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July 20, 1969

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APOLLO 11

WINS RELIGION COMMENTATOR

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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The flight of Apollo 11 to the moon has been quite rightly called "the most daring and most spectacular exploration in all the ages of man." Scientists from as varied fields as astrophysics to biology have termed this incredible achievement the end of one era and the beginning of another. A break through of this magnitude quite obviously cannot be without major consequences for the whole sphere of human existence, including matters of philosophical, religious, and social importance.

From the perspective of classical Judaism, a unique sense of celebration for this triumph over nature is justified. Among all Oriental nations and pagan religions of antiquity the moon was worshipped as a divinity. A cult of "the queen of heaven" existed in ancient times to whom sacrifices were brought. The Book of Deuteronomy (17:2-4) expressly forbade such idolatrous practices on the pain of death.

Triumphalist as it may sound, it is a fact that the radical monotheism of the Hebrew Bible and the Jewish prophets desacralized nature and was responsible for creating the intellectual attitudes that

liberated man to manipulate nature and subdue her for human purposes..

The Apollo 11 moonflight confronts man with another fundamental question. The existence of rational, intelligent beings on a planet other than earth is no longer fantastic. The science of exobiology has begun the study of forms of extraterrestrial life. Although no specimens of such living matter and no definite proof of their existence is yet available, scientists of the stature of Harlowe Shapley believe firmly in the probability of intelligent life on other planets, and that holds "intimations of man's inconsequentiality." "Not only are we not central in the scheme of things, but we may be inferior, physically, mentally, and spiritually to more highly evolved beings elsewhere," so declares Walter Sullivan in his book, We Are Not Alone.

What does this mean for our conception of the uniqueness of man, created in the image of God? Christian theologians have begun to struggle with this challenging problem, and so have Jewish thinkers. Perhaps one of the most impressive essays in Jewish "exo-theology" is that on "The Religious Implications of extraterrestrial Life," by Rabbi Norman Lamm..

Judaism, he writes, can very well accept a scientific finding that man is not the only intelligent and bio-spiritual resident in God's world. ...The uniqueness of man is not a racial doctrine or biophysical phenomenon. It refers to the spiritual dignity of creatures endowed with reason and free will. On earth, only man fulfills these conditions. If we should discover other free and rational



species, we shall of course include them in the community of the uniquely bio-spiritual creatures...For the believing Jew, man can accept a far humbler place in the universe than previously assigned to him without surrendering his intrinsic worth and meaningfulness before God."

We have referred to the implications of Apollo 11 for the past and for the future. What about its meaning for the present?

When Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin land on the moon they will do so, as they have said, as "ambassadors for all the earth." /They bear small flags of 136 nations, including Russia, which will return with them. They will leave on the moon messages from the leaders of 73 nations. They will also leave behind a plaque with the words: "Here men from the planet earth first set foot upon the moon July 1969 A.D. We came in peace for all mankind."

In that dramatic and symbolic way they ratify the fact that we have become in reality "a global village." The Biblical concept of the whole human family constituting the "people of God" bound together by ties of mutual interdependence and mutual support is not just a pious, mystical vision. It is one of the most vital truths of this new cosmic era into which we have now entered. How we learn to live with global-and interplanetary--pluralism, and create authentic human community may well be the most important intellectual, religious and human challenge of the new cosmic age.

One final implication for our present situation. The Apollo 11 is a brilliant demonstration of American ingenuity and craftsmanship.



The success of the mission depends on the perfect meshing of 15 million parts that comprise the rocket and the two spaceships. The total cost of the Apollo program to date is \$22 billion. No serious person of the 20th century can deny the value of undertaking this scientific adventure. But our satisfaction over this triumph must be tempered by the sober realization that the times now demand that we devote comparable ingenuity and craftsmanship to the pressing human demands on inner space. We will not be able to justify to our own conscience and before mankind the continued spending of billions for futuristic experiments in outer space when in our midst some 30 million Americans live below the poverty line; while 10 million Americans are chronically malnourished, and hunger, disease and illiteracy stalk among the millions of human beings who constitute the two-thirds of the human family not in our Western world.

Perhaps one of the greatest achievements of Apollo 11 to outer space will be its becoming a constant goal and prod to all Americans to begin a NASA project for resolving the urgent human needs that hover in domestic space.

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RABBI MARC TANENBAUM - WINS

It was very much an American crowd that gathered in New York's Central Park for a TV watch of the dramatic moon landing. And, as might have been expected, the reactions were many and varied. Uppermost was an outpouring of elation and pride at the heroic achievement, and at the genius and determination on the part of men and nation that made it possible.

But along with the pride there were many sobering, even angry notes. A number of serious men<sup>and</sup> women wondered if the entire space program and all that went into making it a success was worth the hunger of a single child; the twenty-four billion dollars spent on these efforts and the energies of the 425 thousand people involved, they argued, could have been used more profitably to pull the millions of disadvantaged Americans out of their prison of poverty and despair, and to improve the basic quality of life for all our citizens.

This question of national priorities is a deeply disturbing issue. The moonshot demonstrates our country's power to do the impossible--when the will to do it is there. But do we have the will and the sensitivity to focus on human values?

Many Americans exult in the moon landing precisely because it has proved, as one of the astronauts so aptly put it, that "Man can accomplish anything if he puts his mind to it." The spirit that lifted up Armstrong and Aldrin<sup>1</sup> <sup>& Collins</sup> to the moon can lift up our fellow citizens to a decent existence on earth. But it requires the same determination, the same unstinting allocation of money and energies that went into conquering space.

We have gone to the moon. Now we must make sure that future generations are born into the light.

7/24/69



March 29, 1970

*Holiday*

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
"EASTER AND PASSOVER 1970"

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The colorful and impressive pageant of thousands of Christian pilgrims gathering last week in Jerusalem for Holy Week observances graphically symbolizes the persistently mysterious and yet fateful bonds which have linked Christianity to Judaism across two millenia. These bonds have been marked by profound kinships and common features, as well as by crucial differences, and the themes and rituals of Easter embody that paradoxical relationship. The message of the death and resurrection of Jesus which teaches joy and renewal for believing Christians has become historically profoundly alienating to Jews, because for so long the Crucifixion story has been abused as a weapon against the Jewish people charged so mindlessly with collective guilt for the death of Jesus. Witness the latest 1970 script of the Oberammergau Passion Play, which despite its modifications, continues to dramatize God's alleged rejection of Jewry for their role in the crucifixion. And yet, ironically, and tragically, as one studies the most advanced scholarship on the New Testament period, one becomes aware of how much more deeply Jewish were Jesus and his followers than even conventional knowledge is aware of.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

A study of Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday by Prof. Julian Morgenstern in his book, "Some Significant Antecedents of Christianity" (Brill, Leiden), discloses for example that the entire Holy Week observances simply cannot be understood -- as Jesus and his early followers understood them -- apart from their profound rootedness in first century Judaism. The pilgrimage to Jerusalem with palms on Sunday was a traditional practice of the country Jews of Palestine, who inaugurated the composite Passover-matzoh festival by such rites of purification, and Jesus and his followers were conforming to that time-honored ritual. The retreat to the Mt. of Olives was based on the practice of King David who on Sunday, the first day of the New Year of the ancient calendar, carried out a pilgrimage there to wrestle in a cave for seven days with the spirit of death, only to emerge victorious, resurrected and rejuvenated. Then he returned to Jerusalem to inaugurate for his people a new year of abundance and general good. Even the theme of death and resurrection which Jesus knew from the traditional folk religion of the Jews was understandable to first century Judaism. But how the common sources have been overlaid with uncommon misunderstandings, giving bittersweet point this Easter day to the sad but true poem,

How odd of God to choose the Jews  
But not so odd as those who choose  
a Jewish God and reject the Jews.

May this Easter be a time of renewal and rebirth for all our Christian friends and neighbors, and may it be a time of reconciliation

between Christians and Jews everywhere.





April 17, 1971

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
"THE PASSOVER AND PROSELYTIZING"

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The controversy over the television program, The Passover, prepared by the American Board of Missions to the Jews, has resulted in some confusions and tensions which ought not to go unattended. While Jewish individuals and organizations did protest against the misleading nature of the program, it needs to be made clear that there was no Jewish suppression nor efforts at censorship of the telecast. After making a careful check, this commentator is satisfied that the decision not to show the program was made entirely by the TV stations' management who sought to comply with the normal Federal Communications Commission regulations which require that programs must be "in the public interest."

Why was The Passover program considered to be not in the public interest? In the first instance, it contained errors of theological and historical fact, misrepresented the Jewish tradition, and therefore misled the public. To use the Kol Nidre prayer of Yom Kippur as liturgical music for a Passover seder is to perpetrate the ludicrous. To pretend to a television audience that this was an authentic Jewish

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\* Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

Passover ritual while allowing an actor to portray a traditional Jewish head of the household who mispronounced and stumbled over elementary Hebrew prayers is to border on an insult to the Jewish public.

But the Jewish objections were based on an even more fundamental consideration, namely that of the proselytizing approach to Judaism. To uncover the deep roots of Christianity in Judaism is not to deny Christianity; rather its effects are to deepen and enrich the Christian's self-understanding through recovery of his or her origins. To portray the Passover, and indeed all the concepts and traditions of Judaism solely or primarily as preparation for fulfillment in Christianity, as this television show does, is for the daughter faith to deny her mother autonomy and the right to independent existence.

In a time when major Christian institutions have repudiated proselytizing as offensive to them, when leading Catholic and Protestant scholars have rediscovered Judaism as a living faith of permanent value, and have come to understand Jews in their own terms and not just as candidates for conversion, the proselytizing efforts of the American Board of Missions to the Jews appear dated, anachronistic, and not in the public interest of anybody.



October 31, 1971

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
"THE SOVIET UNION, THE CHOSEN PEOPLE, AND RACISM"

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"Fascism and Zionism are racist creeds. The Zionists have come forward with the theory of the chosen people, an absurd ideology... that is religious racism." This is a verbatim quotation from a speech made on October 21 by Ambassador Yakov Malik of the Soviet Union before the United Nations General Assembly. There should be little wonder that this campaign of anti-Semitic vilification by Soviet and some Arab delegates in the chambers of the United Nations has resulted in a widespread reaction of outrage and revulsion throughout the Jewish community and among decent and fair-minded people everywhere.

There are few illusions in the Jewish community as to the intentions of the Soviet and Arab delegates in their systematic program of defaming Jews and Judaism. The Biblical ideal of the election of Israel is the foundationstone of the dignity of the Jew in Western civilization. It is also the basis of the Jewish vocation in history which is, contrary to the Soviet distortions and misrepresentations, not a claim for privilege or superiority, but rather an acceptance of special responsibility to help bring

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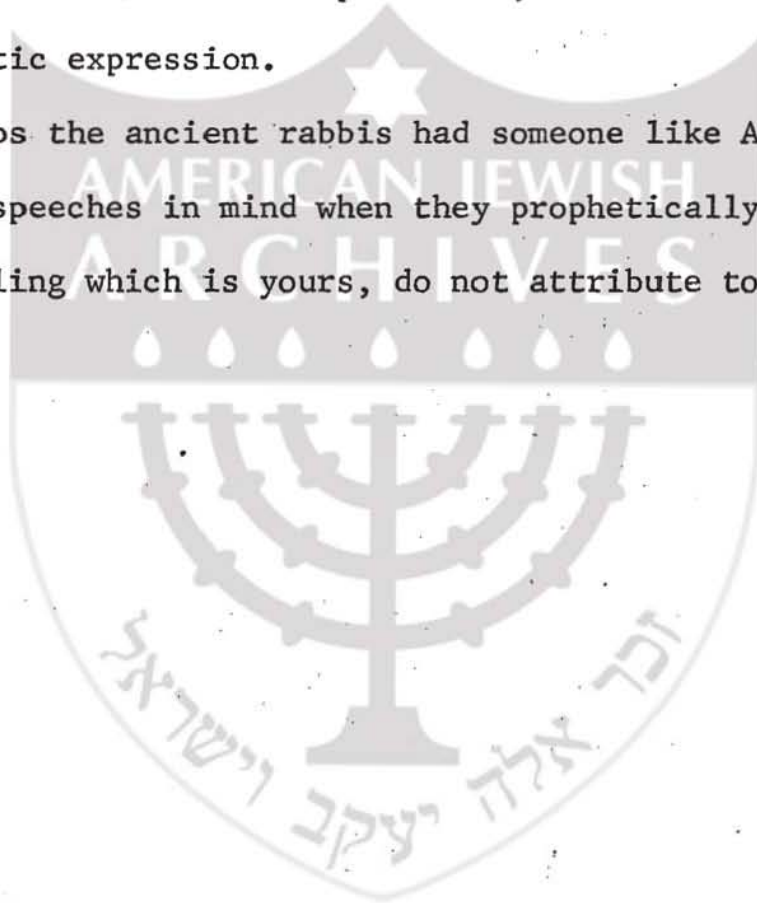
about conditions leading to redemption for Israel and for all mankind. The fact that Rabbinic law accords to the convert to Judaism, whatever his or her racial, ethnic or religious origins, all the rights and privileges of the born Jew, makes clear that the chosen people idea is a profoundly spiritual one and has nothing whatsoever to do with racism. The constant repetition of these epithets of racism and fascism is a calculated effort on the part of the Soviet and Arab spokesmen to mythologize the Jews and Israel into a pariah among the nations, thereby hoping to push them beyond the pale of human sympathy. The parallel between this propaganda and that of the Nazi demonology of the Jews is frightening.

