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Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism

Union of American Hebrew Congregations & Central Conference of American Rabbis

National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods • National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods • National Federation of Temple Youth

838 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK 21, N. Y. • REGENT 7-8200

To: Chairmen, Social Action Committees
Commission on Social Action
Rabbis
Community Relations Councils

From: Irving Jay Fain, Chairman

Date: January 17, 1966

Subject: A CALL TO ACTION ON WORLD PEACE

The most dramatic event of the recent UAHC Biennial in San Francisco was the debate on the "World at Peace" resolution -- and particularly paragraph 6a on United States foreign policy in Vietnam. The position finally taken on Vietnam was overwhelmingly adopted after full and lengthy debate. Another copy of that resolution is attached.

At its meeting the day after the Biennial, the Commission on Social Action agreed to give high priority to the pursuit of peace. A comprehensive program of study, publication and action is now being undertaken on the national level, including a national interreligious conference in Washington in March.

Since the Biennial, many responsible civic and religious groups, as well as an increasing segment of the news media, have called for action similar to that recommended by our resolution. Of particular significance is the major policy statement of the National Council of Churches of Christ, adopted in December. A copy is attached.

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UAHC HOUSE OF LIVING JUDAISM



Enclosed also are editorials from the New York Times of December 3, 1965 and the Christian Century of December 22, 1965. These substantiate the basic position expressed in the UAHC and the NCCC resolutions. Certainly the moral pressure brought by the Pope, other religious leaders and concerned students and citizens groups encouraged the United States Government to undertake the Christmas truce, the current bombing pause and vigorous peace offensive.

Unfortunately, antagonism to any discussion of foreign policy has also been developing. There is a desperate need to create a climate of opinion that will not only tolerate, but sustain democratic debate on this most vital issue of our lives. Student dissenters have been punished by some draft boards; public opinion polls indicate widespread impatience with protest and criticism. The most important function of our local congregations at this juncture is to help conduct the informed public dialogue so essential to the formulation of foreign policy in a democracy. Attached is an important resolution adopted by the 48th General Assembly on the right of dissent. UAHC resolutions are, of course, not binding on any congregation or individual. In 1961 the General Assembly, meeting in Washington, adopted the following resolution, in part:

"Public statements shall reflect points of view and programs adopted by a majority of the delegates of Reform synagogues at Biennial Assemblies of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Such pronouncements, resolutions and other actions of the general assemblies have, in the nature of the case, the status and weight of being neither more nor less than the corporate decisions of such a representative assembly. They are useful to the extent that they serve as a moral guide to our congregations and their members, to the nation and to the world. Such statements speak for the UAHC. They are not binding upon every Reform synagogue, each of which is autonomous, or upon every member of a Reform congregation. Every congregation and every member has the right and the duty to express conscientious dissent within the framework of our common commitment to Reform Judaism and to one another."

The situation in Vietnam is profoundly complex and is in constant flux. Some parts of the resolution may be outdated even by the time this Call for Action is received. Indeed, the essence of the resolution is now being implemented by the President of the United States. However, never outdated is the moral mandate of Judaism to "seek peace and pursue it". That should be our prime concern and that is a long-range and continuing obligation.

The obligation of religious leadership is to point up the moral issues, to strive for conciliation instead of conflict, to strengthen the institutions of international cooperation, to provide an opportunity for concerned persons to look beyond the immediacies and freely to debate and examine the assumptions at the basis of policies, and to nurture our underlying spiritual ideals. Religious groups have a crucial role to play as a countervailing force against those who place their greatest reliance on military solutions to political and social problems.

We urge the following action:

In the congregation:

1/ Distribute, publicize and discuss the UAHC resolution in congregation and community. Additional copies are available upon request.

2/ Conduct a program of peace education. Invite speakers representing divergent positions to participate in debate or panel discussion as part of an Oneg Shabbat, adult education, Sisterhood or Brotherhood program....Set up a special section of material in the library of the temple....Initiate a program to educate the children in the religious school to the approach of Judaism to peace. As aids to discussion, attached is a series of case situations and socio-dramas on various dilemmas in the current situation. Write to the Commission on Social Action for the summary of the 1963 conference on the Jewish Dimensions of Peace.

3/ Plan a Peace Sabbath for 1966, perhaps jointly with other synagogues or perhaps on an interreligious basis.

In the community:

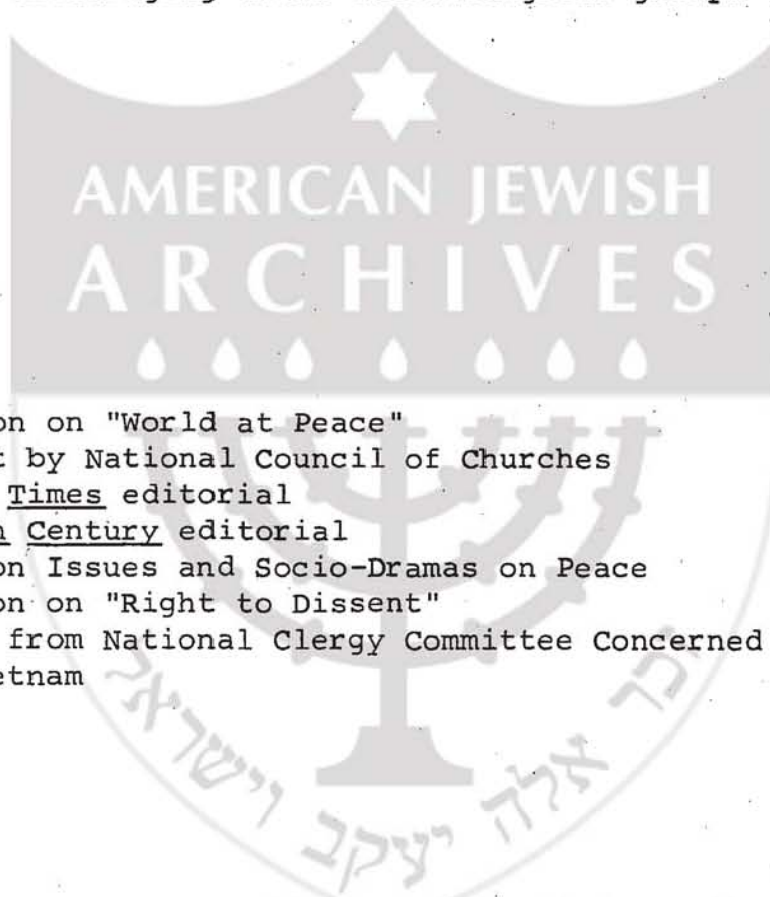
1/ Seek to develop a peace education program in your community. One UAHC region, the Pacific Northwest, is already engaged in a pilot project with a professional consultant guiding congregations in study and action in connection with international affairs.

2/ Interreligious action - Many religious leaders and some of the foremost religious groups have taken public positions on Vietnam. Whatever action is taken is more effective if conducted on an interreligious and community-wide basis. Initiate an interreligious dialogue on this problem in your community.

3/ Plan an all-day conference of churches and synagogues in your community on religion and peace. A National Interreligious Conference on Peace will be held in Washington March 15-17, 1966, and follow-up conferences should be planned in many communities.

4/ Write congressmen and senators, urging a full and frank congressional debate on the Vietnam crisis. Our Religious Action Center in Washington has sent a copy of the enclosed resolution to every member of the Congress.

5/ Initiate the creation of emergency, interreligious clergy committees concerned about Vietnam, along the lines of the ones already existing in New York, St. Louis and other cities. The recently created National Clergy Committee Concerned About Vietnam (see attached telegram) is encouraging local interreligious groups which share this concern.



Enclosures:

- 1 - Resolution on "World at Peace"
- 2 - Statement by National Council of Churches
- 3 - New York Times editorial
- 4 - Christian Century editorial
- 5 - Discussion Issues and Socio-Dramas on Peace
- 6 - Resolution on "Right to Dissent"
- 7 - Telegram from National Clergy Committee Concerned About Vietnam

P.S. There are a number of books and booklets on the subject of Vietnam. Among them are:

- Why We Are in Vietnam.....U. S. State Department
- How the United States Got Involved in Vietnam.....Robert Scheer
Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions

RESOLUTION ON 'A WORLD AT PEACE'

ADOPTED BY THE 48TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS IN SAN FRANCISCO, NOVEMBER 17, 1965

WORLD AT PEACE

As heirs to a great Jewish tradition, we reaffirm our faith in man's capacity, as co-partner with God, to fashion a better world. We believe that in this age of thermonuclear weapons, man must put an end to war. We do believe that the children of God can create a process in which inevitable conflicts in a world of dynamic change can be resolved without resort to armed conflict. To strive toward such a world order, the delegates to the 48th Biennial Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, meeting in San Francisco, November, 1965:

1. Reaffirm our belief in the necessity of coexistence of all nations and social systems. Coexistence requires a willingness to negotiate issues and to accommodate differences. We reject the false belief that negotiations need mean appeasement or surrender.

2. Renew our commitment to the United Nations and to the need to strengthen this indispensable instrumentality of the family of nations. We believe that universal membership in the United Nations should be encouraged, thus opening new possibilities for improved understanding among all nations. In addition, we urge that the United Nations convene an early conference to consider revisions of the Charter so as to make the United Nations more responsive to the vast and profound changes which have occurred since its creation.

