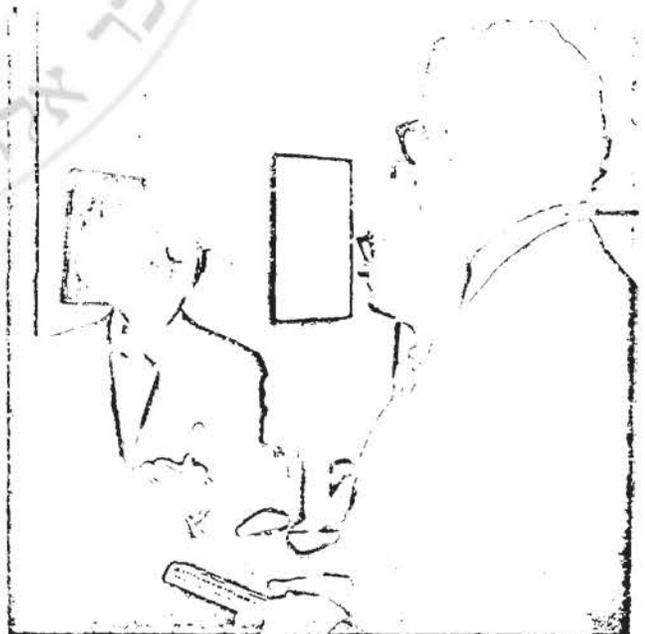
It is not only in black ghettos that anti-Semitism is appearing more often lately, according to Tanenbaum. It can be seen on our campuses as well. The radical left and student revolutionaries have much in common with the radical right. As with all extremists, isolated, ignorant and fearful, prejudice is something shared.

"Anti-Zionism is too often a concealed way of being actually anti-Semitic," Tanenbaum explains. "After the war there was a new style of being anti-Jewish. The radical left has been guilty of promoting not only anti-Zionism [sentiment against the politics of Israel] but also anti-Semitism [sentiment against Jews as Jews]. They are aggressive, vocal, articulate and very destructive."

One of the factors contributing to the lack of sympathy on the part of many Christians for the Jewish-Zionist cause in the Near East is their concern for the thousands of Arabs displaced from their homes since the creation of the state of Israel. To this charge Rabbi Tanenbaum responds that while some have used the Palestinian refugee issue as a call to Christian charity, the Arab governments have thwarted efforts to solve this problem, keeping the refugee issue alive because of political advantages.

He speaks highly of the work of Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, president of the University of Notre Dame, who is a contributing supporter of the Middle East Regional Social, Economic and Development Program and the group's plans to introduce a fast-feed nuclear reactor into the Sinai desert, helping to convert the area into "a sort of agricultural-industrial complex able to serve the Egyptians on one side and the Jordanians and Israelis on the other as well as providing a basis for settling Palestinian and Israeli refugees."

Some groups have charged that Israel is trying to "Judaize" the city of Jerusalem and is "suffocating" its Christian and Muslim population. Tanenbaum, in pointing out that various church groups never complained about the "Jordanization" of Jerusalem in years past, feels that many of the allegations are based on political rather than religious motives and that Israel's behavior with respect to the holy places has been exemplary and has already achieved the central purpose of internationalization, providing free access



Tanenbaum (right) pauses a moment at the office door of friend Rabbi A. James Rudin while Ira Hirschmann (left), former U.S. State Department official and author, presents him with a copy of his book, "Red Star Over Bethlehem," which discusses the problem of Soviet penetration in the Middle East.

and protection for people of all nationalities.

In their pamphlet, *A Statement of Conscience*, published by the Institute of Judaean-Christian Studies at South Orange, New Jersey's Seton Hall University, Msgr. John M. Oesterreicher, himself a Jewish Catholic, and Rev. Edward H. Flannery of the secretariat of the U.S. Bishops' Commission on Catholic-Jewish Relations write: "Soon after the reunification of Jerusalem, the Israeli Parliament passed a bill that promised protection of all sanctuaries from desecration and guaranteed unhindered access to them. The bill testifies to the acumen of Israeli leaders; what is more, it bears witness to their lack of rancor. Only when one remembers the sins of Christendom, particularly the cruelty of those Crusaders who in 1099 burned most Jews of Jerusalem, huddled in their synagogues, alive, can one appreciate the spirit of reconciliation embodied in this law."