To the historian of ideas, there is a grim and diabolic irony in this cynical Soviet exploitation of the chosen people concept. As such respected scholars as Mircea Eliad ("The Sacred and the Profane," Harcourt, Brace and World), and Norman Cohn ("The Pursuit of the Millenium," Harper Torchbooks) have demonstrated, Marxist-Leninist conceptions of the class struggle are fundamentally a secularized heresy distorting wildly the chosen people idea and Jewish and Christian messianic and eschatological ideologies.

According to Marxist thought, the proletariat are the new chosen people whose sufferings are destined to change the status of the world. In the Communist apocalypse, there is a vision of

a "final, decisive struggle" in which the proletariat will destroy the bourgeois capitalist world tyranny - that is, the apocalyptic struggle between Christ and Anti-Christ - and thereby inaugurate a new epoch in world history, the egalitarian millenium of the classless society. Thus, Soviet communism is today in fact the boldest embodiment of "The Chosen People" idea, and at the same time its most fantastic expression.

Perhaps the ancient rabbis had someone like Ambassador Malik and his UN speeches in mind when they prophetically warned, centuries ago, "A failing which is yours, do not attribute to others."



*Soviet*

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October 31, 1971

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
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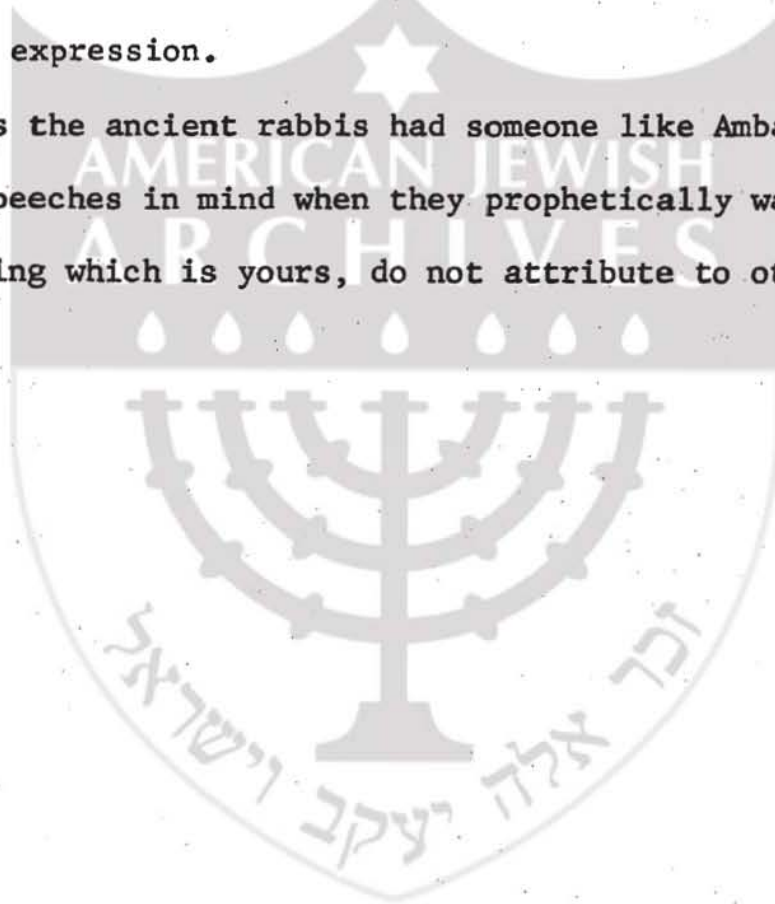
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June , 1972

## EVANGELISM AND THE JEWS

WINS COMMENTARY BY RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

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The recent launching of nationwide campaigns of Christian evangelism dramatized by Explo 72 in Dallas last week, have begun to raise concern in the Jewish community, both in terms of the meaning of the new evangelism for American democracy as well as for Jewish-Christian relations

The two outstanding evangelistic drives are Explo '72 and Key '73. Explo 72 was sponsored by the Campus Crusade for Christ, and brought together about 100,000 young people to Dallas to train as evangelists on some 450 college campuses or in their local communities. The aim of Explo '72, in the words of its sponsors, is "to saturate the entire nation" with Christian claims by 1976," and to persuade President Nixon, the Democratic and Republican national conventions this summer to testify publicly that America is a Christian nation.

Key 73 is a nationwide evangelistic program beginning in January 1973, involving for the first time some 124 evangelicals, but also mainline Protestants and Roman Catholic bodies in a cooperative effort "to blitz the continent with an evangelistic crusade."

While the Jewish community ~~and others~~ obviously respects the freedom of conscience of evangelicals as of others to promote their version of religious truth, those same constitutional freedoms allow some critical questions to be put to the sponsors of these evangelical movements. What, ~~as~~ for example, do these refurbished notions of America as an Evangelical Empire and the related Christian theocratic conceptions of American institutions mean for the pluralism of America, and for the

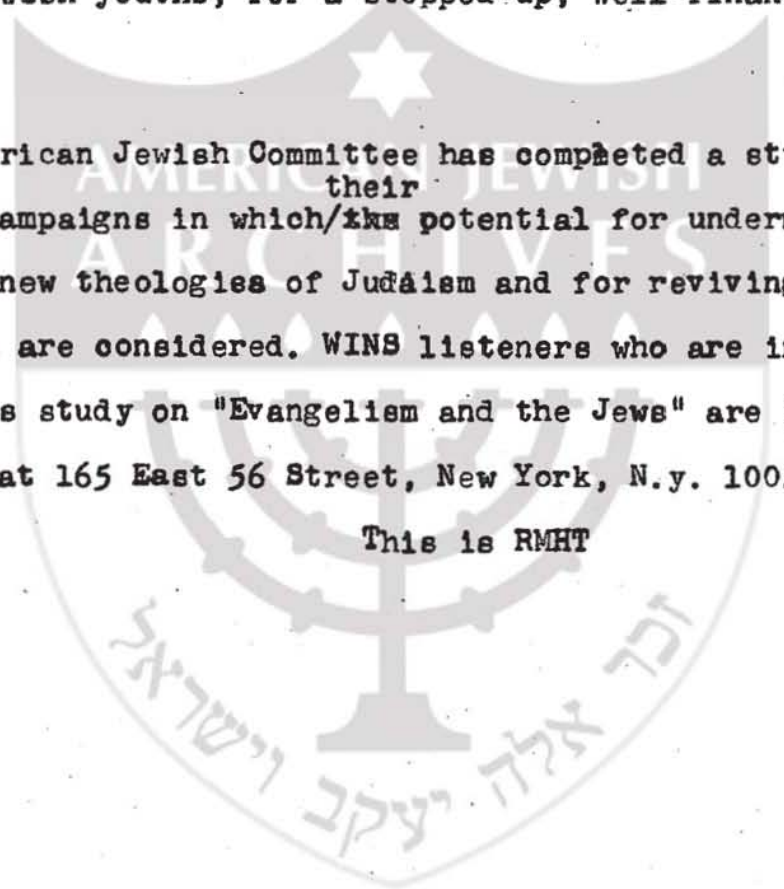


democratic understanding that Jews and other non-evangelicals are full partners in the American republic?

Complicating the picture is the fact that a number of so-called "Hebrew-Christian" and "Jews for Jesus" groups are attaching themselves to these evangelical campaigns, and are targeting the Jewish community, especially Jewish youths, for a stepped-up, well-financed proselytizing campaign.

The American Jewish Committee has completed a study of these <sup>their</sup> evangelical campaigns in which ~~the~~ potential for undermining the constructive new theologies of Judaism and for reviving theological anti-Semitism are considered. WINS listeners who are interested in a copy of this study on "Evangelism and the Jews" are invited to write to me at 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.y. 10022".

This is RMHT



July 16, 1972

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
TISHOH B'OV 1972

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This coming Wednesday evening, at sunset, the Jewish people throughout the world will begin the 24 hour observance of Tishoh B'ov, one of the most important fast days in Judaism that commemorate the destruction of the ancient Temple and of Jerusalem. Tishoh B'ov literally means the ninth day of the Jewish month of Ov, and it was on this day in the year 586 before the present era that the first Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians, and by historic irony, on the very same day 656 years later, in the year 70 of the present era, that the Temple was burned by Titus and the Roman Legions.

Among pious, traditional Jews, Tishoh B'ov and the nine day period preceding it are observed as days of mourning. All celebrations are forbidden. Observant Jews go to the synagogue, sit on low benches or boxes, and chant from the Prophet Jeremiah's Book of Lamentations, which laments the downfall of Jerusalem. They also recite kinos, odes of mourning over the destruction of the Temple and the long years of exile and dispersion that followed, concluding with prayers for Israel's longing for the

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speedy restoration of the Holy Land.

This observance of Tishoh B'ov, reenacted annually by the Jewish people throughout the world for nearly 2,000 years, tells us more than all the academic studies ever written how Jerusalem has been closer to the Jews than any other place, an inseparable part of every rejoicing and at the core of every sorrow. Recently, debate took place in Israel over whether Tishoh B'ov should be abandoned as a day of fasting and mourning since the Jewish people have finally been restored to their reunified holy city. Perhaps it should now become a day of celebration and rejoicing. But as we look around at the signs of the times--both for Jews and for the rest of mankind--there are few evidences that argue convincingly for such a change. The continued captivity and repression of Jews in Russia, in Syria and in other Arab countries, the pervasive exploitation of anti-Semitism in many parts of the world, the brutalization, violence and terror against innocent people in Ireland, India and Pakistan Burundi, the holocaust in Vietnam--all are painful signs that much of Jewish life and human life generally are marked by continual cause for mourning.

Thus Tishoh B'ov reminds us today that in this earthly



July 16, 1972

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city of God, which we all inhabit, the Shekihah, the Divine Presence, is still in exile, and that the world is unredeemed, marred by far too much agony and human suffering, and cries out for the healing and redemption of the Messiah, whose birthday paradoxically also takes place on Tishoh B'ov.



## Catholic-Jewish relations: After 7 years of ecumenism difficult problems remain

By RABBI MARC H. TANNENBAUM

(The national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee was the only rabbi present at the Vatican Council which, just seven years ago this month, adopted the Conciliar Declaration on non-Christian Religions, popularly referred to as the Vatican Declaration on the Jews. In the following article, he appraises the results of the Declaration and the ecumenical progress made in the seven years that have elapsed.)

In terms of Catholic-Jewish relations, Vatican Council II continues to merit the judgment that it was an historic milestone, a decisive turning point in the 1,900 years of relationships between Jews and Christians in the Western world.

The most important net effect of the deliberations and actions taken by the 2,500 Council Fathers is that these have resulted in a profound change of Christian mentality toward Jews and Judaism on many levels in the Catholic Church during the past decade. That alteration in Christian consciousness was a fundamental precondition to taking the first steps in creating a new Christian tradition incipiently characterized by a clear-cut repudiation of anti-Semitism, and a growing respect for Judaism as a living religion of permanent value to its adherents.

### Impetus to study

To the historian of ideas, there are two "facts of life" that are self-evident; first, that great, seminal ideas that have changed the course of history have been invariably the creation of a small group, usually an intellectual elite; second, that it takes decades for such formative ideas to percolate through an entire society and to change its worldview and behavior patterns.

Thus, one of the more significant achievements of Vatican Council II was that its adoption by an overwhelming vote of *Nostra Aetate* (Declaration on Non-Christian Religions)—as well as other progressive declarations on Religious Liberty and the Church and the Modern World—gave strong impetus and provided a sanction for small groups of prestigious Catholic scholars and churchmen to begin the serious process of removing the sources of anti-Jewish attitudes in Christian teaching and liturgy and to lay the foundations of a Christian theology of Judaism that is congruent with the vital realities of Jewish existence.

That there exists today, a decade later, a network of scholars in Scripture studies, theology, church history, liturgy, and sociology in the United States, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and even in Africa and Asia, engaged in creating a new Christian culture that is sympathetic toward Jews and Judaism is itself the most telling commentary on the long-range historic value of the Council.