3. Urge the United Nations to press for extension of the nuclear treaty ban to include underground explosions and to pursue, as an item of highest priority, a systematic, enforceable, general and complete disarmament. We endorse the purposes of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and we urge the strengthening and expansion of this important body.

4. Appeal to the United States to take renewed leadership in calling for the pooling by all nuclear powers of fissionable material and knowledge in the pursuit of peaceful purposes under appropriate international controls.

5. Warn with all solemnity against the danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons. We urge that the United States and Canada pursue the initiative in pressing for a program of inspected mutual military withdrawal and the development of a program leading to political settlements coupled with disarmament and disengagement steps. These should be linked with greater economic and cultural interchanges between eastern and western Europe, leading toward an all-European security system, guaranteed by the members of the British Commonwealth, European powers, the United States, and the U.S.S.R.

6. As representatives of a religious people within whom there dwells the deep hunger for peace among men and for whom a supreme value is the preciousness of human life, we are profoundly troubled and perplexed by the dilemma posed by the military, economic, and political conditions surrounding the war in Vietnam. Along with the Central Conference of American Rabbis and other religious bodies in many lands, we are greatly distressed over the growing violence and the mounting loss of life of all the peoples involved. Faced with this dilemma, we call for an act of moral courage, and

A. Ask the President of the United States, subject only to the requirements of the safety of our armed forces, to declare to the world that as of a given date, our armed forces will cease firing, our planes will cease bombing and that our representatives are proceeding forthwith to a designated neutral place prepared to meet with the representatives of the opposing forces in Vietnam and of the United Nations and to implement such declaration with a view toward finding a peaceful solution to the differences which have brought about this horrible conflict and to call upon the representatives of the opposing forces to join us in this unselfish determination to demonstrate our commitment to peace in our time and for all time.

B. Negotiate with any and all parties to secure a ceasefire and an agreement which will vouchsafe through the U.N. independence, freedom and self-determination for the people of Vietnam.

C. Work with the U.N. to reduce the area of conflict by border control and internal policing undertaken by a multi-national force of the U.N., and

D. Enlarge grants by all nations of substantial economic and technological assistance to countries of southeast Asia, including North and South Vietnam. The effective joint cooperation already manifest in the Mekong Delta project suggests the great blessings which peace can bring to this area.

We call upon the agencies of the Union to join with the like-minded religious bodies, Jewish, Protestant and Catholic, east and west, which share and have expressed these same moral concerns.

7. Commend the increasing cooperation of all religious groups in pursuit of a just and peaceful world. The voice of faith, the message of salvation through righteousness, must again speak to a torn and separated mankind. Reaffirming our belief in the sovereignty of God over all humanity, we renew our pledge to join with all men of good will in achieving man's final opportunity for redemption: A WORLD AT PEACE.

Escalation Goes On

The United States is facing the certainty of further escalation of the Vietnamese war. Secretary McNamara has made this clear.

While under present circumstances it is impossible and in fact undesirable for the United States to give up or pull out—and most responsible Americans critical of present policies reject any such sudden withdrawal—and while American soldiers in Vietnam must of course be fully supported, it is both legitimate and necessary to ask whether the interminable process of escalation is productive.

Escalation has not been a road to peace nor to surrender by North Vietnam. Exactly the opposite has happened, as Secretary McNamara himself pointed out. He has done so, incidentally, at the very date—December 1965—by which he had once said the American military task should be completed and a major part of the American troops withdrawn.

It is true that neither Hanoi nor Peking appears willing now to stop to negotiate. But meanwhile the expansion of the war and of the American commitment is driving North Vietnam constantly into greater dependency on Communist China. Furthermore, reports from Moscow strongly indicate that however anxious the Soviet Union may be to see the Vietnamese conflict end and to proceed with the promising rapprochement with the United States, the Russians cannot abandon North Vietnam without hopelessly losing to China their position in the Communist world. The present state of Moscow's conflict with Peking offers the United States the best possible opportunity to capitalize on the breach between Russia and China; but the conflict in Vietnam prevents Washington from doing so.

It has always been clear that escalation of the war by one side could bring about escalation by the other, which in turn be followed by further escalation leading possibly on to war with Communist China and/or a third world war. Even now, the Vietnam war is becoming exactly what President Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson have all wanted to avoid; a land war in tropical jungles by white men against Asians.

There are alternatives to escalation; and the Johnson Administration has not exhausted them in the eyes of many sincere and patriotic Americans, quite aside from any lingering sense of uneasiness they may have because of recent revelations that the Administration rejected peace feelers put out by Hanoi a year ago.

The most obvious alternative, despite the failure to get any advance promise or concession from Hanoi and Peking, is to try a reasonably long pause in the bombing of North Vietnam more than the token five days of last spring. A decision to do this could be officially and publicly announced to the Security Council of the United Nations as an earnest of American desire for peace.

The gesture might not work, and it of course carries with it a military risk. The North Vietnamese and the Chinese might use the pause to build up their strength and to increase their infiltration of South Vietnam. But Secretary McNamara has already stated that he expects the North Vietnamese to triple their present rate of infiltration, even with the present United States commitment. But if the gesture did evoke some positive response, it could lead to the saving of untold thousands of American and Vietnamese lives.

The political advantage to the United States of showing its good faith and its strong desire for peace in this way would be enormous. War, after all, is an instrument and an extension of politics. A bombing pause would change the whole complexion of the conflict, whether it succeeded or failed. It would give both sides, and the rest of the world, a chance to re-evaluate issues and policies. The air would be cleared figuratively, as well as literally. And the ultimate destruction of the fabric of Vietnamese society would, at the very least, be postponed.

Escalation up to now has failed. More escalation is just as likely to fail—and to bring with it the gravest and wildest danger.

Weighty Unanimity

† ONE OF the striking features of the protest against United States policies in Vietnam is what Harold A. Bosley, senior minister of Christ Church, Methodist, in New York city called the "amazing, unified expression" in Protestant, Catholic and Jewish circles. This unity in protest was evident in three recent declarations. At its meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, the National Council of Churches' General Board, on a motion by Eugene Carson Blake, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church, adopted recommendations which call for: (1) a United Nations-convened peace conference with representation by all interested parties; (2) readiness on the part of the United States for unconditional discussion and negotiation; (3) strict adherence on the part of the U.S. to the policy of avoiding bombing of centers of population in North Vietnam; (4) increased efforts to relieve the desperate plight of non-combatants in South Vietnam; (5) a phased withdrawal of all U.S. troops and bases from Vietnamese territory, if and when they can be replaced by adequate international peacekeeping forces; (6) appropriation by Congress of immediate reconstruction assistance and long-range economic development funds for southeast Asia, including the several associated states of Indochina.

In the increased freedom, openness and frequency of their protests against U.S. policies in Vietnam, Roman Catholics — lay and clerical — are proving that the Roman Catholic Church has "come of age" in American society. The Catholic Peace Fellowship of the Fellowship of Reconciliation published in the December 10 issue of *Commonweal* a two-page, center-spread advertisement in which 70 well known Roman Catholic priests, nuns and laymen declared their solidarity with Catholics who "according to church teaching . . . are obliged to refuse to serve in wars which they judge unjust"; invited "all men of good will, and especially our fellow Catholics and the American Catholic Bishops, to lend their moral support to efforts of peace"; asked that the "National Liberation Front be considered a legitimate and necessary party to negotiations"; requested that the "United Nations be formally requested to intervene and to mediate in the area of dispute, and to chart

an independent, militarily unaligned and independent Vietnam, as was sought under the 1954 Geneva Agreements"; urged an immediate ending of all bombing of North and South Vietnam and asked that the "United States make clear its responsibility toward both the refugees from North Vietnam, and toward those who have allied themselves with the various Saigon regimes." This is probably the first time that so many Roman Catholic individuals have as Catholics taken such a stand.

At its biennial convention held in San Francisco in November the Union of American Hebrew Congregations adopted what is believed to be the strongest position on world peace yet taken by any national Jewish religious organization. In reference to the Vietnam war the Jewish resolution asked that the "President of the United States, subject only to the requirements of the safety of our armed forces . . . declare to the world that as of a given date our armed forces will cease firing, our planes will cease bombing and that our representatives are proceeding forthwith to a designated neutral place prepared to meet with the representatives of the opposing forces in Vietnam and of the United Nations and to implement such declaration with a view toward finding a peaceful solution to the differences which have brought about this horrible conflict." Further, the resolution asked that the United States "negotiate with any and all parties to secure a ceasefire and an agreement which will vouchsafe through the United Nations independence, freedom and self-determination for the people of Vietnam" and that the United States "work with the United Nations to reduce the area of conflict by border control and internal policing undertaken by a multi-national force of the United Nations."

So similar are these declarations in mood and substance that either faith could have written any or all of the recommendations. The lines of the three resolutions parallel each other and then converge in the common request for a cease-fire and for U.N. intervention. These resolutions do not represent the views of all Christians and Jews, but the unanimity at which they arrived through independent courses gives them a significance the fashioners of national policy should not ignore.

Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue New York, New York

RIGHT TO DISSENT

Adopted by the 48th Biennial General Assembly
San Francisco, California November, 1965

In the light of the growing tendency in America to equate dissent with an anti-patriotic or an un-American attitude, we find it necessary at this time to reaffirm the right of American citizens peacefully to assemble and demonstrate whether in support or in protest against government policies.

We reiterate our long-held commitment to civil liberties and to the freedoms safeguarded by the Constitution of the United States. In our democratic system, it is not the right of government, whether local or federal, to silence dissent, however unpopular or controversial.

