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PAPAL ENCYCLICAL SAYS MISSIONARY AIM IS CONVERSION IN CHRIST

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The primary reason the church engages in missionary activity is not to provide social services but to issue an explicit call to conversion in Christ, Pope John Paul II said in his eighth encyclical letter.

Within the church today there is widespread indifference to missionary activity, characterized by an attitude that "one religion is as good as another," he said.

The encyclical, titled "Redemptoris Missio" ("Mission of the Redeemer"), was released at the Vatican Jan. 22. It was dated Dec. 7, the 25th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity.

The 153-page letter is subtitled, "On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate."

The main task of missionaries to call non-Christians to conversion is often questioned or "passed over in silence," the pope said.

"It is claimed that it is enough to help people to become more human or more faithful to their own religion, that it is enough to build communities capable of working for justice, freedom, peace and solidarity," he said.

"What is overlooked is that every person has the right to hear the 'Good News' of the God who reveals and gives himself in Christ," the pope said.

Pope John Paul said some people would prefer that the church not use the words "missions" and "missionaries" because of "negative historical connotations" and an association with colonization in many parts of the world.

Others prefer to use the words to describe all of the church's activity and all of its members, instead of keeping its more traditional reference to work and workers in predominantly non-Christian areas.

The latter is a positive way of emphasizing that missionary activity "is not considered a marginal task for the church but is situated at the center of her life as a fundamental commitment of the whole people of God," the pope said.

But, he added, such thinking does not mean there is no longer a specific mission to non-Christians.

The Christian message and the call to conversion must be explained in a way that respects the consciences of listeners, he said. "The church proposes; she imposes nothing."

The church has an obligation to offer the faith to all, but the acceptance of its message must be left to free choice.

In its work among non-Christians, the church must make clear its belief that "for all people -- Jews and Gentiles alike -- salvation can only come from Jesus Christ," the encyclical said.

"While acknowledging that God loves all people and grants them the possibility of being saved," the pope wrote. "the church believes that God has established Christ as the one mediator and that she herself has been established as the universal sacrament of salvation."

If missionaries ignore the spiritual needs of the people to whom they are sent, they not only deny the people's right to hear the Christian message, they demonstrate that their own faith is lacking or confused, the pope said.

All Christians have an obligation to witness to their faith and to support missionary activity. A person who accepts the call to be a missionary must be convinced that "true liberation consists in opening oneself to the love of Christ."

"The temptation today is to reduce Christianity to merely human wisdom, a pseudo-science of well-being," he said.

The Gospel calls Christians "to be on the side of those who are poor and oppressed in any way," the pope said.

"I therefore exhort the disciples of Christ and all Christian communities ... to carry out a sincere review of their lives regarding their solidarity with the poor."

Speaking of building the kingdom of God is in vogue, the pope said, but the way it is discussed is "not always in a way consonant with the thinking of the church."

"Building the Kingdom means working for liberation from evil in all its forms," he wrote.

Some have a tendency, however, to make the earthly needs of people the central focus of their work, emphasizing "programs and struggles for a liberation which is socio-economic, political and even cultural."

Promoting peace, human rights, liberation, equality for women and minorities and safeguarding the environment are all good things that "need to be illuminated with the light of the Gospel," he said.

A renewed commitment to missionary activity would be good for what ails the church, the pope said. "Only by becoming missionary will the Christian community be able to overcome its internal divisions and tensions and rediscover its unity and its strength of faith."

In the encyclical, the pope also said:

-- Modern people put more trust in the behavior they witness in missionaries than in the things missionaries say.

"The evangelical witness which the world finds most appealing is that of concern for people and of charity toward the poor, the weak and those who suffer."

-- Proclamations of the Gospel must show a knowledge of the lives of listeners and a respect and esteem for their cultures.

At the same time, the pope said, there is a danger that in some areas the church is "passing uncritically from a form of alienation from culture to an overestimation of culture," which is a human creation.

-- The "young churches," found mainly in Africa and Asia, have a valid concern for protecting their identities and cultures, but they should not use this concern as an excuse to "close their doors to missionaries." They must not

be isolated from the universal church.

-- Missionary vocations, "the real measure of self-giving," cannot be replaced by monetary contributions. Vocations are "in danger of disappearing" in many countries that give increasing amounts of monetary support to the missions.

-- Catholics' missionary obligation does not exclude the need for the church to engage in official dialogue with non-Christian religions.

"Dialogue should be conducted and implemented with the conviction that the church is the ordinary means of salvation and that she alone possesses the fullness of the means of salvation," the pope said.

Interreligious dialogue is a means of fostering better understanding, of discovering the way the Holy Spirit works in other people and of examining one's own faith from another's point of view, he said.

"I see the dawning of a new missionary age, which will become a radiant day bearing an abundant harvest, if all Christians -- and missionaries and young churches in particular -- respond with generosity and holiness to the calls and challenges of our time," the pope said.

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# Pope Urges a Convert Drive, Even Where Muslims Ban It

By MARLISE SIMONS

Special to the New York Times

ROME, Jan. 22 — Pope John Paul II, in a new encyclical, issued a clarion call to Catholics today to go out and spread Christianity, emphasizing the need to evangelize in all parts of the world, including those where Islamic laws forbid proselytizing.

He urged Islamic countries to lift those laws as well as others that forbid Muslims to convert to another faith. Without identifying the nations but evidently referring to Middle Eastern, African and Asian countries where missionaries are refused entry, the Pope exhorted, "Open the doors to Christ!"

The document is the first encyclical since 1959 to be devoted to missionary activity and to argue so forcefully that spreading the faith should be one of the most important tasks of Catholics. In the United States, the encyclical will probably strengthen financial support for missionary efforts overseas and make theologians engaged in dialogue with other religions more cautious in their statements.

The encyclical letter "Redemptoris Missio" — its title in English is "The Church's Missionary Mandate" — is the eighth issued by John Paul II. An encyclical demonstrates the importance the Pope attaches to an issue, and as a formal expression of papal teaching, is an authoritative message for Catholics worldwide.

## 'Negative Tendency' Cited

In an introduction, the Pope said the document was intended to help overcome a "negative tendency" in the church, where internal and external difficulties have weakened the missionary thrust toward non-Christians. He said the number of people who did not know Christ had doubled in the last 25 years and was constantly rising.

At the Vatican, papal aides said the Pope was above all responding to the rapid growth of Islam, which has overtaken former Christian areas in the Middle East and Africa and which through large-scale migration is making inroads into southern Europe. To a lesser extent, they said, he was reacting to limitations placed on churchwork in Asia and to the rapid rise of Protestant fundamentalism in Latin America, a traditional Catholic stronghold.

John Paul also focused on the church's relations with other religions and philosophies. He was sharply critical of churchworkers and theologians who in his eyes have gone too far in their sympathy for other religions while making no attempts to convert its members. This tolerance has led to widespread indifference among Christians, which he said was one of the main reasons for the lack of interest in the missionary task.

Such thinking, he said, "is based on incorrect theological perspectives and is characterized by a religious relativism which leads to the belief that 'one religion is as good as another.'"

## No Mention of Judaism

He did encourage missionaries and Christian groups in their dialogue and respect for Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. But, he said, this does not lessen their duty to proclaim the teachings of Jesus Christ or "cancel the call to faith and baptism which God wills for all

people." Citing here from a letter he wrote last year to the bishops of Asia, he made no mention of Judaism.

Difficulties outside the church, he said, are many. Some countries refuse entry to missionaries, he said. In some countries, the Pope said "not only is evangelization forbidden but conversion as well, and even Christian worship." Addressing himself to those "who for various reasons oppose missionary activity," he declared, "The church repeats: Open the doors to Christ!"

At a news conference, the Rev. Marcello Zago, the Superior General of the Order of Oblates of Mary Immaculate, said the Pope referred "to most North African and Middle Eastern nations where Christians may practice privately but it is against the law to convert Muslims."

"Saudi Arabia forbids any cult that is not Moslem," he added.

Papal aides said that in many areas of Africa, proselytizing by Muslims has led Islam to expand much faster than Catholicism.

Jozef Cardinal Tomko, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, insisted that dialogue between Catholicism and Islam remained fundamental and must continue. Referring to the war in the Persian Gulf, he warned, "We must not fall into the trap of calling this war a war of Christianity against Islam."

## Islam the Main Challenge

Father Zago also told reporters that many Vatican officials saw the relations with Islam as Catholicism's main challenge of the future. "And the only

The encyclical is said to respond to Islam's growth.

way is a dialogue," he said. "That's why the Pope has spoken out so strongly against the war."

John Paul also had harsh words for the modern world and its "soulless economic and technical development," a world of "marvelous achievements" that nevertheless seems to have lost the sense of existence itself. "The temptation today is to reduce Christianity to merely human wisdom, a pseudo-science of well-being," he said.

The most painful difficulties facing the church's missionary task, he wrote, are those in the church itself, and he referred to the dramatic drop in new priests in recent decades, the loss of religious practice and values in historically Christian countries, the in-fighting among Christians and the friction between fundamentalists sects and Catholics.

The 153-page encyclical, Vatican officials said, is the result of almost five years of work. It drew on extensive questionnaires sent to church organizations and bishops around the world more than four years ago. Its writing took almost two years. The Pope signed it Dec. 7.

# Excerpts From the Encyclical

Following are excerpts from Pope John Paul II's encyclical "Redemptoris Missio," as issued in translation yesterday by the Vatican under the English title, "The Church's Missionary Mandate":

From the beginning of my pontificate, I have chosen to travel to the ends of the earth in order to show this missionary concern. My direct contact with peoples who do not know Christ has convinced me even more of the urgency of missionary activity.

Difficulties both internal and external have weakened the church's missionary thrust toward non-Christians, a fact which must arouse concern among all who believe in Christ. For in the church's history, missionary drive has always been a sign of vitality, just as its lessening is a sign of a crisis of faith.

In certain countries missionaries

are refused entry. In others, not only is evangelization forbidden but conversion as well, and even Christian worship. Elsewhere the obstacles are of a cultural nature; passing on the Gospel message seems irrelevant or incomprehensible, and conversion is seen as a rejection of one's own people and culture.

## Religious Relativism Rejected

Nor are difficulties lacking within the people of God; indeed these difficulties are the most painful of all. . . . Pope Paul VI pointed to "the lack of fervor all the more serious because it comes from within." . . . Other great obstacles . . . include past and present division among Christians, de-Christianization within Christian countries, the decrease of vocations to the apostolate, and the counter-witness of believers and Christian communities failing to follow the model of Christ in their lives. But one of the most serious reasons for the lack of interest in the missionary task is a widespread indifferentism. . . . It is based on incorrect theological perspectives and is characterized by a religious relativism which leads to the belief that "one religion is as good as another."

Inter-religious dialogue is a part of the church evangelizing mission. Understood as a method and means of mutual knowledge and enrichment, dialogue is not in opposition to the mission ad gentes. . . . In Christ, God calls all peoples to Himself, and He wishes to share with them the fulness of His revelation and love. He does not fail to make himself present in many ways, not only to individuals but also to entire peoples through their spiritual riches, of which their religions are the main and essential expression, even when they contain "gaps, insufficiencies and errors." All of this has been given ample emphasis by the council and the subsequent magisterium, without detracting in any way from the fact that salvation comes from Christ and that dialogue does not dispense from evangelization.

. . . The church sees no conflict between proclaiming Christ and engaging in inter-religious dialogue. . . . These two elements must maintain both their intimate connection and their distinctiveness; therefore, they should not be confused, manipulated or regarded as identical, as though they were interchangeable.

STATEMENT OF RABBI A. JAMES RUDIN  
NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS DIRECTOR  
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

JANUARY 23, 1991

Even a preliminary reading of the papal Encyclical, REDEMPTORIS MISSIO, issued yesterday in Rome, raises several troubling questions. While acknowledging that further study of the document is needed, some key themes are clearly evident.

The Encyclical affirms the principles of freedom of conscience and interreligious dialogue that were adopted in 1965 at the Second Vatican Council. However, it specifically describes the weakening of "the Church's missionary thrust toward non-Christians" as a matter of "concern", and calls for greater conversionary efforts on the part of Roman Catholics. And in some places the Encyclical's language is unfortunately reminiscent of a Christian religious triumphalism from an earlier age.

Because this new document reflects the ambiguity and ambivalence between the Catholic Church's commitment to authentic interreligious dialogue and its renewed call for active missionary efforts aimed at "all peoples," one hopes it does not mark a backward step in improving relations between Catholics and Jews.

The Encyclical also seems to address the intense missionary rivalry between Christianity and Islam that is currently underway with the hope that Catholic evangelization will increase.

Finally, the Encyclical poses but does not adequately answer a critical question: is it possible to fully affirm one's own unique and sacred religious tradition without seeking, either actively or passively, the conversion of those who do not share that tradition? The crucial issues raised by REDEMPTORIS MISSIO clearly underscore the urgent need to develop a theology of religious pluralism among peoples of all faiths. Without such a firm theological base, religious pluralism, and with it mutual respect and understanding between faith communities, can be seriously undermined.

**PAPAL ENCYCLICAL ON CONVERSION NOT AIMED AT JEWS, BUT TROUBLING**  
By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 28 (JTA) -- Pope John Paul II's recent call for more active efforts to convert non-Christians to Roman Catholicism does not seem to be a mandate to convert Jews, say Jewish specialists on interfaith affairs.

But according to Jewish and Catholic leaders, the papal encyclical raises some troubling questions that require clarification.

The encyclical, which carries the highest level of papal authority, is titled "Redemptoris Missio" (The Church's Missionary Mandate).

It reportedly was issued in response to the weakened position of missionary work as a central Christian goal and the rapid growth of Islam in areas in the Middle East and Africa that were once strongholds of Christianity.

