



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

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

Series A: Writings and Addresses. 1947-1991

Box 2, Folder 4, "Interfaith Weekend", 8-10 November 1968.



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date 12/19/68 FO-0
to Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
from Seymour Brief
subject

Enclosed is the best transcript we could make of your remarks at the INTERFAITH weekend November 8-10, 1968. Could you, at your leisure, but as soon as humanly possible, go over, correct, subtract, add, etc., and mail the paper back to us so that we can do some publicizing of it.

Thanks for your help on this, and for the INTERFAITH weekend.

Best wishes.

b/k

enc. Marc Tanenbaum address at Interfaith weekend 11/8-10/68 at Punderson State Lodge.

cc (no enclosures) to I. Terman
 J. Ollander

Interfaith Weekend
11/8-10/68
Purdum State Park
Ohio

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum

Father Gallagher, Sisters and Friends,

If I were to begin with a cliché by telling you how glad I am to be here, you would discount me at the outset as kind of a conventional phoney, I suppose, falling back on the usual trite kinds of ways for starting a talk.

But I think if you knew a little bit about the kinds of things I have gotten myself into the last couple of days you will realize how genuine and sincere my comments are on how glad I am to be here with you this morning, especially in this very lovely spot. I have been spending the past three weeks in Ocean Hill, Brownsville in New York trying to open up some communication between the Black leadership and the Christian leadership....

The magnitude of the problems we are facing in the ghettos and the authentic need of the black and brown people to achieve self-determination coupled with a lack of understanding, a lack of communication between the Whites and the Blacks who

live next door to each other are all a profound demonstration of how critical is the need for dialogue between people today. At the same time while trying to be of some usefulness in this area, I have been obligated to carry on some of the more basic work of the American-Jewish Committee in the field of Judaism, Christianity and Inter-religious relations....Last weekend at Atlanta, Georgia, I attended a meeting with a Southern Baptist to set up a dialogue next fall for a Southern Baptist Convention. This is the first time that a meeting has taken place with Jewish leadership and scholarly academicians at Louisville Baptist Seminary. The week before that I spent a

weekend at Yale University with faculty members discussing essentially the subject we are discussing today. Before that I attended a meeting with an operation connection with the National Council of Churches and Catholic Bishops. I am making this point to indicate to you that you see me today with Exhibit A of ...

If I have any beef at all with Christians...it is not with the substance on the direction it is taking as much as the timing and lack of prudence in organizing it. Now there was a time when Christian-Jewish dialogues were as scarce as, I suppose one would say, hen's teeth, but thank God since the late blessed Pope John XXIII...there simply are not enough Jews to go around any more. I thought the most useful thing that I could try to do during the time that we have together this morning, and incidentally I want to begin with an expression of appreciation for the beautiful and moving mass that Father Gallagher celebrated. I must say that the mass and this new form of liturgy of the Word evokes extremely sympathetic echoes in perhaps two thousand years in Jewish years because by returning to its Biblical and Palestinian mode of celebration of coming so close to the concept of the Lord's table as it existed among the Jews of the first century Palestine in which Jesus, the Disciples and the Apostles were reared, Jews can begin to see a kind of relationship that has not existed literally for almost two millennia. Except for certain key christological concepts about which Father Gallagher and I were talking, there are elements in the celebration of the mass and in Jewish worship service which the Jews have continued to observe for roughly four thousand years in the synagogues and temples around the world and which could stand a very

profitable discussion. Indeed one could conduct a useful seminar on the very theme of liturgy in Christianity and Judaism and their similarities and their similarities and their differences. This would open up, I think, an enormous amount of insight for all of us.