After 1,900 years of by-and-large tragic experience with Christian tradition and Christian society whose momentum moved horrendously in an anti-Jewish direction, the present reversal of field is simply inconceivable without taking into account the decisions of Vatican Council II.

### Catholic teaching on Jews

And continuing for a moment on this positive side of the ledger, the search for a new understanding between Catholics and Jews was not altogether confined to scholars during the past decade. In a study which Dominican Sister Rose Albert Thering and I conducted together in 1970, it was evident that Catholics were making serious efforts to improve teaching about Jews and Judaism in Catholic seminaries, colleges, universities and high schools.

Our study, prepared for a colloquium on "The Theology of Israel," held at Seton Hall University in collaboration with Msgr. John M. Oesterreicher, disclosed that 40 per cent of Catholic seminaries and colleges provided courses in Jewish studies; 41.3 per cent of the seminaries and 75 per cent of the colleges treated Judaism in comparative religion courses, and 82.7 per cent of the seminaries and 68.9 per cent of the colleges offered Scripture courses which specifically dealt with the relationship of Christianity to Judaism.

Almost 70 per cent of the Catholic high schools that responded to our questionnaire reported that local rabbis were invited into the classrooms when Judaism was being discussed.

These developments, too, are inconceivable without giving due account to the impact of Vatican Council II.

Parenthetically, our study also revealed that "no similar structural reform took place among the mainstream Protestant denominations"—a negative affirmation of the value of the Council, and perhaps a positive suggestion to the Protestant leadership, "Go thou and do likewise."

### The negative aspects

A balanced evaluation requires that we look also at the negative side of the Catholic-Jewish ledger and at unresolved

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**A HISTORIC, ECUMENICAL OCCASION**—The late Augustin Cardinal Bea, father of the Vatican Council's Declaration on the Jews, meets with Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel of the Jewish Theological Seminary, left, and Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, center, in March 1963 during the second session of Vatican Council II. It was at this meeting that the Cardinal revealed to Jewish leaders the draft of what later became the Vatican Declaration on Non-Christian Religions.

issues that call for far more serious attention than has been given thus far since Vatican II.

These issues have been stated forthrightly by the Rev. Edward Flannery, executive secretary of the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations in his November 1970 report of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. These problems still exist:

"1) Anti-Semitism, though mostly low-toned and unconscious, was still widespread and required constant effort to detect and unmask its many disguises.

"2) Catholic scholars have not yet sufficiently pursued research into the renewal of theology regarding the place of Judaism in the divine plan, though the Vatican Council's statement on the Jews showed the way.

"3) The State of Israel has become a serious stumbling block in Jewish-Christian relations. Since 'Jews have in the vast majority identified with that State' and 'see Zionism as central to Judaism itself and essential not only to Israeli but also to Jewish survival,' they consider it 'as an ecumenical and a religious consideration

which should be included in the dialogue.'"

#### **Urgent need to close gap**

The need to speed up the process of closing the gap between advances made by the scholarly elite and the people in the pew in relation to anti-Semitism, a more adequate theology of Judaism, and Israel has assumed especial urgency for the Jewish community in light of troublesome developments in recent years.

The calculated exploitation of anti-Semitism, including the use of theological anti-Semitism, by the Soviet Union and some Arab propagandists has impelled many Jews to look to the Catholic community as an ally and countervailing force in combatting this new wave of hatred toward the Jewish people.

The forthcoming nationwide evangelistic drive of "May '73"—paralleled by intensified mission-to-the-Jews programs whose conversionary efforts presuppose a denigration of Judaism as an "incomplete religion"—have also underscored the importance of Catholic and other Christian efforts to put an end once and for all to proselytizing the Jewish people.

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January 14, 1973

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
"TASK FORCE ON JEWISH POOR"

The report out of Washington yesterday that 320 million dollars in federal anti-poverty funds will be eliminated in 1973 should be a cause for genuine concern on the part of all persons who find morally intolerable the continued disparity between affluence and the poverty of some 35 million people in our nation. That curtailment will find special negative resonances in the Jewish community which only recently has discovered that there are an estimated 800,000 Jewish poor people in the United States, two-thirds of whom are in their sixties and older, and are living on less than \$4,000 a year.

It is evident that concerned persons of all faiths and races will need to take counsel together to assure that Government anti-poverty programs are not further whittled away, especially at a time when inflation, unemployment, rising rents and skyrocketing medical costs have rendered the senior citizen population uniquely vulnerable. While the American people must work to make their government more generous rather than less generous to the poor, parallel attention is urgently required in helping the voluntary agencies to implement

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more effectively their person-to-person services to the poor and aged. For that reason the Jewish community in New York should welcome and give greater encouragement and support to the Metropolitan Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty. That Council, under the leadership of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, seeks to serve the needs of an estimated 300,000 Jewish poor in New York. It has just begun to establish neighborhood services programs in the two metropolitan areas which have the greatest concentration of the Jewish poor - the Lower East Side of Manhattan and the Grand Concourse-Tremont section of the Bronx.

Aside from these professional services, there is also a pressing need for volunteers of all ages to help meet the simple wants of the poor - the desire for companionship and human contact, help in shopping and in the routine chores of daily existence, in traveling outside their neighborhoods to clinics, to synagogue services, to a library and a Jewish center. The time has come for every synagogue, temple, and Jewish organization to consider seriously the setting up of a Task Force for the Poor, and in that way to begin to translate into personal terms the values of Judaism which, according to the Ethics of the Synagogue Fathers, obligate us to treat the poor as members of our own families.

Feb. 11, 1973

## SOVIET JEWRY

### WINS COMMENTARY OF RMHT

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This week two events took place in Washington in support of the human rights of Soviet Jewry and other oppressed peoples that made me feel proud to be an American and privileged to be working in the promotion of Jewish-Christian understanding. The first event occurred on Thursday when Congressmen Wilbur D. Mills, chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, and Congressman Charles Vanik of Ohio joined in sponsoring a "Freedom of Emigration Act." That/ would restrain the United States from giving the Soviet Union most favored nation treatment and liberal trade concessions until ~~the Soviet Union~~ <sup>Moscow ceases its</sup> discriminatory emigration policies and freely allows Jews and others to emigrate. The principle behind that, ~~legislation~~ <sup>action, as the</sup> legislators declared, is that "the United States as a nation cannot overlook denigration of human rights for the sake of commercial gain."

Of tremendous moral and political importance is the fact that nearly 260 members of Congress, more than half of the House, have joined in sponsoring the measure, thus representing all political shades of opinion from 46 states, and including all 16 members of the Congressional black caucus. At the same time, Senator Henry Jackson <sup>re-</sup>announced that he will introduce an identical measure in the Senate which he expects will have the backing of ~~xxx~~ at least three-quarters of the 100 senators.

The other event took place on Friday morning on Capitol Hill when Congressman Robert Drinan informed a press conference that ten nationally prominent American religious leaders have protested



to Communist Party Chairman Leonid Brezhnev the sudden and arbitrary cancellation of a nine-day tour of the Soviet Union on which they were scheduled to leave this evening. Speaking on behalf of this commentator, who was the Jewish member of the group, and for the Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and black leaders, Father Drinan who is the first Catholic priest to serve in Congress declared:

"The Russian Government has made it impossible for ~~this~~ this ~~dedicated~~ dedicated group of Christian and Jewish clergymen from America to visit the Soviet Union for the expressed purpose of ~~deepening~~ deepening the spiritual bonds between the Jews of Russia and the Christians and Jews of America. This morning we assure the Jews of Russia that the ~~an~~ arbitrary decision of someone in the Russian Government will not deter us from coming to Russia and chatting with three million Jews 'Let my people go!'"

Evidently something quite profound is happening among the American people who want improved relations <sup>and detente</sup> with Russia, but that will not proceed between our two peoples as long as the human rights of Soviet Jews and others are denied. And Soviet authorities will badly misjudge this country unless they begin paying serious attention to these signs of the American mood and conscience.



73-700-204  
3/4/73

March 4, 1973

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

"BILLY GRAHAM AND JUDAISM"

"I believe God has always had a special relationship with the Jewish people...In my evangelistic efforts, I have never felt called to single out the Jews as Jews...Just as Judaism frowns on proselytizing that is coercive, or that seeks to commit men against their will, so do I."

These words were written and issued to the press last Friday morning by Dr. Billy Graham. When you consider the fact that Dr. Graham is the leading evangelist in the nation, and probably in the world today, they assume unprecedented importance. Dr. Graham returned last week from a trip throughout sections of the United States and became concerned about reports over growing acts of psychological harassment, deception, and intimidation carried out by fervid young evangelists against Jewish young people on public high school and college campuses. In addition, there were episodes of disruption of Jewish religious services by Campus Crusade for Christ types, as is the recent case of Portland, Oregon and Dr. Graham became troubled about the deteriorating effect of such incidents on Christian-Jewish relations.

\* Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is the National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

At the request of Dr. Graham, I visited with him last Tuesday at his lovely mountain-top home in Montreat, North Carolina, and we spent three hours together reviewing virtually every aspect of relationships between Christians and Jews here and abroad. Finally, Dr. Graham decided on his initiative to issue his statement clarifying for the first time publicly his opposition to proselytizing the Jewish community, his commitment to American pluralism in which all religious and racial groups are full partners, and his conviction that Judaism, as he told me, possesses a covenant from God which is "eternal, forever," and not subject to abrogation. Dr. Graham has taken firm positions in the past condemning anti-Semitism; he has been a strong supporter of Israel on the basis of deep Biblical conviction; and he has been extremely helpful to the cause of Soviet Jews. Based on his most recent statement on the permanent value of Judaism, and other positive convictions that he shared with me during our meeting in Montreat, I am persuaded that Dr. Graham is destined to make a fundamental and lasting contribution to the improvement of Jewish-Christian understanding that may well become a historic turning point in relations between evangelical Christians and Jews.

73-700-20A



September 2, 1973

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
"LABOR DAY 1973"

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The recent observance of Labor Day seems to have raised more forcefully than almost any time in the recent past the centrality of moral and spiritual values in the rethinking of the role of labor in a super-industrial society. It is now evident that our society has mastered all the techniques of the assembly line, the computer and automation, and now can produce literally almost anything it sets its mind to. Paradoxically, it has hardly begun to comprehend the value questions, namely, the nature and dignity of man in relation to the uses of technology, as well as the corollary question of the real meaning of work to modern man.

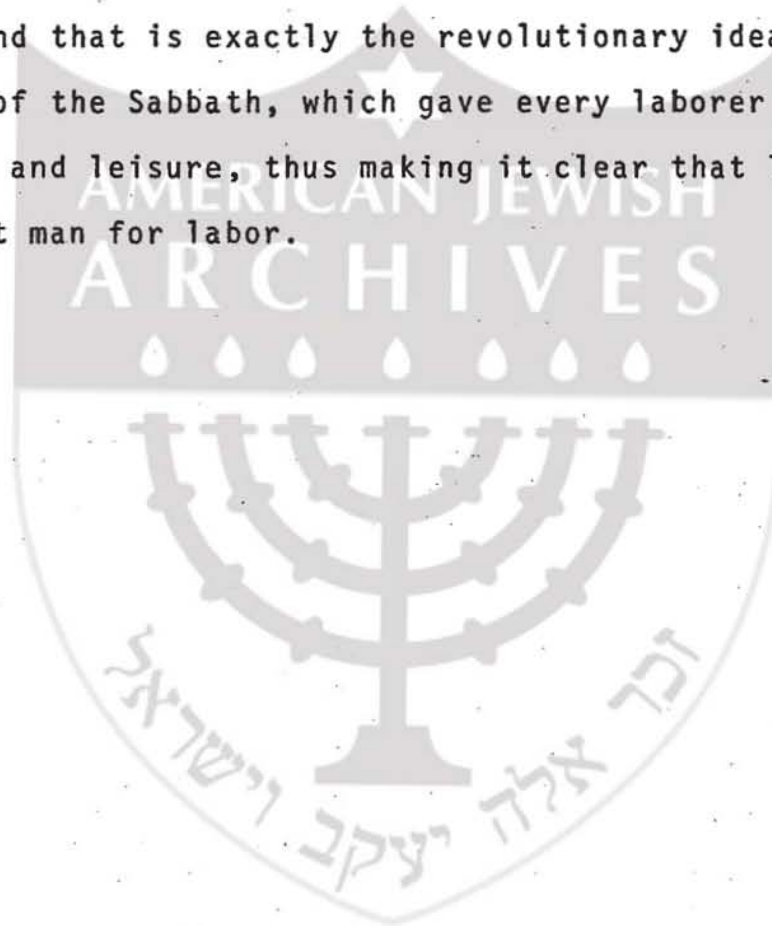
Blue collar workers blues, and white collar dropouts have become popular terms to express a widespread feeling of alienation toward work. Contemporary industrial systems have frequently turned workers from a human being into a thing, a soft machine, an object linked to other objects in factories and offices. That undermining of the dignity of the human person in his most creative capacity of personal achievement through work is now as severe in Communist countries as it is in the West. The fact that so many young people today have turned to being artisans and to making handicrafts is indicative of a genuine need to be master of one's work and to stamp one's identity on one's own creations, a refusal to be lost in the anonymous vastness of the abstract systems and bureaucracies.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.