It also was prompted by barriers placed in the way of church work in Asia and the rise of Protestant denominations in Latin America, where fundamentalist groups are targeting Catholic audiences, according to Sister Mary Boys, a Catholic theologian and associate professor of theology at Boston College.

The encyclical refers "to the mission ad gentes," or "to gentiles," a term that has its roots in the Christian Bible and literally means "to the nations," but is usually used in church circles to mean non-Christians and non-Jews.

The Vatican's position on Jews since the Second Vatican Council's "Nostra Aetate" statement of 1965 has been that the Jewish people maintain a special relationship with God and that God's covenant with the Jews has not been revoked.

Since the latest encyclical mentions Moslems, Buddhists and Hindus but does not specifically mention Jews, Jewish leaders in interfaith dialogue are not worried about Jews being targeted for an overt missionary campaign.

"The Vatican-Jewish dialogue of the past 25 years since 'Nostra Aetate' has given no evidence of a Catholic intent to convert the Jewish people," said Rabbi Jack Bemporad, chairman of the Synagogue Council of America's Interreligious Affairs Committee.

**Stance On Interfaith Dialogue Unclear**

But some Jewish leaders are concerned about statements in the encyclical, such as one saying that "interreligious dialogue is a part of the church evangelizing mission."

The encyclical goes into some detail about the need for interreligious dialogue while insisting there is "no conflict between proclaiming Christ and engaging in interreligious dialogue."

"These two elements must maintain both their intimate connection and their distinctiveness; therefore, they should not be confused, manipulated or regarded as identical, as though they were interchangeable," the encyclical says.

The document is not clear on the relationship between dialogue and evangelization, Rabbi A. James Rudin, national director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, said in a statement issued after a preliminary reading of the encyclical.

He said the encyclical does not answer whether it is "possible to fully affirm one's own unique and sacred religious tradition without seeking, either actively or passively, the conversion of those who do not share that tradition."

The Rev. Michael McGarry, rector of St. Paul's College in Washington and an expert on missionizing, agreed that "the tension is there" between the papal call to evangelize and interfaith dialogue.

Rudin called for the development of a theological commitment by the church to religious pluralism among peoples of all faiths, in order to provide a firm basis for interreligious dialogue.

"As we are in a more turbulent religious era with factionalism and extremism, we need a theological commitment to religious pluralism more than ever.

"If we are not careful, we could end up with theological warfare between religions," he said. But, Rudin added, "this encyclical will not contribute to that war."

**B'NAI B'RITH OPENS IN PRAGUE, FIRST SINCE NAZI OCCUPATION**

By Josef Klansky

PRAGUE, Jan. 28 (JTA) -- The first B'nai B'rith lodge in Czechoslovakia since the Nazi occupation 53 years ago was inaugurated Sunday at quiet ceremonies attended by B'nai B'rith leaders from the United States and western Europe.

It was named the Renaissance Lodge because it will resume the educational, social and charitable activities cruelly ended after Czechoslovakia was forced to cede the Sudetenland, its fortified western region, to the Third Reich in September 1938.

The Nazis occupied the rest of the Czech republic the following March, dooming the 17 B'nai B'rith lodges that had been active in Czechoslovakia during the interwar years.

The originally planned festive inauguration, to have been attended by a large number of guests, was scaled down and muted because of the Persian Gulf war in which Israel, a non-combatant, has been a target of Iraqi missile attacks.

The officers of the new lodge were installed provisionally. A charter will be presented at a future date.

Zeno Dostal, a writer and film director, became the first president of Prague's Renaissance Lodge, which has more than 50 founding members.

Czechoslovakia is the 47th country with a B'nai B'rith presence.

The ceremonies were led by Kent Schiner, president of B'nai B'rith International; Joseph Domberger of Munich, senior international vice president; and Maurice Honigbaum of Nice, France, president of Continental Europe District 19 of B'nai B'rith.

Also there were Daniel Mariaschin, director of B'nai B'rith's international and public affairs department; Lutz Ehrlich, director of District 19; Henry Schneider, international vice president of District 19; and Alan Cohen of England, vice chairman of B'nai B'rith's International Council, and Ernest Bello, a member of England's first lodge, both representing District 15, the United Kingdom.

The Israeli ambassador to Czechoslovakia, Yoel Sher, also attended.

A delegation led by Schiner was received Monday by President Vaclav Havel at Prague's Hradcany Castle. Schiner expressed his gratitude for Czechoslovakia's resumption last year of diplomatic relations with Israel and its strong support of Israel during the current crisis with Iraq.

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# Les chrétiens de Saddam

« Il faut arrêter la guerre », nous déclare à Paris, le patriarche irakien de l'Eglise chaldéenne

Les appels à la guerre sainte, lancés de Bagdad, ne devraient pas faire oublier que l'Irak compte aussi des chrétiens, depuis l'aube des temps. Leur nombre est loin d'être négligeable : 1 200 000 personnes, c'est-à-dire près de 8 % de la population, selon le recensement de 1987. La communauté chrétienne la plus importante - il y en a quatorze au total - est l'Eglise chaldéenne (750 000 fidèles), unie à Rome depuis le seizième siècle (1661) jouissant d'une grande autonomie. Son patriarche, Raphaël I<sup>er</sup> Bidawid, est arrivé à Paris mercredi 23 janvier, en compagnie de Mgr Ghivarguis Sliwa, métropolitain de l'Eglise assyrienne et de Mgr Avak Assadourian, archevêque arménien orthodoxe.

Ces trois évêques se trouvaient à Rome quand la guerre a éclaté. Ils étaient chargés de promouvoir une solution pacifique, par une « conférence chrétienne pour la paix », réunie à Bagdad cinq semaines plus tôt en présence du ministre irakien des affaires religieuses. « Nous ne pensions vraiment pas que les hostilités auraient été déclenchées le 16 janvier », affirme le patriarche chaldéen. Pourquoi n'a-t-on pas donné plus de temps à la paix ? Je préfère cinq ans de pourparlers à un seul jour de guerre. Cette guerre est sans proportion avec le but annoncé. Pour libérer le Koweït, faut-il détruire l'Irak ? »

Mgr Bidawid défend le principe

d'une conférence internationale immédiate, sans le préalable qui serait l'évacuation du Koweït. « La guerre, dit-il, ne résout jamais rien. Il faut arrêter et entamer des négociations. Nous voulons que justice soit faite pour tous, notamment pour les Palestiniens et les Libanais. Les Occidentaux ne veulent pas faire de lien entre toutes ces questions. Pourquoi ? Quel mal y a-t-il à entamer une négociation générale ? Les Libanais ne seraient-ils pas des êtres humains comme les Koweïtiens ? » Mgr Bidawid, qui a été pendant une vingtaine d'années évêque chaldéen de Beyrouth avant de devenir patriarche, ajoute avec vivacité : « Qu'est-ce que les Occidentaux ont fait pour les chrétiens du Liban ? On est prêt à sacrifier tous les chrétiens d'Orient pour quelques barils de pétrole. »

C'est une allusion très claire aux conséquences négatives que pourrait avoir la guerre sur les Eglises locales. Une allusion seulement, car le patriarche chaldéen ne dit pas un seul mot qui le mettrait en contradiction avec M. Saddam Hussein. A l'entendre, les chrétiens d'Irak sont des Irakiens à part entière, et non des citoyens de seconde zone comme les chrétiens l'ont été depuis des siècles dans la quasi-totalité des pays de la région.

Les appels à la guerre sainte (dijhad) ne le gênent-ils pas ? Sourire et haussement d'épaule : « Voyez-vous, il

y a deux sortes de djihad. L'un est islamique et se rapporte à la croyance des musulmans. L'autre est un djihad patriotique, un devoir pour tous les citoyens. La patrie est un devoir sacré. » Le patriarche ajoute que ces appels ne sont pas dirigés contre les chrétiens mais contre les puissances occidentales considérées comme ennemies : « J'ai pris la parole à la télévision irakienne en août dernier pour apaiser les esprits. J'ai dit qu'il ne fallait pas confondre les chrétiens et les Occidentaux. Ce discours est très bien passé. Mais si la guerre devait se prolonger, nos relations avec le petit peuple musulman pourraient se détériorer. »

## En liberté religieuse surveillée

Les Eglises d'Irak ne font pas de politique. C'est dire qu'elles se gardent de toute critique à l'égard du régime. En échange, elles jouissent d'une liberté religieuse réelle et d'une reconnaissance de leurs cultures et de leurs langues araméennes-syriaques qui s'expriment à la télévision, dans de nombreuses revues, dans des clubs et des associations.

Comme chacun sait, le ministre des affaires étrangères, M. Tarek Aziz, appartient à une famille chaldéenne.

Le patriarche a participé récemment à la première communion de son fils. C'est le seul membre non musulman du gouvernement, mais un certain nombre d'autres chrétiens - comme le gouverneur de la banque centrale - occupent des fonctions importantes dans le secteur économique ou dans l'administration. L'armée aussi compte un certain nombre d'officiers chrétiens qui avaient participé en première ligne à la guerre contre l'Iran. Apparemment, M. Saddam Hussein leur faisait plus confiance qu'à leurs collègues chiites...

Les Eglises d'Irak sont exemptées d'impôts et jouissent d'autres petits privilèges. « Nous ne payons ni l'eau ni l'électricité », affirme Mgr Assadourian. Mais elles sont censées s'autofinancer. S'il ne leur verse pas de subventions, le régime est souvent généreux avec elles. On lui doit la restauration de nombreuses églises et couvents, au titre de la défense du patrimoine national. Récemment, le président irakien a même offert aux chaldéens un terrain de 25 000 mètres carrés à Bagdad pour leur permettre d'y construire un nouveau patriarcat et une cathédrale. « Les plans étaient prêts, dit le patriarche. Mais maintenant, avec la guerre... »

Leurs bonnes relations avec les pouvoirs publics autorisent les Eglises à formuler un certain nombre de revendications, voire des protesta-

tions. Elles se sont ainsi opposées, avec succès, en 1981, à l'enseignement du Coran aux élèves chrétiens. Et elles demandent aujourd'hui que les enfants ne deviennent pas automatiquement musulmans si l'un de leurs parents se convertit à l'Islam. De même réclament-elles la privatisation de leurs écoles qui avaient été nationalisées. « Cette nationalisation a fait faillite », affirme le patriarche chaldéen.

Avec ses deux collègues, il a pu rencontrer à Rome le pape et le président du conseil italien, M. Andreotti. Il espérait avoir aussi quelques rendez-vous à Paris, et pas seulement avec des autorités ecclésiastiques. Les trois évêques irakiens doivent aller ensuite à Londres, à Washington, au siège des Nations unies à New-York, et dans plusieurs villes des Etats-Unis, comme Chicago et Detroit, où la diaspora irakienne est nombreuse.

« En attendant, on bombarde des églises », affirme le patriarche chaldéen. C'est, du moins, la télévision qui le dit. Ne pouvant avoir aucun contact téléphonique avec Bagdad, le patriarche en est réduit, comme tout le monde, à regarder CNN dans la chambre de son grand hôtel parisien, où il est arrivé en tenue de clergymen, avec un passeport du Vatican. Ses deux collègues, en revanche, se sont présentés à Roissy avec des papiers irakiens, ce qui a provoqué quelque émotion...

ROBERT SOLÉ

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# Rabbi: 'This is a moment of great change'

Rabbi Leon Klenicki discusses the recent rebirth of Catholic-Jewish dialogue

William Bole

Few people outside Roman Catholicism have gained as close a glimpse of the workings of the Church as a rabbi named Leon Klenicki. Born to a Jewish émigré family in Argentina, Rabbi Klenicki has held discussions with Pope John Paul II and Church leaders the world over, in his capacity as liaison to Catholicism for the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith.

In recent years, Catholic-Jewish relations have been strained by a number of controversial events. There are signs, however, that Catholics and Jews have emerged from this stormy period. In early September, high-level discussions between the two groups resumed with a meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee in Prague, Czechoslovakia, after a delay of three years. In the same week, Rabbi Klenicki met with leaders of CELAM, the Latin American bishops' conference, to discuss and begin putting into effect a recent Vatican document condemning all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism. In December, Jewish leaders met at the Vatican with the Pope and high Church officials.

Bill Bole interviewed Rabbi Klenicki recently in his New York office about Catholic-Jewish relations.

**VISITOR:** What was your impression of the recent meeting between Jewish leaders and the Pope at the Vatican?

**KLENICKI:** I think the meeting demonstrated the ongoing concern of Pope John Paul II with Jewish-Christian understanding. There are two points, in particular, that I would make about the Pope's address to us. First, he made a close relationship between the biblical word and the land — between the Jewish people and the land of Israel. Secondly, to my great surprise, he made a reference to the Babylonian Talmud. I think this is the first time that a Pope has quoted from the Talmud.

**VISITOR:** Some Jewish leaders were reportedly disappointed that the meeting did not break any new ground on the question of Vatican diplomatic recognition of Israel.

**KLENICKI:** I don't think that was expected. And the Pope did refer to Israel by talking about this close relationship of land and people. It is theologically more important that he recognized the connection of the Jewish people to the land and that it is central in our Jewish life. So I think he took a step forward.

**VISITOR:** Are Catholic-Jewish relations back on track?

**KLENICKI:** I would say that the dialogue is back on track on different levels in different countries.

The meeting of Pope John Paul II with (Austrian President) Kurt



Rabbi Leon Klenicki

Waldheim (in 1987) was a real crisis. And I would like to use the word crisis in its original Greek meaning — a time between times, an interlude. So when we're in crisis, we're not in a state of decadence or at an end of organizational life. It's a moment when you have to do a reckoning of sort.

