

CD-1073 Transcription

The Killeen Chair of Theology & Philosophy Lecture Series,

St. Norbert College [1]. 19 March 1992.

Michael Lukens:

-- in our series for the academic year 1991-92. I'm Michael Lukens, and we, on behalf of the whole -- the faculties of Philosophy and Religious Studies, let me express our gratitude that you're here with us. I want to call now on Father Robert Morneau, Auxiliary Bishop for the Diocese of Green Bay, for our opening prayer.

Robert Morneau:

On Tuesday evening I was in this auditorium for a tribute to Benny Goodman, an orchestra was here, and it was sweet music in my ears. And this evening is even sweeter music to have dialogue between the Jewish and Catholic communities. Twenty-seven years ago, in October of 1965, as the Vatican Council was coming to a formal closing, a decree was issued on the dialogue between Catholics and Jews. [01:00] One paragraph in that statement reads as follows: "Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is so great, this sacred synod wishes to further and recommend mutual understanding and respect which is a fruit above all of biblical and theological studies and of

dialogue." In that light I'd like to offer this prayer which is common to our two traditions: May God be gracious to us and bless us and may God's face shine upon us, that your way be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations, that the peoples praise you, oh God, let all the peoples praise you. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations on earth. [02:00] Let the peoples praise you, oh God, let all the peoples praise you. The earth has yielded us increase. God, our God, has blessed us. May God continue to bless us, that the ends of the earth revere God. Amen.

Michael Lukens:

Dr. Thomas A. Manion, President of St. Norbert College, will bring us the Greeting for the College. Dr. Manion.

Thomas Manion:

Thank you very much, Mike. It's certainly a pleasure and a privilege for me this evening to be able to extend the official greetings and warm welcome to each and every one of you on behalf of the entire college community. On behalf of the Killeen Chair and of the Jewish Centennial Committee, we offer a special [03:00] welcome to our honored and (inaudible) guest, to the Right Reverend Rembert Weakland, and to Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum.

I'm told we'll begin before the end of the evening. (laughter). The Killeen Chair was established in 1984. Since that time we've had opportunities to bring nationally and internationally recognized scholars to the campus to share their wisdom and knowledge and understanding (inaudible) with the entire greater Green Bay community. And certainly, the mission of the Killeen Chair continues to be fulfilled this evening. We are particularly pleased -- I think this is the most appropriate time, the Feast of St. Joseph, that's a very special day in the [Augustine?] community, and during this season where both the Catholic and [04:00] Jewish communities prepare for their High Holy Days, for us (inaudible), and we are very pleased that the program is being sponsored by the college and by the Jewish Centennial Committee. I received a letter last week from Abbott Killeen telling me that he was very sorry that he would not be able to be with us this evening because of health reasons, but he would be with us in spirit and prayer. And I say that something has changed in that, because Abbott Killeen is sitting here, appears well, and I would like to recognize Abbott Killeen. (applause) Abbott Killeen, we know you will always be with us in spirit, but it's very nice with you here in person. Thank you. I salute the [05:00] members of the faculties of the Religious Studies Department and the Philosophy Department for the continued outstanding work they do. Killeen Chair, we

congratulate the members of the Jewish Centennial Committee for the wonderful, marvelous program that they continue to bring to us throughout this year and the reminder of the many, many contributions that the Jewish community has given to the [common?] community to this region. Congratulations, (inaudible). We are delighted to be part of this celebration. So to each of you we extend again a warm welcome. We have the most appropriate topic. We have the most knowledgeable and experienced speakers. We're in the right place together at the right time and we look forward to a good evening. Thank you. (applause) [06:00]

Michael Lukens:

As most of you know, this kind of an event takes a lot of planning, has to start long in advance. The discussion of the Committee, at least a year ago when we talked about this March date, someone always raises the possibility of a problem in terms of the weather. And I actually didn't think anything about that. I woke up this morning and it was gorgeous. Isn't that right? I mean, today was simply a gorgeous day. I wasn't paying attention to the weather outside of this area. It was brought to my attention mid-morning when Karen [Kasick?] who is the Killeen staff associate called and said that nothing was leaving the New York area. Rabbi Tanenbaum did make it to Detroit, and [07:00]

we are assuming is in an aircraft between Detroit and Green Bay. We are hopeful that that's the case. So we have to -- some adjusting to the program and we are going to begin this evening as you would expect given that announcement, with Archbishop Weakland.