Those who are critical of the United State's policies, whether from the pulpit or in the street, must be neither stifled nor intimidated by the threat of investigation. Neither shall their motives nor their loyalties be impugned.

We most vigorously urge our congregations to sponsor those programs, both internal and public, which would fully explore every area of social and religious concern, even those deemed most controversial.

DISCUSSION ISSUES AND SOCIO-DRAMAS ON PEACE

- 1) A Jewish youngster comes to his rabbi and says he thinks the war in Vietnam is morally reprehensible and he would, therefore, like to be a conscientious objector on Jewish grounds. His objection is to this war. He acknowledges that he would have fought willingly against Nazi Germany. He asks the rabbi if there is a Jewish sanction for his position. What should the rabbi say to him?
- 2) A committee against United States policy in Vietnam asks the temple if it can use its facilities for a public meeting, paying an appropriate fee. The temple has rented its facilities to other civic and educational groups. One member of the Board strongly objects to "letting the temple be used for anti-American propoganda at a time like this". If you were on the Board, what would you suggest?
- 3) A member of the Board of the temple moves to repudiate the UAHC position on Vietnam in the resolution on world peace. He contends that Judaism has "no business mixing in such a political issue" and that this is "divisive" and "harmful" to the Jewish community. You are on the Board. How would you react?
- 4) A man from the Jewish War Veterans asks you to sign a newspaper ad as part of a Jewish committee in favor of American policy in Vietnam. He feels that the statements of leading rabbis have given a wrong impression that Jews are opposed to the President's policy in Vietnam. He tells you that the JWV national commander, upon his return from South Vietnam, had said he was "disgusted by those groups.....so concerned about the right to dissent....that they seem not to recognize that freedom requires responsibilities. They are less articulate about our country's right and need to wage a vigorous war against communism in Vietnam." The ad is to rectify this imbalance, he says. What would you think of his suggestion?
- 5) Harold Gordon is a student at Michigan University. He participated in a sit-in at Ann Arbor in protest against United States policy in Vietnam. The local draft board has changed his status to 1-A in retaliation. The rabbi asks the temple Board to write a letter of protest. You are a Board member. What should the Board do?

- 6) A controversy erupts in the local daily newspaper following an editorial which criticized a local Protestant minister for preaching on the Vietnam war. "What really do clergymen know about this matter that the average man doesn't?" Why do they plunge into this subject when they have nothing fresh or original to say? Several laymen of the minister's church have urged laymen of other religious groups to write letters to the editor. What would you say?
- 7) The Social Action Committee discusses the crisis in Vietnam. The meeting almost breaks up when one member says, "Let's face it, there is nothing we can do which can be helpful. These events are probably beyond anybody's control by now, but certainly we here are utterly powerless to affect this situation and we should not be so pretentious as to imagine it makes any difference what we in this community do or do not do on this matter." As chairman of the committee, you respond. What do you say?



wire sent by the

National Committee of Clergy Concerned About Vietnam
to President Johnson, Tuesday, January 11, 1966

We are appalled by the inhumanity of the war in Vietnam and the extension of hostilities to neighboring countries. Impending national decisions about Vietnam will fundamentally influence the political, military and above all, the moral future of our nation and our world. We are heartened by your recent efforts for peace and we urge:

- 1 - that the cessation of bombing in North Vietnam be maintained;
- 2 - that you continue to press for a negotiated peace and that the National Liberation Front be given direct representation in all discussions;
- 3 - that you vigorously resist all pressures toward further escalation;
- 4 - that economic development for humane purposes at home and abroad be given budgetary priority over military spending.

a partial list of signers includes:

Dr. John Bennett

Dr. Abraham Heschel

Rev. William Coffin

Dr. David Hunter

Rev. Edward Dahlberg

Bishop John Wesley Lord

Dr. Maurice Eisendrath

Rev. Leo McLaughlin

Dr. Dana McLean Greeley

Dr. Howard Schomer

U A H C

Commission on Interfaith Activities

A Joint Commission of the
Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Central Conference of American Rabbis
and the Jewish Chautauqua Society

838 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK 21, N. Y. • REGENT 7-8200

Director: RABBI BALFOUR BRICKNER

January, 1966

FROM: Rabbi Balfour Brickner, Director
Mr. Paul Dobin, Chairman

TO: Rabbis, Congregational Presidents, Commission on Interfaith
Activities, Chairmen/Interfaith Committees, Chairmen/Social
Action Committees, Presidents/National Federation of Temple
Sisterhoods, National Association of Temple Administrators,
National Federation of Temple Youth

FOR INFORMATION OF: Community Relations Councils

SUBJECT: HERE AND THERE #8

I. As a Result of the UAHC Biennial Assembly

A. The delegates passed the attached resolution calling for more intensive Dialogue programs by the laity of our congregations, as well as by the clergy and religious professionals.

1. The Commission is prepared to help you initiate such "lay dialogues" in your community. Write us for "Come Let Us Reason Together: A Guide to Establishing Lay Dialogue." (Fill out attached Order Form Item #1)

2. The Dialogue idea is spreading. In Rochester, New York, 20 laymen from Congregation Emanuel (Rabbi Allan Levine) meet monthly with an equivalent number of Catholics and Protestants to study "The Radical Right." We have copies of the program and background material on the subject. (Item #2) (See Social Action Programs of the Month #1: Right Wing Extremism in American Life, January 22, 1962)

In Syosset, L.I. North Shore Synagogue, 15 lay members of the Syosset community meet for 6 sessions with an equivalent number from St. Bede's Episcopal Church to study: "The Episcopal and the Jew: An Overview." The sessions are divided as follows:

- a) Concepts of God
- b) Concepts of Jesus Christ
- c) Concepts of the Hebrew Bible
- d) Concepts of the New Testament

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Irvin Fane

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Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath

COMMISSION ON INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES

Chairman:

Harold W. Dubinsky

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- e) Concepts of Man
- f) Concepts of Culture: Jewish and Christian

The laymen study seriously and prepare their own papers. A small interreligious lay steering committee chose the topics. Who said laymen cannot or do not want to discuss religious matters?

In Nashville, Tennessee -- the Commission on Interfaith Activities with the help of Rabbi Randall Falk (Congregation Ohabai Sholom) was instrumental in starting an informal dialogue with Southern Baptist leadership in Nashville. To our knowledge, this is the first time representatives of Reform Judaism have so met with any fundamentalist Protestant group. Rabbi Falk's article for Christian youth "Judaism and Christianity" appeared in the September 1965 issue of Workers With Youth, a publication of the Methodist Church. (Write us for a copy. Item #3.)

An interesting Dialogue theme: "The Changing Images We Have of One Another."
(Write us for background material.)

3. Representatives of the Catholic and Protestant communities attended the Biennial as Official Observers. More than 20 of those suggested to the Commission by the National Council of Churches and the National Catholic Welfare Conference accepted our invitation and their presence made headlines all over America. (See attached montage.) We believe that this is the first time that Protestants and Catholics have ever officially observed a national meeting of a Jewish religious organization.

4. Rabbi Gerald Raiskin (Peninsula Temple Sholom, Burlingame, California) invited 2 of the Catholic Sisters Observers to address his Congregation on December 10th.

5. Attached is the syllabus prepared for the Forum: "Man and His Neighbors: The Interreligious Life." Note the suggested reading list. You may wish to order these books for your congregational library. We call your attention also to a new and exciting volume, "The Case for the Chosen People," by Rabbi Gunther Plaut (Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto, Canada), Doubleday 1965.

II. Catholic-Jewish Relations

Attached: 1) The full text of the recently promulgated Schema: On the Relations of the Church to Non-Christian Religions.

2) An article by Rabbi David Polish, which appeared recently in the Christian Century.

3) Our own evaluation.

III. Planning for Brotherhood Week? (February 20-27)

A. The regular pulpit exchange is the easy way out. Why not try something new and, admittedly, a little more difficult:

- 1. A truly interreligious service. (Item #4)
- 2. An interreligious Music Service. (Item #5)

These are becoming very popular.

3. "Project Understanding" started in New Orleans, now being used by Temple Sholom, Chicago, Illinois (Rabbi Louis Binstock) where it has received a great deal of publicity. (Item #6)

HERE AND THERE #8

A variation of this was instituted in Fort Wayne, Indiana, by Rabbi Fred Doppelt (Congregation Achduth Veshalom) which is called "Church Walk 1965." Write us for a copy. (Item #6a)

4. An Institute for: Christian Religious School Educators and Teachers or for laymen. Write us for Guide for Institutes. (Item #7)

If you are planning an institute and would like some excellent "give away" material explaining the holidays and Holy Days, order it in quantity from us. (Item #8)

B. Institutes and Institute Ideas -- During the past year, Rabbi Joseph Glaser, Pacific Northwest Regional Director of the UAHC, spoke on the "Judaic Concept of God" at a symposium entitled: "Religions of Abraham," sponsored by the Junipero Serra Shop and College of Notre Dame, Belmont, California. Those who attended all sessions of the seminar earned a unit of college credit.

Rabbi Solomon Kaplan, Southwest Regional Director of the UAHC, lectured on the Jewish faith as part of an interreligious topics series sponsored by the First Presbyterian Church of Lubbock, Texas.