And in that crisis with John Paul II, as I pointed out in our presentation before the Pope, one can understand the difficulty of the Pope's position, because he, as the leader of the Church, has to receive the good person and the evil person. He has to receive Mother Teresa and one of the generals of the Argentine junta. But the goodness of the papal office is that he can say a word of inspiration for all of us when he meets Mother Teresa, and a word of recrimination — in a pastoral way — to the general and his lack of respect for human rights. And we were expecting that with Waldheim.

But the fact that we're in dialogue allows us to clarify matters very much. And I would say that John Paul II has taken every opportunity to remind the world of what happened to the Jews in the Second World War.

**VISITOR:** On what levels is the dialogue on track?

**KLENICKI:** What is on track very much is the daily work. Let me give you two examples.

One would be the recent document of the Vatican on racism. Excellent document. That was the reason for our meeting with the Latin American bishops' conference. That document stresses the Vatican's condemnation of anti-Semitism, and it says leaders of the Church were also involved in anti-Semitism. In one paragraph, it also says that anti-Zionism is at times a form of anti-Semitism — that anti-Zionism is an excuse for anti-Semitism — which is a word to the United Nations (which has equated Zionism with racism). That document is excellent in our fight against racism all over the world and especially anti-Semitism.

Secondly, the American bishops

came out with an excellent document, "In God's Mercy," about the representation of Jews and Judaism in Holy Week preaching. It's a very important step forward.

**VISITOR:** What would you say is the significance of the recent meeting in Prague?

**KLENICKI:** I would say that it is a special sign of our times — a sign of hope: the fact that the meeting in Prague was practically parallel to the meeting in Buenos Aires on the other side of the world.

**VISITOR:** And you're no stranger to that part of the world. What was it like to grow up Jewish in Catholic Argentina?

**KLENICKI:** I discovered Catholicism in high school, during the Peronist dictatorship. There was an arrangement between Peron and the Church, and Peron mandated the teaching of Catholicism in high school and primary school. So those who were Jewish or Protestant or atheist had to take so-called morality courses, which were essentially Catholic morality. And we all got A's.

The second year we got a teacher who lasted one year, and after that he was expelled from school. He was a Catholic in the line of Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier, the great French Catholic thinkers. And he said, "You're not going to use this book (the required text). I'm going to give you things to read." So he gave us a list of readings. And they were books about morality and nature. He gave us readings from Maritain, Mounier, as well as from Jewish sources. So he introduced me to Jacques Maritain. And I would read Maritain at home in hiding, because at home, if my father knew I was reading a Catholic thinker, it would be a scandal.

When I went to the seminary (in the United States), I had to prepare a thesis on philosophy. So I wrote my thesis on the mystical language of St. John of the Cross. It was a scandal in my seminary. They said to me, "You're writing about St. John?" I said, "No. I'm writing about St. John of the Cross." I had read St. John of the Cross when I was in high school in Argentina, and I loved his writing.

Now, the same summer that I was writing that thesis, there was a young Polish priest who was writing his thesis on St. John of the Cross. He became pope, and I became rabbi and worked for ADL. I once told the Pope that. He embraced me and said, "We are partners in St. John of the Cross." And we started laughing.

**VISITOR:** Are you saying that your exposure to these elements of Catholic belief have benefited your Jewish development?

**KLENICKI:** I would say that it has reaffirmed my own covenantal relationship with God. But it has also made me understand the religiosity of the

other person of faith.

**VISITOR:** There have been press reports of renewed anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe. How bad is the situation there?

**KLENICKI:** I would say that the situation is quite serious. And it has much to do with the shortcomings of the communist economic system. That system was a disaster, and one has always to look for a scapegoat. One scapegoat could be the inefficiency of communism. But when they look for a scapegoat, they find the Jews. It's practically in their collective unconscious. It's the old anti-Semitism that's coming in new guise. But in this case, history has changed drastically and the Holy See is very aware of the dangers of anti-Semitism and have denounced it. That should be the path of the Church in Poland and elsewhere.

**VISITOR:** What are your thoughts, in retrospect, on the conflict over the Carmelite convent at the site of Auschwitz?

**KLENICKI:** I visited the Carmelite nuns three times. I had very good conversations with them. What I am sorry about is the way the whole thing became a real scandal. Perhaps what should have been done — and was not done in the meeting with the cardinals and the Jewish leadership in Europe — was that they should have invited the representatives of the Carmelite convent. They should have done this out of respect and also out of recognition of womanhood. It was such a male chauvinist way of doing things.

**VISITOR:** You mean the Catholic and Jewish guys got together to decide what the sisters should do?

**KLENICKI:** Yes. It should have been done in consultation. And besides, you have to remember that Auschwitz was created by the Nazis to destroy the Polish intelligentsia. Later on it became a center of Jewish destruction. That doesn't diminish the place, but we have to have that in mind. Auschwitz is our symbol par excellence, but we also have to acknowledge that many non-Jews died there.

**VISITOR:** Beyond the question of Catholic-Jewish relations, what are some of your deeper impressions of the international Catholic community today?

**KLENICKI:** This is a moment of great change. What I want in that change is that Catholics not repeat the mistakes of the past. At this stage, Catholics and Jews should, committed to our own vocations, witness God together. This is the call of God, after all that has happened in the 20th century. And I think it's a response to evil in general that we witness to God together, though committed to our own vocations. *CB*

Bole free-lances from Washington, D.C.

Summary translation of text faxed by Dr. Riegner to Dr. Feldman who conveyed it to us  
January 29, 1991.

PRESS RELEASE OF THE HOLY SEE

Friday, January 25, 1991.

Statement by the Director of the Press Office of the Holy See, Dr. Joaquín Navarro-Vall with regard to the relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel

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There has been some confusion in public opinion with regard to the above.

I. The first confusion refers to the difference between "recognition" of a State and "establishment of diplomatic relations" with it.

1. The fact that there are no diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Israel does not imply that the Holy See does not recognize the State of Israel.

a) It should be evident that the Holy See never put in discussion the existence of the State after the proclamation of its independence, as evidenced by

the inclusion of Israeli delegations at the funeral of Pius XII, opening and closing of Vatican II, funeral of John XXIII and inauguration of John Paul II the meeting of Paul VI with the President of Israel in Meggido in January 1964 visits to the Vatican of Abba Eban, Golda Meir, Moshe Kol, Moshe Dayan, Itzhak Shami and Shimon Peres

the regular contacts between the respective embassies and foreign ministries

the numerous public statements of the Pope with regard to Israel - in most of the Pope's remarks about the Holy Land and the Middle East, he specifically refers to Israel and its security, i.e.

\* the October 5, 1980, Homily in Otranto

\* the April 20, 1984 Apostolic Letter "Redemptionis Anno)

\* the 11 September 1987 address to Jewish leaders in Miami

\* the January 12, 1991 speech to the Diplomatic Corps

\* the January 23 1991 general audience

b) One might say that this is only an implicit recognition, but in international usance this is indeed the case and, according to Law, there is no need for a solemn and explicit statement.

2. Diplomatic relations are something else and depend on a group of circumstances. They are voluntary and not obligatory (cf. Balladore Pallieri - 1962; "International Public Law"). The Holy See is not a State, it is only an observer at the U.N., and nothing obliges it to maintain diplomatic relations with any one State.

Israel is not the only State with which the Holy See is waiting before establishing formal diplomatic relations - i.e. this is the case with South Africa, Jordan, Mexico, the USSR, Poland and the other States of Eastern and Central Europe; even with the U.S. relations were established only a few years ago. In some of these cases there were specific reasons for the Holy See's attitude: as for Israel, these were not theological but juridical.

II. A second confusion concerns the difference between the Holy See and the City State of the Vatican.

II. A second confusion concerns the expressions Holy See and Vatican City-State.

1. The Holy See is the central government of the Church and subject to international legislation.

2. The Vatican City-State is a tiny territorial entity, which allows the Pope to govern his Universal Church, though even before it existed, between 1870 and 1929, the Holy See had diplomatic relations with many States.

III. The juridical difficulties for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel concern the presence of Israel in the occupied territories, the relations with the Palestinians, the annexation of Jerusalem, as well as the general situation of the Catholic Church in Israel and the territories.

IV. A third confusion relates to religious dimensions versus political ones.

1. Inter-religious relations exist and are developing, e.g. the celebration of the 25th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate," the Pope's visit to the Rome synagogue, his meetings with Jewish groups in many countries and his statements against anti-Semitism.

2. The Holy See has deep respect for the State of Israel, as for other States, but is mindful in particular of the need to protect the existence of Israel and its security through the search for agreement between the States of the area. The Holy See is aware of the deep attachment of Jews everywhere to their ancient homeland. But it distinguishes between the religious dialogue and the respect for the Jewish people and its history, and the political environment, as spelled out in a 1985 document of the Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism which says:

"Christians are called upon to understand this religious attachment (of the Jews to their Land) which has its roots in biblical tradition... The existence of the State of Israel and its political choices must not be considered within a properly religious perspective, but in their reference to common principles of international law" (Notes for the correct presentation of Jews and Judaism in preaching and catechesis of the Catholic Church, June 24, 1985).

WAR-RELATIONS Jan. 28, 1991 (390 words)

ISRAELI OFFICIAL SEES OFFICIAL RELATIONS AS WAY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) -- Establishing diplomatic relations between Israel and the Vatican would be the best way to deal with the problems the Vatican says currently prevents the exchange of ambassadors, an Israeli official said.

"One of the aims of full relations is to have an absolutely open agenda," said Yitzhak Shoham, an official at Israel's Embassy to Italy.

Shoham handles his government's contacts with the Vatican, which he said are "not frequent."

The Vatican press office released a statement Jan. 25 saying that while it recognizes the existence of Israel and its need for security, unsettled legal questions prevent the exchange of diplomats.

The areas of Vatican concern include: the definition of Israel's borders and its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip; the annexation of Jerusalem; the treatment of Palestinians; and relations with the Catholic Church in Israel and the occupied territories.

Shoham said the Vatican did not establish diplomatic relations after Israel's independence in 1948, even though at that time "the territories of Judea and Samaria" were not occupied and Jerusalem "was in Arab hands." Israel took those areas in the 1967 Six-Day War.

While the pope made specific mention of "the state of Israel" in talks Jan. 23 and 27, "nothing has changed about the position of the Vatican toward Israel," Shoham told Catholic News Service Jan. 28.

"They continue to talk about the same points," he said of the Vatican. "The problems can be resolved after ties are established."

Diplomatic relations do not signify full approval of all the policies one's partner in diplomacy may pursue, he said. The purpose of formal ties is to provide a forum "to ask for explanations sometimes, to find solutions for problems, to explain things."

Having permanent, official ties means not having to find "excuses" to talk to one another and enables both sides to keep better informed about what the other is doing, he said.

While Israel is a Jewish state, nothing in its laws would prevent establishing relations with the central government of the Catholic Church, he said.

"There has been no serious movement lately" on the Vatican's part to establish official ties, Shoham said. "They know where to find us. They know we are ready."

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ARAB CHRISTIANS Jan. 30, 1991 (420 words)

CHRISTIANS WOULD FACE PROBLEMS IF RELATIONS ESTABLISHED NOW

By Catholic News Service

MILAN, Italy (CNS) -- Christians in Arab countries would face "serious difficulties" if Vatican-Israeli diplomatic relations were established before major Middle East political problems are solved, said an Italian bishop who advises the Vatican on Catholic-Jewish relations.

Those issues include establishing a Palestinian homeland, the status of Jerusalem and the status of territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war with an Arab coalition, said Auxiliary Bishop Pietro Rossano of Rome, consultant to the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

The church has members in many countries and must take all their concerns into account in forming policy, he said in an interview published Jan. 30 in the Milan daily newspaper, Corriere della Sera.

"Christian communities -- not only the Catholic ones -- would find themselves in serious difficulties before their governments" if relations were established without Arab-Israeli problems being solved, he said.

"If the three problems previously mentioned would be resolved, this difficulty would be overcome," he added.

"The first worry of the Holy See is its relationship with Catholic communities," he said.

Bishop Rossano named those in Syria, Iraq and Egypt as of special concern.

The Vatican "cannot establish relations by going over their heads," he said.

Although the Vatican does not have diplomatic relations with Israel, it publicly recognizes its right to existence and is influencing Arab Christians to live with Israel, he said.

"The Holy See tries to convince Arab Christian communities to accept all the demands of living together with the state of Israel," Bishop Rossano said.

"It is important, therefore, that the Jewish world understand their sensitivities," he said.

Diplomatic relations now "would deepen the anti-Israeli feelings" of Arab Christian communities, he added.

Bishop Rossano said the Vatican also is concerned about specific civil rights problems of Arab Christians in Israeli-occupied territories.

The massive influx of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories has eroded the "acquired rights" Arab Christians had gained during centuries of rule by the Turkish Ottoman Empire, he said.

"These concern questions of property lines, the buying and selling of property, and problems raised by regulatory plans and expropriations," the bishop said.

There are also "difficulties for educational and social activities," he said

"Jewish immigration has made the maintaining of these acquired rights difficult," he added.

"The Jewish settlements which are continually growing are surrounding the islands of Christian inhabitants and putting into doubt their very survival," he said.

"The Christian presence is diminishing rapidly," Bishop Rossano said.

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# ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

OF B'NAI B'RITH

823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, N.Y. 10017

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Abraham H. Foxman  
**From:** Leon Klenicki  
**Date:** February 4, 1991  
**Subject:** Dr. J. Navarro-Valls Declarations on Vatican-Israel Relations

Attached is a copy of a translation of Dr. Navarro-Valls, in charge of the Vatican media in Rome.

He "clarifies" the state of relations between the Vatican and Israel. His style is difficult by using words that can have several meanings. His clarification, however, was given in different forms by the Vatican, by Bishop E. Cassidy in charge of ecumenical and interreligious affairs and other Vatican officials.