It's my privilege to introduce to you the Most Reverend Rembert T. Weakland. Archbishop Weakland entered religious life as a benedict and novice at St. Vincent Arch Abbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania in 1945, and made his solemn profession as a monk in 1949 in France. He was ordained a priest in 1951, pursued an academic career in music [08:00] with studies in Italy, France, Germany, as well as the Julliard School in New York. From 1957 to 1963, he taught as part of the music faculty at St. Vincent's College in Latrobe and subsequently served a number of positions in his Order, including (inaudible) Arch Abbott of St. Vincent Arch Abbey, and Abbott Primate of the International Order of St. Benedict with his offices in Rome starting in 1967 and was elected to a second term in 1973. In the wider church, his appointments include membership on the Commission for Implementing the Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. In 1968, he presided at a meeting of Monastic Superiors in Bangkok, and as he told us in an informal session this afternoon, reminded [09:00] us this was the meeting at which

Thomas [Merton?] was one of the principal speakers and at which time Father Merton met his tragic death. And it was Archbishop Weakland who administered the final anointing. In this country, he is best known for serving as the Chairperson of the Committee which drafted the Bishop's Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the US Economy. In fact, he was one of the featured speakers a few years ago when the Killeen Chair sponsored a special symposium on this Pastoral letter. He continues to serve as the Chair of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and in the dialogue between Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. He has been the Archbishop of the Milwaukee Diocese since 1977 and in such proximity he has always been [10:00] a close friend of St. Norbert College. He is known to us for his strong leadership, his generous sensitivity, and it's always a great pleasure to have Archbishop Weakland with us. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you Archbishop Rembert Weakland.

(applause)

Rembert Weakland:

After that, I'm afraid to open my mouth. (laughter) Abbott Killeen and friends, all. When I heard that Marc might be a little late I thought of that famous story about the pastor who was setting the stations and called out [11:00] on a sick call,

you know that famous story? He was called out to the middle of stations and he asked the sexton to continue. And when he came back about a half hour later, the sexton was saying, "The twenty-fourth station, Pontius Pilate, (inaudible) Mary Magdalene. (laughter) I thought what would happen is that if Marc doesn't get here, I'm going to take my little beanie out and do the second half for you. (laughter) As Mike was reading my biography, I couldn't help but have the feeling that I'm a has-been. (laughter) You know, like the great musicians don't die, they just fade away. (laughter) I'm in that category now with Robert. But I'm delighted to be here and to talk about the Jewish Catholic dialogue at this moment. It's an important [12:00] moment.

Twenty-five years after Vatican II now, it's easy for us all to kind of count our gains in our interfaith dialogues to say how much has been accomplished in a very short time, and it is short if one looks at the history of Judaism and Catholicism, and then to kind of coast along into the future. But such an attitude right now would not only be foolish, but it would be very dangerous. And I would like to say a few words, first of all, about this moment of history before we face that future, and then talk a little bit about some of the themes that I believe that dialogue must pick up. I begin with this moment of history,