Rabbi Richard Rosenthal (Temple Beth-El, Tacoma, Washington) sponsored a Clergy Institute on Martin Buber. Write us for a copy of the program. Available from our office is material on Buber, the tape of an "Adventures in Judaism" radio program devoted to his life and thought, featuring Professor Walter Kaufman. (Item #9)

Rabbi Murray Rothman (Temple Sholom, Newton Center, Massachusetts) conducted a second institute on Judaism for a group of Catholic nuns, all educators from various parts of the country attending a summer course at Boston College. The presentation to the sisters was made by Bernard H. Shulman, director of the Congregation's Religious School.

C. Don't forget your Youth. Write us for a packet of interreligious youth programs, including:

- a) An Institute on Human Relations for High School Youth.
- b) We Speak for Judaism
- c) We Sing for Judaism (Please write the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF TEMPLE YOUTH.)
- d) An Interreligious Weekend Conclave for Youth

(Item #9a)

IV. Interreligious Statements on Peace and Vietnam

We have statements on the subject from the National Council of Churches, the Methodists, etc.

In the light of the UAHC and Central Conference of American Rabbis' positions, you may find these of interest. Write us. (Item #10)

V. New Programs

A. A Course in Interreligious Relations

Together with the Packard Manse House, an Ecumenical Center in Boston, Rabbi Jerome Davidson, director of the UAHC, New England Region, has initiated a new and

unusual course in Jewish-Christian Relations, to be taught for 15 weeks at the Boston College of Adult Jewish Studies. Lecturers include: Professor Krister Stendahl, Prof. of New Testament, Harvard Divinity School; Professor David Neimann, Prof. of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, Brandeis University; Father Gregory Baum, O.S.A., Center of Ecumenical Studies, Toronto, Canada; Dr. Martin Cohen, Jewish Institute of Religion; Professor Marcus Barth, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Enrolment is open to the total community. A fee of \$15.00 is charged for the entire course.

This enterprising effort represents a new and welcome departure in the area of inter-religious relations. We have sent outlines of the program to all our regional directors, urging them to explore a similar format in their own regions. Write us for a brochure outlining the course. (Item #11)

B. Rabbi Neil Brief (Ventura, California County Jewish Council) has been certified as an instructor in Bible by the General Board of Education of the Methodist Church to teach in their schools for Church Leadership Education.

C. Rabbi Barry Greene (B'nai Jeshurun Congregation, Newark, N.J.) has instituted a Festival of Religion and Arts which his Congregation is co-sponsoring with Seton Hall University. Write us for a copy of the program. (Item #12)

VI. Interfaith Councils

Many communities are beginning to create local Interfaith Councils. Write us for copies of:

- a) the Chicago Interfaith Laymen's Council
- b) the Interfaith Council of Northern Westchester
- c) the Interfaith Committee of Somerset Hills
- d) New Jersey Interfaith Council which has so far instituted a Youth Employment Service in their community. (Item #13)

VII. Congregational Programs

A. In the field of Race Relations:

1. Rabbi Leonard Winograd (Beth Zion Temple, Johnstown, Pa.) reports a workshop on Community Responsibility in Race Relations held last June. Themes discussed included: "Understanding the Negro Protest," "Cooperating to Meet the Racial Challenge in our Community," "How Can We Better Communicate and Cooperate to Prevent and Solve the Racial Problems of our Community?"
2. In Norwalk, Connecticut, we hear from Rabbi David Hachen of his involvement in a series of 4 lecture-discussions on "Negro History: Myth and Reality." The program was interfaith and interracial in its sponsorship and organization.
3. Write us for a copy of our program "CO-OP" which can guide you in the organization of such conferences. (Item #14)

B. Congregational Lay Committee

1. In Waco, Texas, Mrs. Norma Podet reports a series of ongoing panel discussions on the theme: "Cooperation Without Compromise."
2. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Congregation Emanu-El B'nai Jeshurun conducted a

series of home parlor sessions on the general theme "Judaism in American Society." Five themes were chosen which were studied for three successive weeks: "Political Extremism," "De Facto School Segregation," "Open Housing," "The Open Society," "Catholic, Protestant and Jew in America." 190 members registered. They are planning a similar program for this year in conjunction with a Presbyterian Church in the neighborhood.

3. The Sisterhood of Anshe Emeth Temple, New Brunswick, New Jersey, reports that their Interfaith Committee, working with women of a neighboring Presbyterian Church were instrumental in procuring for their county a model Detention Home for Juvenile Delinquents. To do this, they first visited other detention homes, attended sessions of the Juvenile Court, interviewed the Judge of the Court, probation officers, attended meetings of the County Board of Freeholders, studied architectural plans, offered ideas and suggestions, many of which were incorporated into the building plans. They are now working interreligiously on a Planned Parenthood Program. An excellent example of the emerging pattern of inter-religious social action. If you want details write their Interfaith Chairman:

Mrs. Alfred Bloch
9 Bloomfield Avenue
Somerset, New Jersey

VIII. Interreligious News

A. Germany

By virtue of the unanimous approval of the Boards of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Jewish Chautauqua Society and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Commission on Interfaith Activities has now been officially mandated to sponsor and implement a pilot program first presented to it by Rabbi Joseph Asher (Temple Emanu El, Greensboro, N.C.) in order to send German speaking American rabbis and educators to Germany to teach to German Youth and those in teacher-training about Jews and Judaism. Particular emphasis will be placed in the Nazi period. The project will begin in June and July of 1966. The Commission is working with officials of the West German government which will finance this and subsequent programs in this area.

B. The first major interreligious Conference on Peace will be held in Washington, D.C., March 15-17, 1966. Dr. Maurice Eisendrath, together with a number of other outstanding clergymen, has been instrumental in the creation of this national Conference to which only 500 clergymen and laymen will be invited.

C. The Director of the Commission was one of 20 Jewish religious representatives who met with an equivalent number of Protestant leaders for a 5-day consultation last August at the Chateau de Bossey, Switzerland, to discuss "The Situation of Man in the World Today." The unique Conference was sponsored jointly by the Synagogue Council of America and the World Council of Churches. Subsequent meetings are being planned.

D. Last July, Rabbi Abraham Shusterman (Har Sinai, Baltimore, Maryland) was awarded the Cardinal Gibbons Medal by Lawrence Cardinal Shehan. The Award was made in recognition of Rabbi Shusterman's outstanding work in interreligious relations. He is the first non-Christian to receive this honor.

E. Last June, our weekly radio program, "Adventures in Judaism," received the coveted Ohio State Award "in recognition of outstanding achievement among radio programs relating to personal problems." The citation read:

"Unlike many religious broadcasts, the series places a high value on entertainment. Music, drama, discussions and unusual documentary approaches tie in the subject of religion with the problems and experiences of our day..."

This half hour radio show, heard weekly over more than 25 stations throughout the country is available for your community. Write us for a catalog of the shows, a list of the stations now carrying it and for the details of how it can be aired over a radio station in your community. (Item #15)



COMMISSION ON INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Order Form

Date: _____

Please send the following:

- Item #1 _____ "Come Let Us Reason Together: A Guide to Establishing Inter-Congregational Lay Dialogue"
- Item #2 _____ Interreligious Dialogue on "The Radical Right"
(Congregational Emanuel, Rochester, New York)
- Item #3 _____ "Judaism and Christianity" -- article by
Rabbi Randall Falk
- Item #4 _____ Interreligious Services of Temple Sinai,
Washington, D. C.
- Item #5 _____ Interreligious Music Services:
Temple Sinai of Bergen County, Tenafly, New Jersey
Temple Sholom, Newton Center, Massachusetts
- Item #6 _____ "Operation Understanding"
- Item #6a _____ "Church Walk"
- Item #7 _____ A Guide for Institutes
(\$1.00 per copy. Please enclose check or cash)
- Item #8 _____ Holiday and Holy Day Explanations "Tables of Division"
(Detroit)
- Item #9 _____ Institute material on Martin Buber: printed _____
tape _____
- Item #9a _____ Packet of Youth Programs
- Item #10 _____ Interreligious Statements on Peace & Vietnam
- Item #11 _____ Boston Interreligious Course Outline
- Item #12 _____ Festival of Arts Program
- Item #13 _____ Programs of Interfaith Councils
- Item #14 _____ "CO-OP"
- Item #15 _____ Details and Program Catalog of radio series, "Adventures in Judaism"

Name _____

Address _____

Congregation _____

City and State _____

Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue New York, New York

INTER-RELIGIOUS

Adopted by the 48th Biennial General Assembly
San Francisco, California November, 1965

The new directions of American inter-religious life and specifically the call from our Christian brethren for a closer community and dialogue, offer fresh opportunities for the strengthening of these relations.

We urge the expansion and deepening of the programs of our National Commission on Interfaith Activities and summon our congregations to enter more intensively into dialogue with our Christian compatriots even into those areas which touch on matters of faith.



SYLLABUS FOR FORUM D
NOT BY WORDS ALONE

"Man and His Neighbor: The Interreligious Life"

Wednesday, November 17th, 2:00 P.M. - Venetian Room

A. THEME

It has been suggested that the racial crisis in America inadvertently produced two new important phenomena in American religious life. It "saved the church from irrelevancy" (Reinhold Niebuhr), and it moved interreligious relations from the area of superficial interfaith pleasantries to the arena of meaningful interreligious social action. What individual, and often isolated, church and synagogue bodies felt they could not enter into singly, they discovered they could do together. Interreligious cooperation has become the distinguishing characteristic of religiously sponsored social action. We can anticipate both a continuation and an intensification of this new spirit of cooperation. A second and equally important force has changed the interreligious climate of our society: the spirit of aggiornamento typified by the life and actions of the late Pope John XXIII and, hopefully, carried further by the Vatican Council which he initiated.