9 As you know, I have been asked ~~to spend my time this morning with you in trying~~ (to examine the meaning of the state of Israel to the Jewish people and to Judaism, and to try to help ~~all of us to~~ ^{are} comprehend more fully the whole complex of issues that ~~has been~~ ^{are} involved in the way in which the Jewish people ~~have been~~ ^{are} related to the state of Israel, the people of Israel and the holy city of Jerusalem. It is quite clear as you reflect ^{on} ~~upon~~ the days of May and June of 1967, when the two-and-one-half million Jews of the land of Israel were being threatened with extermination, that the response of the Jewish people of this city, of this country, ^{and} throughout the world was an unprecedented response. For the first time, perhaps since the days ^{during} ~~in which~~ the Jews stood together ~~in activity~~ at the foot of Mt. Sinai and were conscious of an indissoluble unity, a sense of mutual independence and solidarity, I know of almost nothing else in the Jewish historic experience which made Jews aware of their tremendous self-consciousness as a people and as a historic community in which in a moment of crisis they had bonds of responsibility for one another. I recall vividly during the end of May, May 23rd, to be exact, of sitting in an office ~~on the fourteenth floor~~ in New York City with the leaders of twenty-three Jewish national organizations

who had been brought together from every aspect of Jewish life, representatives from the most Orthodox Traditional branch of Judaism, from Conservative, Reform, Zionists, womens' groups, secular groups, and social welfare groups....And we were brought together to hear some tapes which had just been taken of a speech made about three days before by President Nasser over Radio Cairo. It was in Arabic and was translated to the group. In that talk President Nasser was filled with great emotion and passion and he called for a ... holy war and spoke of the call for the unity of the Arab world to liquidate the two-and-one-half million Jews of Israel. "We will drive them into the sea, we will use our hands, our feet if need be, we will once and for all end the shame of Israel living in our midst." Then placed on the table before us by the young Israeli who came to this country from Hebrew University in a great state of alarm, were a series of documents. They were captured battle plans that had been seized from a troop of Egyptians who had been captured in the Sinai Desert in the Negev. And the plans were detailed instructions on how TelAviv was to be destroyed literally within a matter of hours. Jerusalem was to be bombed, Motza was to be entirely wiped out. After listening to that tape in which the themes of ^{genocide} ~~Genosis~~ were rehearsed once again and after seeing the battle plans,,we knew that if the destruction of the Jews had been carried out according to schedule, within the first three or four hours of assault more than a quarter million of our brothers and sisters would have been liquidated in TelAviv and Jerusalem alone. In response to those communications there emerged in that room, regardless of

ideological or political lines or religious commitment, a consciousness of peoplehood, of solidarity so that one could not tell who represented what ideology^{ies}, what position or what point of view. One was a Jew and one spoke out of a consciousness of one's feeling of commitment to one's people. After the war began the one group which was outside of this consultation was the American Council for Judaism. This organization is a minor party in Jewish life with a membership of about four thousand persons which was constructed for the sake of carrying out an ideology of antizionism which sought to make a radical distinction between Judaism as a religion and Judaism as a nationalism, a false distinction which I should like to deal with in a few minutes. This American Council for Judaism, which has been advocating a strong policy of antizionism has sought to influence our government ^{to adopt} in that position. When it became clear that the lives of two and a half million Jews were placed on the block, five of their most powerful leaders, Classical Reform Jews, left the group and for the first time in their lives made contributions (of more than \$25,000 each) to the cause of the Israel Emergency Campaign. Now why did this happen? How can one understand this radical transformation that has taken place in the consciousness of the Jewish people. Not just vaguely or theoretically, but concretely and existentially one became aware of this sense of being a community of common concern, as I said before. It seem to me that if one wants to comprehend that phenomena and if one wants to deal seriously in trying to understand the

psyche of the Jewish person today, regardless of his religious or ideological orientation, that it is essential at least to take into account two primary dynamic forces which shape the contemporary consciousness and mentality of every Jew who sits in this room, who lives in this city, who lives almost anywhere in the world. I would suggest that these two primary forces are the experiences Jews have gone through as recently as twenty-five years ago with the Nazi ^{holocaust} ~~cause~~, and secondly the experience of the incredible emergence of the state called Israel after two thousand years of dispersion around the world without a homeland. Now I would like to be very clear in the discussion of the Nazi holocaust. I know that those of you ^h who are Catholic and Protestant who have been here these days have been exposed to a great amount of discussion about the Jewish suffering, and it should be made clear that sometimes ~~for~~ some Jewish persons ^{may} ~~to~~ use the holocaust experience to try to ^{elicit} ~~illicit~~ a kind of cheap confessionally guilt on the part of the Christians. I want to dismiss that at the very outset. The Holocaust was too traumatic to us for it to be played with, and it becomes a blasphemy to use it with any ulterior purpose other than to stand silent before the mystery of it today. But it is essential to try to understand it as the demonic force it became and how it has shaped the Jewish understanding and self concept even to this moment.