because it is important. Why is it so important to analyze where we are historically, and thus place our dialogue between Jews and Christians on a firmer footing [13:00] for that future? The first reason it seems to me is this: In our contemporary historical moment, it's taking on a rather unusual coloring because the generation of survivors of the Holocaust is dying out. But we enter then into a new historical moment where there soon will be no eye witnesses of those sufferings. Their stories will have to be told in second-hand accounts or in and through their writings. And the new generation will know only what it has read. It will not have experienced the emotion of the teller and the way in which that emotion was communicated. In the Jewish community, there is a need to keep the intensity of the story alive. As I think about that, I can't help but think that we resemble in a way [14:00] the period when the gospels were first written. A few decades after the event, and as the survivors of those events began to die out, there was a need to have a perpetual chronicle and somehow capture what those events meant. The memory must not fade. I am sure that is why there has been a proliferation of Holocaust museums around the country. What if people, and especially us Christians, forget? Then could it happen again? Memory, in this case, must be institutionalized. That such a fear is a real one can be seen by the recent revisionist approaches to the whole Holocaust event

among the younger generation, I am sure that no one in his or her right mind takes seriously [15:00] those theories that the Holocaust did not historically take place. But the mere fact that such theories are propounded in our day by some is worrisome. The increase in anti-Semitic incidence on college campuses gives rise to authentic fears among all of us. Even if there's no denial of the events themselves, their significance and their importance, could be diminished by the next generation. As one moves further and further from the historical events, their truth, their impact, their significance could get lost to the other more contemporary experiences. Moreover, we see as we get further from the events, that there are different memories of the same event. Such a difference was evident in the question of Carmelite [16:00] Convent at Auschwitz. These different memories can also become very divisive. We saw that in reactions to the speeches with Cardinal Glemp. We also were aware of these differences in memory during the controversies over [Waldheim?]'s earlier years. There seems to be also a Christian tendency to want to forgive and forget and move on, without analyzing all of the events that led up to the Holocaust. Not only are there different memories developing, but also divergencies on how to heal those memories but not lose their significance. All of these approaches are characteristic now of our day. And the fear remains that much will be glossed

over in order to create a new, but not necessarily, healthy irenicism. [17:00]

Lastly, about the points I want to make about our contemporary scene, I sense that there's been a shift or a change of attitude among many of the actors with regard to the State of Israel.

This is certainly true in my own Catholic church. There's also been a shift with regard to our own government in relationship to the State of Israel. And all of these changes are

(inaudible), not just split (inaudible) along the denominational lines. I would have to state honestly that there seems to be less sympathy among Christians now for the cause of the State of Israel than perhaps there was a few decades ago. And this erosion of sympathy among Christians can also have its effects on how one perceives then the relationship between the Jewish faith and it's attachment to the land. [18:00] As mentioned,

these changes I think are affecting both Jews and Catholics.

It's often difficult for some in the dialogue to keep all of these issues, political and religious, separate in their own approaches. But the erosion of sympathy for the State of Israel, I think is with us for a long period. It will not go away soon.

And it does affect the dialogue. I believe our historical moment, then, is one of transition. And for that reason, all transition moments are important ones. You hate to live as a

transition person. We all want to be those who are in a period that is more stable. Yet I'm convinced that people in a transition mode have great, great witness and have a great responsibility. How we deal with issues and how we lay the ground for attitudes for the future now, [19:00] is going to be most important. So much for how I see the now.

I want to go on now to something about the demands on us Christians for the future. I'm going to direct this specific section to the Christians, and especially the Catholics, present here. First of all, to the Catholics and the Christians present here, I would like to say that we have not yet finished the task of responding to the Holocaust. The fact that such a horrendous event took place in our day, to a country that was historically imbued with Christian principles, and to the almost total silence of so much of the rest of Christianhood, still demands of us an answer. I am not just referring to an historical analysis of the events that led up [20:00] to the Holocaust, but to all those aspects of Catholic tradition and teaching, all those pre-suppositions and attitudes about Jews and the Jewish faith that were the sources of the Holocaust, and that could well still be with us (inaudible), if not patently, it's still a part of Catholic practice. It is true that the Church and Vatican Council II repudiated the whole theory of contempt, but