The reasons for not exchanging diplomats relate, according to Navarro-Valls, to the following: occupied territories, relationship with the Palestinians, annexation of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and the situation of the Church in Israel and the territories under their administration.

LK:ps

Enclosure

cc: Melvin Salberg  
Justin Finger  
Ken Jacobson  
Bluma Zuckerbrot  
Harry Wall  
Rabbi David Rosen

*Handwritten signature*

# ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

OF B'NAI B'RITH

823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, N.Y. 10017

## MEMORANDUM

To: IJCIC

From: Rabbi Leon Klenicki

Date: February 4, 1991

Subject: Translation of Dr. J. Navarro-Valls's Declarations,  
Vatican Press Bulletin AK

Declarations of the Director of the Holy See Press Room, Dr. Joaquim Navarro-Valls concerning the relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel.

I have been surprised by a certain confusion in the public opinion concerning the question of the relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel.

I.

The first confusion relates to the questions of the "recognition" of a state and the "connection of the diplomatic relations" with that state.

In this respect it would be good to consult a good treatise of international law to understand the difference.

1. The fact that diplomatic relations do not exist between the Holy See and the State of Israel does not imply that the Holy See does not recognize the State of Israel:

A. It is important to clarify that the Holy See does not question the existence of the State of Israel, nor its proclamation of independence:

This was provided by,

- The inclusion of the Israeli delegation among the official delegations sent to the funeral of Pius XII, to the opening and closing of Vatican II Council, the funeral of John XXIII or the official inauguration of the pontificate of His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

- The encounter of Pope Paul VI with the President of the State of Israel in Meghiddo, in Samaria, on the occasion of his trip to the Holy Land (January 1964).

The visits of personalities of the Israeli government to the Vatican:

1969 - Abba Eban, Minister of Foreign Affairs

1973 - Golda Meir, Prime Minister

1975 - Moshe Kol, Minister of Tourism

1978 - Moshe Dayan, Minister of Foreign Affairs

1982 - I. Shamir, Minister of Foreign Affairs

1985 - S. Peres, Prime Minister

Regular contacts with the Israeli embassy in Italy and the apostolic delegation in Jerusalem with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Concerning this, I can point out that on October 16 Monsignor Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montozemolo, apostolic delegate in Jerusalem at the beginning of his mission, paid a visit to his excellency, Dr. Herzog, President of Israel;

Numerous references of the Holy Father to the State of Israel:

In the majority of the interventions of the Holy Father concerning the problems of the Holy Land and the Middle East, the State of Israel is mentioned and the need for its security is emphasized. As an example it is possible to refer to the following references:

1. \* The Otranto homily of the Holy Father (October 5, 1980):

"The Hebrew people after tragic experiences, after suffering the extermination of so many sons and daughters, willing for security, has given life to the State of Israel..."

\* Apostolic letter "Redemptiois Anno" (April 20, 1984):

"For the Hebrew people, living in the State of Israel and have for that land a precious testimony of faith, we want security and just tranquility, and peace, that are basic for any nation and a condition of life and progress for any society..."

\* Speech to the leaders of the Jewish community in Miami (September 11, 1987):

"...after the tragic extermination of the Shosh, the Hebrew people have started a new period of its history. Like any civil nation, it has a right to a country, in accordance with international law. For the Hebrew people living in the State of Israel..."

\* A speech to the diplomatic corps (January 12, 1991):

"...the aim is to guarantee at this time to the State of Israel the just conditions for its security..."

\* General audience (January 23, 1991):

"...I express in particularly my solidarity with everyone in the State of Israel who are suffering for the deprecable bombardments..."

B. One could say that it is an implicit recognition. In international affairs, in the majority of the cases, the recognition of a state is implicit and does not need, according to law, solemn and explicit declarations.

2. The diplomatic relationship is another matter and depends on a series of circumstances and evaluations.

Such relations are voluntary and as international law affirms "no state is obligated to...maintaining diplomatic relations or consular relations with another country." (Balladore Pallieri, International Public Law, Milan 1962, p. 338.)

This is true for all states, how much so for the Holy See, that is not a state, but the central government of the Catholic Church.

The Holy See, not being a state, attends U.N. sessions only as an "observer," though it is free of having or not diplomatic relations with a specific state.

And naturally, the case of Israel, is not the only one with which the Holy See has decided to wait, before agreeing in establishing formal diplomatic relations. One has to remember that in other cases there are no diplomatic relations, but it does not follow that the Holy See does not recognize the state.

- That's the case of South Africa and the Kingdom of Jordania.

- It's the case of Mexico and the Soviet Union with which a process has started towards the establishment of formal diplomatic relations.

- This was, until last year, the case of Poland and other states in central and east Europe.

- In the case of the United States of America there are only recent diplomatic relations. Though, obviously, the Holy See always recognized the United States.

In none of these cases is there any specific motivations. In the case of Israel, the lack of relations is not a matter of theological reasons, only legal matters.

## II.

Another kind of confusion has appeared in the last years in the use of the expressions like Holy See and the State of the Vatican City.

1. The Holy See is a subject of international law. It is the personification of the central government of the church and has been recognized in history like a subject of active and passive legation.

2. Vatican City is a small territorial reality with a function to allow the Pope to exercise freely his ministry of the government of the universal church.

Though the City State of the Vatican didn't exist between 1870-1929, the Holy See had diplomatic relations with many nations.

III.

It is important to point out that there has been until this time legal difficulties of an official linking of the diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel. Those are the difficulties, not clear yet, of the presence of Israel in the occupied territories and the relations with the Palestinians, of the annexation of the Holy City of Jerusalem, as well as the situation of the Church in Israel and the territories under their administration.

IV.

A third source of confusion that appears often is the question of the religious dimensions and political dimensions of the dialogue, and the relations and the attitudes of the Holy See and the Church in regard to Judaism and the relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel.

1. Interreligious relations have developed and have increased:

Last December, the Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism has celebrated the 25th anniversary of the conciliar declaration Nostra Aetate with the participation of representatives of the major Jewish organizations of the world.

In this context one has to point out the importance of the visit of His Holiness to the synagogue in Rome, of his many encounters with Jewish groups during his apostolic trips in many countries of the world, and the pronouncement of the Holy See denouncing anti-Semitism.

2. In regard to the State of Israel, the Holy See has an attitude of deep respect for it, as for other states. In particular, the Holy See considers that the State of Israel must be assured in her existence and security, especially in the search for points of agreement with other nations in the region.

The Holy See knows that for the Jews of all the world, the attachment to the country of their elders, the State of Israel is particularly important, this is understood and respected. The dimension of the religious dialogue and the respect for the Hebrew people and its history has to be put distinctly in the political dimension. This has been clearly expressed in an important 1985 document of the Commission for the Religious Relations with Judaism,

"Christians are invited to understand this religious attachment which finds its roots in Biblical tradition, without making their own particular religious interpretation of this relationship (cf. Declaration of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, November 20, 1975).

"The existence of the State of Israel and its political options should be envisaged not in a perspective which is in itself religious, but in their reference to the common principles of international law."

LK:kg

cc: Abraham H. Foxman, Melvin Salberg, Justin J. Finger, Kenneth Jacobson, Bluma Zuckerbrot, Harry Wall, Rabbi David Rosen

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:pro:jalat exnewyork:

VATICAN SAYS IT MUST RESPECT  
ARAB 'SENSITIVITIES' ABOUT ISRAEL  
By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Feb. 5 (JTA) -- The attitude of Catholics and Christians generally in the Arab countries is behind the Vatican's reluctance to extend diplomatic relations to Israel, according to Bishop Pietro Rossano, a member of the Vatican commission for relations with Judaism.

"The Holy See is seeking to convince the Arab Christian communities to accept co-existence with the State of Israel, Rossano said in an interview in the Italian daily Corriere della Sera.

"It is necessary for the Jewish world to understand their touchiness," he added, noting that substantial Christian communities exist in Syria, Iraq and Egypt.

"These communities have their sensitivities, which the Holy See must respect," he said. Christian communities and not just Catholics "would find themselves in serious difficulties with their governments" if the Vatican recognized Israel before  
--More--

outstanding issues are resolved, the bishop said.

He said that if a solution was found to the "three juridical questions" that the Vatican last week said impeded relations with Israel, "this difficulty would be able to be overcome."

The three points are the Palestinian question, Israel's administration of the territories and the status of Jerusalem.

"On all three, there are U.N. resolutions censuring the decisions of the State of Israel," Rossano said, adding, "The position of the Holy See is that of the United Nations."

JTA END

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Disposition:

**JOURNAL RESTATES REASONS WHY  
VATICAN CAN'T RECOGNIZE ISRAEL**

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- The Vatican cannot formally recognize Israel because it would compromise the pope's impartiality in the Persian Gulf war and might endanger Christians in Arab countries, the authoritative Jesuit journal *Civiltà Cattolica* stated in an editorial Thursday.

The journal, whose texts must be approved for publication by the Vatican Secretariat of State, cited other obstacles in the way of diplomatic ties between Israel and the Holy See.

The editorial largely repeated a four-page statement issued by the Vatican last month explaining why it did not formally recognize Israel.

The first problem, it said, was the Palestinians. "The Holy See feels that this is a situation of international injustice which continues to hit the weakest people and cannot be accepted," the Jesuit journal said.

The second difficulty is the status of Jerusalem, which "must have a special internationally guaranteed status as a city holy for Jews, Christians and Moslems."

The third problem, according to *Civiltà Cattolica*, was the condition of the Catholic and Christian communities and institutions in Israel and the territories it administers.

"It is evident that the Holy See desires that these difficulties be eliminated as soon as possible, or that at least on Israel's part there be a clear readiness and concrete will to initiate the process of solution, as is happening in other countries with which until now the Holy See did not have diplomatic relations," the editorial said.

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## *Vatican said to respect Arab feelings on Israel*

ROME — The attitude of Catholics and Christians generally in the Arab countries is behind the Vatican's reluctance to extend diplomatic relations to Israel, according to Bishop Pietro Rossano, a member of the Vatican commission for relations with Judaism.

"The Holy See is seeking to convince the Arab Christian communities to accept coexistence with the State of Israel, Rossano said in an interview in the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*.

"It is necessary for the Jewish world to understand their touchiness," he added, noting that substantial Christian communities exist in Syria, Iraq and Egypt.

"These communities have their sensitivities, which the Holy See must respect," he said. Christian communities and not just Catholics "would find themselves in serious difficulties with their governments" if the Vatican recognized Israel before outstanding issues are resolved, the bishop said.

He said that if a solution was found to the "three juridical questions" that the Vatican recently said impeded relations with Israel, "this difficulty would be able to be overcome."

The three points are the Palestinian question, Israel's administration of the territories and the status of Jerusalem.

"On all three, there are U.N. resolutions censuring the decisions of the State of Israel," Rossano said, adding, "the position of the Holy See is that of the United Nations."

*Jewish Telegraphic Agency*

# Lies with Israel could endanger Arab Christians, bishop says

By Catholic News Service

**MILAN, Italy**—Christians in Arab countries would face "serious difficulties" if Vatican-Israeli diplomatic relations were established before major Middle East political problems are solved, said an Italian bishop who advises the Vatican on Catholic-Jewish relations.

Those issues include establishing a Palestinian homeland, the status of Jerusalem and the status of territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war with an Arab coalition, said Auxiliary Bishop Pietro Rossano of Rome, consultant to the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

The Church has members in many countries and must take all their concerns into account in forming policy, he said in an interview published Jan. 30 in the Milan daily newspaper, *Corriere della Sera*.

"Christian communities — not only the Catholic ones — would find themselves in serious difficulties before their governments" if relations were established without Arab-Israeli problems being solved, he said.

"If the three problems previously mentioned would be resolved, this difficulty would be overcome," he added.

"The first worry of the Holy See is its relationship with Catholic communities."

Bishop Rossano named those in Syria, Iraq and Egypt as of special concern.

The Vatican "cannot establish relations by going over their heads," he said.

Although the Vatican does not have diplomatic relations with Israel, it publicly recognizes its right to existence and is influencing Arab Christians to live with Israel, he said.

"The Holy See tries to convince Arab Christian communities to accept all the demands of living together with the state of Israel," Bishop Rossano said.

"It is important, therefore, that the Jewish world understand their sensitivities."

Diplomatic relations now "would deepen the anti-Israeli feelings" of Arab Christian communities, he added.

# NEWS FROM

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS, INC.

71 Fifth Avenue • New York, N.Y. 10003

Contact: Robert Brading  
(212) 807-8440

## LEADERS FROM THREE MAJOR FAITHS UNITE IN CALL FOR PEACE ON WARFRONT AND AT HOME

NEW YORK, January 1991 -- As part of an ongoing dialogue for understanding and harmony, representatives from Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities have issued a joint plea for an end to bloodshed in the Gulf and for an immediate stop to any harassment or violence the war might engender at home in the United States.

The statement, prepared under the auspices of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, reads as follows:

### A CALL FOR PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING

"As children of one God, and as People of the Book, we stand together in prayer that, without delay, a peaceful solution may come to the Middle East, to avoid further shedding of blood. We express our deep concern and anguish at the death and suffering which have resulted from war in the Gulf region.

"Furthermore, we firmly oppose any intimidation or bigotry directed at Arab-Americans, whether Muslim or Christian, or any other religious or ethnic groups in the United States. We call upon religious, community and government leaders to be sensitive to problems, and to raise the level of awareness in their communities.

"We stand united in prayers for understanding and for peace with justice.

"Peace. Shalom. Salaam."

The discussion leading to the statement uncovered numerous

(more)

JOINT CALL FOR PEACE, cont'd

areas of disagreement, both between and within the different faiths. However, the overriding importance of peace and of tolerance at home was unanimously agreed.