There is an author by the name of Elie Wiesel, a survivor of several Nazi concentration camps, who at one time was a quite devout Jew and who, after standing in Auschwitz and seeing Jewish children thrown up into the air, one and two year old children, cast into the air as toys and targets as German storm troopers fired at them

for target practice, lost all faith in God and could not believe that there was a gracious and compassionate God who ruled men's affairs. Wiesel tried to commit suicide several times because he could not endure the knowledge and guilt that he had survived. He was able to resolve the incredible terror of his existence by undertaking to become the spokesman for the dead of the holocaust. So his entire life has been dedicated to writing and speaking about what six million of his brothers went through and from which he by some strange design was allowed to survive. In his latest book, Legend of Time, Wiesel describes a conversation with Alfred Kasan, the literary critic, who happens to be Jewish and at the final point of their conversation -----

It would seem so fundamentally impaired their beliefs of man and of the moral universe. It is only as one comprehends how traumatic this has been to the Jewish people - the fact that a whole people was chosen by one of the most cultured nations, the seat of the Roman Empire, that land that gave Goethe, Beethoven, Heine to the world and that this nation could turn around and select as a matter of political policy the destruction of a whole people and then finding that Jewish disbelief that except for a number of white Christian souls who were prepared to sacrifice their lives to help Jews in that predicament. The Jews were abandoned, abandoned by some of the greatest governments in the world. Only if one enters into that understanding of the transforming trauma that this represented can one begin to understand such a kind of fleeting phenomena which in itself is a true insight into what has happened to the Jews.

If one reflects on the nature of the debate over the deaths, you will recall then several years ago the play The Deputy by Ralph Hochhuth ~~Holcom~~ which played on Broadway and made a caricature of Pope Pious XII as being the villain of peace, saying in effect that Hitler was prepared to liquidate the Jews but it was Pious who by his silence was responsible for the murder of the Jews. This was an incredible oversimplification and thousands upon thousands of Jews accepted Holcom's version of how it was. Pope Pious was silent and was therefore primarily responsible for the deaths of the six million Jews who perished in the Nazi holocaust. And then suddenly another book comes out by author Morrison in which he documents that the State Department was responsible. Others have written about Churchill and Roosevelt and point out the fact that if one thinks about this, the Jews are, if anything, people given to scepticism, rationalism and hardheaded judgment in the nature of our whole tradition. To ask hard questions, to take nothing on simple faith. How is it that this question which touches the whole-----of their existence, they were prepared to accept the most simplistic answers in explaining a complex historical social culture phenomena. I think what is clear, it seems to me, is how intolerable to endure or comprehend this knowledge of their whole people being singled out in the face of the world for elimination. It became so unendurable and so irrational that the Jews were seeking desperately for a rational answer that would make sense out of the senseless. It would seek to make rational that which was totally absurd. Pope Pious XII did, it; Morrison did it; Churchill did it; the State Department did it. There had to be an answer to that which-----And indeed in

seeking to find this kind of simplistic answer to this question Jews were in effect evading confronting their own conscience which was so terribly agitated. Especially we in the United States in the Western world who could not face the question of our own silence. Where were we? Did we do enough? Did we march on Washington as we marched on Selma and Montgomery and Albany, Georgia? And that continues to gnaw in the vitals of the Jew.

The thematic expression which has characterized the response of the Jewish people in Germany, in Poland, in Czechořlavakia, in the continent - the metaphor which hangs over Jewish history like a terrible intimidation - is in the Biblical phrase-----they went like sheep into the slaughter^t. There is a whole generation of young Israeli called Canaanites who have turned their backs on two thousand years of the Diaspora, who regard that as a stigma because they believe the Nazi episode is the end product of that history and never again will they allow the possibility of Jews going----- like sheep into the slaughter.

