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Box 107, Folder 9, Suffolk Board of Rabbis [New York]. 13
February 1977.



Rabbi Tobias Rothenberg, D.E., D.D.

HUNTINGTON JEWISH CENTER
510 Park Avenue
Huntington, N. Y. 11743

א'א
February 16, 1977

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th St
N.Y.C. 10022

Dear Marc, Shalom !

Needless to say you made a superb presentation as always.

It must be heard to have to measure ^{up} to maximum expectations every time one appears in public.

We made ^a tape which you may want to have for your own purposes. In fact everything was carefully taped. We hope that you will have no objection to our making them available to every Rabbi, School, and group in Suffolk.

I enclose the write-up which we received in Newsday on Mon. Feb. 14. I can't understand how the reporter omitted completely any reference to your appearance and paper. She did the same for Al Schiff. We are taking the matter up with the Publisher and Editor.

We are disturbed also by omission of the Episcopal priests' authorized letter. The whole article lends itself to the tone of hysteria which we tried so hard to avoid.

Without desiring to impose further upon your valuable time and esteemed friendship we are interested in your reactions to this matter and to the entire Conference.

Thanks again !

Sincerely yours,

א'א

Tobie

CONFERENCE ON "HOW TO COMBAT THE MISSIONARY THRUST IN SUFFOLK"

sponsored by The Suffolk Board of Rabbis

Sunday, February 13th, 1-4:30 PM

at the

Huntington Jewish Center, 510 Park Avenue, Huntington

Chairman - Dr. Tobias Rothenberg

Coffee and cake in the Social Hall - 12:30-1:00 PM

P R O G R A M

Welcome	Mr. Jerry Kaye, Pres. HJC
Introductory Remarks	Rabbi Morris Shapiro, Pres. Suffolk Bd Rabbis
Updating on the Missionary Activities	Mr. Hesh Morgan, Anti-Missionary Institute
A Personal Experience - How We Emerged	Larry Cohen and Rifka, Hineni
Introduction of Guest Speaker	Rabbi Stanley Wernick, Past Pres. Suffolk Bd Rabbis
Address - "Evangelism & the Jew- Constructive Alternatives"	Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum American Jewish Committee
Introduction to Teaching Demonstration	Rabbi Bart Shallat, Secy Suffolk Bd Rabbis
How We Can Combat in the Classroom the Missionary Effort!	Rabbi Lawrence Colton, Union Reform Temple, Freeport
What We Are Doing Already in Suffolk	Rabbis & Laymen
Introduction of a Guest Speaker	Dr. Tobias Rothenberg
Our Best Response-Better Education More Extensive Outreach	Dr. Alvin Schiff, Exec V.P. Board of Jewish Education of NY, a Federation Agency
Call To Action	

4:30 PM - Shalom!

Thanks to the Huntington Jewish Center for the use
of its facilities and to the Sisterhood for the
gracious serving.

C A L L T O A C T I O N !

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a Task Force on "The Jewish Community and Evangelism" comprising members of the Board of Rabbis and interested persons be formed to deal on an ongoing basis with the Missionary programs.
2. That a Series of four County-wide Youth Conclaves be organized to acquaint our teen-agers with each other, and to teach them what to answer when accosted, and to stimulate their Jewish Identity, pride, and self-knowledge.
3. That instruction on Comparative Religion be initiated in the Religious School on the High School level.
4. That suitable curricula be worked out for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah age level to teach our youngsters how to answer the Missionary.
5. That coffee houses for our older teen-agers and college-age young people be set up in various areas by individual synagogues or by several acting in concord.
6. That a Panel of Rabbis who are professionally trained in counseling be formed to work with young people who are involved with the missionary groups.

C A L L T O S E R V I C E ! !

We shall need many willing hearts and helping hands!
If you are willing to give of your time and ideas, please
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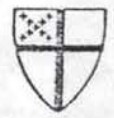
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POST OFFICE BOX 339
18 MAGNOLIA PLACE

February 9, 1977

Kevin Lahart
NEWSDAY
Stewart Avenue
Garden City, NY 11530

Dear Mr. Lahart:

As a person deeply concerned with interreligious relations, I feel that it was in no way a service to anyone for Newsday to give space in last Sunday's edition to a tract on why Jews ought to become Jewish-Christians ("Some Wait for the Messiah -- For Others He has Come", February 6 Ideas section, p. 5).

Any Jew or Christian is free to believe that his religion is the only correct one. So also anyone is free to understand Jews and Christians as having equally valid religious experiences and beliefs. But whatever stand we choose to take about another's religious position, the Ideas section of Newsday is not the place to proclaim the exclusive rightness of our religious beliefs and to attack the integrity of all other religions. This is, of course, precisely what Stephen Campbell did in his two column article. He then invited your Jewish readership to "see the light" and espouse his beliefs. I am very surprised that Newsday even agreed to print such an inflammatory piece.