As one rabbi noted, "This is one aspect of work in progress. It represents part of a dialogue among diverse viewpoints."

And a Muslim colleague, sitting next to him, added, "What's important is to show that we in America are still talking, still getting along, no matter what. We need to set an example."

One Christian leader observed, "Things are moving very fast, and we are determined that the animosity of war not play itself out in America's schoolrooms, or poison attitudes on human rights in our society."

The tri-faith dialogue was initiated in 1978. Its sponsor, the Greater New York Region of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, was founded in 1927 to educate and promote better understanding among people of different backgrounds. It seeks to reduce conflicts with overtones of racial, ethnic or religious prejudice.

# # #

01-18-91

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## Jews support U.S. attack; Christians urge Israeli restraint

By Religious News Service

NEW YORK (RNS) — While President Bush's decision to go to war with Iraq received strong support from American Jewish leaders, top executives of ecumenical Christian organizations appealed to Israel to use restraint in responding to missile attacks.

Shoshana S. Cardin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish

Organizations, said Jan. 17 that "President Bush has made a wise and courageous decision in using military force against Iraq."

Ms. Cardin, whose organization is a coalition of 46 national Jewish groups, said that "as regrettable as war is, we recognize that the use of force against the regime in Iraq is necessary to achieve peace. In this struggle, we are not alone. A worldwide coalition supports our country, morally and militarily."

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, said that "contrary to what some have thought, our nation is not in this war for oil or to gain dominion in the Middle East. It is a war that was forced on us by Saddam Hussein and is supported by virtually the entire civilized world."

The Reform Jewish leader said that "while it was necessary in the end to employ force to liberate Kuwait and eliminate the arsenal with which Iraq's power-mad tyrant had hoped to hold the entire Middle East — if not the world — hostage, we weep for the loss of life, civilian and military, that this inevitable step entailed."

In a Jan. 18 message the Rev. Gunnar Staalsett, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, told Izhak Lior, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, that "being aware of the fact that the international community recognizes the right of states to self-defense, I nevertheless would like to take this opportunity to urge your government to exercise as much restraint as is possible under the circumstances in order to avoid exacerbating a situation which is already extremely volatile."

The Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky of the Orthodox Church in America, president of the National Council of Churches, and United Methodist layman James A. Hamilton, general secretary, said in a joint statement that "while we recognize the profound anxiety of the Israeli people at this moment, we hope that their government will show the utmost of restraint in the interest of an early cessation of the conflict and a negotiated solution."

Melvin Salberg, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and Abraham H. Foxman, national director, said that "Israel has indeed shown tremendous restraint by not launching a preemptive strike against Iraq. But in light of last night's (Jan. 17) unprovoked Scud missile hits against Tel Aviv and Haifa and the continuing threat posed by Saddam, Israel's top priority must be defense of its citizens."

# john h. burt

bishop of ohio retired

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February 3, 1991

Rabbi Henry D. Michelman  
Synagogue Council of America  
327 Lexington Ave., New York, N. Y. 10028

Dear Henry:

I am pleased to enclose a final draft copy of our Presiding Bishop's Committee on Christian-Jewish Relations triennial report -- as it will appear in the official "Blue Book" distributed to all bishops, clergy and lay delegates who will attend our next General Convention in July.

Since your desk must get piled high daily with more things to read than you have time for, I would call your special attention to page 5 where we report on our successful negotiations with the Standing Commission on Evangelism about implications for religious pluralism in the newly-launched Decade of Evangelism. The exact wording of the resolution which is being proposed jointly is found on page 8.

In working on this issue, we were helped by a sermon which Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning preached last fall at a service preparatory to launching this Decade. Among other things, in that sermon Bishop Browning said, "...We no longer think that the only people God wants to save are the the people who belong to the same church we belong to. We no longer think that the only people God wants to save are the Christian people. In short, we no longer limit God's mighty power by the outlines of our own structures. And we now admit, in a way we didn't always admit before, that the Church is a human structure. And we admit that God is God and the Church is the Church and the Church is not God..."

Could it be that, if adopted at Phoenix, this resolution might prove to be yet another milestone in inter-religious sensitivity? I do hope so.

May I also draw your attention to the paragraph on page 7 dealing with "The Incidence of Anti-Semitism"? I'd appreciate your reaction.

Ever sincerely yours,



P.S. Henry, you know, I trust, that I wear at least "two hats" in the Christian-Jewish arena and I try to keep my activity with the National Christian Leadership Conference for Israel separate from my role with our P. B. Committee. This is not easy, given the pro-Palestinian cast among most of our national church staff. While I think I am fairly successful in this, recently, as my name has appeared in public statements including the A.J.C. ad, I sense that my credibility is being challenged even by some of my most liberal friends. My support for Israel (though not every one of her policies) remains unwavering. But I suspect "the going" will be even tougher for me in Episcopal Church circles in the period ahead. I just thought you should know.

The Presiding Bishop's Committee on Christian-Jewish Relations

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A. MEMBERSHIP

- The Rt. Rev. John H. Burt, chairperson, Bishop of Ohio (ret.)
- The Rev. Dr. James A. Carpenter, General Theological Seminary,  
New York City
- The Rev. Vesta Kowalski, St. Luke's-in-the-Field, New York City
- \*The Rt. Rev. C. Shannon Mallory, Bishop of El Camino Real
- The Rev. Robert P. Patterson, Church of the Redeemer,  
Baltimore, Maryland
- The Reverend Dr. Paul van Buren, Religion Department,  
Temple University, retired
- Mrs. Jane Wolfe, Little Rock, Arkansas
- Ms. Nancy Lown Young, National Conference of Christians and Jews,  
New Brunswick, New Jersey
- \*\*The Rev. Canon Harld G. Hultgren, Los Angeles, representing the  
Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers
- \* In 1990, the Rt. Rev. Andrew Wissemann of Western Massachusetts  
replaced Bishop Mallory on the Committee.
- \*\* In 1989, Mrs. Midge Roof of Indianapolis replaced Father  
Hultgren as representative from EDEO.

B. PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The Presiding Bishop's Committee on Christian-Jewish Relations (formerly called the Presiding Bishop's Advisory Committee on Christian-Jewish Relations) was established originally by Presiding Bishop John E. Hines early in the 1970s. Mrs. Theodore O. (Cynthia) Wedel was named the initial chairperson; serving with great distinction until her death in 1985.

In the fall of 1986, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning, following the tradition of his two predecessors in that office, reconstituted the Committee. To succeed the late Cynthia Wedel as chairperson, Bishop Browning named the Retired Bishop of Ohio, John H. Burt. Dr. Christopher Agnew, Associate Ecumenical Officer for the Episcopal Church, serves as staff aide to the Committee.

The principal purpose of the Committee since its founding has been "to maintain an overview of the wide field of relationships between Anglicans and Jews in the United States and around the world. The Committee will not develop programs, but will report activities that have been effective and are worth attempting in other places." To that statement, the Committee has added its intent to provide "a liason between the Presiding Bishop and the five national Jewish organizations with offices or departments of religious affairs." During the 1988-91 triennium the Committee reaffirmed its "primary tasks" in pursuit of this purpose to be nine in number:

1. To offer advice and counsel to the Presiding Bishop (and through him to the Church at large) on issues affecting Christian-Jewish relationships.
2. To cultivate personal relationships between leaders of this Church and leaders in the Jewish community that will enable the discussion of current, and sometimes stressful, issues in an atmosphere of theological candor and truth.
3. To encourage Christian-Jewish dialogue on diocesan and local levels, in cooperation with the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical Officers (EDEO).
4. To disseminate news and the experience of local Christian-Jewish activities for the benefit of other localities. To make available materials that have been produced locally to assist other communities to develop Christian-Jewish initiatives.
5. To report triennially to the General Convention concerning its activities (including the authoring of proposed resolutions) in order to raise the consciousness of the whole church to the theological issues inherent in a religiously pluralistic world with particular reference to Christian-Jewish relationships.
6. To advise program groups in the Episcopal Church, especially in the fields of Christian education and evangelism, on the implications in their materials and programs for Christian-Jewish relationships.
7. To encourage education and training in Christian-Jewish dialogue at the various seminaries, working in cooperation with the Center for Jewish-Christian Studies and Relations at the General Theological Seminary.
8. To distribute the 1988 General Convention Guidelines for Christian-Jewish Relations.

9. To cooperate with, and support the work of, the National Council of Churches' Office on Christian-Jewish Relations and the World Council of Churches' Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People; and to maintain liaison with the Office for Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

#### Advisory Consultants to the Committee

The Committee has long been aware that, because of its small membership (limited to eight) and budgetary restrictions on meetings (limited to two annually), there is a need to increase its effectiveness through the help of a larger group of Advisory Consultants named from among those across the nation interested in this activity. Accordingly, during this triennium the following persons have served as Advisory Consultants to the Committee. They are: from the House of Bishops: George Hunt, Edward Jones, Shannon Mallory, and John Spong; from the ranks of other clergy: Grant Abbott of St. Paul, Minn., Carla Berkedal of Seattle, Washington, Philip Bottomley of A Christian Ministry Among Jewish People (CMJ/USA), Bruce Bramlett of Tracy, California, Cynthia Bronson of Buffalo, New York, Philip Culbertson of the University of the South, David Deppen of Westfield, N. J., Douglas Evett of Ann Arbor, Michigan, Kenneth Finger of Willmar, Minn., Virginia Herring of Salisbury, N. C., David Hunter (a former Executive Council and National Council of Churches staff officer), Robert Insko of Lexington, Kentucky, Daniel Miner of Duluth, Minn., Robert J. Miner of Old Greenwich, Conn., Elisabeth Gale Morris of Morgan Hill, Calif., Gaylord Pool of Fort Worth, Texas, Frank Strasburger of Princeton University, Thomas Tiller of Jackson, Miss., Robert Trache of Alexandria, Virginia, Elizabeth Turner of New York City, William Weiler of Nashotah House Seminary, James Lassen Willems and Daniel Burke, both of Providence, R. I.; from the ranks of the laity: Sister Mary Boyle of the Anglican Church of Canada, Joy Browne of Rochester, New York, Don Compier of Decatur, Georgia, Frank Eakin of Richmond, Virginia, Darlene Ehlinger of Huntsville, Alabama, Carole Johannsen of Danbury, Conn., Evangeline Lewis of Charleston, S.C., D. F. Morgan of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific; and from the ecumenical community, Dr. Eugene Fisher, Director of Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Dr. Jay Rock, Office of Christian-Jewish Relations of the National Council of Churches, and Hans Ucko of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland.

#### C. SUMMARY OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

The Committee has held one special and six regular meetings in the triennium just past.

#### Promoting Dialogue At The National Level

a. A major effort by the Committee this triennium has been to effect the publication of and distribution of its "Guidelines for Christian Jewish Relations" as formally adopted by action of the 1988 General Convention meeting in Detroit. In early 1989, at our urging, The Forward Movement did just this in a small booklet which also contained a Foreword authored by Dr. William Weiler, former member of the Committee. The adoption of these Guidelines proved to be among the major news stories emanating from the Detroit Convention and were affirmed in several articles published in the New York TIMES and other newspapers across the

land. The Guidelines are presently listed in the Forward Movement's regular catalogue.

b. The Committee also promoted Episcopalian attendance at the two National Workshops on Christian-Jewish Relations which were held during the triennium. About 100 members of our Church were present for the 1989 Workshop in Charleston, South Carolina and about 82 for the November 1990 Workshop in Chicago. At the latter both Advisory Consultant Philip Culbertson and Committee chairperson John Burt made major presentations. Corporate communion services and caucus gatherings for Episcopalians were held at both conferences. At both, also, the local Episcopal diocese was a major "sponsoring body."

c. During the past triennium, the Committee maintained and deepened its relationships with the national offices and leadership of the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the Synagogue Council of America, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Representatives of each of those bodies were official guests of the Presiding Bishop at the 1988 Detroit Convention and were presented to both Houses by our chairperson who earlier had presided over a luncheon in their honor. Moreover, in the fall of 1989, the Committee facilitated a full morning of discussion between representatives of these same five organizations and the Presiding Bishop, together with certain members of his staff, on the question: "Implications for Christian-Jewish Relations in the United States of the Crisis in the Middle East." Following this discussion, Bishop and Mrs. Browning hosted a luncheon for all conferees in their apartment at the Church Center.

d. In further attempts at Middle East understanding, in July of 1990 in Garden City, Long Island, the Committee had a "Day of Dialogue" over Middle East matters with Episcopal Church Center staff persons who bear responsibilities for Public Affairs, World Mission and Communication. One of the Committee members, Mrs. Jane Wolfe, has chosen to reside in Jerusalem during much of 1990, enabling her to bring the Middle East perspective to the Committee deliberations in a personal way.

e. In other activities with national implications, the Committee opened conversations with the Standing Liturgical Committee over certain readings with anti-semitic overtones in the present Prayer Book Lectionary; expressed its continuing displeasure at anti-Jewish interpretations in the way Matthew 27:25 ("the blood curse") gets dramatized in the Oberammergau Passion Play; and established deeper ties with the Anglican Church of Canada's work with their Jewish community.