So the very meaning of Jewish existence was at stake and in addition to that one has to say the very meaning of being human was at stake because the Jews became aware that for \$.25 the Nazis were able to purchase a vile of Ayklon B gas which literally within a matter of minutes was able to destroy a hundred human beings. And so what was at stake for us was not just our Jewishness, but our very humanity. A human being was now worth less than 1/100 of \$.25. This meant the dignity of being human was now totally undermined and thus the response for the Jewish people during the days of the threat to the survival of the Jews of Israel was profoundly effected;

by the reaction against this trauma which was the sleeper reaction-- never again like sheep into the slaughter. Regardless of the fair opinion of mankind, the Jews were to respond; there also was some effort to restore some kind of effort in their human dignity as persons. ⁹ Related to this in terms of this unprecedented response of the Jewish people everywhere was the meaning that the state of Israel assumed for them and in some ways Jews behaved better than they understood for they have not altogether comprehended with any clarity in any articulate systematic way the meaning of the state of Israel. Well, clearly this much they did understand. As Jews have looked through their history and have sought to understand the meaning of being a Jew throughout the nineteen hundred years of existence in the Christian West and as they have tried to comprehend the phenomena of antisemitism of exclusion, of dispersion, everywhere they found that there was a Christian diagnosis which explained the phenomena of Jews as a marginal community. Then the body politic of Christiana--of the unified Christian Society gave clues and insight to the Jewish predicament such as this. Max Fabor who is one of the foremost scholars from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century did a monumental study of ancient Judaism. In its opening chapter Fabor gives this description of the situation of the Jews in the Western world: "Sociologically the Jews are a pariah people. They are analogous to the Indian caste system." To say that means that they have lived at the will and the whim of the majority people and they have shaped their whole faith in this dependency relationship to the general society. As one goes back in the writings of Christian

scholars and historians, one finds for example in Germany in the nineteenth century, which is important for our understanding of the present situation, that the greatest intellectuals in Germany among them as an illustrative example, Paul DeLaguard, who was the son of a Lutheran pastor who later turned away from Christianity and became a believer in German Daism. DeLaguard was a tremendous influence in German intellectual circles who together later on with---- influenced a whole generation of Christian intellectuals and political leaders. DeLaguard in describing the misunderstanding of the Jews in Germany and in western culture altogether declared, "The Jews are a nation, not a religious community. They are the latter only because they are the former. It is impossible to tolerate a nation within a nation. The Jews will become Germans only when they continually hear from us that they have not yett achieved this, and that as Jews they are for us a repulsive burder useless for history. We are antisemites because the Jewish community living among us betrays in the nineteenth century and in Germany the rules, customs and ways of speech which go back to the separation of the peoples after the flood of Noah, and because they do so, appear as extraordinary amongst us as flint axes and arrowheads. We are anti-semites," said DeLaguard, "because in the midst of a Christian world Jews are asiatic pagans."

It was in response to such diagnosis, which hammered in on the Jewish consciousness almost from every intellectual quarter in the Western world, especially conservative intellectual communities, the Jews began to realize that they had better begin thinking in terms of a diagnosis. It they are in the minds of the greatest Christian

scholars and historians a pariah people, a leech people, living off the creativity and productivity of another society, if they are in the minds of DeLaguard and others incapable of being either segregated successfully or assimilated successfully, they had to turn unto themselves and find a Jewish prognosis for this Christian diagnosis. Now it just so happened that a great many of the Jews, especially in eighteenth century Europe welcomed the breakdown of the medieval feudal order the-----regime which was oppressive, intolerant, and participated in the movements toward national liberation of the continent. They participated in every single major movement, from the liberation of Greece of ancient Athens, the liberation of Italy under-----who picked many Biblical motifs in his-----for Italy. They participated in the nationalist revival after 1848 in Germany, and Gabriel W-- became Vice President of the Frankfurt parliament. Dozens of Jews died in the struggle of Germany for national liberation. They participated in every movement in northern Europe for nationalism. And as Jews they began to seek a Jewish answer to their anomalous situation and their abnormality on the continent, they essentially formulated this response-to achieve normalcy in the terms and in the catagories that they found all about them, namely western European nationalism. Now they had other motifs working for them. They had motifs growing out of the Biblical tradition with strong-----ideas, as we can allude to in a few moments. Essentially Israel was created by the Jewish people to rectify this abnormality, this anomalous existence as some kind of marginal people. And to achieve this normalcy they recaptured the ancient motif, the return of the exiled, the restoration of Zion, of the coming back to the promised land, These