I am not so sure that all the [faithful capitals?] have accepted that repudiation and made it their own. The document of Vatican Council II that dealt with this repudiation is well known, *Nostra Aetate*, promulgated on October 28, 1965. Two short paragraphs contained this new teaching. I quote them -- that [21:00] there still remains a glimpse of triumphalism or a claim of superiority on the part of the Church; nevertheless, coming after centuries of the teaching of contempt for the Jews, this text remains extremely remarkable. And I quote: "Although the Jewish authorities with their followers pressed for the death of Jesus, still those things which were perpetrated during his passion, cannot be ascribed indiscriminately to all the Jews living at the time nor to the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be represented as rejected by God or accursed as if that follows from Holy Scripture. All should therefore take care that in holding religious instruction and preaching the Word of God, [22:00] they teach nothing which is not in keeping with the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ. Moreover, the Church, which condemns all persecutions against any people, mindful of the common inheritance with the Jews, and motivated not by political considerations but by the religious charity of gospel, deploras feelings of hatred, persecutions, and demonstrations of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews at whatever time and by

whomsoever." That's a powerful paragraph. But it is one thing for a church council to try to do away with the deicide charge, but it is another thing to have in place new pastoral practices that implement that vision and eliminate the vestiges of past attitudes. We have not yet [23:00] totally done so.

In the USA, the Jewish community has worked well with us in this process of creating some new guidelines for catechesis as well as new insights for preaching. One would have to admit, however, that it is not then and will not be easy. There are so many passages of Scripture that lend themselves to stereotypes that continue the theory of contempt. All vestiges have not been wiped away. And although there have been some new and good guidelines for passion plays, they, too, continue [all the categories?] since such clashes lend themselves to dramatic tension. But at least for the United States, we have tried to change those texts and the historical interpretation given to them to avoid the attitudes [24:00] that led up to the Holocaust, or at least that permitted the consciences of so many, to remain silent.

I have said that these things are going on in the United States, but there's much to be done around the world. When the Eastern bloc opened up, we were all aware that the church there had not

had the same grace that we had had to dialogue for several decades with our Jewish partners. One saw real vestiges of the pre-Vatican II mentality and attitudes everywhere. When I was in Poland, when I was in Russia, a year and a half ago, I bumped into clear vestiges of anti-Semitism everywhere. Meetings have continued to take place to discuss this problem, but it will take, I think, over a generation or two to change all those attitudes. [25:00] I mentioned, before reading the text from the document of Vatican II, *Nostra Aetate*, the certain triumphalism in the tone of the Church's response to the contempt theory. This attitude is a bit more subtle and could go under the term - - I think there's two fancy terms here I invented. It could go under the term of abrogationism to define the Church's attitude toward the Jewish community of the Jewish Cabinet; or supersessionism -- with an S, all of you who worry about how you spell, (laughter) supersessionism to describe that same phenomenon from the point of view of the Catholic community. These attitudes are contained in the belief that the old covenant was abrogated. That's why I used the term abrogation, abrogationism. And that the new covenant supersedes. Supersessionism. Dr. Gene [Fisher?], [26:00] on this subject recently said, "The urge among us Catholics to dichotomize falsely between old covenant and new, law and grace, justice and mercy, Jesus's teaching and the Pharisaical teaching, and so on,

remains deeply imbedded in the structure of so much Catholic and Christian catechesis. Even with its gross re-manifestations removed, as they now have been, subtler forms of antithetical supersessionism can still be read in our textbooks and especially heard from our pulpits. The theological issues involved here is that of the covenant. Is there one covenant? Two covenants? Many covenants? How are they related? Jesus is quoted as talking about the new covenant in his blood. We hear it every time we say Mass. [27:00] The letter to the Hebrews also states that there is an old and the new dispensation. For centuries, we have spoken of the Old and the New Testament. Since these theological concepts also deal with redemption and salvation, they are not easily dismissed or rapidly changed just for the sake of better relationships. Many do contend, however, that they are the source for a certain exclusivity and a triumphalism on the part of the Catholic church and other Christians. Has there been any advance made with the use of these concepts? The most quoted text in this regard is that of the present pope, John Paul II. In a meeting in Langst, Germany, already in 1980, he talked of the dialogue between Jews and Catholics [28:00] in these terms: "The first aspect of this dialogue," he said, "namely the meeting between the people of God of the old covenant, which has never been revoked by God," and he says see Romans 11 verse 29, "and the people of God of