#### Promoting Dialogue at the Local Level

Our close alliance with the network of the Episcopal Ecumenical Officers (EDEO) is our principal channel for stimulating local dialogue -- along with the assistance of our 36 Advisory Consultants. In addition, we seek to give special encouragement to unusual local programs and seek to promote them as models for use elsewhere. "The Abrahamic Accord" in the Diocese of Rhode Island, under the leadership of the Rev. Daniel Burke, is one such model. Its conferences on "Conversion and Community" dealing with Interfaith Marriage, and on "Theological Self-Identity and a Theology of the Other" were notable. A November 1990 Philadelphia Conference on "Captive and Free: Lessons of the Holocaust", a March 1991 Stockton State

College (California) 21st Annual Scholars Conference on the Holocaust and the forthcoming October 1991 Midwest Conference on "Jewish-Christian Reflections on Change and Continuity" are illustrative of what is happening locally all over the nation. Nor should we fail to mention programs in our seminaries, led by The General Seminary's Center for Christian-Jewish Studies and Relationships under Professor James Carpenter, the visit of Hans Ucko to Nashotah House and Philip Culbertson's work at Sewanee. Among the various diocesan programs, the work and witness of the Diocese of New York on Interfaith Marriage is outstanding. The Dioceses of both Minnesota and Newark have hammered out their own Guidelines for Christian-Jewish Dialogue.

Another notable outreach to the local level was the publication of the February-April 1990 Forward Day-by-Day devotional booklet which emphasized insights that regularly come to us in the Christian-Jewish dialogue. Three Episcopalians associated with our Committee work were among the authors.

### The Decade of Evangelism and Its Implications for Non-Christian Religions

A major concern of the Committee during the triennium, as the Episcopal Church (along with other major Christian bodies) prepared for "A Decade of Evangelism," has been the implications for non-Christians, including the Jews, in this major new effort "to present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit in such ways that persons may be led to Him as Saviour and follow Him as Lord within the fellowship of the Church."

So often in the past, the style in which Christians have evangelized has involved methods that abused non-Christians. Unfair intimidation, cruelty and even terror have been employed. With respect to special attempts to covert Jews to Christ, there are today differing viewpoints among Christians, even in our own Church. Some feel a special mission to the Jews is obligatory and is for the Jews' own salvation. Many holding this view believe that Jesus Christ as Messiah has superceded the promises of the Mosaic Covenant. Thus, it would appear that God's eventual intent may be that Jews as Jews should disappear. Others, especially those with a biblically literalist turn of mind, believe the conversion of the Jews to be an eschatological event still to come which will climax the history of the world. Some such people see the emergence of the political State of Israel as fore-ordained by biblical promise, to be a sign that the eschaton and the Second Coming of Christ may be at hand. Still others, probably a majority in our Church, would simply include any individual Jews who so wish in the one Christian invitation that is extended to all non-Christians. Most with this view would argue that God does not break his promises and, thus, is still faithful to his Sinai covenant with the Jews, despite his subsequent revelation in Jesus Christ.

Early in this triennium members of our Committee spent a day with representatives of CMJ/USA (formerly Christian Mission to the Jews and now A Christian Ministry Among the Jewish People) to discuss our varying views about evangelism and Judaism. Though we grew in mutual understanding we did not reach a full meeting of minds.

Subsequent to this, our Committee undertook consultations with the Standing Commission on Evangelism on this same subject. We found ourselves grateful that our Anglican tradition, in its more enlightened moments, has been particularly respectful of God's truth as it exists

outside of the Church, yet without compromising our devotion to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. On the basis of such gratitude, we have been able to act jointly with that Evangelism Commission in proposing a resolution for the forthcoming General Convention on this whole matter. The words of the resolution and the "Explanation" for it are to be found in the later pages of this Report.

### The Present State of Christian-Jewish Relations

During the last twenty-five years, remarkable progress in the relationship between Christians and Jews has occurred. A recent milestone was a December 6, 1990 meeting in Rome when Pope John Paul II officially set forth his Church's admission that God's covenant with the Jewish people is permanent -- that it was not superceded by the emergence of Christianity.

Many factors have contributed to this evolution but four of them stand out:

First, a new spirit of openness and mutual respect has allowed Christians and Jews to speak not just words of introduction to one another but also words of deep and abiding meaning. The increasingly pluralistic expression of religion in the United States fosters a particularly conducive environment for those in each religious tradition to meet each other as equals.

Second, both Jewish and Christian leaders care deeply for the state of human affairs in this land that has protected liberties and allowed the celebration of religious differences. Christian and Jewish leaders find themselves working side by side on such issues as racism, the challenge of poverty, sexism, concern for the environment and the preservation of civil liberties.

Third, there is a virtual revolution taking place theologically in current Christian biblical studies which some call "the Rejudiaization of Jesus." Without any Christian diminution in their affirmation of Christ's uniqueness as God's instrument of special revelation, his Jewish lineage and its effect on our understanding of him are being explored and honored in fresh ways.

Fourth, the historic complicity of Christians in the scourge of anti-semitism over 18 centuries, culminating in Adolph Hitler's "final solution," is increasingly being acknowledged by people in the churches. Liturgical remembrances of Kristallnacht and, in educational curricula, Holocaust studies grow in number. During this past triennium both our chairperson, John Burt, and our Associate Ecumenical Officer, Christopher Agnew, have been named to the Church Relations Committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council which, among other things, is erecting a \$ 151 million Museum of the Holocaust just off the Mall in Washington, D.C.

There are, of course, some serious areas of divergence in Christian-Jewish Relations. One which currently causes great pain to most Jews and puts real strain on our current inter-religious efforts in dialogue is the anti-Israel stance being taken by many Christians in America as they place primary blame on the State of Israel for the plight

of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Because this present Report is drafted in January for study and action at General Convention in July, any further attempt by our committee at this time to discuss the dynamics of this issue here may well prove to be "out of date" by Convention time, considering the rapid pace of events in the Persian Gulf.

### The Incidence of Anti-Semitism

Generally speaking, anti-semitism appears to remain at a low ebb in America today. By encouraging pluralism and combating bigotry in the workplace, campus, schools and religious institutions, Jewish organizations with Christian help have managed to relegate religious and ethnic extremism to the American periphery. At the same time a 1989 "Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents" by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith reported that "anti-semitic incidents in the United States reached their highest levels" since ADL began publishing statistics eleven years ago. No less than 845 episodes of vandalism and desecration and 587 acts of harassment, threat and assault against Jewish individuals, their property and their institutions were reported in 44 states and the District of Columbia. This was a nearly 12% rate of increase over 1988. One hopeful note: Largely absent from the 1989 record was a 1988 trend that incidents were inspired by the Palestinian intifada, the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht and an unusual spate of incidents in the South.

### Special Activities of the Chairperson

During the triennium, it has been the privilege of the chairman to represent the Committee on a number of occasions and in a variety of forums: He conducted clergy conferences in Western New York and Iowa on Christian-Jewish relations. He attended two National Workshops on Christian-Jewish Relations (Charleston, S.C. in 1989 and Chicago in 1990) addressing the Episcopal Caucuses at both and led a two-session seminar at the latter on "Religion and the Land." He served as an official consultant to Office of Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and met with them annually. He attended a week-long seminar at Union Theological Seminary on "The Medieval Heritage and Modern Realities In Christian-Jewish Relations." He attended the Executive Council meeting in Fresno, California in 1990 where he addressed the Partnership Committee of that body. He called on the Ambassador from Israel to protest his government's action in the St. John Hospice Incident and with the Consul General for Israel following the Temple Mount slayings. He critiqued the Executive Council's June 1990 Resolution on the Middle East and has written on Israel's view of the Middle East crisis in "Episcopalian Life." He shared the lecture platform at Nashotah House Seminary with Hans Ucko of the World Council of Churches. Although not acting as representative of the Committee, he is the current president of the National Christian Leadership Conference on Israel, in which capacity he addressed the 1991 American-Israel Friendship Dinner in New York along with former Vice-President Walter Mondale.

### D. FINANCES

Until 1991, the committee had never had an official budget, its expenses consisting only of money needed for travel to two meetings annually plus modest duplicating and mailing costs. Beginning in this current year, a small item to cover these matters is now in the General

Church Program Budget. Occasional contributions by the Presiding Bishop from his discretionary funds have supplemented these monies when needed.

#### E. PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, that the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, during this Decade of Evangelism, reaffirms its commitment to the fulness and uniqueness of God's self-revelation to humankind in Jesus Christ, while recognizing that the gospel in a pluralistic society also reminds us to be aware of the significance of God's self-revelation outside the Church; and be it further

Resolved, that even as we seek new opportunities to share our Christian faith with those who do not know Christ, we also affirm our willingness to cherish continuing opportunities to learn more of God from those whose perception of God's mystery differs from our own.

#### EXPLANATION

The General Convention of this Church has declared that the 1990's will be a Decade of Evangelism, calling upon the whole membership of our Church to dedicate itself to "the presentation of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit in such ways that persons may be led to Him as Savior and follow Him as Lord within the fellowship of his Church."

Our Anglican tradition has always been particularly respectful of God's truth as it exists outside of Christianity, yet without compromising our devotion to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

The Standing Commission on Evangelism and the Presiding Bishop's Committee on Christian-Jewish Relations have, during this past triennium, undertaken together a discussion of the person and work of Jesus Christ within a pluralistic society and jointly recommend the passage of the resolution above.

#### F. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING TRIENNIUM

1. To further the implementation, as appropriate, of each of the nine "primary tasks" of the committee -- as listed earlier in the "Statement of Purpose" section of this report.
2. To work with Executive Council, through its Committee on Partnerships, to find an improved way of working with non-Christian religions while affirming the special relationship which we believe links Christian faith with Judaism..
3. To press for more adequate treatment of Judaism (both in its historic and contemporary expressions) in the curricula of our seminaries.
4. To continue surveying the present level and extent of Christian-Jewish dialogue and relationships both in local and diocesan programming.
5. To work closely with the Executive Council's Task Force on the Middle East with special responsibility to interpret the Jewish point of view.

6. To press for the inclusion of Yomah Shoah and Kristallnacht on the Church's calendar.

7. To work with ecumenical commissions in the Dioceses of New York, Newark and other appropriate places toward the promulgation of a national set of guidelines on Interfaith Marriages.

8. To work toward removing the doctrine of supersessionism from the canon, eucharistic liturgy, reading of the Hebrew Scriptures, Prayers of the People and the lectionary.

Filed with the Secretary of General Convention  
2-1-91

*Robert Burt*



TIMES (London)

Feb 4/91

Sigmund Sternberg

## Creating religious dialogue to overcome prejudices of past

ATTENTION needs to be drawn to the painstaking processes of dialogue and reconciliation that have in recent years informed the attitudes of Jews and Christians. More recently these processes have extended to other faith communities, particularly in Europe and the West.

Long before glasnost and perestroika became universally accepted vocabulary, the Jewish-Christian dialogues outside what used to be termed the eastern bloc had opened insights into the roots of antisemitism. Those involved in these talks explored themes such as the joint foundations of Judaism and Christianity and developed an encompassing educational programme to allow for openness and the restructuring of attitudes.

The International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ), the umbrella organisation for 23 national dialogue organisations, resolved to hold a consultation in Prague within months of the "velvet revolution" in Czechoslovakia. The aims of these 23 nations were to examine the challenges and tasks facing the ICCJ in the wake of the changes that had taken place throughout central and eastern Europe, and to share their experience with those eastern European countries after 40 years of religious starvation.

Antisemitism, recently described by Pope John Paul II as "a sin against God and humanity", a term coined in 1947 by the World Council of

Churches Assembly in Amsterdam, is the most clearly definable form of ignorance, xenophobia and racism. Paradoxically, all these prejudices have also re-emerged with the new freedom in the East. Western churches have at least been supplied with suitable guidelines to deal with such prejudices over the past decades. Eastern Orthodox churches such as the Russian Orthodox are too busy redefining their own re-emergence at the moment to attempt any new theological thinking on Christian-Jewish relations. The eastern churches are also unlikely to find time to tackle trilateral dialogue with Islam, despite the increasing Muslim population in Europe.

A primary task for the ICCJ is to educate people to understand that self-identity and independence must in economic and ecumenical terms lead to interdependence and identification with others. It is a task to which the ICCJ will need to devote considerable resources around the world.

National member organisations can share their experience of textbook revision, the teaching of history and the place of Israel in history. Graduates and postgraduates must be trained to carry the experience of an older generation into the present.

This must be undertaken in countries which are themselves struggling to understand their own recent history, often working in the aftermath of programmes designed to

annihilate their particular cultures and identities.

Although we live in an age of resurgent religious consciousness, underlying cultural cross-purposes remain a major source of misunderstanding and prejudice. This year the ICCJ will address some of these concerns. A theological symposium in April in Cracow will deal with an issue of common concern to Poles and Jews: the Holocaust and its implications for Jewish and Christian theological thinking. The symposium is being organised jointly by the ICCJ, the Polish Episcopal Commission on Christian-Jewish Dialogue and the Club of Catholic Intellectuals.

The ICCJ's annual colloquium in July at Southampton university appears even more relevant now than when it was conceived. This will tackle "When religion is used as a weapon ... and the use and misuse of religion in defence of national and fundamental values."

The colloquium will be preceded by the ICCJ Young Leadership Conference, on religious revivalism and nationalism. This group includes postgraduates and professionals from all walks of life whose participation will ensure continuity and an ongoing response to the challenges of reconstruction.

Sir Sigmund Sternberg is chairman of the executive committee of the International Council of Christians and Jews.

The Conference of Major Superiors of Men and the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers joined an ecumenical coalition, Churches for Middle East Peace, in one of the first condemnations of the war issued after hostilities broke out. In a statement Jan. 16, within hours after the first bombs hit Baghdad, the coalition appealed for an immediate cease-fire and peace negotiations under United Nations auspices.

Several Catholic organizations founded by or closely linked to religious orders have also condemned the war. Maryknoll Father Joseph R. Lang, executive director of the U.S. Catholic Mission Association, and Franciscan Sister Marge Zacharias, associate director, in a joint letter to President Bush urged him to "Stop the war. Prepare a Middle East conference. Dialogue and listen to one another."