traditions, it must be noted, gave content to the political forms that they had adopted from western European nationalism. By that I mean ~~that~~ throughout the whole of the dispersion of the Jewish community from the days of the destruction of the temple in the year 70 A.D., the first century of this era. As Jews became scattered throughout the world, they saw themselves in terms of being a providential act of God "to become a light unto the nations," in the words of the prophet Isaiah. They also knew that there was a kind of dialectical tension between their dispersions and the homeland. The-----of the earth for which Jews were converted from a rabble of slaves into historic community. They became a people in this land, They struggled with the prophets and sagas of Israel and developed self-consciousness as a historic, religious community in this land. And it was to celebrate understanding of their origins and to retain the profound spiritual connection with the seeing of their emergence into history that the Jews continued throughout the whole of their dispersion of two thousand years to keep alive in their daily life the memory of their glorious past, an awareness of the ambiguity of their presence, and a constant hope for fulfillment to return to the scene of their ancient glory. And they do this to this very day. Every Jew in this room who celebrates the Passover, reacts this whole experience of the people. Every Jew who prays daily says in the daily prayer services,----- "Because of our sins, we were driven from the land. And as we pray for the restoration and the fulfillment of God, we look forward to the return of Jerusalem to its scene of ancient glory where God first manifested himself in His full presence to Israel."

And we find throughout the whole liturgical calendar that the three pilgrim festivals make no sense to the Jews without affirming a relationship on the part of the people to the Holy Land. By the succot festival which we recently celebrated (when Jews sit in booths beside their houses, move out of their split-level homes to sit under this shaky little tent which they erect out of branches with twigs on the top of it, looking up to the sky, they are affirming the memory, the historic memory of their being a collective people who emerged from slavery in Egypt where, by divine providence, they were carried through the wilderness. It was in tents such as these that they lived during their journey from slavery to the liberation on Mt. Sinai and then on into the promised land. No Jewish wedding takes place, for example, even at this moment without the sacred moment of standing under the Jewish canopy, and concluding the service with the husband breaking a glass under the canopy. At the moment of greatest joy for the bride and groom, they break a glass to commemorate the destruction of the temple and to offer up a prayer for the restoration of the Holy Land as the scene of the origin of their people. In fact, this consciousness of the relationship to that land takes place the very moment any Jew sets foot into a temple or to a synagogue because the very ark of the covenant in every synagogue and every temple is so constructed, that it faces toward the eastern walls and the eastern wall points to the holy city of Jerusalem and specifically to the spot on which the holy temple was created. And so throughout two thousand years of history as Jews prayed there, as they said Grace after meals and recited prayers of-----"And rebuild speedily Jerusalem, the holy

city, the scene from which the law has gone forth out of Zion." And as they went through the daily ritual and the--- ---and all of the rites of---, a constant awareness of the relationship to the Holy Land dominated Jewish self-consciousness. And so that awareness, joined together by the historic necessity of achieving normalcy and learning from the experience of western political nationalism, led Jews to rebuild the state of Israel.