But just as he denounces double-standards in other areas, he feels that Jews cannot afford the luxury of complaining about extremists who violate democracy, justice and charity while not denouncing extremism from violent militant groups such as the Jewish Defense League. He feels that while the JDL and its radical leader Rabbi Meir Kahane helped turn a spotlight of publicity on the plight of Jews unable to leave Soviet Russia, they have gotten more publicity for themselves and accomplished far less than the major organizations working on the same problem with Christian groups. In a pluralistic democracy the way we pursue a goal is as important as the cause we have. While the cause is just, the harassment tactics practiced on Soviet diplomats and visiting entertainers have accomplished little practical good. If world concern was aroused about the Leningrad Trials, causing sentences to be modified, and public opinion enlisted to allow more Jews to leave the Soviet Union, it was because of the efforts of world Jewry and ecumenical cooperation rather than by threats and bombings.

From 1880 to 1910 one-third of the Jews in Eastern Europe migrated, over 90 per cent of them to the USA. Marc Tanenbaum's parents, who later ran a small store in a poor white neighborhood in South Baltimore, were part of this group. His father, an immigrant from the Ukraine, had suffered terrible poverty and oppression. And the experience of America's Depression days only added to the man's feelings that Marc should become a doctor.

Marc smiles as he recalls, "He used to say, 'Doctors always make a living. There are always sick people who always need a doctor.' It was one way of breaking out of the circle of poverty.

"Another influence on my career was my mother. She was quite traditional and quite Orthodox. Our home was Orthodox. She felt the desire for the continuation of a chain of tradition of rabbis in the family. And she felt fear of her kids being assimilated."

Such assimilation, or as sociologists might put it, "acculturation," has been a fear of many a Jewish parent, along with intermarriage, loss of identity and secularization. But while intermarriage in America is rising, particularly with the educated of each new generation, there are more converts to Judaism than apostates; and the birthrate, stable for the past 40 years, is slowly increasing.

Assimilation has been offset by a new sense of pride and peoplehood among today's American Jews. Even if uncertain as to how it's to be attained, they are trying to achieve a sense of Jewishness or Jewish consciousness. Tanenbaum points out that the impetus welding this sense of unity or peoplehood came from the two most important events in Jewish history since the dispersal of 2,000 years ago: the Holocaust, with its ovens and camps, and the founding of the State of Israel.

Still another influence on his career came from his

brother (who went into radio as announcer Ernie Tannen and now owns radio stations). "Ernie was interested in biology and it rubbed off on me. We had garter snakes, tadpoles and so on in the house. To reconcile both influences I studied biology at a rabbinical seminary."

He had gotten used to long days and hard work while attending a secular high school daily and then, at 5:30, going off to Hebrew studies. He also found time to become a prize-winning debater and orator. He came to New York City, an area in which more than a third of the nation's almost six million Jews live, to attend Yeshiva University. And, not surprisingly, at 14, was the youngest in his class. He smiles reminiscently, "The first day I bawled like a baby."

Still he avoided making a decision. "I enjoyed biding my time and participating in extracurricular activities, and when I got out of college in 1945, I still hadn't resolved the conflict.

"I began to apply to medical schools. But one day I went into a cadaver room; and something turned inside of me. I have a regard bordering on reverence for medicine, but . . . I had a sense that this was not for me.

He was 19 when he graduated from college and spent the summer on a newspaper. He was still going through a process of doubt and self-examination. In 1946 he entered the seminary and during that time supported himself by working for the religious show *The Eternal Light*, and "I kept open the possibility of a literary career."

In 1950 he was ordained and received a Master of Hebrew Literature degree at Jewish Theological Seminary of America. At that time he had no idea that he would hold three honorary doctorates. The latest is from St. Louis University where he is the first rabbi to serve on the board of a Catholic divinity school and where, this year, he became the first rabbi to give the commencement address at a Catholic university.

Following his ordination he rented a mountain cabin and spent the summer writing. "I wrote almost a short story a day and got almost a rejection slip a day." Then, back to Baltimore and to the teaching of religion in the afternoons while working on a novel in the mornings. "It's still in the trunk," he smiles ruefully.