There is an urgency for giving working men and women a much greater degree of control over their own working lives, and a greater involvement in the entire production process as a means to enrich human values in the work places of our societies. In this effort to rethink the nature and role of labor, it would be useful to recall that Jewish tradition has consistently upheld the dignity of labor. Even God himself - or herself - worked six days and then rested. And that is exactly the revolutionary idea behind the institution of the Sabbath, which gave every laborer every week a day of freedom and leisure, thus making it clear that labor exists for man and not man for labor.



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Dec. 30, 1973

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
"1973: A JEWISH RETROSPECT"

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What kind of year was 1973 for the Jewish community?

If this were a less cynical and more believing age, one might be tempted to call 1973 the year of the birth pangs of the Messiah. According to Jewish traditions, the dynamic movement of history is two-sided, combining destructive with constructive forces, with catastrophe serving as the background for redemption. Jewish Messianic theory holds that the transition from the historical present to the Messianic future is inevitably to be marked by upheaval and cataclysm, the world in fact is to be shaken to its foundations, as a prelude to the establishment of the Messianic age of lasting peace. Certainly 1973 has had its full share of the cataclysmic and the destructive - the Middle East war and its tragic loss of young lives; famine and starvation resulting in tens of thousands of deaths in West Africa, Ethiopia, and India; the energy crisis and the oil embargo which topsy-turvy transformed the Arab nations into the new imperialists that treat the rest of the world arbitrarily as if all of us were suddenly colonial dependencies imploring for oil handouts to avoid economic ruin; the Watergate scandal whose revelations of moral corruption in high places disclosed how serious is the threat to a democratic society of the new bureaucratic man who believes he is beyond morality and ethical accountability.

The Jewish community was caught up and participated in the universal anguish and painful dilemma of these tumultuous events of 1973, but somehow managed with its fellow Americans not to succumb to despair. There were constructive happenings

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that counter balanced the destructive, and provided some basis for confidence and trust in a better future. The Geneva peace conference that brought Arabs and Israelis to the negotiating table for the first time in 25 years after four wars offered a cautious glimpse of hope for a more peaceful 1974. The continued emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union, despite the closing down of the Schonen transit camp in Austria, was another affirmative sign, although constantly overshadowed by continuous Soviet harassment of dissidents. And there were other positive developments in religion, education, and culture, especially on the American scene.

But the overarching positive achievement in 1973 for the Jewish community was the assertion of an unprecedented consciousness of group unity, solidarity, and mutual helpfulness in the face of unparalleled intimidations and threats to Jewish survival. Given the challenges, quite likely of a turbulent character that will confront all of us in the coming year on both the foreign and domestic fronts, that sense of group interdependence, lively cooperation and determination on the part of all religious, racial, and ethnic groups to prevail <sup>together</sup> over the destructive and the despairing may well prove to be ~~together~~ <sup>the</sup> most precious human and spiritual resource at our disposal on entering 1974.

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Nov. 25, 1973

## U.S. JEWRY

WINS COMMENTARY BY RHEH

A strange and somewhat disquieting dialogue is beginning to surface in parts of the Jewish community in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War. In recent weeks, a number of religious spokesmen have begun to speak and write about how the overwhelming response of American Jews to the needs of Israel in her hour of peril demonstrated the institutional primacy of the synagogue in American Jewry, implying that Jewish communal bodies - such as B'nai B'rith, American Jewish Committee, and American Jewish Congress among others - were shown to be somehow marginal. The role of the American Synagogue in helping mobilize moral and material support among Jewish masses was unquestionably a proud and brilliant chapter in the history of American Jewry. But any failure to give adequate attention and credit to such communal agencies throughout the country as the Jewish federations, community relations councils, and national civic agencies and their local chapters would be nothing less than a distortion of the actual record.

While American synagogues served, as they have since their ancient origins, as major houses of assembly for Jews during the present crisis, two plain facts need to be faced if the discussion is to be kept accurate and honest. The first is that aside from Yom Kippur day itself, Jews assembled in synagogues and temples primarily to demonstrate their solidarity with Israel, and not solely for liturgical purposes. And the second fact is that the Jewish communal agencies did carry out the lion's share of educational and public information activity without which the interpretation of Israel's cause might well have been a disaster. What all these comments come down to, in my judgment, is that the Jewish community in America after more than 300 years of trial and testing has evolved a mature and vital partnership between its synagogueal and communal leadership and institutions, both of which are absolutely indispensable for a viable Jewish life. Give the magnitude of foreign and domestic challenges that the Jewish people face in the weeks and months ahead, that partnership must be further strengthened, and any tendencies that would erode such collaboration and unity would be nothing less than reckless and irresponsible, playing into the hands of the worst enemies of the Jewish people.



September 1, 1974

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
"LABOR DAY 1974"

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When Peter McGuire first advocated in 1882 the observance of Labor Day, his purpose was to dramatize the exploitation of labor and dehumanizing working conditions. Thanks to the relentless advocacy of the organized labor movement, the worst features of sweat shops, slave wages, and child labor have been removed. But with all its successes, the labor movement and our industrial society at large is today faced with one of its greatest and most difficult challenges and that is the widespread feeling of alienation toward work.

Blue collar workers and white collar dropouts are popular terms that express that alienation. Despite our tremendous productivity, our computerized and automated industrial systems have frequently turned workers from a human being into a thing, a soft machine, an object linked to other objects in factories and offices. That undermining of the dignity of the human person in his or her most creative capacity of personal achievement through work is now as severe in Communist countries as it is in the West.

There is an urgency for giving working men and women much greater control over their own working lives, and a greater involvement in the entire production process as a means to enrich human values in the work places of our societies. On Labor Day 1974, it will be useful to recall that Jewish tradition taught then and now that the dignity of the human person requires that men and women should be the masters of labor, and not its slave.

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740911  
September 11, 1974

ANTI-CATHOLICISM AND THE NEW YORK PRIMARY

WINS COMMENTARY BY RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM, AMERICAN  
COMMITTEE

JEWISH

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The results of the New York primary race demonstrated many interesting political things, ~~and~~ not the least important of which is that it gave the lie decisively to the widely-current charge that anti-Catholicism is on the rise in the Jewish community<sup>and elsewhere.</sup> The most recent expressions of that charge appeared in the Aug. 29 issue of the Brooklyn Catholic Tablet. In an article entitled "September and the Catholic vote", Jim Miller wrote that Jewish militancy ~~in~~ and a heavy Jewish vote in the primaries are responsible for the Democratic Party's being on the verge of permanently purging Catholics from running for state-wide office. And, Mr. Miller added, that Congressman Hugh Carey is an Irish Catholic with 12 kids and there is a prejudice against politicians like that.

It will be interesting to see whether Mr. Miller will write another article now that the primary results are in. How will he reconcile his imputation of anti-Catholicism to the Jewish community and the plain, hard fact that the one genuine surprise of the primary was the fact that Hugh Carey outscored the Jewish candidate Howard Samuels, among Jewish voters. Mr. Carey won some 34% of the Jewish vote of the state and carried by 60% the vote in the four heavily Jewish Assembly districts of New York. Like the slogan of anti-Semitism the slogan of anti-Catholicism may turn out voters to the election booths, but it is a dangerous game to play. Once you let the genie of group prejudice out of the bottle, it becomes very difficult to put it back, and that's a luxury that America can hardly afford



December 15, 1974

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

"SEASON OF LIGHT"

This is the season of light. Jews have just concluded their eight-day observance of Chanukah, the Festival of Lights. Our Christian neighbors will celebrate Christmas this week with the lighting of trees. Why is light such a prominent religious and human symbol? In an essay on The Menorah in the Orthodox Journal, Tradition, Rabbi Shubert Spero observes that the candelabrum was made in the form of a tree to represent the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. Life is defined in Biblical terms as an organic interaction with nature, a being at home in the universe. To symbolize that ideal of wholeness, the Menorah had to be made out of a single piece of metal, without any seams. So life lived in accordance with the Biblical moral and spiritual values<sup>15</sup> not fragmented and chaotic, but one harmonizing the individual with society, nature, history, and the Divine Presence.

If the Menorah represents the Jewish tree of life, its greatest fruit is light. And light is understood as the universal symbol of knowledge, a knowledge and wisdom that helps integrate a total personality and unifies a society through a way of life marked by equality, justice and fraternity. In our anarchic world marked by so much darkness of suffering, hunger, violence, and corruption and prejudice, the warmth and divine illumination of the lights of these Jewish and Christian festivals are desperately needed, almost as never before.

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Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Middle East, and quite possibly, throughout the world.

The original Chanukah was the initial "breakthrough" of universal import in that the Maccabean victory was the first triumph in the struggle for religious freedom and for the acceptance of pluralism in the history of mankind. Scholars tell us that the Syrian emperor, Antiochus, embarked on a ruthless campaign of suppressing the Jewish religion and culture and tried to impose emperor worship, pagan idols, and cults in the Holy City of Jerusalem/ as a means of enforcing conformity and political loyalty to his totalitarian empire. To committed Jews, then and now, these alien ways were ultimate offenses to everything that gave meaning to their lives, and they rather suffered martyrdom than deny their God and their sacred traditions.

The Maccabean struggle to resist imperial oppression was thus a decisive victory for pluralism - for the right to be oneself, in one's own terms. Had the Maccabees been defeated, Judaism would have perished and, quite conceivably, Christianity and Islam would never have emerged from the loins of their Jewish mother faith. It is no accident that the Christian liturgical calendar celebrates a Feast of Maccabees day, and that the Christian Bible has incorporated the Books of the Maccabees in the Christian Biblical canon.

The courageous visit of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to Israel, and the equally heroic response of Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel to these peace initiatives, are in many ways the latest, modern chapter in the ancient Chanukah story. After more than thirty years of pan-Arab refusal to acknowledge the right of

December 29, 1974

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

"1974: A JEWISH RESPECTIVE"

What kind of year was 1974<sup>75</sup> for the Jewish community? When one tries to answer that question, Dorothy Parker's comment comes to mind, namely, that Jews are like everybody else, but only more so. Like everybody else, the Jewish people shared that widespread anxiety that perhaps civilization was reaching the end of a cycle of growth and decay forecast by the historian Oswald Spengler. The signs were all about us - widespread violence, terrorism and crime undermining law and stability; proliferation of nuclear and conventional arms races; tragic famine and hunger, international economic recessions and unemployment deepened by the oil and food shortages. And for Jews 1974 was only more so a time of troubles what with the Arab-Communist bloc's ~~threat to Israel's survival~~ <sup>verbal violence against Israel</sup>, the Russian roulette game <sup>I saw the UN and UNHCR</sup> that the Soviet Union was playing with the human rights of Soviet Jews and others. In trying to cope with these monumental threats, Jews both consciously and unconsciously fell back on the wisdom and insights of their history and tradition. While others <sup>may have</sup> sought escape from history in apocalyptic speculation and fantasies, Rabbinic Judaism insisted on the use of reason and law as the only viable means for coping with the irrational and with chaos. And then Jews believed that for every malady God prepared in advance the remedy. 1975 will be a time for mobilizing the uses of reason and for seeking remedies for the inevitable <sup>together with other concerned people</sup> maladies that will face all of us.

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March 16, 1975

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum\* of the American Jewish Committee

"NAZI HOLOCAUST: 30TH ANNIVERSARY"

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The year 1975 marks the 30th anniversary of the liberation of survivors of the Nazi concentration camps. An International Scholars Conference on the Nazi Holocaust was held in New York last week with leading Jewish and Christian thinkers seeking to probe the meaning of Nazi genocide for the Jewish people as well as for mankind. Over and again, scholars agreed that Jews lived in a post-apocalyptic world, that everything has been changed by the Nazi holocaust. While the grief over Auschwitz was mitigated by the birth of the State of Israel, the October 1973 war resulted in a loss of confidence for it revealed again how fragile is the world order in that Western technological civilization could potentially be reduced to political and economic disaster by the Arab domination of crucial supplies of oil. The Nazi trauma also disclosed a fundamental contempt for moral limits, as well as the failure of politicians and other leaders of society to anticipate and to take adequate measures to avert catastrophe. Today, when the human race struggles to adjust the balance between population and resources, when millions of human beings are regarded as surplus population in the way the Nazis looked upon the Jews, one wonders if the Jewish experience of genocide may some day be the fate of millions of other expendable men and women. That could happen, if the world continues to avoid and evade the Nazi Experience, thinking that it is solely a Jewish obsession, with no serious meaning for the rest of the human family.