the new covenant, is at the same time a dialogue within our church between the first and the second part of the Bible." Notice that that the pope said, explicitly, when he talked of the old covenant, "which has never been revoked by God." Here the pope is certainly saying that the Jewish people today are still a coveted people with God. His interpretation of Romans 11:29 is clear. God is never unfaithful to his promises. The covenant perdures. [29:00] Since 1980, books have been written about that quote. We Catholics tend to take sentences from the pope that we like very seriously. (laughter) Perhaps the most noted author who has written in this area has been a Jesuit German theologian by the name of Norbert Lohfink, who just last year, in English, published a book called *The Covenant Never Revoked* in which he takes all of these and tests them out, one covenant, two covenants, how many covenants, different expressions of the same covenant, and he ends up by saying what is really most important is not the word *covenant*, but the Torah, which survives them all. It is not my purpose here, though, to describe all the subtleties of the theological debate on this question. But certainly it is not yet reached the pulpits [30:00] of our priests nor the manuals of our theological textbooks. It is important, however, because with that one sentence the Holy Father changed the parts of the dialogue from the Catholic point of view. Until then, it was

mostly negative. Damage control, one could call it. Now the dialogue has turned a corner and is pushing on in a more positive way. If God's covenant with the Jewish people, from the Catholic perspective, has not been abrogated or revoked, then what does that mean for us Catholics today? How are we to relate to that Jewish community? What do we have in common in that covenant? These do not become historical questions of the past, but become living realities for our relationships today. In that same quote you noticed [31:00] the Holy Father did speak of the relationship with Christianity between the old and the new testaments. Here the supersessionism is still evident, but more in terms of a question: How are our roots, what are our roots, in Jewish law and culture? This question is posed at a good moment in our history as Catholics. We Catholics, by the way -- and I say this to all of you out there even if you're Catholic -- we Catholics are again becoming a biblical people, in case you didn't know it. Since Vatican Council II, our people are hearing the Word of God, both the Hebrew and the Christian scriptures, in a language they understand --

(break in audio)

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Among the theological issues that must be discussed today is also that of the relationship between the Jewish people and the State of Israel. I mentioned that in my earlier remarks. But this is also a theological question and not just a political one. The fact that the Vatican still does not have diplomatic relations with the State of Israel [34:00] is often interpreted as meaning that the Holy See does not want to give wholehearted assent to the theology of the land that is [impured?] in the Jewish vision. I doubt that this plays a major role in Vatican thinking. The question of the Catholic Arabs and their fears and unrest play a much greater role in Vatican decision-making. In fact, I keep thinking that if the Vatican would establish diplomatic relations with the State of Israel, we might have nothing to talk about at our dialogues. (laughter) It seems to be always the number one issue. I have gone on record many times as stating personally that I wish that that recognition would come and come soon, but I think it would be very positive for the dialogue and the continuing dialogue that is necessary in the Middle East. On the other hand, Catholics have not taken seriously [35:00] the whole Jewish position on the relationship of their faith to that particular plan. For us Catholics, we lack the category of thought in our religious system where there is any particular parallel, but at the same time we, too, claim a certain relationship to Jerusalem, to that land, because of

historical events that have happened there. And we still have to examine, it seems to me, how those relationships are going to work out. When I visited one of my Jewish friends in Israel not too many years ago, a wonderful woman who had been a student with me at Columbia, she was trying to explain to her children a little bit about all of this. And they weren't getting it. So she said rather clearly, "Well the problem is really, how do people live in the same house with overlapping rugs?" (laughter) [36:00] It's a good image.