He returned to Manhattan in 1951 and took a job editing a series on Jewish culture, philosophy and history, subjects on which he's since written much. It was during this period he worked part time, and then full time, with the Synagogue Council of America, a coordinating group. During the next decade he became its executive director and the organization went from a \$12,000 debt to an assured income of \$100,000. But he's proud not so much of the organization's solvency as that it became a force in "building contact between Jewish communal and religious agencies. They had the expertise; we were symbolic."

He's referring to the variety of often-overlapping Jewish cultural, educational, philanthropic, fund-raising and community relations agencies which are not under religious auspices. These agencies needed to be brought under an umbrella organization along with the synagogues, themselves separated by fuzzy boundaries into rigid Orthodox, Americanized Reform and compromise Conservative. "There was need for such a partnership of religious and lay organizations to work as parts of a clock to speak for the Jewish community insofar as any organization could; to speak for those who were religious and those who found their spiritual fulfillment in the fields of public service, arts and politics."

Around 1951 the first serious, if self-conscious, ecumenical encounters between the Jewish community and the liberal mainline Protestant groups began. Cooperation with the Catholics, Tanenbaum explains, "was limited and circumscribed by all sorts of clearances" until after Vatican II.

For a decade he developed programs with the National Council of Churches and the National Catholic Welfare

Conference. But much was symbolic. Too often agreement was only among leaders and didn't filter down to the people, just as too often ecumenical writings are done by scholars writing in esoteric journals.

"Around 1960-61 I became troubled by the reverse ratio of administration and studies: there was too much of the former and too little of the latter. I was asked to take positions on a wide variety of issues without having sufficient facts on which to base them."

In 1961 he was invited to join the American Jewish Committee (which, with the American Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League, are the major secular agencies speaking for Jews of all shades of belief). The AJC was founded in 1906 by educated and modernist German Jews and leaders of the Reform movement. They were members of the first major wave of Jewish immigration who were well established before the second major wave, the *Ashkenazim*, pressured by prejudice and pogroms, left the *shtetlach*, the villages and communities of central and eastern Europe, to find freedom in America. The Committee helped the adjustment of these fellow Jews of differing convictions, customs and caste. It functions today, Tanenbaum explains, as an organization of reconciliation, of education, and one which seeks to be a catalyst to depolarize the conflict and help all men to work together towards solutions which will enable them to live in harmony and unity without sacrificing their identity and diversity.

The American Jewish Committee is often confused with its more militant and court-oriented competitor, the American Jewish Congress. This similarity in organizational names should be particularly noted by Catholics so as not to confuse the strong stand taken by the American Jewish Congress against state aid to parochial schools with the much more moderate stand of Tanenbaum and the American Jewish Committee.

"There are almost five million children in the Catholic school system," Tanenbaum observes, "and we of the Jewish community have a responsibility—as a matter of moral and ethical integrity—to be concerned with them and with the quality of the education they're getting."

"I've been arguing, and I think with some response, that the Jewish community should reevaluate its stance and consider the crushing burden that Catholic and Jewish parents are carrying in trying to provide adequate education for their children in their schools."

"The entire American people, and certainly this advanced technological society, have a crucial stake in the quality of such education. This deep, valid human concern for excellence in education has led many liberal leaders to respond to the needs of minority children with impressive flexibility and innovative imagination. Liberals have led the struggle to decentralize public schools, to establish community control, and even to consider the revision of the merit system for the appointment of principals."

"Cannot some of the same flexibility, compassionate care, and creative imagination be exercised in relation to this equally pressing educational problem which has reached crisis proportions?"

---

**"Editorial criticism aplenty! But fraternal conversation . . .?" His secretary Miriam Binder interrupts to remind Rabbi Tanenbaum of fast-approaching flight time while he straightens out a last-minute ecumenical problem before taking off for Europe. In flight he'll work on his book, "Israel and Christian Renewal."**

Despite occasionally feeling "done in," let down, left out and sat on, rather than allowing himself the luxury of becoming fed up, Rabbi Tanenbaum is still fired up with determination for dialogue. "I have a terrible practice of traveling with documents and notes for future writings. I'm beginning to limp on one side from that heavy box. But I get a lot of work done on planes. It's a creative tension and I like it. After all, I have a commitment to redemption of this world. The Jew has an obligation as a member of a covenanted community to bring about justice and righteousness and to overcome evil."