Many people engaged in interreligious work are now asking if we have gone as far as we can hope to go in these relationships. Is interreligious social action the outermost limit of our contact with one another?

Some, like Rabbi Joseph B. Solovetchik and the Lubovitcher rebbe, respected leaders of American Orthodox Judaism, have emphatically warned their constituents to avoid contacts with non-Jews which carry beyond the limits of social action. Spokesmen for fundamentalist Protestantism have expressed similar caveats. However, these sentiments seem to be those of a minority in the chorus of American religion.

A few religious leaders are beginning to think of interreligious relations in a new and possibly deeper dimension.

What cannot be ignored is the remaining great wall of separation between the Jewish people and Christianity. The average churchgoer is unaware of it, simply because he does not know the long history of persecution inflicted on the Jews in the name of Christ. (James R. Brown, "The One Israel of God," Jews and Christians: Preparation for Dialogue, ed. George B. Knight. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1965, page 150)

This history of persecution and its concomitant attempts to convert the Jew has understandably made the Jew at least suspicious of, if not hostile to, any interreligious contact which would carry Jews and Christians to deeper levels of interreligious exchange. Nevertheless, that level is being sought.

True dialogue among laymen, as well as clergy, may intensify an awareness by Jews of this new Christian interest as it may help Jews understand that dialogue does not imply disputation and/or evangelical goals.

B. QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Are the Christian and Jewish communities of America ready or prepared to dialogue on matters other than social action?

What should be the next areas to which Jews and Christians address themselves in mutual interreligious social action?

A Christian theologian has suggested that:

- a. By all the laws of reason this people (the Jews) ought either to have disintegrated and disappeared or else sunk to the level of pariahs. Instead, they have emerged from the holocaust unbroken in spirit, conscious of their dignity and with a sense of mission and purpose.
- b. The awareness of Israel's election has never left the Jewish people. That Israel is an "am segullah" God's special property...persists as the collective consciousness of the Jews. (9 Jacob Jocz' "The 'advantage' of the Jew," in Knight book referred to above, page 89)

Is this a viable thought for Jews and/or Christians today?

What are the implications of this concept for Jews and Christians in their separate and interreligious relations?

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Anguish of the Jews, E. H. Flannery, Macmillan, 1965

The Teaching of Contempt, Jules Isaac, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York 1962

Judaism and Christianity, James Parkes, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1948

We Jews and Jesus, Samuel Sandmel, Oxford University Press, N. Y., 1965

The Faith of Other Men, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Mentor Books, N. Y., 1965, paperback

"The New American Jew," Time Magazine, June 25, 1965

- Prepared by Rabbi Balfour Brickner

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Distributed by the
Commission on Interfaith Activities
Joint Commission of the
Union of American Hebrew Congregations,
Central Conference of American Rabbis,
and the
Jewish Chautauqua Society
838 Fifth Avenue New York City

Summary of Schema on Non-Christians

ROME, Oct. 14 (Reuters)—Following, as issued in English by the Vatican, is a summary of the declaration "On the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions," which is before the Ecumenical Council:

Day by day, mankind is being drawn closer together and the ties between various peoples are becoming stronger. The Church considers more attentively her relationship to non-Christian religions. In her task of promoting unity and love among men and among nations, the Church above all considers in the declaration what men have in common and what leads to mutual fellowship.

One is the community of all peoples, one their origin, one their ultimate end, God. His providence, His manifestations of goodness, His saving design extend to all men, until that time when the elect will be united in the Holy City, where the nations will walk in His light.

Men expect from the various religions answers to the unsolved riddles of the human condition: What is man? What is the meaning, the aim of our life? What is the moral good, what is sin? Whence suffering, and what purpose does it serve? What are death, judgment and retribution after death? Whence do we come? Where are we going?

'Among Various Peoples'

There is found among various peoples a certain perception of that hidden power which hovers over the course of things and over human events. At times, some have come to a recognition of a Supreme Being, or even of a Father. This perception and recognition penetrate their lives with a profound religious sense.

Religions that are entwined with an advanced culture have struggled to answer the same questions by means of more refined concepts and a more developed language.

In Hinduism, men contemplate the divine mystery and express it through abundant myths and essays into philosophy. They seek freedom from the anguish of our human condition either through ascetical practices or profound meditation or a flight to God.

Buddhism, in its various forms, realizes the radical inadequacy of this changeable world; it teaches a way by which men may be able either to acquire a state of perfect liberation or attain, by their own efforts or through higher help, the Supreme Illumination.

Church Respects All

Other religions, each in its own manner, try to counter the restlessness of the human heart by proposing teachings, rules of life and sacred rites.

The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She recognizes those ways of action and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men.

The Church proclaims, and ever must proclaim, Christ "the way the truth and the life" in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself.

The Church exhorts her sons that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote those spiritual and moral goods as well as those socio-cultural values found among these men.

The Religion of Islam

Moslems adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself, merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth who has spoken to men. They strive to submit even to His incomprehensible decrees, just as Abraham submitted to God—to Abraham the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself.

Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honor Mary, His Virgin Mother. They await the Day of Judgment, when God will reward all those who have been raised up. They value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

In the course of centuries, quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems. This synod urges all to forget the past, and to work for mutual understanding and to preserve and promote together social justice, as well as peace and freedom, for the benefit of all mankind.

The Jewish Religion

The council searches into the mystery of the Church and remembers the bond that spiritually ties the people of the New Testament to Abraham's stock.

The Church acknowledges that according to God's saving design, the beginnings of her faith and her election are already found among the Patriarchs, Moses and the Prophets. She professes that all who believe in Christ—Abraham's sons, according to the faith—are included in Abraham's call. The Church cannot forget that she received the Revelation of the Old Testament through the people with whom God in His ineffable mercy concluded the ancient Covenant.

Indeed, the Church believes that by His Cross, Christ our Peace reconciled Jews and Gentiles, making both one in Himself.

The Church recalls that Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, as well as most of the early Disciples, sprang from the Jewish people.

Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation, nor did the Jews, for the most part, accept the Gospel; indeed, many opposed its spreading.

Nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of the Fathers; His gift and call are irrevocable. In company with the Prophets and

Paul the Apostle, the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and "serve Him shoulder to shoulder."

Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is so great, the council wants to foster and recommend a mutual knowledge and respect which is the fruit, above all, of Biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues.

'New People of God'

Although the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ, nevertheless what happened to Christ in His Passion cannot be attributed to all Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor to the Jews of today.

Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected by God or accursed, as if this follows from Holy Scriptures.

May all see to it, then, that in catechetical work or in preaching the Word of God, they do not teach anything that is inconsistent with the truth of the Gospel and with the spirit of Christ.

Moreover the Church, which rejects every persecution against any man, mindful of the common patrimony with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, deplores hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.

As the Church has always held and holds now, Christ underwent His Passion and death freely, because of the sins of men and out of infinite love, in order that all may reach salvation. It is, therefore, the burden of the Church's preaching to proclaim the Cross of Christ as the sign of God's all-embracing love and as the fountain from which every grace flows.

Universal Brotherhood,

Excluding Every

Discrimination

We cannot call on God, the Father of all, if we refuse to treat in a brotherly way any man, created as he is in the image of God. Man's relation to God the Father and his relation to men, his brothers are so linked together that Scripture says: "He who does not love does not know God."

The foundation is therefore removed from any theory or practice that leads to discrimination between man and man or people and people, insofar as their human dignity and the rights flowing from it are concerned.

The Church thus reproves, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against men or harassment of them because of their race, color, condition in life or religion. On the contrary, the council ardently implores the Christian faithful to "maintain good fellowship among the nations" and, if possible, to live for their part in peace with all men, so that they may truly be sons of the Father who is in heaven.

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The Statement on the Jews: An Inadequate Document

A midwestern rabbi sees the Vatican declaration as
 condescending, lacking the spirit of reconciliation.

DAVID POLISH

+ TEXTUAL analysis of Vatican Council II's statement on the Jews reveals the inadequacy of its content and the poverty of its spirit. Perhaps these failings might not be revealed in so stark a light were we not aware of the dilution of the original document and of the pressures which brought that dilution about. Elimination of the reference to Jewish "deicide" is not as significant as the frenzied maneuvers to eradicate the term. Nor do the tortured explanations for expurgating the word repair the diminished dignity of the document. Yet when the unfortunate events preceding the final draft have become merely a matter for historical research, the document itself will remain disturbing and unedifying.

We may be certain that the structure and tone of the statement and the choice of each word were weighed with utmost care, and we should therefore assess it in similar manner. We must not only study the statement on "the Jewish religion" as a unit but also read the entire Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions in which the Jewish section is lodged. To extract specific passages would lead to misrepresentation of the content and the spirit of the section as well as of the total reference to Judaism.

The statement on the Jews is enveloped in a larger framework — a far-ranging reference to other religions — in which it occupies a subordinate position. It is revealing to note the contrast in text and tone between the references to the Moslems and those to the Jews. The section on Islam speaks approvingly of the monotheism of that faith and of the

fact that its adherents "revere" Jesus "as a prophet" and "honor Mary, his virgin mother." It then acknowledges the age-old conflicts and animosities between Christians and Moslems, makes two strong appeals for reconciliation, and "urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom." In both content and spirit this section is unambiguous and straightforward.