Now I want to say something about the future. The ecumenism among the Christian denominations, it seems to me, has a clear and ultimate goal, namely unity. Christian unity. How that will look is not clear for Christians, but it seems to me that the goal has to be clear and well defined. For interreligious dialogue, the goals are more fluid. Nevertheless, it is important to discuss what the ultimate aims of such dialogue really are. One must begin, of course, with mutual respect. That should be the aim of all dialogue. This means more than just a toleration of differences. It involves creating attitudes that are positive. [Gene Fisher?], on this point, once said, and I loved the images here, [37:00] "As the Middle Ages was characterized by the gothic, and the twentieth century by the skyscrapers, both soaring heavenward in a monolithic, one might

say, Tower of Babel-like thrust of self-confidence, is it too much to suppose, for example, that the theological architecture of the twenty-first century will be more akin to the geodesic dome? This would be a structure of tranquility and harmony, not only with the environment but one which will be seen to have many facets of various world religions, interlocking to create a satisfying wholeness, a Shalom, that does not so much challenge the skies as reflect the unity of heaven in earth." The value of such an image, I ended that quote, is that it does not presuppose a least kind of least common denominator kind of religion [38:00] that would be pleasing to no one, but it really implies an acceptance of pluralicity but not antagonistic multifaceted kinds of relationships that would respect the wholeness of each. To arrive, though, at such a position, there is also a need for reconciliation and much more trust. We have come far in this regard, and I have to say here publicly how recent events, so many of the problems that we've had to face together, have shown that that trust has been so important and has made those difficult moments possible. We have not really split apart as many thought we would. God has been good to us. But that trust now must grow because the future that we will have, I'm sure, will be one of even more [39:00] difficulties. Lastly, it is important in any dialogue to remember that no group is static, and no group is monolithic. Each group is

changing according to the demands of the times. Catholicism today does not look like it did before Vatican Council II. And within the Jewish community as well, there are divergencies and differences of opinions and those must be respected. Each group is changing. I don't know how anybody can dialogue with us Catholics with the rapidity with which we've changed in the past three decades. It's like dialoguing with a dart that's passing in the night. It is not easy. And just when you think you've caught what Catholicism is all about, or what the opinion amongst Catholics is all about, you find them just as divided on everything as the Jews. [40:00] And that's the way in which it keeps on going. So during this period, we have to learn to respect the changes that are taking place in other groups and learn how to live with those changes. That we are dialoguing with living plants not with fossils. And that's so important as we move ahead.

I would like to add one more and one last point. It's one thing to dialogue. It's another thing to live together. We have to learn, at this point, how to live together, not just how to dialogue together. One is an emotional and the other is an intellectual experience. And believe it or not, it's easier to dialogue. It's much easier to get up in front of an audience, to say deep profound thoughts that you took from somebody else's

book, (laughter) but it's another thing to have to come [41:00] together and to be able to work together on common causes to make this world a better place in which to live. And sometimes at that point we find that the real differences are not that great, are not that important. I want to tell a little story with regard to that. I was, at one time, at a banquet with Archbishop Iakovos, who is the archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church for North and South America. Archbishop Yakavost is 80 years old now, long beard, a wisdom figure. And at the banquet a young Greek lad came up to Archbishop and said, "Tell me, Your Holiness, what is this *Filioque* stuff all about?" And ediope is what split the East and West in 1059, if you recall. The archbishop tried to explain the *Filioque* to this young college boy, [42:00] and when it was all over the man said, "Well I guess it's not very important anyway." (laughter) Sometimes there's a lot of wisdom from the mouth of youngsters, but we on the academic level, or I on ecclesiastical level, can get all hot and bothered about many, many items such as covenants, and so on tonight, but sometimes the very practical, living together, can escape us. I would say, what is important is that we move ahead now to look at all those issues that are so vital for our society. Those issues we can work together on. One of my great experiences as a bishop was the economic pastoral letter of the bishops because we were able to work together,

interfaith, ecumenically, on that letter, and it was powerful [43:00] to know that everyone could feel within that document that their voice was heard.