Once again, the broad smile, this time resignedly. "Since 1966 I've been trying to arrange for a sabbatical to do more analytical writing. But that was the year the cities blew up."

Realizing how isolation can drive its anguished victims to victimize, he helped form the International Foundation for Community Organization, an organization for concrete economic self-development and "to give the poor a handle to lift themselves out of poverty. I worked with Lucius Walker, a brilliant black guy, and we tried to build a bridge between the Establishment institutions and the ghettos."

"Then in 1967 I thought I'd get my sabbatical; but as you recall, the Six-Day War between Israel and Egypt broke out in June. Being on top of all the information that came across my desk was chilling. The Soviet Union poured in \$3 billion of the latest equipment. If the Egyptians had struck first they would have destroyed a quarter or half-million Jews. Arab radio was using terms and expressions not heard since the Holocaust."

The Nazi holocaust of the 40's, man's most inexplicable crime, was not the conquest of a nation but the systematic extermination, in camps and crematoria, of a whole people—of European Jewry; of almost 6 million humans of all ages: of over a third of the world Jewish population of 17 million. All amidst the silence of moral leaders, the neglect of governments (refusing to issue visas even to children, or to bomb railroad tracks leading to the ovens, etc.) and, even a degree of apathy from American Jews themselves. Rabbi Tanenbaum feels that the immediate aid organized by American Jews for the victims of Biafra and Nigeria was partly due to guilt for the lack of aid given fellow Jews years ago. "There's too great a tolerance for violence in the world. Too much spectatorship. We must join hands to confront evil and injustice whenever they occur."

If Jews as a people—as well as all others with basic human feelings—are still stunned by attempted genocide in our times, Marc Tanenbaum as a person is haunted by other memories as well. Memories that lend a clue to the driving force behind his efforts.

He recalls how as a child, on Saturday afternoons, his father reviewed lessons from the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) or from the week's Hebrew lesson. "Occasionally he'd relate stories to unburden himself, stories of his childhood in a small town in the Ukraine near the turn of the century before leaving Czarist Russia. And there was one story which explained to me why my father, whenever passing a Christian church, would always spit on the ground."

"One Good Friday the Russian Orthodox priest got so worked up on the 'guilt' of the Jewish people, he inflamed the congregation at the height of the service and all rose and left the church together. I'll never forget the vivid image my father described—of the great crucifix hanging on the neck-chain of the priest's cassock and glinting in the afternoon sun as he marched the whole Christian congregation to the Jewish village and to my grandfather's house."

"My grandfather was the unofficial mayor or spokesman for the Jews. My uncle Aaron, a poet and the family's first-born son, was visiting for Passover. The mob demanded my grandfather turn Aaron over to them. Then they marched him and the whole Jewish village down to the edge of the lake. There were shouts of 'Christ killer!', 'murderers of God!' and 'Jew bastard!'

"And then, crying 'This is the atonement for the death of Our Lord!'—they forced him to march into the lake, until the waters closed over his head."

There is a pause, and then he continues.

"The 'Christ-killer' charge is not an academic one for me. For years a crucifix represented to me not the blood of Christ but of the Jewish people. So you can see what Vatican II meant to me."

He went to Rome in 1964 to help draft the document denouncing anti-Semitism and the concept of collective guilt which was finally adopted by a vote of 2,221 to 88. As guest of Lawrence Cardinal Shehan of Baltimore and Augustine Cardinal Bea, "I stood in St. Peter's Basilica to hear the reading of that announcement during that greatest seminar on Catholic-Jewish relations in history. It was an extraordinary, deeply personal and emotional experience, knowing that finally the Church was facing up to anti-Semitism. It may not seem much as we look back over half a decade, but when you look back with the perspective of 2,000 years, it was enormous. It was the closing of a cycle for me."

Nor is anti-Semitism an academic matter for the family of his wife, the former Helga Weiss, a clinical psychologist working with disadvantaged children at Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan. She was from Cologne, and Nazi anti-Semitism drove her out as a child of eight and she was forced to flee to Holland. Her father was in a detention camp; half her family were in camps.