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March 23, 1975

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum\* of the American Jewish Committee

"PASSOVER 1975"

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At sundown next Wednesday, the Jewish people begin the observance of Pesach, or Passover, the oldest and undoubtedly the most influential of the Jewish festivals. Known in Jewish tradition as Zman Cherutenu, the Season of our freedom, Passover commemorates the liberation of the Israelites from bondage to Pharaoh in Egypt. The Exodus from Egypt was as much an act of liberation from intolerable spiritual bondage as it was redemption from physical slavery. In Egypt, the king was regarded as a god, a divine mediator, he was the source and master of the law, never its servant, and men and women were victims of his whims. The rejection of Egypt by Moses and the Israelites was thus a declaration of spiritual independence, an act of self-determination of a people seeking a life of human dignity and freedom to be themselves. But Passover celebrates not only redemption as a past event, but through the Seder family ceremonies, it reenacts liberation as a present-day experience and that is why this Passover, the worsening plight of the Jews in the Soviet Union and in Arab countries will be uppermost in the minds and hearts of Jewish families everywhere. When the words "Next Year in Jerusalem: are recited, Jews will be recommitting themselves to the renewed struggle for liberation and justice, until the Exodus of Soviet Jewry and that of all people who seek freedom and self-determination are realized everywhere.

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July 13, 1975

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

"TISHA B'OV 1975"

Next Wednesday evening, the Jewish people throughout the world will begin the 24-hour observance of Tisha B'ov, the ninth day of the Jewish month of Ov. Tisha B'ov is the most important of Jewish historical fast days in that it commemorates events connected with the destruction of the ancient Temple and of Jerusalem, first by the Babylonians and then by the Roman Legions.

The Rabbinic Sages sought to make Tisha B'ov a day on which the calamitous events of Jewish history would be remembered. Therefore the special liturgy for Tisha B'ov included not only the Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah over the destruction of the Temple, but also elegies for Jewish victims murdered by the crusaders, recollections of the heroism of the martyrs of all generations, and the magnificent hymn of praise by the poet philosopher Yehudah Halevi expressing the Jewish people's longing for the Holy Land and prayers for her speedy restoration. Since the establishment of the reborn State of Israel in 1948, some Jews have felt that Tisha B'ov should no longer be observed, since the Jewish commonwealth has been restored in Israel. The Conservative Jewish theologian, Rabbi Seymour Siegel, has written in the Jewish Digest, that the Jewish calendar would be impoverished if Tisha B'ov were to be discontinued for it would be a severe diminishing of our concern and love for those who went before us to remove or modify this day when their sufferings are recalled. We need Tisha B'ov to remind us that the world is yet unredeemed, that people still suffer, that nations still oppress other nations, and that we must renew our efforts to end all exile and oppression so that all people can rest secure in their homes with none to make them afraid.

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February 1, 1976

(see over)

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY  
RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

"The Vatican, Pope John, and Israel"

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The publication last week of declassified Vatican documents that deal with the role of the Holy See in relation to the Nazi slaughter of Europe's Jews and the rise of the State of Israel raises as many questions as the documents were apparently intended to resolve. I won't enter here any judgment regarding the Vatican's policy of public silence on the massacre of Jews and others by the Nazis ostensibly for reasons that such protests would endanger quiet diplomacy on their behalf. In fairness, one simply will have to read that 700-page volume and check the documents concerning Vatican diplomatic interventions in behalf of innocent victims before determining whether Pius XII did act as the Vicar of Christ on earth might be expected to in the face of such enormous human suffering and tragedy. Nor is it necessary to comment at length on the hostility of the Vatican Secretariat of State in 1943-and-later to the establishment of the State of Israel. Both the content and the rhetoric of that opposition to Jewish national sovereignty is as old, as depressingly familiar, and as repugnant as the theological anti-Judaism of fourth century Church Fathers who preached that the Jews must remain in exile forever as divine punishment for not accepting the Christian Messiah.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

(o v e r)



WINS/Vatican, Pope, Israel  
February 1, 1976

-2-

What is surprising is the opposition attributed to Pope John to the rebirth of Israel. My sense of shock grows out of the fact that in March 1963 the Vatican's Augustin Cardinal Bea informed the late Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel and myself on a confidential basis at a private meeting in the Boston Chancery that Pope John was planning to recognize the State of Israel during Vatican Council II as a gesture of friendship to the Jewish people. Tragically, Pope John died shortly thereafter, and so apparently did that reversal of Vatican policy.

*WE SUGGEST SENDING THE INCLOSURES TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS  
PERHAPS THEY CAN LEARN SOMETHING*

76-700-07

AUGUST 7, 1976

"TISHA B'AV 1976"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

This past Thursday, the Jewish people throughout the world observed Tisha B'Av, the ninth day of the Jewish month of Av. Tisha B'Av is the most important of the four historical fast days that commemorate events connected with the destruction of the ancient Temple and of Jerusalem some 2,500 years ago. According to Jewish tradition, it was on the ninth day of Av in the year 586 before the present era that the first Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians, and on the same day, 656 years later, that the Second Temple was burned by Titus. Among pious, traditional Jews, the fast of Av is observed with all the solemnity of the Day of Atonement. In addition to avoiding all celebrations and sensual pleasures, observant Jews pray like mourners, sitting on the ground of the synagogue, reciting dirges over the passing of the Temple and the religious and national life of which it was the symbol and the embodiment. With the rebirth of the State of Israel, with the reunification of Jerusalem, and with the spectacular liberation of hostages from terrorism in Uganda; many Jews—traditional as well as liberal—now ask whether Tishah B'Av should not be abandoned, or at least updated. One Orthodox Jew in London proposed last week this reformulation of reasons for observing Tisha B'Av in the 20th Century: What then do I mourn over? I mourn over the reasons for the ancient destruction, many of which regrettably exist today. I mourn over the causeless hatred which finds people who eat and drink together and then thrust each other through with the daggers of their tongue; I mourn over the lack of social justice, business integrity, and unethical behavior among those in high places. I mourn over the serious moral evils that could do more to undermine human existence than any sword raised against us from the outside.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.



September 5, 1976

"LABOR DAY 1976"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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Great is labor for every craftsman walks out with the implements of his calling and is proud of them. That Rabbinic statement is representative of the attitudes of Judaism toward labor- labor is inextricably bound up with the dignity of the human personality, and honest work and industry are expressions of human creativity and should be a source of pride and fulfillment. On this Labor Day weekend, ~~in this Bicentennial Year,~~ it may be useful to recall these attitudes toward labor, for fundamental changes in industrialized societies have eroded much of the belief in those values. Sociology Prof. Daniel Bell informs us that we have moved from an industrial to a post-industrial society and therefore such changes are inevitable. In the history of work, Dr. Bell reminds us most people have worked with nature as farmers in the pre-industrial economy, and with things and machines in the industrial world. In the post-industrial economy, work increasingly involves knowledge and services. Thus today some 27 million people hold jobs producing goods while more than 60 million work in services. Service jobs as in transportation, public utilities, and government involve not a relationship with nature or things but relations between persons. And so the shifts are vast and global but one Biblical value must remain unchanged - and that is the perennial wisdom that human beings live not just for work, but that work must become meaningful and fulfilling so that people can live to realize their fullest <sup>human</sup> dignity as ~~divinely-created personalities.~~

\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.



October 26, 1976

ARCHBISHOP TRIFA: A CHALLENGE TO MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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The presence of Romanian Orthodox Bishop Valerian Trifa as the representative of the Orthodox Church of America on the general board of the prestigious National Council of Churches has become the cause of significant strain and tension between the NCC and the Jewish community.

The heart of the issue centers on the fact that Bishop Trifa came to the United States in July 1950 and in order to gain entry and later to become an American citizen, he denied flatly in his written affidavits that he had been a member of the Romanian Iron Guard, a Nazi-like storm trooper cadre. Membership in that fascist body automatically excluded him from our country. Bishop Trifa also denied that he was an anti-Semitic agitator, and that he participated in a 1941 Iron Guard massacre of Jews and Christians in Bucharest. In May 1975, the criminal division of the U.S. Department of Justice filed charges against Trifa, accusing him of lying to the American government, and stipulating that he was in fact a Commandant of the Iron Guard and that "he did participate in activities commencing in January 1941 which resulted in the murder of Jews and Masons." During an interview with Ralph Blumenthal of the New York Times, Bishop Trifa was shown photographs of himself wearing the Iron Guard uniform and texts of anti-Semitic speeches which he delivered during which he said: "Even if Adolf Hitler had done nothing else than wage this huge struggle of National Socialism, which leads to the unmasking of the fight against Judaism, he still would have risen to great peaks of history, as he blazed a new path."

Bishop Trifa finally admitted in a December 26, 1973, interview with the New York Times that he had been a member of the fascist movement, and acknowledged that he had in fact made anti-Semitic speeches which glorified Hitler. The responsibility for designating Trifa to the National Council rests with the Orthodox Church. But it

is inconceivable in light of this record, that the National Council of Churches cannot find a way to suspend this acknowledged anti-Semite until the Immigration Service tries him for deportation. Were Trifa a racist or a Ku Klux Klaner, would the NCC have any doubts about his suspension?



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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR

76-700-80

March 20, 1977

"UNIFICATION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 24, in Albany, the New York Board of Regents will have before it an application for a charter submitted by the Unification Theological Seminary. That so-called Seminary, has been set up by the self-proclaimed Messiah, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, for the ostensible purpose of training teachers for the Unification Church. Should Rev. Moon's Seminary receive accreditation by the Board of Regents, that would not only confer on the Unification Church an aura of legitimacy, which it desperately seeks, but it would also enable munitions manufacturer Rev. Moon to obtain state and federal tuition grants for his students. In recent days, opposition to giving the accreditation has become strong and widespread, especially among education and seminary authorities in the Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and Jewish communities. That opposition has nothing to do with a supposed fear of competition. It has everything to do with the fact that recent studies of Rev. Moon's teachings document that his Unification Church's writings are filled with anti-Christian, anti-Jewish, and anti-democratic bias. Quite incredibly, the New York Board of Regents has declared that it is not its responsibility to be concerned about the content of Rev. Moon's teachings. All it cares about are technical matters, such as, personnel, library facilities, financing. By such unbelievable amoral and intellectually irresponsible standards, it is not inconceivable that the New York Board of Regents could accredit applications from the Nazi party and the Ku Klux Klan. Maybe you can help the Regents get some common sense on this issue, if you would let them know how you feel about it, before next Thursday.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR.



# On Moses, Jesus & human rights

My Dear Chairman Brezhnev:

OW THAT YOU have placed our disappointed secretary of state back on his aircraft, you would do well, on this Palm Sunday to check out Jesus on the thorny issue of human rights. You will, then, better understand why the "born again" President Carter is not likely to walk away from the question.

Jesus who, you say? Come off it, dear chairman. You have not forgotten the strange exotic Man who, not sharing your taste in expensive autos, rode into Jerusalem that first Palm Sunday morning on a donkey while all the workers cheered and waved their hammers and sickles. That was really a week that shook the world. Look Him up in the New Testament that you placed some years ago in the plain brown wrapper behind Chekhov's short stories.

Read in John 8, about the days he spent in the capital city during the Feast of the Tabernacles. You and I would call it the harvest festival.

The city was wall-to-wall people. It was another "no room in the inn" scene. The local Elaine's was bursting each night with intellectuals slyly showing each other their newest manuscripts. The Suzy of the period was overweight from covering dinner parties for the vicarious digestion of her readers in the Jerusalem Herald. It was all there: Vintage wine, not-so-vintage women, and name bands. Almost sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Jesus the Christ came walking out of the Galilean Hills into the Big Apple. (That's what the mayor, who was up for reelection, kept calling the city, which was in some kind of fiscal trouble.) Jesus wasn't about to pass up this opportunity to teach the huge crowds daily elbowing their way into the temple. He was anxious to get his nonviolent revolution, a human rights revolution, on the track. Time was rushing him to a very violent end.

The Rev. James Gilhooley is regional director of Pax Christi, the International Catholic Movement for Peace.

His text that morning was: "Whatever you do for the least of my brothers, you do for me." Suddenly a woman was dumped at His feet by men who were not exactly members of His fan club. The crowd tensed. The pretty young woman was terrified; well she might be. The self-appointed vice squad had spent the dark hours looking into other people's bedrooms. To their delight they had found this woman in the wrong bed. Of course her lover had got away. Lucky fellow! The penalty for adultery was death. Stoning or, if you were lucky, quick strangulation.