The same cannot be said for the section on the "Jewish religion," which lacks the unequivocal conviction of the preceding section. It reflects a discordance of conflicting views which have been tortuously reconciled. It displays a restraint of spirit, as though acknowledging that it may have gone too far in its initial motivation but cannot altogether retract. One searches in vain for a clear declaration, as in the section on Islam, on the history of Christian-Jewish relations; one searches in vain for a word of authentic reconciliation.

How can a historic document about Judaism possibly overlook the tragic record of Jewish persecution in which the church over the centuries was hardly neutral? It is in the absence of the remotest reference to this record that the section on the Jews assumes a doubly unfortunate note: (1) it is condescending; (2) the weight of the entire section is shifted from a confrontation between two groups in historic controversy (as in the Islam section) to a unilateral pronouncement by one party which presumes to redress on its own terms a wrong which it does not admit. There is not a hint of contrition or atonement. The weaknesses of the pronouncement are therefore inherent. It is predicated on the un-

Rabbi Polish is spiritual leader of Beth Emet, the Free Synagogue, in Evanston, Illinois.

tenable assumption that it is the church alone which harbored a grievance against the Jewish people, and that it is for the church alone to lift (however diffidently) an age-old blood accusation without so much as issuing a call for its own repentance or for reconciliation with Israel.

Condescending, Unreconciling

The absence of a word of authentic reconciliation is clearly related to two propositions which the section sets forth: (1) that Judaism has been superseded by Christianity; (2) that (unlike the Moslems) the Jews did not accept the gospel or any portion of it.

In reference to the first proposition, it is acknowledged that Judaism and Christianity share a common source and that Jesus, Mary, the apostles and many of the disciples were Jews. But Judaism has been replaced by Christianity: "the Church is the new people of God." It is, in fact, indigenous to the very origins of Judaism: "the beginnings of her faith and her election are found already among the Patriarchs, Moses and the Prophets."

A Jew would understand, if not accept, this assertion in another context, but set as it is in a section whose climax is the lifting of the crucifixion charge, it can only be read as condescending in spirit. That condescension is particularly pronounced in the statement, "Nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers." I assume that the reference is to the patriarchs of the Jewish people. There are frequent references in Rabbinic literature to *zechut avot* (the merit of the Fathers) by virtue of which Israel endures. But for a church document, especially in the 20th century, to ascribe divine love for Israel to the saving intervention of the (pre-Christian) patriarchs, to see no other basis for God's relationship with contemporary Judaism is, in the context of this section, offensive.

Furthermore, the section indulges not only in condescension but in recrimination: "Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation, nor did the Jews, in large number, accept the Gospel; indeed, not a few opposed its spreading." This is not a mere historical observation; it is an accusation, theologically deprecating. While it is true that for the most part the Jews did not accept the gospel, it is questionable whether it is particularly helpful to mention that fact in a document intended to mitigate an ancient charge against the Jewish people, especially in view of the document's total silence on the religious history of anti-Semitism. Reference to the "time of her visitation" and to the refusal to accept the gospel carries overtones of reproach, opening all Jewry, then and now, to collective accusation, even though the "deicide" charge be lifted. To be sure, we are told that "by His cross Christ Our Peace reconciled Jews and Gentiles, making both one in Himself." But from a Catholic point of view that is

a historical event; it does not speak to the issue of Jewish-Christian relations in our time.

The mood of the sentences preceding the paragraph "absolving" the Jews is most restrained: "This Sacred Synod wants to foster and recommend that mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues." One cannot object to a bow toward "mutual understanding and respect" or "fraternal dialogues" — but such commendation is a far cry from a strong call to repudiation of animus and rejection of the past. One must not forget that even in the darkest years of the Middle Ages "fraternal dialogues" did occasionally occur. In the presence of the vacuum created by the failure to deal with the wrongs of the church against the Jews, it is inevitable that there should be circumlocution, modulation and hesitancy. It is a far cry from recommendation of "respect" and "dialogues" to that appeal for joint efforts "to preserve . . . to promote together . . . social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom" which had been addressed to Islam. It is interesting that the church should extend such an invitation to Moslems but not to Jews. And certainly the presumption that the tragic record of the past is a matter to delete or ignore does not accord with "fraternal dialogues."

A Mild Slap on the Wrist

It necessarily follows that references to anti-Semitism must likewise be attenuated. The section "decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism" — in the light of contemporary history, an understatement and a cliché. And it is in disappointing contrast with other positions taken in the total declaration, in which the church shows itself capable of strong convictions. Here we are led to a study of verbs in the document, verbs whose selection we may assume was not carelessly made. The contrast between strong and weak verbs is striking.

In the section on such religions as Hinduism and Buddhism the church "exhorts . . . dialogue and collaboration." In the section on Islam it "urges" work "to promote together . . . social justice and moral welfare." In dealing with universal brotherhood the church "reproves" discrimination on the basis of race, color, condition in life, or religion." It "ardently implores" the "Christian faithful to 'maintain good fellowship among the nations.'"

In the section on the Jews, however, the verbs become muted and somewhat circuitous. What happened to Christ "cannot be charged against all the Jews." The Jews "should not be presented as rejected by God or accursed." "May all see to it" that they do not "teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ." The note of urgency, of summoning to unequivocal action and forthright indoctrination, is missing. The strongest verb in the section is in the passage assert-

ing that the church "decries" hatred. To decry is to be grieved about an event, to be sorry about it. It is an emotional, not a moral, response such as would be denoted by the verb "condemn." It is true that "reproof" is directed against discrimination, but this admonition is found in a general section dealing with race and nationality but also including religion.

No single, firm word is said about anti-Semitism itself. And the qualifying word "nevertheless," used specifically or inferentially, is found chiefly in reference to the Jews: "Indeed not a few opposed [the gospel's] spreading. Nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their fathers." "True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ; still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected by God or accursed as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures."

Deploring of anti-Semitism is further weakened by the curiously irrelevant disclaimer, "moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love." Must the church make a special point to the effect that its grounds for opposing anti-Semitism are not political? To do so is at best gratuitous. But when one recalls the external pressures from the Arab world, this explanation must be seen as a shocking concession to those who link anti-Semitism with anti-Israel politics. Why should a religious document explain and justify its attenuated rejection of anti-Semitism?

The 'Hidden Persuasion'

The paragraph stating that the Jews "should not be presented as rejected by God or accursed, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures," is hedged by two antecedent and highly significant comments. The first opens the passage in question and leads directly into it: "Although the Church is the new people of God . . ." If this is so, by what dialectics can it be shown that the Jews are not indeed rejected? I am aware that since the concept of the "new Israel" is intrinsic to Catholic theology, more than a phrase placed in an invidious context would be required to overcome that profound dogmatic position. What the sentence seems to say is this: The Jews should not be rejected for the crucifixion, but their refusal to accept the gospel is the cause of their displacement as the true Israel. And reference to the Jewish people's failure to "recognize the time of her visitation" seems to explain the emergence of "the new people of God."

As I have indicated elsewhere, from the suppositions of certain aspects of Christian theology itself the issue of the rejection of the Jews has been rendered irrelevant. The sign of rejection has been

exile, the mark of the wandering Cain. With the emergence of Israel this sign no longer applies, and I suspect that much of the frenzy about the statement on the Jews revolves around this irrefutable fact.

How does the document handle the fact that the Jews still do not accept the gospel? By proclaiming the message of Christ within the body of the section on the Jews, by concluding the section with a ringing affirmation containing additional strong verbs: "Christ underwent His passion and death freely, because of the sins of men and out of infinite love, in order that all may reach salvation. It is, therefore, the burden of the Church's preaching to proclaim the cross of Christ as the sign of God's all-embracing love." It is not straining the point to see an evangelical thrust as the culminating theme of the statement on the Jews. It is not free of the "hidden persuasion." It concludes, in fact, as a message to the Jews. This alone negates whatever may be regarded as conciliatory in the text.

In the context of the entire section, then, the declaration that "what happened in [Christ's] passion cannot be charged against all the Jews" is not only restrained but diminished, hedged in by too many reservations and historical obstructions. Much of this fault can be attributed to the document's struggle with the New Testament. It is not true that, as the document states, the condemnation of Israel does not follow from Holy Scriptures. What is more, that condemnation has been made even more explicit by scripturally oriented church authorities whom the document chooses to overlook, giving the impression that the tradition about the "cursedness" of Israel arose by spontaneous generation. Still and all, the fact that the document seeks to separate the church from scripturally based anti-Semitism (even if it makes incorrect assumptions in doing so) gives reason for hope. This concession may some day lead to bolder ventures into biblical hermeneutics, ventures that could open the door for a truly unequivocal statement on the Jews.

Commission on Interfaith Activities

A Joint Commission of the
Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Central Conference of American Rabbis
and the Jewish Chautauqua Society

838 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021 • REGENT 7-8200

Director: RABBI BALFOUR BRICKNER

October 29, 1965

FROM: Rabbi Balfour Brickner, director

TO: Rabbis, Commissions on Interfaith Activities and
Social Action, Chairmen: Interfaith Committees and
Social Action Committees, Community Relations
Councils and Christian Social Action Organizations

SUBJECT: "On the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian
Religions" (Recently adopted Ecumenical Council's
Schema)

UAHC OFFICERS

Chairman, Board of Trustees:
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Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath

COMMISSION ON
INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES
Chairman:
Paul Dobin

The long awaited Schema was formally adopted on Friday, October 15, 1965 by a vote of 1,763 to 250 and has now been promulgated by the Pope into official Church doctrine. This text, attached, is the authoritative teaching of the Pope and the Vatican Council. Laity and clergy are under obligation to "recognize, preserve and promote those spiritual and moral goods, as well as those socio-cultural values" found among Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Jews.