What will the future hold? Who knows. But what we must do at this point is create the trust, the goodwill, and the framework within which the dialogues can continue. Thank you. (applause)

Michael Lukens:

Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm going to ask your patience here for a minute. The program calls for a break. This is not the break.

(laughter) But I want you to just relax [44:00] for a few minutes. I think we may have the second team (inaudible).

(laughter) (applause) [45:00]

(pause)

Well the Killeen Chair generally delivers. (laughter) (applause)
I introduce my friend, my colleague with whom I team teach, with the spiritual leader of the Keneseth Israel Congregation, Rabbi Sidney Vineburg. (applause)

Rabbi Sydney Vineburg:

Good evening. That was good, yeah. (laughter) I am very, very honored and thrilled this evening to be able to introduce to you Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum, not only because [46:00] he is a wonderful speaker and a very, very well-known rabbi in the Jewish community, but because with his arrival here we have now doubled the Rabbinic population. (laughter) I'm not alone anymore. (laughter) Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum, International Relations Consultant of the American Jewish Committee, has a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugee, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns. He has served as Director of International Relations of the American Jewish Committee from 1983 until 1989. Formerly the American Jewish Committee's National Interreligious Affairs Director, Rabbi Tanenbaum was designed in a recent national poll as one of the ten most influential [47:00] and respected religious leaders in America. A cover story in New York magazine described Dr. Tanenbaum as one of the foremost Jewish ecumenical leaders in the world today. In 1987, he was elected unanimously as Chairman of the prestigious International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, which represents world Jewry in relations with the Vatican and other world religious bodies. In May 1988, Rabbi Tanenbaum was awarded the Interfaith Medallion of the International Council of Christians and Jews for his historic contributions to advancing interreligious

understanding over the past 25 years. Dr. Tanenbaum has served as a member of the Human Rights Research Committee of the Foreign Policy Associations' study of priorities for the 1980s. In recent years he has testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on moral imperatives in the formation of [48:00] American foreign policy. He has also testified before Congressional committees on world refugee and world hunger problems, and played a key role with organizing White House conferences on foreign aid and energy conservation. President Jimmy Carter invited Dr. Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among 10 national religious and academic spokesmen to discuss the state of the nation at Camp David Summit Meetings in 1979. He was also appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust. At the invitation of the International Rescue Committee, he joined delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out three separate fact-finding investigations of the plight of the Vietnamese boat people, Cambodian refugees, which contributed to the saving of tens of thousands of lives of Indochinese refugees. He has organized many relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including Kurds, Lebanese, Nigerians, [49:00] Ugandans, Ethiopian Jews, Haitians, Afghanis, Central Americans, and Polish refugees. He is a board member of the International

Rescue Committee, he oversees development counsel of the United Nations Association, the Bretton Woods Committee, the National Peace Academy, and the Bayard Ruston Institute. He is a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry which aids oppressed Jews and Christians in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In March 1979 he was invited to consult with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and German Parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations of Nazi war criminals. He is a founder and leading member of the joint liaison committee of the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations, and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, and of a similar body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only Rabbi at [50:00] Vatican II and participated in the first official [audience?] of world Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City. He was also the first Jewish leader to address 4,000 delegates attending the sixth assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in July 1983. He has served as a consultant to the NBC nine-hour special *Holocaust*, and earlier was consultant to the special *Jesus of Nazareth*. He is an award-winning weekly commentator over at WINS, Westinghouse Broadcasting, and appears frequently on major network programs. He has lectured at major universities, seminaries, religious and educational bodies in the United

States, Israel, Europe and Latin America, and at numerous national, international conferences. Rabbi Tanenbaum is the author and/or editor of several published books and of numerous articles. Whew! (laughter) [51:00] It is indeed my great pleasure and honor to introduce to you at this time Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum. (applause)

Marc Tanenbaum:

If you knew the kind of day I had -- (laughter) you'll know that I will take encouragement from wherever I can find it.