"Master, what would you have us do?" A contract, as we say in flourishing New York City, was out on Jesus. Were He to release her, He would violate the law. And, unlike our own day, the authorities reacted quickly against law-breakers. But, if He were to demand capital punishment, He would contradict everything He had just said about the human rights of each man and woman.

But this Chairman was not about to be had by the town's bully boys. With a trace of a smile, He said, "let him among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." As they scrambled off, He said to her, "Neither do I condemn you. Go away."

**W**E ARE told that in the USSR hit men are beating up on people whose convictions, religious and otherwise, differ from the official line. In effect, their most elemental rights are denied.

In this holy season, when each Christian, even those of us not "born again," reverences the divine fire in every person, I join President Carter in appealing to you not to condemn countrymen who disagree with you and your administration. Indeed, should they wish, let them go away.

In 1917, Lenin wrote: "The constitution of Soviet Russia must ensure legal rights for all citizens, regardless of sex, creed, race or nationality."

If your Nikolai Lenin would have it so, are you really surprised that our James Earl Carter cannot ask for anything less from the present father of all the Russians?

In Christ.  
Father James Gilhooley

By MARC TANENBAUM

**T**HE SEARCH for peace and justice," President Jimmy Carter declared on March 17 before the United Nations, "means also respect for human dignity . . . No member of the United Nations can claim mistreatment of its citizens is solely its own business. Equally, no member can avoid its responsibilities to review and to speak when torture or unwarranted deprivation occurs in any part of the world."

Those could well have been the same sentiments that Moses, the Liberator of the Israelites whose deeds we celebrate this first day of Passover, felt when he began his career as the foremost champion of human rights of his times. "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was growing up, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren," we read in Exodus, Chapter 2, Verse 11. Moses, who had grown up in the luxury and isolation of the palace of Pharaoh, saw for the first time a poor Hebrew slave being flogged by the lash of an Egyptian taskmaster. It was more than he could bear. "And he smote the Egyptian" because he obviously felt that taking a stand against cruel oppression and persecution was very much his business.

While Moses was the adopted child of Pharaoh's daughter, he was in fact raised by his own mother, who educated him in the sacred traditions of the Hebrew people. At the center of those traditions was the belief in one God, Creator of the Universe, in whose Divine Image every human being was formed. That tradition strengthened Moses' conviction that each human life was sacred, of infinite worth, and that no person could be used as a means for somebody else's end — not for building pyramids, nor for terrorism, nor for maintaining Idi Amin's repressive police state in Uganda.

Coming to those humane convictions must have involved a terrific conflict of conscience for Moses, for Moses grew up in a palace environment in which the Pharaoh was venerated as a god-king. Pharaoh was the source of all law, never its servant. With a flick of his royal finger, Pharaoh could destroy human lives wholesale: "Every son that is born you shall cast into the river."

Tragically, there are Pharaohs today in almost every part of the world, disdainful of the value of human lives, callously violating human rights. Amnesty International reports that there are at least 60 nations in the world that regularly employ torture as a "standard administrative practice."

**"W**HEN MOSES was grown up," the Bible tells us, "he went out into his brethren and looked on their burdens."

Scholars say that "grown up" meant "when Moses became great," he went out to his people. Many leaders who become great go away from their people and their plight. Moses' greatness resided in the fact that he went out from the security of the Egyptian Palace into the brick fields where his people toiled and suffered in cruel bondage. He identified with their plight, stood up against Pharaoh, and finally led them from bondage into freedom — to Mt. Sinai, where former slaves achieved the dignity of a "kingdom of priests and a holy people."

The Exodus is far from over for millions of people suffering from slavery, violence, and oppression. They should take heart, as should we, when President Carter, standing before the nations of the earth declares, "The basic thrust of human affairs points toward a more universal demand for fundamental human rights. The United States has a historical birthright to be associated with this process . . . We will be steadfast in our dedication to the dignity and well-being of people throughout the world."

Moses would have been pleased with Jimmy Carter.

Rabbi Tanenbaum is national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee.



*Carter*

May 15, 1977

"PRESIDENT CARTER REJECTS DEICIDE CHARGE"

WINS-WESTINGHOUSE BROADCASTING COMMENTARY

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director  
of the American Jewish Committee

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Several weeks ago, President Jimmy Carter conducted a Bible class at the First Baptist Church in Washington during which he commented on the role of the Jewish people in the Crucifixion of Jesus. According to an Associated Press report, the President seemed to have revived the ancient Christ-killer charge. That led to a reaction of widespread dismay and concern, not only among many Jews but among Christian leaders as well. In response to literally dozens of calls from rabbis and Jewish communities around the country asking for clarification, I contacted members of the White House staff to relay these concerns. The White House staff was most sympathetic and asked that I send copies of positions taken on the subject by Catholic, Protestant, and Evangelical bodies, which I did. At the same time, Rev. John Steinbruck, pastor of the Luther Place Memorial Church in Washington, wrote President Carter requesting that the President clarify his views. Last Friday, President Carter wrote to Pastor Steinbruck a letter whose contents can only be described as historic. The President declared that he regarded the charge of collective Jewish responsibility for the death of Jesus as false, and that he joins with Christian leaders in rejecting that charge totally and decisively. He also quoted a resolution of his church, the Southern Baptist Convention, which condemned "anti-Semitism as un-Christian." To that, President Carter concluded, "I can only say 'Amen' with all my heart."

MHT:RPR

77-700-47

October 2, 1977

"SIMCHAT TORAH 1977"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

*This Wednesday evening*  
Beginning ~~tomorrow night~~, (the Jewish people throughout the world observe the closing days of the eight-day festival of Sukkot or Tabernacles, climaxed by Simchat Torah, which means literally, Rejoicing with the Torah. Simchat Torah is the merriest festival in the Jewish calendar year, dramatized by the carrying of Torah scrolls around the synagogue seven times in sacred procession. But the joy of the festival will be tempered this year by a series of disturbing events. At the United Nations, the verbal pogrom against Israel has been launched, with the characteristic selective hypocrisy that avoids even mention of the ongoing massacres in Uganda, the murder and exile of millions in Cambodia and Vietnam, the terrorism in Argentina, and the suppression of human rights in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. Last week, more than thirty Soviet Jewish activists voiced their fear that Soviet authorities are now trying to liquidate the Jewish emigration movement, using the case of Anatoly Scharansky as their brutal club. Nor does the Jewish mood take much comfort from President Carter's baptizing of the PLO terrorists as a legitimate partner for negotiations. The seven processions of Torah scrolls this Wednesday symbolizes not only Joshua's bringing down the walls of Jericho, but expresses the hope as well that walls of hatred and hypocrisy, will collapse throughout the world.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR



WRFM

Dec. 28, 1977

## 1977 - THE YEAR OF EVANGELICAL-JEWISH RELATIONS

by Marc H. Tanenbaum

As the year winds down, media people wrap up ; they wrap up the ten most important stories of the year, and reflect on their possible importance for the coming year. Without exception, every wrap-up of 1977 prepared so far that I have read, either in religious or general journals, regards the meetings of ~~a~~ ~~Sadat~~ President Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Begin of Israel both in Jerusalem and Ismalia as the most important story of the year. And deservedly so, for after thirty years of unremitting hostility and non-recognition of Israel by the Arab nations, the visit of Sadat to Jerusalem was little short of a human miracle.

But there was another important story of historic dimensions - and that strangely enough went by virtually unnoticed by the mass media. That story has to do with the extraordinary response of millions of Evangelical Christians who rallied in unparalleled ways to the support of Israel and of the Jewish community. There were also plentiful expressions of Catholic and liberal Protestant responses of support of Israel, but the Evangelical response was something quite new and dramatic.

It all really peaked after Oct. 1st. That was when the Carter Administration signed a joint agreement with the Soviet Union on the Middle East. The major features of that agreement seemed to invite the Soviet Union not only to serve as co-chairman of the Proposed Geneva Conference, which they have a right to do, but invited Russia to participate in implementing the peace agreement. Images of Soviet troops stationed outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre,

the Al Aksa Mosque, and the Walling Wall - that's the images that an Evangelical Christian leader saw and he was horrified by the prospect. Small wonder, given the marvelous record of the Soviet Union in defending religious liberty in Russia and in Eastern Europe.

The other feature of that agreement was one which spoke of legitimate Palestinian rights and implied a role for the PLO as the Palestinian spokesman. That ~~was~~ too exercised Evangelical Christian leaders because they had just seen what the PLO did to the major Christian presence in Lebanon.

Infuriated by the Oct. 1st agreement, Evangelical Christians did something they had seldom done ~~for~~ before. They became involved in taking publicly political positions on issues of peace and justice in the Middle East.

On Oct. 28, the Rev. Dr. Billy Graham addressed a group of 500 national Jewish leaders in Atlanta, Georgia, the first time he had ever spoken before a major Jewish body such as the American Jewish Committee. In his address that was obviously intended for his fellow born-again Christian, President Jimmy Carter, Dr. Graham said that the overwhelming majority of ~~evangelical~~ the Evangelical Christians in America support the right of Israel to exist as well as her safety and security. Referring to the Lebanon disaster for Christians, Dr. Graham also said that evangelical Christians are opposed to terrorism as a denial of the sacred dignity of every human being, and he called on the Palestinian people to bring forth legitimate leadership committed to peace and coexistence with Israel. His statement was carried on the front pages of the Atlanta Constitution and in hundreds of other papers around the country.

Three days later a group of 15 Evangelical Christian leaders, a virtual Who's Who of evangelicals, published a full-page ad in the



New York Times, the Washington Post, and some 20 other newspapers in which they declared their wholehearted solidarity with the people and the state of Israel.

"While we are sympathetic to the human needs of all the peoples of the Middle East, ~~much~~ we affirm as Evangelicals our belief in the promise of the land to the Jewish people- a promise first made to Abraham and repeated throughout Scripture, a promise which has never been abrogated.

They also declared, that we would view with grave concern any effort to carve out of the historic Jewish homeland another nation or political entity, particularly one which would be governed by terrorists whose stated goal is the destruction of the Jewish state.

Those sentiments of 50 million evangelical Christians lit up candles of joy in the hearts of millions of Jews in Israel and elsewhere. That is not to say that Jews are not conscious of other problems with some evangelicals -- problems of conversion, problems of trying to convert America into an evangelical nation, problems of right wing ultraconservative evangelicals who once formed the backbone of the Ku Klux Klan.

But changes are taking place in Evangelical Christianity. There is today much diversity and pluralism of views on politics, economics, and even on conversion. But on thing they are agreed, and that there is a biblical and historic basis to the existence of Israel and no government has a moral right to tamper with that. And that attitude among the fastest growing Christian movement in America is a really big story of 1977, and promises to be an even bigger one in 1978



July 2, 1978

"JULY 4, 1978"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof. That Biblical verse that our nation's Founding Fathers engraved on the Liberty Bell will probably be one of the most frequently quoted phrases during the festive observances this weekend marking our country's birthday. And it is right that it should be so for the American struggle for independence simply cannot be understood apart from its rootedness in the Biblical and Hebraic values of liberty and human dignity. The Declaration of Independence, adopted on July 4, 1776, refers four times to a divine source as the foundation for the nation's birth. All human beings are "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights," which can be neither given nor taken away by any other powers. Inspired by the Prophets of Israel who were the first to stand against despotic monarchs in the ancient world, the Founding Fathers of the Republic believed and demonstrated that a free people must be prepared to risk their lives and substance to defend their rights. In recent days we learned of the cruel oppression by Soviet authorities who are clearly determined to uproot both Jewish and Christian human rights activists in Russia - Vladimir Slepak, Ida Nudel, Yuri Orlov, Alexander Shavansky. It is some 200 years later, and the Liberty Bell reminds us that in a world of widening political oppression, the struggle to make freedom prevail is still very much before us.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR

August 6, 1978

"POPE PAUL VI"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
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The last time I saw Pope Paul VI was in Vatican City in 1975. The Pope was pale, and tired from his arthritic condition, yet he had a genuine spiritual radiance in his face, a warmth, which left a deep impression. The occasion of our meeting was to discuss the present state of Catholic-Jewish relations in the United States and in other parts of the world. It was Pope John XXIII who actually made the breakthrough in improving understanding between Catholics and Jews through his calling Vatican Council II into being. In October 1965, the Vatican Council adopted almost unanimously a declaration which repudiated anti-Semitism, and called for fraternal dialogue and mutual respect between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people. It fell to Pope Paul who officially promulgated that historic declaration, to implement its principles. He personally proceeded to appoint a special Vatican Commission on Catholic-Jewish Relations one of whose lasting achievements is a set of far-reaching guidelines for revising textbooks, liturgy, and promoting joint social justice. While much less publicized, there also took place during his reign extensive interchange between scholars in Israel and in Vatican City. Above all, Pope Paul dedicated his Papacy to world peace and human rights - causes that were equally cherished by the Jewish people everywhere. We extend heartfelt condolences to millions of our Catholic neighbors in America and throughout the world over the loss of their revered spiritual leader, Pope Paul VI.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR

78-700-56

Of profound importance was the fact that after Pope Paul visited Christian shrines in Jerusalem and saw first-hand how well they had been cared for by the Israeli Government, he abandoned the Vatican's earlier policy calling for the internationalization of the city of Jerusalem. In his audience with Golda Meir in January 1973 -- a most cordial audience despite newspaper reports to the contrary -- he repeated his gratitude for Israel's safeguarding of Christianity's holiest shrines.