The document shows the scars of the long and arduous battles through which it has passed. It is a compromise document and is, when compared with the draft previously passed last November, somewhat of a disappointment. For American Catholic-Jewish relations, however, its passage affords extended opportunities for deeper interreligious relations.

There follows an analysis of the text and some suggestions for our congregations.

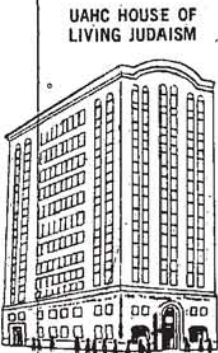
The Changes

I. Deicide

The word 'deicide' has been completely eliminated from the text. Eliminated also is the passage:

"May they (Catholic preachers and teachers) never present the Jewish people as one rejected, cursed or guilty of deicide. All that happened to Christ in His passion cannot be attributed to the whole people then alive much less to those of today."

UAHC HOUSE OF LIVING JUDAISM



The text now reads:

Although the authorities of the Jews with their followers urged the death of Christ, what happened in this passion cannot be imputed either to all the Jews then alive without distinction or to the Jews living in our time.

Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews cannot be presented as condemned or cursed by God, as though this followed from sacred scripture.

Evaluation

Some feel that the elimination of the word 'deicide' has not weakened the intent of the thought. In the words of Cardinal Bea, president of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity,

'It is obvious to anyone who reads the text and has had it explained to him, that the 'substance' of what we wished to express in the prior text by this word is found exactly and completely expressed in the new text. I well know that some give great psychological importance to this word. Nevertheless, I say: if this word is misunderstood in many regions, and if the same idea can be expressed by other more apt words, then does not pastoral prudence and Christian charity forbid us to use this word, does it not require that we explain the point in other words? I say that this is required by that same 'religious, evangelical love' which impelled John XXIII to order that this declaration be prepared and which last year inspired you to approve it. Our secretariat judged this emendation to be of great importance in order that the declaration itself be everywhere rightly understood and accepted in spite of the various difficulties. Thus, I strongly urge that you would consider this amendment in the light of pastoral prudence and evangelical charity.'

America magazine did not totally agree:

'The Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity explains that it dropped the word 'deicide' because it is odious in any context and, secondly, could give rise to false theological interpretations. But the Secretariat also says that phrases such as 'murderers of God,' 'Christ-killers,' 'the deicide people' and equivalent expressions should disappear from the Christian vocabulary. If the Secretariat can say this, cannot the Council also say it, making it plain that it intends to ban the use of certain epithets against Jews without implying any diminution of Christian faith in the divinity of Christ?'

(America magazine, October 16, 1965)

Our Own View

A. The word ought to have been retained if for no other reason than to indicate the Vatican's clear repudiation of these anti-Jewish sentiments expressed in previous ages by such Church theologians as St. Justin, Tertullian, Origen, St. John Chrysostom and even St. Augustine. Granted that an Ecumenical council is restricted to dealing with 'gospel truths' as it sees it, and not with homiletical interpretations of texts, no matter how such an inflamed rhetoric may have turned

Christians against Jews, yet as Father Flannery has written in his remarkable book, 'The Anguish of the Jews':

"Behind the invective lies the very clear theology of Judaism... It is this theology moreover rather than the vituperation that inflicted greatest injury to the image of the Jew... Christians, as well as Jews can only deplore these sermons..."

B. The language substituted for the 'deicide' phrase leaves open the interpretation that at least some Jews were in some way responsible for Christ's death. That fact notwithstanding, the text seems to say, Christians ought to overlook this all too tragic 'fact' as recounted in the gospels. Thus, the present document preserves the authenticity of the gospel texts.

II. Anti-Semitism

There then follows a new and lengthy paragraph condemning anti-Semitism:

"...the Church which rejects every persecution against any man, mindful of the common patrimony with the Jews, moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, deplores hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism directed against Jews at any time and by anyone."

The former draft read:

"The Council in her rejection of any injustice, is mindful of this common patrimony between Christians and Jews. Thus, the Council deplores and condemns hatred, persecution of Jews, whether they arose in former or in our own days."

Notice that the adopted text "deplores hatred, persecution, etc." while the previous draft used the word "condemns". There is a difference in the force of these two words. To "deplore" is to express regret. To "condemn", especially when used in a church document, carries the weight of prohibition.

At a news conference prior to the vote on the text, Cardinal Bea indicated that "heresies are condemned. Not sins."

Evaluation

The inserted paragraph deploring persecution makes no reference to the role that the Church has played in the tragedy that has befallen Jews. There is no word of repentance, or atonement, and there is nothing of the spirit suggested by Father Edward Flannery when he wrote in the introduction to "The Anguish of the Jews":

"Christians, on the contrary, even highly educated ones, are all but totally ignorant of it (the history of anti-Semitism) except for contemporary developments. They are ignorant of it for the simple reason that anti-Semitism does not appear in their history books. Histories of the Middle Ages--and even of the Crusades--can be found in which the word 'Jew' doesn't appear, and there are Catholic dictionaries and encyclopedias in which the term 'anti-Semitism' is not listed. There seems to be only one conclusion: the pages Jews have memorized have been torn from our histories of the Christian era."

III. 'Jerusalem Did Not Recognize the Time of Her Visitation...'

The original draft contained a paragraph which began:

"Even though a large part of the Jews did not accept the Gospel, they remained dear to God for the sake of the Patriarchs..."

The present statement reflecting the Jewish non-acceptance of the New Testament is as follows:

"Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation (Luke 19: 44) nor did the Jews for the most part accept the Gospel; indeed, many opposed its spreading."

Evaluation

When one looks at the quoted text in context, it seems to refer not to Jesus and the new gospel but to the destruction of Jerusalem over which Jesus mournfully lamented. This is a typical prophetic pattern, familiar to and understandably used by a person like Jesus, who may have seen himself in the prophetic mold.

IV. "For the sake of the Fathers" and the phrase, "Although the Church is the new people of God"

The adopted text reads:

"Nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of the Fathers; His gift and call are irrevocable."

The previous draft read as follows:

"Even though a large part of the Jews did not accept the Gospel, they remained dear to God for the sake of the Patriarchs."
(Romans 11:28)

Evaluation

Inherent in the voted text is a difficult point in Christian theology which even the Apostle Paul reflects in his writings. He recognized that the Gospel does not set aside the eternity of God's covenant with Israel. (See Romans 11:1) If the Church is the new people of God, is Israel, the first people of God, now supplanted and/or displaced by the Church? Paul said: "No!"

"...hath God cast away His people? God forbid..."

See also Romans, chapters 9 and 10. In the 3rd chapter of this same book, Paul writes:

"What advantage then hath the Jew or what profit is the circumcision? Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

As God's chosen people, a covenant exists between God and Israel that is irrevocable (See Gen. 17:7).

God is an El E'munah -- A Faithful God (see Deut. 32:4) where faithfulness and lovingkindness is from generation to generation. (See Psalm 100:5.) As God

doesn't change, neither does His covenant commitment to Israel. Israel remains God's chosen people even if Israel breaks the covenant. Paul understood this. To say then that Israel was rejected by reason of her faithlessness would not only malign God's character but would contradict the inner meaning of both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. If God could reject Israel in preference for the Church, God might also some day be able to reject the Church in preference for another as yet unfound religious approach. To argue that God favors the Christian at the expense of the Jew is to reduce God to a changing, fickle God whose promises are at best conditional and words transitory and finite.

Nevertheless, there did, and to a certain degree still does, exist within Church teaching the belief that she had entered upon Israel's inheritance, displacing Israel as God's chosen. As gentile Christianity cut loose from its earlier Jewish moorings, Catholic theologians increasingly taught that the Church was not simply an inheritor (one among many) of God's promises but the sole and exclusive heir of that promise. The loss of Palestine in the year 70 of the Common Era was "evidence" that God had removed His favor from the Jewish people. That the Jewish people continued was dismissed as an anachronism. During the Middle Ages, their continued claim to chosenness was an affront to the Church.

In light of the above, what is the impact for Judaism, and for the Church, of the addition into the text of the Schema of the highly evocative phrase: "the new people of God?" The Council cannot be reasserting a classical Church position of Jewish displacement since the text contains the phrase: "His gift and call are irrevocable." Then, is it saying that the Jew has never and can never lose his unique position in God's favor? If so, then the continued existence of the Jewish people is a necessity and they should be held most dear, not for the sake of the fathers but for their own sake as God's chosen people past, present and future.

Finally, what theological importance does the Church give to the re-emergence of the State of Israel? Does not the reestablishment of the State invalidate any suggestion which Christianity might have made that the loss of Palestine was proof of God's withdrawal from the Jewish people? Does it not reinforce the Jewish conviction that the Jewish people were always especially favored by God? Should not the Church recognize Israel as the practical fulfillment of an eternal spiritual promise?

These are issues about which Jews and Catholics might profitably dialogue.

V. Both Drafts call for Dialogue

The adopted version reads:

"Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is so great, the Council wants to foster and recommend a mutual knowledge and respect which is the fruit above all Biblical and theological studies, as well as of fraternal dialogue."

The earlier version used the same language essentially.