Now that you have published Mr. Campbell's article, however, I feel it is important that your readers be clearly informed that the views of this "Jewish-Christian" spokesman are emphatically not those of most Christians.

I urge you, therefore, to publish the enclosed statement to provide your readers with a more balanced view of how Christians feel about Judaism and the "Jewish-Christian" phenomenon.

The statement has the full support of the Right Reverend Jonathan G. Sherman; Bishop of Long Island.

Sincerely,

Chairman
Commission on
Christian-Jewish Relations
Diocese of Long Island

DIOCESE OF LONG ISLAND
COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

"CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS: THE THREAT OF 'JEWISH-CHRISTIANITY'"
The Reverend Lawrence McCoombe, Commission Chairman

It is time to make clear to the public how most Christians feel about Judaism and about the "Jewish-Christian" movement.

I am confident that I speak for most Christians in saying that we recognize Judaism to be a valid and positive way of life. The integrity of the religious tenets of Jewish faith is beyond question. This will sound rather patronizing to many Jewish ears. Still it needs to be said: it's all right with most Christians for Jews to be Jewish. Christianity is not a "better" religion. Christian beliefs are not "superior" to Jewish ones. They are, of course, different -- not better, just different.

When Christianity and Judaism parted company in the first and second centuries, there was a lot of name-calling on both sides. It was like a divorce: both parties had to feel justified about the "rightness" of the split. So Christians called Jews blind to Jesus' messiahship; and Jews called Christians infidels.

Historically, the name-calling persisted long after that parting of the ways. Christians, since they were the ruling majority, used the Jews' "rejection" of Jesus' messiahship as good and proper cause for keeping Jews out of positions of power and confining them to a second class citizenship -- unless, of course, they became Christians. The Jewish community in turn became understandably suspicious in all its dealings with the Christian majority, especially in religious matters.

We have come a long way in the recent past toward changing this pattern of prejudice. Although discrimination remains a problem, it

is not now as dangerous to be Jewish as it once was. (This is not grounds for Christian self-congratulation: we've simply become less involved in playing a very harmful game which we shouldn't have been playing in the first place.)

Christians and Jews today have become more willing to discuss their religious beliefs with each other, to take the first tentative steps toward mutual understanding, to leave fear and mistrust behind and enter into a dialogue in which Christians are not out to show Jews where they "went wrong", and in which Jews are not as afraid that someone is out to make them into Christians.

We are beginning to be able to acknowledge and respect each other's religious traditions as representing positive ways of life. Christians are realizing that Judaism has its own integrity and needs no Christian correction. Together we are beginning to see that we can behave as equals, that we do not need to make each other's beliefs systems "wrong". We are siblings, each possessing his own validity, vitality and wholeness. Christians no longer pray for the conversion of the Jews. It is all right now with most Christians for Jews to be Jews and Christians Christians.

This climate of growing respect and understanding is now threatened by the recent growth of something called -- for want of a better name -- "Jewish-Christianity". The zealous proponents of "Jewish-Christianity" aim their proselytizing activities specifically at Jews. They maintain that real fulfillment for a Jew consists in accepting Jesus (they call him Yeshua) as messiah. Their message is grounded in the notion that to accept Jesus "is the most natural, wonderful and, above all, spiritual thing that can happen to a Jewish person." Once again the "incompleteness" of Jewish faith is being preached.

The current rise of "Jewish-Christian" missionary activity in Long Island is distressing to both Jews and Christians. It is upsetting

to Jews because it impugns the integrity of Jewish belief. It is alarming to Christians because it misrepresents Christianity. It is disturbing to both Jews and Christians because it undermines the basis of mutual respect which it has taken so long for us to establish.

Perhaps the greatest danger in this "Jewish-Christian" missionary activity is that the Jewish community may draw back from interfaith dialogue, convinced that the "Jewish-Christian" movement is simply a highly visible manifestation of the otherwise tacit intent of all Christians to convert Jews to Christianity.

We wish, therefore, to make it clear that as Christians we acknowledge and affirm the integrity of Judaism and disavow completely the message and the methods of these "Jewish-Christian" groups.

February 9, 1977



February 15, 1977

Ms. Donna J. Stone
President
National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse
111 East Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60601

My dear Donna,

Thank you for your warm and thoughtful note.

I know that Ann enjoyed as much as I did the very stimulating and constructive discussion that we had.

Of course, we want to continue to be helpful. Please feel free to call on us as the needs warrant.

My warmest good wishes to your father whom I remember in such positive ways from our meeting together at The Religious Heritage of America.

Cordially, as ever,

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
National Director
Interreligious Affairs

MHT:RPR

cc: Brian Fraser
Dean Gitter
Ann Wolfe

bc: Bert Gold
John Heyman