While Pope John XXIII deserves the credit for beginning the process of changing the Catholic Church's negative or ambivalent attitudes towards Jews and Judaism, to Pope Paul VI belongs the merit of personally creating the Vatican Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations, which is the first instrument in the Catholic Church's history charged with specific responsibility for translating ideas into realities -- in revising textbooks, liturgy, sermons, and promoting joint social action.

If you were to ask me what qualities many Jews would like to see in the next Pope, I think it would involve the best qualities of both Pope John and Pope Paul. Pope John, the charismatic prophet who proclaims fresh new visions of mutual respect. Pope Paul, who translates those visions into practical programs, not only for Jews, but for the peace and unity of the whole human family.

OVER.....





August 14, 1978

## "POPE PAUL VI AND THE JEWS"

by Marc H. Tanenbaum

(Rabbi Tanenbaum, national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee and a pioneering leader in Jewish-Christian relations, was the only Rabbi at Vatican Council II over which Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI presided.)

I had the privilege of meeting Pope Paul VI on three separate occasions in Vatican City and in New York. The overriding impression that I carry with me of the late Pope is that of a complex, dedicated, highly intellectual person who, at the same time, was a deeply spiritual man. He was warmer than first appearances indicated, and he genuinely cared for human beings.

Pope Paul entered the diplomatic service of the Vatican Secretariat of State in 1925, five years after his ordination. He spent most of his adult life in Vatican City. He had, therefore, little opportunity to get to know Jewish people, their religion and culture (or, for that matter, any of the other major religious communities.) Vatican Council II, which flung open the windows of the Catholic Church to the world outside Italy, became in effect an extraordinary "on the job" training for Pope Paul to experience first-hand that outside world, including the world of the Jewish people and Israel.

During World War II, as Monsignor Giovanni Battista Montini, the first group of Jews he met were refugees from Nazi-dominated Central Europe. So he knew Jews mainly as victims in exile. That would tend to confirm some of the ancient images in certain traditions of Christian teaching of "the wandering Jews" who suffered exile as punishment for not becoming Christians. But Pope Paul's

exposure to the pitiful plight of thousands of Jewish refugees from Nazism and fascism also undoubtedly heightened his awareness of the catastrophic effects of the war, as well as the demonic consequences of anti-Semitism.

From the time of his election as the 262nd Supreme Pontiff on June 21, 1963, until his death on August 6, 1978, Pope Paul clearly went through an evolution in his attitudes toward Jews, Judaism, and the State of Israel. Some of his pronouncements inevitably reflected his limited contact with Jews and Judaism. Thus, in his first encyclical issued during August 1964, Pope Paul invited Jews, Muslims, and followers of "the Afro-Asiatic religions" to join with the Catholic Church in "defending common ideals of religious liberty, human brotherhood, good culture, social welfare and civil order."

But, in the same breath, he declared, "loyalty requests us to declare openly our conviction that there is only one true religion -- that of Christianity. It is our hope that all who seek God and adore Him may come to acknowledge its truth." Needless to say, Muslims and Eastern religions were no happier with that attitude than were Jews who do not believe that their religion is inadequate or unfulfilled.

It is a genuine tribute, to Pope Paul, however, that his native intellectual integrity and his genuine, if cautious, openness to new ideas and experiences led him increasingly to modify his traditionalist views as he gained fresh insights. Some of his new insights began to emerge from his growing number of audiences with various Jewish leaders from 1963 through 1978.



His changing attitudes were perhaps most clearly expressed during one of his first audiences, and in his last. Referring to the trauma of the Nazi holocaust, Pope Paul on June 1, 1964, told an American Jewish Committee delegation that he "strongly deplores the horrible ordeals, the many trials and sufferings, of which the Jews have been the victims in recent years."

Anticipating the Vatican Declaration adopted on October 28, 1965, which condemned anti-Semitism and repudiated the false charge of collective Jewish guilt for the death of Christ, Pope Paul then declared that he "does not believe Jews should be held responsible for the death of Jesus"...and the Jewish people should "never undergo any diminution in your human rights."

Finally, he spoke of his appreciation of Judaism in these words: "Our particular consideration for the Jewish religious tradition with which Christianity is so intimately linked, and from which it derives hope for trusting relations and for a happy future." The Pope concluded the audience with a blessing to the AJC leaders, saying, "We wish you every favor from God whom we invoke with all our hearts on your behalf and that of all those who are near and dear to you." To underscore the significance of his declaration, Papal authorities had the Pope's full text reprinted on the front page of the official Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano.

In his last address on Jewish-Christian relations, Pope Paul spoke even more forthrightly of "the connections between Jewish thought and Christian thought," noting that in the past "there has been real and profound mutual esteem (between Christian and Jewish scholars) and a conviction that we had something to learn from one another." Significantly, he reminded the Christian and Jewish leaders present at a January 10, 1975, reception for the Inter-



national Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), that he had called on "all the faithful of the Catholic Church to pay heed in order (in the words of the Vatican Guidelines of 1975) 'to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience'."

Again, with a special warmth, Pope Paul expressed to the Jewish leaders "and for your families, but widely still for the entire Jewish people our best wishes for happiness and peace."

The most dramatic expression of his growing interest and appreciation of Judaism as a source of religious insight and inspiration became manifest in his study of several books on the Philosophy of Judaism by the late Rabbi Heschel, with whom he developed a personal friendship. From the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, in 1969, Pope Paul quoted from the texts of Rabbi Heschel's books and spoke of the spiritual treasures of Judaism which he commended to the attention of the Catholic faithful before him. To my knowledge, that was the first time in 1,900 years that a reigning Pope cited a Rabbi and texts of Judaism as a spiritual resource.

Similarly, with regard to Israel and Jerusalem. In January 1964, the "pilgrim Pope" made a journey to the Holy Land. While many were troubled by his diplomatic reticence in referring to Israel by name, the Pope's exchanges with President Zalman Shazar were warm and mutually respectful, and left Israeli authorities feeling extremely positive over his visit. His authorization of Eugene Cardinal Tisserant to visit the Memorial Room of the Holocaust on Mt. Zion and to light candles in memory of the Jewish victims of the Nazis during World War II left a particularly forceful impression on the Jewish people.

Of profound importance was the fact that after Pope Paul visited Christian shrines in Jerusalem and saw first-hand how well they had been cared for by the Israeli Government, he abandoned the Vatican's earlier policy calling for the internationalization of the city of Jerusalem. In his audience with Golda Meir in January 1973, -- a most cordial audience despite newspaper reports to the contrary -- he repeated his gratitude for Israel's safeguarding of Christianity's holiest shrines.

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MHT:RPR



September 17, 1978

"LEBANON'S TRAGEDY"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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The eyes of millions are riveted on Camp David this weekend hoping that a dove of peace will flutter atop that summit. But that justified yearning for peace, at least the beginnings of a negotiated peace process, must not be allowed to obscure much longer the tragic massacre of thousands of innocent Christian and Muslim civilians in Lebanon that has been taking place, especially during these past few days. Last week, Robert Basil, president of the American Lebanese League, which claims a membership of two million, held a press conference in Thurmont, Maryland, during which he denounced the "barbarous Syrian occupation" of Lebanon and the incredible silence of the Western world. Mr. Basil appealed to the leaders at Camp David for a declaration affirming Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty as a Western-oriented and pluralistic democracy. Earlier, Dr. Charles Malik, former Lebanese Foreign Minister, joined Mr. Basil in testifying before a U.S. Senate subcommittee during which they declared that Syria is intent on destroying the Christian presence in Lebanon for the purpose of re-creating a Greater Syria. Syria's alleged peace-keeping role, they said, is like asking the fox to guard the chicken coop. Saying that he was neither pro-Zionist nor pro-Phalangist, Mr. Basil stated that if Israel's aid means the survival of the Christians in Lebanon, we fully support Israel's intervention for that purpose. Beyond all the politics, the central moral issue is the saving of human lives and the Lebanese have a right to ask, does anybody out there really care?

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR



November 12, 1978

"BAVARIAN CATHOLIC SYMPOSIUM"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

The Bavarian Catholic Academy is probably the most prestigious theological think tank of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany. Next Sunday, November 19th, the Bavarian Academy will sponsor an all-day symposium in Munich of major Christian and Jewish scholars and leaders who will examine systematically the relationship of Passion Plays to the development of anti-Semitism in Germany and in Christian culture. Co-sponsored by the Academy and the American Jewish Committee, the symposium will mark the first time in the history of Germany and of the Oberammergau Passion Play that the negative images of Jews and Judaism in the crucifixion narratives will be studied from theological, historical, liturgical, and sociological perspectives. This commentator will have both the privilege and the unparalleled opportunity to present a paper on "The Role of the Passion Play in Fostering Anti-Semitism Throughout History." Quite extraordinary is the fact that on the following day, I will be giving several lectures on Jewish-Christian relations in Oberammergau itself at the invitation of Oberammergau villagers. It is also of significance that the West German Federal Republic has attached such value to this potentially historic development that they have invited us as official guests of the German government to meet with them next week to discuss the general state of Nazism and efforts to combat it. You'll hear more from us about these developments as they unfold.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR

78-700-80

December 31, 1978

## "1978 - A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

As the calendar year 1978 came to an end, symbolic events in mid-December captured the ironies of the human condition and of the Jewish condition as well. There was much to confound and even grieve the human spirit, and there were occasions for gladdening the heart. In December the Jewish people throughout the world mourned with Israel over the passing of this noble matriarch who became a legend in her lifetime. Then, in Scandinavia, Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egypt's President Anwar Sadat's representative received the Nobel Peace Prize, for a Middle East peace that was tantalizingly near, yet elusive. At the same time, in Stockholm, the Nobel Prize for Literature went to the Jewish Isaac Bashevis Singer. Altogether four Jews won Nobel Peace Prizes, underscoring the continuing and fundamental Jewish contributions to the welfare of the entire human family through medicine, physics, mathematics, and the humanities. It was a year in which NBC-TV's "Holocaust" reached millions of people in America and in 12 other countries, and a year in which relative indifference to Indochinese refugees and violation of human rights throughout the world demonstrated that humankind perversely refused to learn anything meaningful from the Holocaust about opposing tyranny and evil. Yet, paradoxically, America was not involved in any wars anywhere, leading to a false sense that peace prevailed in the world. Clearly 1979, in the words of Chairman Mao, will find us all living in interesting times, times that will desperately call for mutual understanding and mutual caring.

\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.



## HOLOCAUST SERIES AND THE SOUL OF GERMANY

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum\* (1-26-79)

NEW YORK (RNS) -- Nothing -- no book, no TV documentary, no film, no lecture -- has touched the soul of modern Germany on the moral watershed tragedy of the Nazi holocaust as has the NBC-TV series, "Holocaust." That dramatic but factual conclusion has emerged from a series of overseas telephone calls that I have had with public officials in West Germany, and in particular with leaders in the village of Oberammergau, on January 25, following the viewing of the second installment of "Holocaust."

Major American newspapers reported that some 13 million West Germans, or 36 per cent of the viewing audience saw the second installment of the TV production. That was more than double the predicted 15 per cent that were expected to watch the program over Westdeutscher Rundfunk of Cologne, the regional station coordinating the telecasts. The German officials I spoke with said that such figures were an underestimate, and that, in fact, some 20 million people had seen the second installment. That means one in three potential viewers were exposed to the Holocaust account. "That audience broke every record for regional television in Germany," one official told me.

More than 20,000 people called the WDR television offices following the January 23 showing, and two-thirds of the callers were in favor of "Holocaust" being televised in Germany. Many of the viewers told the TV station authorities that they either could not go on watching it, and some said that they could not sleep and had to take valium or sleeping pills, so powerful was the program's impact.

One authority told me, "The experience with the program already has been quite extraordinary. Nobody, even the most sympathetic in the TV industry, expected such an emotional reaction. It has staggered everybody."

We then spoke with several people in the village of Oberammergau who are involved in an effort to revise the anti-Semitic version of the Oberammergau Passion Play scheduled for production in April 1980. Hans Schwaighofer, director of the Rosner text of the Passion Play, told us, "practically everybody in Oberammergau has watched the first two installments of 'Holocaust.' The impact has been tremendous. There is a feeling of shock throughout much of Oberammergau. Many people are walking around the streets of the village saying, 'God's sake!\*' and shaking their heads in disbelief. How did we let that happen?"