All of that can be quite mystical, quite symbolic, and quite theoretical, but does it really mean that much to the Jews? Am I not kind of overstating it in religious jargon? On the human level, I think one would have to respond to that and say, that Israel became for the Jewish people, in terms of this prognosis, a test of their manhood as a people, a test of their humanity as a people, because in Israel Jews became conscious that this was the incarnation, the incarnation of being a Jew in the world. It is the one place in the world, despite all the freedoms and the conquests the Jews feel, especially in western democracies, it is the one place in the world where Jews, out of their own initiative in their own terms, out of the incapacity, challenge themselves as full human beings. They are no longer to be caricatured as the bankers and the financiers with the hooked noses in the-----cartoons. This was the place where Jews had the opportunity to become in the words that the Jews cried out unto King Saul, "We shall be like unto all nations" in terms of trying to become a normal human people. So it was here, the only place in the world where Jews were able to test out their capacity to run a political state, to develop their own economic system their cultural institutions, their intellectual

institutions, their social institutions, indeed test the relevancy of their religious tradition to the real world. We are now in the situation that the church was in after Constantine when it was challenged to relate the-----affirmation for making the hard moral and political decision in the real world, with all the temptations and corruptions of power. It is one thing to develop a religious system which for many Jews in the Diaspora world is really a hot house creation. To develop a religious system in a ghetto where you can play with it, you can do it under your own terms and you do not have to make hard choices between tolerance and intolerance, between being decent to other people who are not part of your community-----life and death decisions for most of us who live in religious hot houses. Israel compelled the Jews to put to test their religious affirmations in the real world, in all the challenges of secularity, and so Israel became the incarnation of the Jewish presence in the world. It was the one place in the world where in their own terms, out of their own categories, out of their own Jewish angularity they were to be put to test in terms of their capacity to become in effect what their early eschatology of the nation demanded of them. They were called into being as a people to become a-----kingdom in which the divine will was to be realized; they were called to the task of justice and righteousness and as a community not just for themselves but for all the nations on earth. So the Jews have been aware of this, even though they havenot articulated it. They knew in Israel something very special Jewish was at work. The very presence of Jewish Jewishness, the very presence of the Jewish existence in its most systematic

form was now at stake.

And so if it was possible for the state of Israel to be liquidated as was threatened, it meant that for every Jew in the world something of the dignity of his presence was now at stake, because if the systematic, intensive incarnation of the Jewish presence in the world was now vulnerable to liquidation, to becoming expendable, every Jew everywhere felt that a piece of him, if not his whole self, was subject to expendability in the consciousness of the world.

Now, indeed, if Jews underwent a transformation, some say that the Jewish-Christian relationship also underwent a transformation.

I do not want to take too much time to belabor that, but simply to note a few details and then move on to a few points that I should like to make before I close.

At the height of the struggle in May and June of 1967 there was a great deal of very high emotion in the Jewish community. Because of all of these reasons the Jews had somehow expected that mankind had learned something from the experience of the Nazi holocaust.

As those Jews looked around for a response of well-meaning people-
 Christians and friends-to tht threat, they wanted to hear an eternal
 "NO" against this reenacted potentiality of the annihilation of
 the people. And one of my colleagues, a rabbi, in a very high emotion
 arose before a conference of rabbis on the West Coast and declared
 in these words, "By and large, the Christians were silent." And
 that became a message throughout the whole Jewish community. There
 was a consciousness throughout American Jewry if not throughout
 the whole world, that that phrase somehow said it the way it was.

In point of fact it did not describe the way it was. As it was clear from all of the opinion polls taken then and subsequently, namely Gallop and Harris, that of the masses of American people, who, according to our latest census which indicates that 91% of them identify themselves with one or the other Christian denomination, 82-88% of the American people who were polled in these several surveys indicated their support for the right of Israel to survive, for the right of the people of Israel to be free from harassment and belligerency, for the right of Israel to have free access to waterways and subsequently for the right of Israel to retain a united Jerusalem provided it guaranteed free access to the holy places. And there were numerous Christian individuals, some of the startling names in American Christendom as well as in other parts of the world, who spoke out. Father--- to his great credit, and a good friend of mine who was just here, Father U--- joined in issuing a statement of great power. Father John S---, Archbishop H---, Cardinal Cushing, and many others as individuals spoke out. Many in the Protestant community spoke out including the late Martin Luther King, -----, -----, the dean of Harvard --- School, ----- Davies, the leading New Testament theologian in America, Robert Matthew Brown, and many others spoke out of deep conscience. The Christian institutions failed as they failed too frequently in the past to be present when the Gospel was to be heard in the moments of crushing decision in the life of people. And for many Jews this was again, a terrible feeling of abandon by the centers of authorized powers of the Christian world. The National Council of Churches,-----resolution, appeared to make an equation between