"We cannot justify the Persian Gulf conflict.... We cannot live a life of hate and perpetuate the difficulties of the Middle East by a military intervention," they said. Many religious orders are members of the association and help fund its work.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister Nancy Sylvester, national coordinator of Network, called the U.S.-led attack on Iraq "an immoral action against all of humanity, especially the innocent people of that region." Network is a Catholic social justice lobby founded by orders of women religious.

Jesuit Father James E. Hug, director of Center of Concern, an independent think-tank on social issues that was founded by the Jesuits, called the allied attack "unjust" and a "return to the law of the jungle."

"We urge an immediate end to the fighting and a return to sustained and long-term diplomatic efforts.... We reject all attempts at justifying the bombing of Iraq and Kuwait and demand an immediate end to it," he said.

♦♦♦  
WAR-SLEEP Feb. 6, 1991 (160 words)

#### POPE SPENDS RESTLESS NIGHTS CONTEMPLATING PERSIAN GULF WAR

By Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) -- President Bush says he's not losing sleep worrying about the course of the Persian Gulf war, but Pope John Paul II is.

Polish President Lech Walesa told a Rome press conference Feb. 6 that the pope "told me that he was not able to fall asleep."

"He is asking himself how in today's world it is possible that people are shooting at each other," said Walesa, who met with the pope Feb. 5.

Bush acknowledged that the human cost of the war "works on my mind every day," but added during a Feb. 5 news conference in Washington that he was not losing any sleep worrying about the wisdom or course of the conflict.

"I know what I've got to do; I've got very good people helping me do it," Bush said. "I don't really lose sleep."

♦♦♦

CRASH Feb. 6, 1991 (390 words)

#### THREE PRIESTS OFFERED COUNSELING AT SCENE OF L.A. CRASH

By Peter Droege

Catholic News Service

LOS ANGELES (CNS) -- Among the emergency personnel responding Feb. 1 to the fiery collision of a USAir jetliner and a Sky West commuter plane at Los Angeles International Airport were a contingent of chaplains, including three Catholic priests.

MIDEAST-BURTCHAELL Feb. 8, 1991 (500 words)

PRIEST OFFERS PALESTINIAN PERSPECTIVE ON MIDDLE EAST HISTORY

By Mark Pattison

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- To understand Palestinian perspectives of the Middle East, "you must attempt to re-create in your own sensibilities what the world looks like to Palestinian people," said Holy Cross Father James Burtchaell during a Feb. 7 talk at Georgetown University.

That worldview, Father Burtchaell said, includes a history of invasions by foreign nations, the denial of their right to a homeland, "refugees displaced several times over," emigres who have left relatives behind, and "chagrin and frustration" by Palestinians unable to assert their rights.

"The United States appears to justify its virtual declaration of war against Iraq on grounds that they have seized a land and dispossessed its people," he said, "which is precisely what the Palestinians believe have been done to them" by Israel.

Father Burtchaell's talk, "Palestine: The Enduring Irritant in the Gulf Dispute," was sponsored by the Washington chapters of the Notre Dame Club and the St. Mary's Club, Georgetown's campus ministry and the school's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies.

Currently on sabbatical from his theology professor's post at the University of Notre Dame, Father Burtchaell has studied in Jerusalem and translated an Italian priest's book challenging military conscription, "A Just War No Longer Exists."

U.S. support of policies to expel Palestinians "has made us the greatest destabilizer in the Middle East," Father Burtchaell said.

Yet "I think we will have to compose a peace in the Middle East," Father Burtchaell said of the United States. "We cannot avoid being participants in the peace," which he said must include the Palestinian issue as well as the Persian Gulf conflict.

Father Burtchaell detailed a long history of military conquests of Palestine, dating nearly to Abraham's journey there in Old Testament times. The name "Palestine," he said, is a variant of "Philistines," best known for having been defeated by David.

The birth of the Zionist movement in 1891, which led to the choice of Palestine for a Jewish homeland, was an event over which Palestinians had no control, Father Burtchaell said.

Jews and Palestinians, he said, lived an increasingly less peaceful coexistence in Palestine in the years before the creation of the Jewish state of Israel.

Father Burtchaell said "domestic warfare" erupted between 1936 and 1938, Father Burtchaell said, and Jewish terrorist groups prior to Israel's creation included among their members former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and current Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

"Since 1970, it has been generally accepted by Palestinians that any settlement would include recognition of Israel," he said. But since then, he added, a "rejectionist attitude" by Israel and the United States has resulted in a massive expulsion of Palestinians.

The Palestinian cause "has an ear in the Arab-speaking countries," Father Burtchaell said, but added in a question and answer period after his talk that it is "a destructive and devastating mistake ... for the Palestinian people to look toward (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein as a morally qualified ally."

02-12-91

13945

## U.S. religious leaders spearhead call for end to gulf war

By Patricia Lefevere  
Special to Religious News Service

CANBERRA, Australia (RNS) — American religious leaders gathered here for the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches renewed their opposition to the war in the Persian Gulf and called for a cease-fire and fresh efforts to find a diplomatic solution.

In a 13-point "Call to the Churches," the Americans asked U.S. churches to become centers for preparing people for non-violent action and to offer support and sanctuary to conscientious objectors and to those who cannot obey military orders that conflict with church teaching on the value of human life.

"Let our churches exercise their pastoral and prophetic ministry by becoming places of sanctuary in the 'Desert Storm' of war, thus reclaiming our historic tradition of providing safe shelter in times of trouble," reads the statement scheduled for release Feb. 13.

The "Call" was also a call to prayer, silence and meditation in the churches and an invitation to U.S. Christians to reach out to "our brothers and sisters in the Middle East who are also in great crisis."

Churches should also provide pastoral support for military families and returning soldiers and become safe houses of discussion for "those seeking a deeper understanding of the Middle East and a Christian response to modern warfare," the statement said.

Most of the leaders of the 32-member denominations of the National Council of Churches are expected to sign the document. As many as 100 other international church leaders at the assembly and leading Catholic figures in the United States are expected to endorse it, said the Rev. Martin Bailey, National Council communications chief.

In the "Call," U.S. church leaders address those already suffering in the war — U.S. service personnel and their families, people of color "who are a disproportionate number of those doing the fighting," Kuwaitis, Iraqi families and "Iraqi draftees being carpet-bombed in the desert," Israelis, Palestinians and prisoners of war on both sides.

Presiding Episcopal Bishop Edmond Browning told members of the American delegation here that U.S. churches "awakened from their slumber and passionately urged a negotiated political solution to the crisis" but that such an awakening has not been without its struggle. "I've taken much flack from those in my church," the bishop told a media conference here. He said other U.S. clergy leaders had also drawn criticism from their flocks for their condemnation of the war as being neither "just" nor "moral."

In addition to drafting the "Call," U.S. church leaders here — led by the Rev. Joan Campbell, the National Council's general secretary-designate — convened a meeting Feb. 10 of 20 U.S. and Middle East delegates. Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church Metropolitan Mar Gewargis Sliwa of Baghdad represented Iraqi Christians.

Together with other National Council delegates and those from the Middle East Council of Churches, the 20 repeated their churches' backing of an immediate cease-fire and a joint commitment to seek peace based on justice in the gulf, as well as in the Israeli-Palestinian, Lebanon and Cyprus conflicts.

Middle East delegates thanked U.S. churches for their strong opposition to the war. In a brief communique, the group said that "tolerance, dialogue, mutual respect and cooperation between people of all faiths lies at the heart of the calling of Christians to be peacemakers."

The two councils agreed to cooperate on humanitarian efforts to assist refugees and war victims. They also discussed the possibility of sending food and medical supplies to Iraqi and Jordanian children and assistance to Palestinians living in the occupied areas who have been living under a near constant curfew since Jan. 17.

02-12-91

13946

## Talk of gulf war dominates discussion at World Council assembly

By Patricia Lefevere  
Special to Religious News Service

CANBERRA, Australia (RNS) — Talk about the war in the Middle East dominates much of the formal discussion, behind-the-scenes strategy sessions and corridor conversation at the World Council of Churches Assembly here.

The seriousness with which the issue is taken here was evident when many of the 4,000 Christians from more than 100 lands attending the assembly marched in silent procession through the center of the Australian capital.

Many local Christians — carrying flowers and banners proclaiming, "Spirit of Peace, Reconcile Your People," — joined the out-of-town visitors. Following their arrival at the worship tent on the campus of the Australian National University, participants held an all-night vigil for peace and many fasted.

The vigil ended next morning with the Lima Liturgy, an ecumenical Eucharistic service first celebrated in Peru in 1982 and observed at several ecumenical occasions since, including the Vancouver Assembly in 1983.

Even before the assembly opened, the World Council's executive committee issued a call for the immediate end to hostilities in the gulf. After only three weeks the war has reached "ominous proportions and tragic consequences," which threatened all of God's creation, the committee said.

While some here criticized the executive committee's statement as "provocative" in that it preempted a statement expected before the assembly ends Feb. 20, World Council general secretary, the Rev. Emilio Castro, said he was glad if the earlier action created controversy.

"It would be tragic if no one paid any attention," Mr. Castro said. "When governments are doing well in war, they are never interested in negotiating for peace," said Mr. Castro, but it is "incumbent upon the church of Jesus Christ to call for peace," even though all may not favor an immediate cease-fire.

Some assembly participants said they fear the gulf war threatens to overshadow all other issues here, especially that of the Soviet incursion into the Baltic states last month, which many European and Canadian delegates see as a situation seriously in need of the churches' response.

"Gulf, gulf — not one more word. I can't stand it. My people have been dying for decades," said Elsa Tesfay-Musa, an Eritrean-Canadian, who said that the conflicts in Liberia, Somalia, Sudan and East Timor have failed to capture the church's moral outrage in anything like the way the gulf war has. Ms. Tesfay-Musa, a Lutheran church worker in Canada, made her remarks at a pre-assembly women's meeting.

In a press conference Feb. 9, Eastern Orthodox Metropolitan Paulos Gregorios of India, a World Council president, said that he had been told late last year by a deputy foreign secretary in Saudi Arabia that it was a mistake to have invited the Americans to deploy troops in that country.

"I was told by the Saudis that they do not want the allied presence in their country," he said. "They had asked for it because they were threatened by an invasion from Iraq."

Garland Pohl, ecumenical officer for the Catholic diocese of Houston-Galveston, characterized the mood of many of the 600 Americans attending as one of "profound sadness." There is such a depth of anti-war sentiment here; we feel so counter-cultural to mainstream America."

Mr. Pohl said he thinks that U.S. Christians still bear guilt from the Vietnam years. "It's not that we didn't welcome the returning soldiers as heroes that burdens us, but that we didn't shout 'no' (to the war) sooner and louder."

A Sri Lankan theologian, the Rev. Tissa Balasuriya, criticized the war and remarked that if America would spend the daily cost of the war "on New York's public transport one day, on Chicago's the next and so forth, it wouldn't need the oil."

Ariela Fule, who works for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Louisville, was troubled by how the United States views itself in relation to the rest of the world. Rejecting the role of "world policeman," she said, "this is not America's world; it's God's creation, and it's being destroyed."

02-12-91

13950

## **'A Call to the Churches' — a plea to end war and aid the victims**

**By Religious News Service**

(RNS) — The following is the text of a statement on the war in the Middle East issued by U.S. church leaders attending the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia.

The churches have been at the forefront of those urging peaceful alternatives to war in the Middle East. We said, "War is not the answer." We have wrestled with our varied theological traditions, returning to fundamental questions of the Christian faith. We agreed that the stakes in human lives were so high, and the potential for catastrophe in a Middle East war so great, that military confrontation had to be averted. Even in victory, there would be no winners in this war. War would bring nothing but loss to us all and unleash violence that would only multiply and reverberate around the region and the world in the days ahead — and likely even for generations to come. We have insisted that there are alternatives to war and have indicated what they could be.

But now the nation is at war — a war that should have been avoided. And a great human tragedy of yet unknown proportions has begun to unfold. When Gabriel Habib, general secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches, was recently asked by a BBC reporter, "Whose side is God on in this war?" his response was, "God is on the side of the suffering."

Already many people are suffering: young American service men and women being sent into battle and their fearful families at home; people of color who are a disproportionate number of those doing the fighting, even while many of their families still fight for survival at home; Kuwaitis enduring brutal occupation; Iraqi families living under the daily rain of bombardment; Israeli parents putting gas masks on their children under the terror of missile attack; Palestinians and other Arabs who see their hopes for dignity and freedom dimmed by the clouds of war; prisoners of war paraded on our television screens; Iraqi draftees being carpet-bombed in the desert; the thousands of refugees who are already fleeing for their lives.

It is for the sake of these — and the many more who will follow — that we opposed this war on moral grounds and remain opposed to it now. On their behalf we call for a halt to the fighting — a cease-fire — and a fresh effort to find a diplomatic solution.

We call upon our churches across the country to open their doors and their hearts in a time of national trauma and to reach across international boundaries to our brothers and sisters in the Middle East who are also in great crisis.

Let our churches reach out in a spirit of dialogue and seek ways to bring Muslims, Christians and Jews together to address our fears, concerns and hopes for peace.

Let our churches exercise their pastoral and prophetic ministry by becoming places of comfort and calm sanctuary in the midst of the "Desert Storm" of war, thus reclaiming the historic tradition of providing "safe shelter" in times of trouble.

Let our churches be havens of prayer, silence and meditation throughout the week for those who seek the peace of Christ in the midst of media bombardment and the political noise that surrounds us.

Let our churches offer prayers of intercession for wisdom and compassion on the part of political leaders on all sides of this conflict, and for mercy and justice for war's many victims.

Let our churches provide pastoral support for military personnel, comfort and hope for their families, friends and communities as they grapple with their fear, confusion and grief.

Let our churches stand ready to help those returning from war with physical, psychological, economic and spiritual wounds and needs.