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum is national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee and was consultant to the NBC-TV series of "Holocaust."

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The Oberammergau Town Council has sent around a questionnaire to all the villagers inviting them to sign up for the 1980 Passion Play. In light of the shocked feeling in the village in the wake of 'Holocaust' many are refusing to answer the questionnaire, and it is now being extended for another eight days. Several hundred of the younger villagers identified with the Rosner text have now indicated that they will refuse to act in the Daisenberger version of the Passion Play which has been condemned by Christian and Jewish authorities alike as "structurally anti-Semitic."

Some Oberammergau officials told us that they now hope that the reaction to 'Holocaust' will play an important role in influencing the rejection the anti-Jewish Daisenberger text of the play.

There were a good number of negative and hostile reactions of Germans who asked, "Why reopen old wounds? We should forget all this. It is enough time already."

Heinz Galinski, head of the Jewish community in West Berlin, said that "the reaction of the Jewish community throughout West Germany had been positive," adding that he had received many calls from Jews and non-Jews alike. There are about 27,000 Jews in West Germany today, a tragic remnant of the more than 500,000 Jews who lived in pre-war Germany.

Mr. Galinski said the "timing of the showing was perfect. It comes at a time when there is talk again of the Auschwitz lie," a reference to the Nazi effort to revise history and claim that the genocide of Jews never took place, "when some students are making jokes again about Jews, when the statute of limitations on Nazi war crimes of murder is an issue and at a time when everybody seems to be preaching 'let us forget.'"

Perhaps the most significant response of all to "Holocaust" was that of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. In a debate in the lower house of the West German Parliament on January 22, Chancellor Schmidt commended the "Holocaust" TV series, said the film is a "must" in connection with the current controversy over extending the legal time limit under which Nazi war criminals can be prosecuted." He added that the series encourages critical and moral reflection" which "is important in view of the decision each of us must make for himself in the course of this year on the statute of limitations."

Paradoxically, the nine-hour series on "Holocaust" could achieve its most powerful dramatic impact and success among the people whom we had feared would be the most resistant to its narrative and its message.

Based on the impact already registered, the American Jewish Committee now plans to carry out a systematic study of responses to the entire series in Germany as well as in the 15 other countries in which the film is being shown, and then an intensive follow-up educational program in German religious and secular school systems.

Having labored in this project with NBC-TV and Titus Productions for more than a year as their Jewish technical consultant, I have no hesitation in saying that if this "Holocaust" series had achieved nothing other than the impact that it has already had in Germany, it more than justified all the investment of time and energy in helping bring its message before millions of Germans who might otherwise have avoided or repressed facing the greatest human tragedy in the twentieth century.



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### "HOLOCAUST" SERIES AND THE SOUL OF GERMANY

by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee and consultant to the NBC-TV series on "Holocaust".

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Major American newspapers reported that some 13 million West Germans, or 36 percent of the viewing audience saw the second installment of the TV production. That was more than double the predicted 15 percent that were expected to watch the program over Westdeutsche Rundfunk (WDR) of Cologne, the regional station coordinating the telecasts. The German officials we spoke with said that such figures were an underestimate, and that, in fact, some 20 million people had seen the second installment. That means one in three potential regional viewers were exposed to the Holocaust account. "That audience broke every record for regional television in Germany," one official told me.

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Perhaps the most significant response of all to "Holocaust" was that of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. In a debate in the lower house of the West German Parliament on Monday, Chancellor Schmidt commended the "Holocaust" TV series, said the film is a "must" in connection with the current controversy over extending the legal time limit under which Nazi war criminals can be prosecuted." He added that "the series encourages critical and moral reflection" which "is important in view of the decision each of us must make for himself in the course of this year on the statute of limitations."

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February 11, 1979

"HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISRAEL"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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"The function of the press is very high. It is almost holy. ( It ought to serve as a forum for the people, through which the people may know freely what is going on. To misstate the news is a breach of trust." Those compelling words were written more than a half century ago by the great Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, and they represent a stern judgment against those newspapers which carried this week sensationalized stories about the alleged violation by Israel of the human rights of Palestinians. The Washington Post, and (in a lesser flamboyant way), the New York Times, breached that public trust when they flashed across their front pages stories alleging the use of torture and sadism against Palestinian terrorists by Israelis, without providing a single shred of objective empirical evidence. Later on, it became know<sup>n</sup> that the stories were based on cables written by a U.S. Foreign Service consul in East Jerusalem who had been engaged to a PLO terrorist. That's like turning to Mata Hari as a source of information on the ethics of the Bible. Subsequently, both the Times and the Washington Post wrote editorials acknowledging that while there may have been ugly episodes in the past, resulting from threats to Israel's security, the record of Israel has been exemplary with extremely high standards of justice and human rights. But these denials seldom catch up with the original charges, and the damage to public trust, as well as to the atmosphere needed for peace in the Middle East, has taken its unfortunate toll.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Director of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR

March 18, 1979

"POPE JOHN PAUL II'S FIRST AUDIENCE WITH JEWS"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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"As a sign of the understanding and fraternal love already achieved, let me express again my cordial welcome and greetings to you all with that word so rich in meaning, taken from the Hebrew language, which we Christians also use in our liturgy: Peace be with you, Shalom, Shalom!" With those warm words Pope John Paul II concluded his address before his first official meeting with world Jewish leaders last Monday (March 12). Held in the resplendent Apostolic Palace in Vatican City, this significant audience between the new Pope and Jewish leaders from Europe, Israel, Latin America, and the United States was characterized by deep mutual respect and personal warmth. In his formal address, Pope John Paul II spoke of the close relatedness of Christianity to Judaism and he called for strong efforts to foster fraternal dialogue and fruitful collaboration between Catholics and Jews throughout the world. This Polish Pope then forcefully repudiated all forms of anti-Semitism and discrimination as opposed to the very spirit of Christianity. In response to the statement by the Jewish spokesman, Philip Klutznick, regarding the religious importance of Israel to the Jewish people, the Pope said he would do everything in his power for the peace of that land. During our personal conversations with Pope John Paul, Israeli representatives brought him greetings from Israel. "Israel, I want to come there soon." He will be as warmly welcomed in the Jewish State as we were received in Vatican City.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

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April 1, 1979

"OFFICIAL JEWISH VISIT WITH CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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A new chapter in the history of relationships between West Germany and the Jewish people quite possibly was opened last week when the Bundestag began its debate on abolishing the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals and murderers generally. This past Thursday, an American Jewish Committee delegation, led by its President Richard Maass, was privileged to take part in events marking that potential historic turning point. As official guests of the Federal Republic of Germany, we sat in the Bundestag, the lower house of Germany's parliament, to witness the beginning of the three-month debate on bringing criminals and Nazis to justice. Before a gallery filled with German citizens, including many young people, German parliamentarians of the ruling Social Democratic Party and the opposition Christian Democratic Union addressed the issue of Nazi war crimes in a mood of heightened moral seriousness. While there were real differences in the legal approaches of how to deal with the Nazis and other murderers, it was clear that the vast majority of the Parliamentary leaders shared the firm conviction of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt who told the Bundestag, "The deliberate destruction of human life cannot be undone by the passage of time," and there must be continued prosecution of Nazi war criminals. Last Thursday, we met with Chancellor Schmidt in Bonn and discussed with him in a warm and direct spirit a whole range of issues, from Nazis to the Israel-Egypt peace treaty which he strongly supports, to human rights, Salt II, and fighting inflation. Following our meetings with numerous German government, political, and religious leaders, we are convinced that there is a new consciousness of moral commitment to democracy in Germany, and that is to be as much as encouraged as it is to be welcomed.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

## POPE JOHN PAUL II'S VISIT -- A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

By Marc H. Tanenbaum\*

NEW YORK (RNS) -- There is more than a surface symbolism in the fact of Pope John Paul II's arrival in the United States on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the most solemn day in the Jewish year. For on Yom Kippur, a day of fasting, repentance, and renewal of hope, the Jewish people throughout the world articulate their deepest values and aspirations for the redemption of the Jewish people, of Israel, and of the entire human family."

"And may all wickedness be consumed as a flame," Jews pray on this day, "and may evil rule be removed from the earth." How is evil in the world to be overcome? The Jewish prayer book proposes as an answer, "May all Your (God's) children unite in one fellowship to do Your will with a perfect heart."

Pope John Paul II comes to these shores at a time when the American people, and particularly the Jewish people, feel deeply troubled about "the wickedness and evil rule" in the world. At Camp David on July 10th I joined a group of ten religious leaders in discussing with President Jimmy Carter and his top aides "the Malaise of America" and "the crisis of confidence." For Americans, this pervasive anxiety and downbeat mood may well be an accumulated response to the shocks of Vietnam, Watergate, the assassinations of the Kennedys and Martin Luther King -- a gloom now deepened by the economic decline and the OPEC-induced oil crisis.

For American Jews who, as Dorothy Parker said, are like everybody else but more so, there is the additional emotional burden these days of watching incredulously as elements in our Government and some public personalities fall all over themselves to embrace and legitimize the PLO assassins, people who daily murder, bomb and terrorize innocent civilians, men, women, and children.

Add to that dispiriting mood the Passion Play of Andrew Young -- the first black Ambassador to the United Nations who is perceived as martyred, and the fact that some demagogic leaders resort to raw, blatant, racist anti-Semitism trotting out the ancient and discredited canard of collective Jewish guilt -- "the Jews crucified him." And the President of the United States finally tells the truth, namely, that "the Jews" did not crucify Andy Young who foreordained his resignation by his own conscious actions. Meanwhile, the collective Jewish guilt charge has become established as a dogmatic verity in much of the black consciousness and will be as difficult to overcome as the original "Christ killer" canard.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum is national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee. He met with Pope John Paul II in March 1979 in Vatican City.

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Overarching these domestic troubles, Pope John Paul II comes to the United Nations at a time when the entire human family feels in its bones a universal malaise. The insane proliferation of nuclear weaponry finds the United States and the Soviet Union bristling with the capacity to destroy the four billion people of the earth 20 times over. There is now the real possibility of igniting a global Auschwitz. We are, in fact, the first generation to be told that we may be the last.

The nations of the earth spend more than \$400 billion a year to maintain armies but cannot find the means nor the wisdom nor the compassion to save some 800 million human beings from starvation and hunger. Science and technology, long venerated as unambiguous sources of material blessing, also fill the earth with toxic pollution and nuclear radiation; unguided Skylabs and crashing DC 10s careen dangerously around us. The implements of advanced technology are daily employed by a growing band of military dictatorships to enforce their totalitarian rule through systematic torture and massacre of millions of human beings -- Cambodia, Uganda, Vietnam, Ireland, Argentina, the Soviet Union. It is as if the world has gotten out of control.

Against that bleak cosmic background, it is little wonder that there is such widespread expectation associated with the pope's visit. Pope John Paul II experienced in his personal life the barbarism, the suffering, and dehumanization of Nazi racism and anti-Semitism. He responded to that evil rule by helping to save Jewish lives in Poland during World War II. He stood courageously against the Polish Communists who destroyed Jewish homes and cemeteries in their orgy of anti-Jewish hatred, and he fought effectively for human rights -- for religious liberty, the right to educate children religiously, the right to emigrate and reunite families.

When I first met Pope John Paul II on March 12th in Vatican City, together with other Jewish leaders, I was deeply impressed by his intellectual acuity, his deep spirituality, his sensitive respect for Judaism and the Jewish people, his abhorrence of racial and religious hatred, his grasp of the real world, his respect for the human dignity of all people, above all, his hope. Such a commanding personality has the capacity to call the world to its senses -- to turn away from nuclear disaster and moral anarchy and to turn toward human unity. All of us have a stake in that urgent message being heard and acted upon, while there is still time to avert global catastrophe.

In his first official statement of his personal attitudes on the relation of the Catholic Church to the Jewish people, Pope John Paul II told us:

"I believe that both sides (Christians and Jews) must continue their strong efforts to overcome difficulties of the past, so as to fulfill God's commandments of love, and to sustain a truly fruitful and fraternal dialogue that contributes to the good of each of the partners involved and to our better service of humanity."

And the pope concluded, "As a sign of understanding and fraternal love already achieved (between Christians and Jews), let me express again my cordial welcome and greetings to you all with that word so rich in meaning, taken from the Hebrew language, which we Christians also use in our Liturgy: Peace be with you. Shalom, Shalom!"

That message of Shalom -- of peace, of mutual respect, of love, of human solidarity -- uttered by this charismatic pope in a troubled, even threatened world -- could not come at a more opportune time not only for America but for the world at large.