(laughter) It was a very important biblical experience for me today. (laughter) [52:00] From childhood on when I went to the Jewish parochial school and we would study the book of Genesis and my rabbinic teachers would tell us about how the first day stars and light were created and on the second day animals were created; third day -- I'm not doing that in order because I need the time to sort myself out before I get through the seventh day -- but I used to wonder as a child how could all of that happened each day? Filled with so much creativity, generating so much of the universe. And then as I got older I studied rabbinic commentaries and the rabbis declared that those days were not the kind of days that we mortals were used to, 24 hours a day. Each day represented a millennium, if not more than that. Today

[53:00] I (inaudible). (laughter) (applause) And a good piece of the Exodus as well. (laughter)

When I got up this morning at 6:00, shortly after that I was called by American Airlines and told that my flight to Green Bay, Wisconsin, was canceled. Here. (inaudible) I immediately asked them if I could fly on another airline that might take me here, although it seems to me somewhat bizarre that on the same landing field at LaGuardia Airport, planes can't take off and other planes can take off. (laughter) Parting the Red Sea waters. (laughter) [54:00] But I'm telling you why I insisted on coming and keeping this commitment. I've had occasions like this in the past and I decided to deal with the inevitable. I always have those great bumper stickers, "Man Proposes, God Disposes." (laughter) That could have happened today as well. I came here to pay reverence, respect and homage to one of the genuinely, genuinely authentic great religious leaders of America, not only the Catholic community. Archbishop Weakland [55:00] has been a hero to many of my colleagues and myself from the earliest days of Vatican Council II. In fact, I remember that one of the first, first conferences of Catholic and Jewish scholars that was convened after the Council was convened by Archbishop Weakland, I think it was in Latrobe. And I couldn't believe it. Here was the head of the Benedict (inaudible), and there we were

in a monastery. I said, "God, I hope my mother doesn't hear about this." (laughter) My mother always knew I would go in, she was never sure I would come out. (laughter) [56:00] But I mean that with utmost seriousness. To be able to be present, even as late as I've come in here, it's something to have the wonderful introduction, Rabbi, and I'm very grateful for it. You read it just the way I wrote it. (laughter) But also for your warmth and wonderful spirit you've expressed from the very first days of our contact, I knew you were a friend. The other thing is I think I've lost about 25 pounds today, so you only have one and a half rabbi. (laughter) But I wanted to be here, simply for the privilege of being present and to say thank you and God bless you, Archbishop Weakland, for the courage, and moral conviction, [57:00] and strength that he has displayed on so many vital human moral issues, and particularly the leadership you gave from the very beginning, when it was not very popular, to be involved in Catholic-Jewish dialogue. (applause) Now having said what was really on my heart, I shall proceed to emasculate this talk --

(break in audio)

-- particularly the leadership you gave from the very beginning, when it was not very popular, to be involved in Catholic-Jewish

dialogue. (applause) [58:00] Now having said what was really on my heart, I shall proceed to emasculate this talk. (laughter)

In point of fact throughout what I heard in the back of the hall, it is quite remarkable how much consensus he expressed that is felt so widely and deeply in much of the Jewish community. Vatican Council II, in both historic and theological perspectives, [59:00] was without question a turning point in the history of Christianity and Judaism. And here I want to share with you a personal experience which became for me a decisive reality on what Vatican Council II has meant, not only as a matter of theologians sorting out theological doctrines from the historic past, both what it has meant and what it can mean and should mean, in the real life in which we live as Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, [01:00:00] and others, black and white, in the kind of world in which we live. I was born the child of Russian immigrants who came to the United States from the Ukraine. They came to this country impoverished, with a few kopecks in their pockets, they have lived a life of poverty -- dignified poverty, but poverty nonetheless -- and they suffered horribly from (inaudible) inquisition, (inaudible). And murderous [peasants?] who were exploited by the landlord. And (inaudible) as a way of diverting from the real problems of the people.

END OF AUDIO FILE