Evaluation

This may be the most important part of the Schema as far as American Catholic-Jewish relationships are concerned.

Certainly, this part of the Schema has been given a high order of priority by American Catholicism. A sub-Commission for Catholic-Jewish Relations of the United

States Bishops' Commission for Ecumenical Affairs has already been created. Its chairman is Bishop Francis P. Leipzig of Baker City, Oregon and its executive director is Msgr. William Baum now on the staff of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. Assigned to that Commission are some of American Judaism's closest Roman Catholic friends: Rev. Raymond Bosler, editor of Indianapolis Diocesan newspaper, The Criterion; Rev. Edward H. Flannery, editor of the Providence, Rhode Island Visitor; Msgr. Francis Lally, editor of the Boston Pilot; Msgr. Daniel Cantwell of the Catholic Council of Chicago; Rev. Edward Duff, S.J., Holy Cross College, Worcester, Massachusetts and Msgr. George Higgins, director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

When the sub-Commission was announced, Bishop Leipzig issued a statement in Rome declaring the declaration to be "of great significance." He conceded that the Schema had "minor imperfections" and "weaker expressions than one could wish." The important thing, however, he said, "is the overall text and the overall spirit." "I look forward to the time when the Council's wish for more deepened conversations with our Jewish brethren will be implemented and I pledge my wholehearted support toward that important purpose."

The Jewish religious community is split over the matter of dialogue with Roman Catholicism on religious items. The Orthodox feel that such dialogue must be restricted only to social action matters. It was because of this fundamental difference that despite a series of long meetings the major national Jewish organizations could not jointly issue a statement on the Schema at the time of the vote. Two national organizations did issue separate statements.

Does or should Reform Judaism share the Orthodox view? Reform Judaism has no position restricting the subjects of dialogue. As a matter of fact, representatives of Reform Judaism have often discussed matters of theology with their Christian brethren.

VI. Recommendations:

A. Institute a course of study in your congregation which will examine in depth the details of the Schema and its implications.

The following texts may be helpful:

1. The Anguish of the Jews -- E. H. Flannery
(MacMillan, 1965)
2. The Teaching of Contempt -- Jules Isaac
(Holt, Rinehart & Winston, NY, 1962)
3. Judaism and Christianity -- James Parkes (Univ. of Chicago Press
Chicago, 1948)
4. We Jews and Jesus -- Samuel Sandmel (Oxford Univ. Press, N.Y.,
1965)
5. The Faith of Other Men -- Wilfred Cantwell Smith (Mentor Books,
N.Y., 1965, paperback)
6. The New American Jew -- Time Essay (Time magazine, June 25,
1965)

B. Invite a qualified Catholic to speak to your congregation on the implications of the Schema for American Catholic-Jewish relations.

C. Sponsor a panel with Catholic-Jewish spokesmen on the theme: "Changing Theological Images We Have of One Another."

D. Prepare a dialogue group in your congregation. You may write us for guidelines for establishing a lay dialogue.

E. Prepare a youth and/or adult "We Speak for Judaism Team" in your congregation to meet with their counterpart in the Catholic community. Write us for a guide for establishing "We Speak for Judaism Team."

F. Have your temple library subscribe to a few Catholic and Protestant journals. We recommend the following:

1. America magazine, 329 West 108 Street, New York, N. Y.
2. Commonweal, 232 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016
3. Christian Century, 407 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill. 60605
4. Christianity and Crisis, 537 West 121 Street, New York, N.Y. 10027

G. Conduct an institute either for religious educators, laymen or clergy on the subject: "What Do We Teach About Each Other?" Write us for a copy of such a program conducted at the North Shore Synagogue, Syosset, L. I.

H. Keep the Commission on Interfaith Activities of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations informed of your activities.





Jews Invite Non-Hebrews To Talks

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 13—(AP)—The Union of American Hebrew Congregations has spanned a gulf nearly a century old by inviting Protestant and Catholic observers to its 48th biennial assembly.

The UAHC's tradition of conducting conferences closed to non-Jews was the first to fall as the organization opened a five-day meeting in San Francisco today.

NCWC NEWS SERVICE (Domestic) -8-
CATHOLICS ARE OFFICIAL OBSERVERS AT JEWISH MEETING 11/16/65 - Tu.
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It marked the first time that "Catholic and Protestant clergy and laymen have been present to observe a national Jewish religious meeting," said Irvin Kane, chairman of the board of trustees of the UAHC.

Catholics Official Observers At U.S. Jewish Assembly

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commission on interfaith relations. Sister Mary Kathleen, chairman of the committee on intergroup relations and curriculum of the San Francisco archdiocese's department of education, was one of the Catholic observers.

"The most impressive thing about the discussions was seeing the groups coming to grips with problems confronting all religiously committed people—to today's man; how to make our religion meaningful to our young people; why, if such a large percentage of people profess belief in God, so few attend their lead pressed for the document's wording, Rabbi Eisendrath commented, is "provocative."

He also questioned the historical accuracy of the text's statement that "the Jewish authorities and those who follow them have persecuted without respite those who profess to be Christians."

down one finally adopted," Rabbi Eisendrath said. The earlier version, contained in the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, said Jews are not guilty of "deicide" and it condemned anti-Semitism. The version finally adopted the word "deicide" and said the Church "deplores" anti-Semitism.

Jews Act To Close A Gulf

U. A. H. C. Invites Other Churchmen to Biennial Assembly

The U. A. H. C. has more than one million members. Figuring prominently in the opening ceremonies were the 25 observers composed of ministers and two nuns. They were selected by the National Council of Churches and the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Two of the ministers, a Protestant and a Catholic, are to participate in an interdenominational conference.

time I, emperor of Rome, prohibited Jews from engaging in conversion activities and prospective converts from embracing Judaism, under penalty of death.

Subsequent centuries of persecution discouraged Jews from seeking converts.

But in the present day, the conference spokesman said, there are many in liberal Jewish circles who would favor "seeking new converts and

Jews Open Parley To Christians

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 13 (AP)—The Union of American Hebrew Congregations has spanned a gulf nearly a century old by inviting Protestant and Catholic observers to its forty-eighth biennial assembly.

The UAHC's tradition of closing conferences to non-Jews was the first to fall as the organization opened its five-day meeting Tuesday when the delegates debate a proposal for missions to convert "the unsynagogued and the unchurched" to Judaism.

atics, attending a Jewish religious conference here first non-Jewish observer invited, reported yesterday the experience in "a greater affinity with people outside our own church."

tended led him to this conclusion: "They're having the same basic problems we are having. They are facing the same question, 'Is this faith really relevant, is it meaningful?' It is no longer

Join Protestants as Observers Catholics at Jewish Parley

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Catholics and Protestants were official observers at the 48th biennial assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations here.

over the different ways in which we worship." Sister Rose Maureen also remarked that "personally, I was delighted" that Reform Judaism is undertaking a new program of proselytizing, of seeking non-Jewish as well as Jewish members.

Father Shanahan spoke up, however, to emphasize: "Basically, our goal is still

Reform Jewish Congregations in the United States and Canada, will attend some sessions with the commission of the 25th Biennial Assembly of the Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, women's organization.

Catholics' View on Jewish Session

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In each of the two faiths, he said, "Some members just aren't buying the message of social justice—of civil rights—and some are." As a result, he said, he felt an even closer affinity with some of the

her strongest impressions was that during a Jewish discussion of prayer, "I felt that every word being said was being said to all of us... We all worship the same God."

Hebrew Union's Ecumenical Note

The Biennial Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations will open Tuesday in San Francisco.

Irvin Fane of Kansas City, chairman of the National Council of Churches, and

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over the different ways in which we worship."

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Catholics' View on Jewish Session

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In each of the two faiths, he said, "Some members just aren't buying the message of social justice—of civil rights—and some are." As a result, he said, he felt an even closer affinity with some of the Jews he met—who are buying

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Jewish Assembly Welcomes Observers

Doors Open to Gentiles

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The UAHC's tradition of conducting conferences closed to non-Jews was the first to fall as the organization opened a five-day meeting in San Francisco today.

Another startling innovation may come Tuesday when the more than 3,000 delegates de-

bate a proposal for missions to convert "the unsynagogued and the unchurched" to Judaism.

The Jews have made little effort at proselytizing for the past 16 centuries.

REPRESENTATIVES of 664 Reform Jewish temples in the United States and Canada were in attendance for the keynote speech by Rabbi Ely E. Pilchik of South Orange, N. J., whose topic was "What Is a Jew?" The UAHC itself has more than one million members.

Figuring prominently in the opening ceremonies were the observers composed of ministers and two nuns. They were selected by the National Council of Churches and the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Two of the ministers, a Protestant and a Catholic, are to participate in an interdenominational forum later in the assembly. Discussion will center on the "attitude of Christians and what it means to the synagogue."

Jews Drop Ban on Gentiles at Major Meeting

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Attend Jewish Convention

SAN FRANCISCO (RNS)—Catholic and Protestant observers attended the General Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations for the first time in the history of the Reform Jewish organization.

Irvin Fane, of Kansas City, chairman of the board of trustees of UAHC, welcomes the observers.

"This is the first time that Catholic and Protestant clergy and laymen have been present to observe a national Jewish religious meeting," Fane said. "We are delighted to have them with us. We want them to see the way we function. Although the faiths may disagree on some issues, better understanding must come as a result of hearing how each of us debates the theological and social issues of the day."

The observers were designated by the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the National Council of Churches.