the right of Israel to survive and the solution of the Arab refugee question. The Arab refugee question commands our moral attention. It is a scandal the way the Arab refugees have been used as political scapegoats and are on the checkerboard of Pan-Arab leadership. And something is being done at this moment in the state of Israel, by the Israeli not by the Arabs. To resolve that problem 60% of the Arab refugees are being rehabilitated for the first time in twenty years. The Israelis refuse to allow them to continue to stagnate in those camps. For the first time literally thousands of them are earning a day's pay working on roads and rebuilding settlements in their own community. But apparently it is not a question of Christian values. It becomes a question very often of Christian interests, and they are legitimate Christian interests. The Christians have an absolute moral right to be as much concerned about Arab Christians, as Jews have an obligation to be concerned about Jews. But very often one has a feeling that there is a great concern about property values in those countries where there are great investments. One wonders how much that equation of life against property becomes a factor in that kind of straddling of moral issues. Jews have never asked Christians to adopt a Jewish religious understanding of Israel and Jerusalem. The Jews have never asked Christian institutions to make some judgment on the legal right of Israel to exist. That is not a right for Christian institutions to decide. The United Nations, the League of Nations, and the Balfour Declaration decided that. The legal instruments of mankind decided Israel's right to exist as it decided the right of all the Arab states to exist. Israel came into being by the

very same process that the Arab nations came into being. Most of them have been carved out since the end of 1920 to 1930 by the great powers, as Israel was carved out by the great powers and then attested to by the United Nations. What was being asked for was a response on the moral and human problem of the threat to the survival of the people. So the issue today is can religious institutions play a reconciling role, one which they have held to be their role in history according to the Gospel. Can religious institutions that over-identify with one side as against another really bring about even-handed justice and peace between people? And I ask this question because at this very moment elements within the National Council of Churches in many of the denominations and even in the Catholic community, are distorting the issue, are contributing to a situation of over-identifying in very sentimental pious ways with the Arab refugee problem, not even allowing publicly how much that problem has been liquidated. They also are creating a situation that is compelling Jews, who, as much as anyone else in the world, want to participate in the resolution of the Arab refugee problem. We were slaves in the land of Egypt, and know the meaning of suffering and persecution. The Jews would be prepared to join in any activity to bring about the resolution of that problem. But the continued polarization renders that almost impossible. I have spoken at great length; in conclusion I just want to add two or three brief observations for they are essential to the development of this thesis. If there has been this out-of-touchness for the institutions, it may very well be that I am not doing justice to the magnitude of the problem. I believe there are paradoxical

and contradictory elements in our present situation which may help explain in all honesty why it is that Christian institutes of leadership per se cannot comprehend the experiences the Jews are going through. I think it is clear that there is a paradoxical situation in the fact that the Christian institution and Christian leadership have been going through an experience since the French revolution of what is Desacreligation. Since the French revolution Christianity has ceased to be the established church in many parts of the world. Christianity as a faith has ceased to be the faith of a whole nation, or the whole continent. There are many Christian theologians today who are celebrating the fact of Desacreligation. These, in fact, believe that it is a positive benefit to the spiritualization of Christianity that it not become involved in the real estate of the continent and that there be a break between the throne and the altar. At one time popes were playing emperors and emperors were playing popes. Now the pope should be the pope, and Christianity should be the faith of the believing community with the government behind the throne. And it is for many Christians as they go through the experience of Desacreligation, that they find Jews talking as if they are sacrelizing the Jewish experience. We are not talking about holy lands and holy cities as though they are sacrelizing the Jewish experience. We are not talking about holy lands and holy cities and holy places. It is as though we are moving off in two opposite directions. At the same time, there may very well be a paradoxical contradiction that we have not faced up to in the fact that Christians are also, many Christian scholars, certainly in the new thought in the

Christian world today, are talking about-----.

 scripture. It is to say that to remove from it its legendary, its fable aspects, the story elements of it and to seek to enter into its essential lesson, its corrigma, its teaching content. And Jews are now talking about the fulfillment of scripture. They hear stories about Jewish women in Jerusalem who after the sixth day were baking loaves of bread, awaiting the coming of the Messiah in Biblical fulfillment. Herein Jews were using the scripture of Israel in terms of the battle plans of this war. ----- has become a great authority on sacred scripture because the ground on which the Jews have been fighting has been the plains of Megiddo, the plains of ----- and -----.