There is another moment of silence. Perhaps Marc is thinking of her and their children, Adena (13), Michael (11) and Susan (6). His eyes flash behind his heavy glasses and the strong jaw tightens; yet the language is deliberately calm; "I am determined to make sure those conditions do not obtain again."

Could it happen again? There is no pause. "It's an 'iffy' question. Without being hysterical and yielding to irrationalism, we have to act *as if* it might happen again. There are enough demonic forces in the world fixing Jews as cultural scapegoats and tending to fall back on that image in times of crisis. Prejudice becomes a monster and has a special appetite for Jews. It's a defection from responsibility not to sit in constant vigilance.

"The Church, for example, could certainly play a more constructive role in Central America and South American countries such as Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil and especially, Argentina, which, with Mexico, is a center for anti-Semitic propaganda."

But how to stop anti-Semitism? "First and foremost are social controls—legal barriers to its manifestation. Law and order. People have to know society is not going to allow them to indulge pathological hatreds against another. Within Church institutions the Church has to exert its own social controls. Happily it's now an established Church principle; if a guy's going to be an anti-Semite, it's going to be on his own hook and on his own time, and with no halo effect. We must not only avoid derogatory remarks and labels, but also oversimplifications, accepting the complexity of issues and of life itself, while recognizing individuals as individuals, each with his unique problems and talents."

History, however, has not eliminated hope for Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum. Things *can* get better, he feels; and have already, he explains, with Christian guilt at the Holocaust causing a reexamination of petty injustices. Growing interest in the Old Testament and the Jewish background of Jesus and Christianity's recognition of its minority status in the world have also contributed to progress in overcoming anti-Semitism.

"There was a time when the Vikings were regarded as the worst and most rapacious of peoples. Yet today their descendants are the most civilized of peoples. This shows the potentiality of man to redeem himself and create a new order.

"In both Christianity and Judaism there are recognized potentialities for change. And that's my 'theology of hope.' Not a pic-in-the-sky thing. It involves recognizing that the process of changing attitudes in order to change behavior is a long-range one. *But it can be done.*

"My perspective, after 20 years in the work, is that there's the filling out of a portrait. Bits and pieces are beginning to move in and fill out the mosaic. There's a maturing of the religious scene as we move into the 70's and these relationships between faiths increase and orchestrate.

"Symbolically the human family is like a symphony orchestra. Each group, each religion plays its own instrument; none are interchangeable. The violin is no substitute for the oboe, nor the oboe for the cello. When they play separately and in dissonance, there is chaos. When harmonized, with each performing at his or her creative maximum, the end result is a magnificent symphony which ennoble the players themselves, the entire orchestra and the conductor.

"Some people are pessimistic about the future of Christian-Jewish relations, but I'm not. From Vatican II we have something to build on and around; we have an *impulse* and with time and energy we can translate that impulse into reality. I guess I'm really a cautious optimist. You couldn't stay in this field unless you were an optimist—based, of course, on a certain amount of realism. Happily there are serious self-examinations taking place today on *both* sides of the street.

"Without conversation and dialogue between faiths you get a sort of polarization-by-default; and then issues become distorted and each fails to recognize the priority of issues of the other's agendas. We cannot permit this polarization-by-default to happen. We must even expand the talks, we must include Hindus, Buddhists and Moslems—the world is getting smaller; and we're all going to have to live with each other. And there's no reason we can't have fruitful religious co-existence on an international scale."

He puts down a cola can and leans across the desk. His gaze is direct. "We share a common universal agenda because we share a common Father and inherit a common covenant."

Time is running out, and the occasional occupant of the office must go now. There are things to be done, places to visit, agendas to arrange, rifts to heal, ideas and ideals to share and people to depolarize. Already he's late. He rises, smiles, thanks you for coming, and goes.

And once again the photos stare silently from the walls at the desk sitting in the small empty office. □

John E. Fitzgerald is a critic, free-lance writer and lecturer, and a holder of the Directors Guild of America's annual "Best Critic" Award (for his weekly column in Our Sunday Visitor). He also writes a separate film column for the New York Catholic News.

This is a reprint from the October, 1971 issue of ST. ANTHONY MESSENGER 1615 Republic Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45210.

[end]

Original documents  
faded and/or illegible