So there is a kind of ----- to a ----- as if Jews are re-nathaligizing whole with this experience. And also there appears to be a kind of disparity in the way we are looking at an experience. Christians seek to affirm that religion is essentially a universal phenomena, that it is a universal church, and that it is a universal Christian experience. And here is Judaism, which they had thought of as forum of universalist faiths with the great prophets of the eight century preaching that the great Lord God of Israel is not just the Lord God of Israel, but the Lord God of all nations. Somehow, that religion seems to be located in a piece of real estate. It is as though Jews are regressing from universalism to a kind of tribalism or -----ism.

Well, there is a great deal to be said on these stories, and I would think that just to open the question for subsequent discussion would be most worthwhile. It seems to me that this very encounter calls for much greater thinking about the whole meaning of the sacred, and the whole meaning of religious symbols in the lives of those in our communities. I would submit that under the impact

of several kinds of experiences religious symbolism has lost a great year of its power in the lives of many of our people. We live in a machine technical age in which symbolism seems to be irrelevant. Reality is the end to man's existence and rationality has made possible a technical civilization and technology and science appear to be the enemy of religious symbolic values.' Yet at the same time we know from our whole psycho-analytic experience that place that symbols hold in the life of the person. Man indeed does not understand reality other than through images and symbols, Images and symbols are the way one participates in reality which manifests itself through healing the human person. And here I have to make a point in terms of understanding, to say there is a point made by a great Romanian Orthodox scholar, perhaps the greatest living historian in religion ----- who in talking about the question of the sacred, says "somewhere at a given time, each human society chose for itself a certain number of things animals, plants, suggestions, places and so on and turned them into -----, ----- in the manifestation of the divine in the human experience. Each -----, each manifestation of the sacred, we look at is an historical fact. Every manifestation of the sacred takes place in some historical situation even the most personal and transcendental mystical experiences are affected by the ages and the place in which they occur. There are no purely religious phenomena. No phenomena can be solely and exclusively religious because religion involves the human. It must for that reason be something social, something -----, something economic. You cannot think of man apart from language and society and the fact that a

-----, a manifestation of the sacred is always a historical event, Christ was then a historical event in form to the Christian world. That is to say because it is an historical fact, it always occurs in some definite situation that did not lessen its universal quality. Some ----- have a purely local purpose, others have retained world-wide significance. The Indians, for instance, venerate a certain tree called.----- . A manifestation of the sacred in that particular plant species has meaning only for them. For only to them is the ----- anything more than just a tree. Consequently, that ----- is not only of a certain time, as every ----- must be, but also of a certain place. However, the INdians also have the symbol of a cosmic tree, ----- and this mythical symbolic ----- is universal, for we find cosmic trees everywhere among ancient civilizations. But note that the ----- is venerated because it embodies the sacred significance of the universe in constant renewal of life. It is venerated in fact because it embodies as part of, or symbolizes the universe as represented by all the sacred trees and all mythologies. The land of Israel, the Holy Land is the particular form in which the Lord God of Israel made himself manifest to the whole of mankind. And I would submit to you that if that land with its venerated holy memories and sacred sights to Christianity, to Judaism and to ----- were to be obliterated, the very character of Christianity would be profoundly transformed. Jesus was not placed by God in ----- . Jesus was not made the son of the Virgin Mary, who was a Buddhist woman; the sermon on the mount could not be born in the language of the ----- tribe. The very character of the Christian faith is profoundly indelibly formed by

its Biblical, ----- and Jewish background. And for Christians and for Jews and for Moslems the future sanctity as well as the survival of that land is of universal and enduring importance.

You have been very patient, thank you very much.