Let our churches offer support and assistance to conscientious objectors who are refusing military service for reasons of faith and conscience and to those who cannot obey military orders that conflict with the church's teachings on the sacredness of human life.

Let our churches become places for reasoned discussion and spiritual discernment for those wrestling with the moral issues at stake in this crisis and for those seeking both a deeper understanding of the Middle East and a Christian response to modern warfare.

Let our churches speak clearly their historic teachings on war and peace and provide moral guidance for soldiers, citizens and political leaders.

Let our churches give voice to the cries for justice of those silenced by grinding poverty and inequality in our own society, of those who will pay the price of this war not only in dreams deferred but in the denial of basic human needs.

Let our churches embrace the bereaved, maimed and homeless of the Middle East through a generous response to the ministry of compassion.

Let our churches become centers for non-violence, preparing people to act and to respond to conflict in ways that take seriously the gospel mandate to love one another.

Let Christians help build a disciplined, morally-based non-violent movement in response to the war in the gulf and in response to poverty and suffering throughout the world.

The words of the gospel cannot be reconciled with what is now happening in the gulf. It is on Jesus' call to be peacemakers that we are united and will take our stand.

Signers of the call included the following leaders of the National Council of Churches (U.S.A.): Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, president, NCC; Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary-elect, NCC; Rev. James Andrews, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); Bishop Edmond L. Browning, the Episcopal Church; Bishop Herbert Chilstrom, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Rev. John Humbert, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Rev. Donald E. Miller, Church of the Brethren; Rev. Edwin G. Mulder, Reformed Church in America; Rev. Paul Sherry, United Church of Christ; Bishop Melvin G. Talbert, United Methodist Church; and Rev. Daniel Weiss, American Baptist Churches.

Fifteen Roman Catholic bishops also signed the statement including: Bishop Thomas J. Gumbleton, Archdiocese of Detroit, president, Pax Christi, USA; Bishop Raymond G. Hunthausen, Archdiocese of Seattle; Bishop Michael H. Kenny, Diocese of Juneau, Alaska; Bishop Leroy T. Matthiesen, Diocese of Amarillo, Texas; and Bishop Walter Sullivan, Diocese of Richmond, Va.

Other religious leaders signing the call included: Dr. Patricia Rumar, Church Women United; Rod Sider, Evangelicals for Social Concern; and Jim Wallis, Sojourners.

Wednesday, February 13, 1991

CNS - Catholic News Service

POPE-POLAND Feb. 12, 1991 (240 words)

POPE TO VISIT 12 TOWNS IN POLAND, SAYS NEWS AGENCY

By Catholic News Service

WARSAW, Poland (CNS) -- Pope John Paul will visit 12 towns in nine days during his fourth trip to his native Poland in June, according to PAP, the official Polish news agency.

He also will make a two-day visit starting Aug. 15 to attend an international youth gathering in Czestochowa, the site of Poland's holiest shrine, the Black Madonna.

The pope's previous trips to Poland, a predominantly Catholic country, attracted millions of Poles to open-air Masses and were seen as playing a major morale-boosting role in the country's struggle against communism.

The papal visit that starts June 1 includes the eastern towns of Bialystok and Lubaczow, seats of Polish bishops whose ecclesiastic authority extends to vast Lithuanian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian territories that were Polish before the Soviet Union took them over during World War II.

The Vatican has never adjusted the boundaries of the pre-war eastern dioceses.

Pope John Paul also will go to Koszalin, on the Baltic coast; Rzeszow and Przemysl in the southeast; and Kielce, Radom, Lomza, Olsztyn, Wloclawek and Plock in central and northeastern Poland.

He will spend the last two days of the trip in Warsaw, PAP said.

At the Vatican, spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said Feb. 12 that the itinerary was still tentative. He said the time frame was correct, but the cities were "not 100 percent sure yet."

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RATZINGER-INTERVIEW Feb. 12, 1991 (670 words)

VATICAN OFFICIAL CALLS DIALOGUE BEST ANSWER TO THEOLOGIANS

By Carol Luker

Catholic News Service

DALLAS (CNS) -- A continuing dialogue on the part of theologians, bishops and the Holy See is the best way to reconcile tensions among them, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, said Feb. 7 during a visit to Dallas.

In an interview with The Texas Catholic, Dallas diocesan newspaper, the cardinal spoke about various issues of morality and church life, including abortion, Christian feminism, the morality of the Persian Gulf War, Vatican relations with theologians and the alleged Marian apparitions in Medjugorje, Yugoslavia.

On the war, he echoed comments in an Italian radio interview in January in which he said there were grounds for serious doubts whether it could be considered a "just war."

On a juridical and moral level, he said, the authority of the United Nations and the duty of the international community to come to Kuwait's defense in response to the Iraqi invasion "are clear to me."

But on the practical level, he said, it is difficult to maintain the principle of proportionality between means and ends, especially with the changed character of modern warfare and the "unforeseeable aspects of the problem" once hostilities have begun.

The dynamics of warfare can lead to a situation in which "finally you are in a reality not corresponding to what was your intention," he said.

Late last year several hundred North American theologians criticized the Vatican's way of dealing with collegiality, ecumenism, the role of women in the church and relations with theologians. Asked to comment on their critique, Cardinal Ratzinger declined to evaluate it but said there are "many factors and motivations for these tensions."

Some tensions are creative, he said, while others "are dangerous or are oppositions against the positive tension of life."

He said the twice-a-year visits to Rome by top officials of the U.S. bishops' conference help the Vatican "understand the problems of the United States and help also for the American bishops to see what are our intentions so they can be better the interpreters of the Holy See for the theologians and help to overcome ineffective and negative oppositions."

He said the doctrinal congregation is not helped by the bad media image it has in the West.

"The relationship between the media and the work of the congregation is not so good, and reflection (on) how we can better introduce into the media our message is a very important issue," he said.

"The media are the mediator of our message," he continued. "True ... the media are media of our time, of our liberal time and our secular time, which in many aspects is opposed to Christian faith. And so it is quite difficult to translate our message."

Asked about a planned meeting of the world's cardinals this spring to talk about threats to life, Cardinal Ratzinger said Pope John Paul II was particularly concerned about a need to form Christian consciences on abortion.

"It's interesting that the Islamic world is especially resistant to abortion, while in the Christian world we simply are (institutionalizing) abortion," he said.

Concerning the alleged Marian apparitions in Medjugorje he defended the provisional decision of the Yugoslavian bishops' conference to permit pilgrimages there while saying there is no proof yet of supernatural occurrences.

"I think the proper point is that people can go to pray there, to confess and so on, but people should not find conversion and life in the firmament of apparitions," he said. "Even if perhaps this is the first point to come, it must be the medium to find sound Catholic piety, a sound Catholic life of faith."

On the role of women, Cardinal Ratzinger described Pope John Paul's 1988 letter, "The Dignity of Women," as a "first step" in giving definition to Catholic Christian feminism.

"It's a first step because we must begin in the context of our time to study the problem.... It is an important challenge to find the Christian articulation of the special dignity of women," he said.

## The Home Front

# Church Leaders Reaffirm Opposition to War

By PETER STEINFELS

In their first collective statement on the Persian Gulf war since hostilities broke out there almost a month ago, leaders of more than 20 major Protestant and Orthodox Christian denominations, joined by 15 Roman Catholic bishops, have reaffirmed their opposition to the war and called for a cease-fire.

The statement, which also urged "pastoral support" for American troops and their families, was issued by the National Council of Churches on Tuesday, before the American bombing of a fortified Baghdad building that reportedly killed many civilians.

The nation is in "a war that should have been avoided," said the statement, made public in New York and in Canberra, Australia, where many of the signers are attending the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches. "The words of the Gospel cannot be reconciled with what is now happening in the gulf."

The statement repeated assertions, issued by church leaders in the days leading up to the fighting, that even a victorious war would produce "no winners" but instead "unleash violence that would only multiply and reverberate" for generations.

### Call for 'Fresh Effort'

After enumerating those who are suffering from the war, including American troops and their families, Iraqi victims of bombardment, Israelis, Palestinians and prisoners of war, the signers called for a cease-fire and "a fresh effort to find a diplomatic solution."

Besides the officers of the National Council, a body of 32 denominations, the signers included leaders from the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the

## Denominations join to call for a cease-fire.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Episcopal Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Orthodox Church in America, the United Church of Christ, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the American Baptist Churches and the Reformed Church in America.

Also signing were leaders of five largely black denominations: the National Baptist Convention of America, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Progressive National Baptist Convention and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

### Views of Catholic Leaders

The leadership of the Roman Catholic Church has been ambivalent in its stance toward the war. Before the fighting began on Jan. 17, representatives of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops warned that war ran a high risk of violating Catholic principles regarding just wars.

But since then, while warning against nationalist fervor or military excesses, most bishops have not explicitly condemned the war. At the same time, many orders of priests and nuns have denounced the war, and some of them, along with the 15 bishops, signed the statement from the National Council.

Besides urging churches to provide spiritual, psychological and material assistance to American troops and their families, the statement asked

congregations to aid people "refusing military service for reasons of faith and conscience" and "those who cannot obey military orders that conflict with the church's teachings."

Major groups from American evangelical churches, like the Southern Baptists, the Assemblies of God and the Missouri Synod Lutherans, were not represented. These denominations do not belong to the National Council of Churches and have been either neutral on American gulf policy or supportive of it.

Speaking before the National Religious Broadcasters, a largely evangelical organization, on Jan. 28, President Bush said the war met frequently cited principles for a just war including a just cause and authorization of war as a last resort by a legitimate authority.

In an interview Wednesday, Richard Land of the Southern Baptist Convention, said, "On balance I would say that approximately one month into hostilities, the criteria laid down for conduct of a just war have been met."

Mr. Land said his 15-million-member denomination, the nation's largest Protestant group, was not giving "anybody a blank check," but he rejected the call for a cease-fire. "My guess," he said, "is that if that were put to a vote of the membership of the churches belonging to the National Council, it would lose, and lose badly."

In a newsletter soon to be mailed to the membership of the National Association of Evangelicals, Robert P. Dugan Jr., the group's director of public affairs, calls Mr. Bush's recent speech a "clear and compelling case that the war against Iraq does meet the just-war criteria."

The association, with 77 denominations, is the evangelical counterpart to the National Council of Churches.

# Religious Leaders Debate Morality of the Gulf War

**BARA NUSSBAUM COHEN**  
JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY  
NEW YORK — As war casualties in the Persian Gulf, religious leaders continue to debate morality of the conflict.

Some religions consider inherently immoral, the Jewish position is that war is justified and even mandatory in certain circumstances, say scholars. Jewish law forbids the destruction of the

Second Temple, rabbinic exegesis recognized three categories of war: *milchemet reshut* (permissible war), *milchemet chovah* (obligatory war) and *milchemet mitzvah* (commanded war). Ironically, these laws were codified during a time when Jews were under Roman rule and not able to make decisions of state.

"War ipso facto is not essentially immoral," said Rabbi Leonard Kravitz, professor of Midrash and

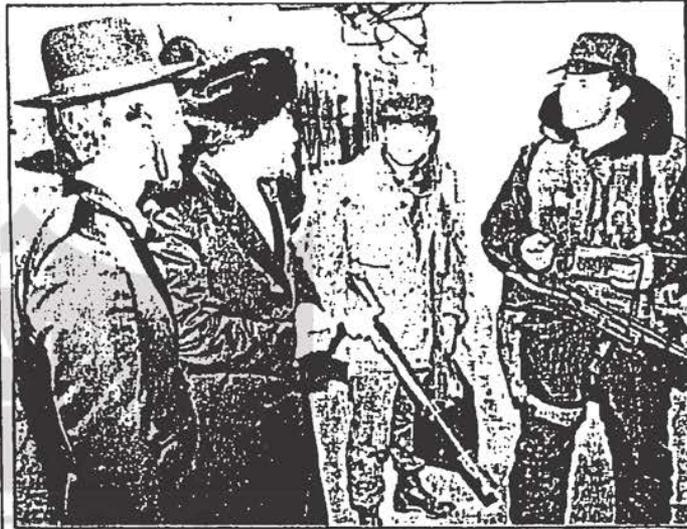
homiletics at Hebrew Union College, the Reform movement's rabbinic seminary, and a former army chaplain.

"Judaism is a pacific tradition. We look at peace as the best thing," he said. "We pray for peace. We greet each other with peace. But the world is unredeemed."

"Mashiach (the Messiah) hasn't come. The world where nations don't learn war any more hasn't happened yet. Where evil still exists, what does the individual do? War is sometimes necessary in an unredeemed world."

Other Jewish authorities disagree, defining *milchemet mitzvah* as war of self-defense, the one legitimate reason for war in the modern era.

"The only type of war permissible in this historical epoch is a defensive war," said Rabbi David Bleich, rosh yeshiva of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary at Yeshiva University.



Orthodox Jews chat with an Israeli army patrol on their way to the synagogue in the Old City of Jerusalem last Saturday.

This war is not only permitted, but is halachically required, said Rabbi Bleich and other scholars.

The first rabbinic category, *reshut*, is understood as "optional war," a war initiated to conquer territory, for example some of the wars undertaken during the era of Jewish kings.

There are several legal requirements before beginning *milchemet reshut*, including obtaining the approval of the Sanhedrin, which cannot be fulfilled in the modern era.

*Milchemet chovah*, according to Rabbi Kravitz, is war "to enhance the land or to expand the land."

Rabbi Arthur Green, president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, defines it differently. *Milchemet chovah*, he said, is "something you are obliged to do to save the life of your society when its existence is threatened."

*Milchemet mitzvah*, according to Rabbi Green, means war that is commanded by Scripture. That definition is "limited to wars of conquest in the time of Joshua, to rid

the land of Amalek.

"Since the Talmud says that the Canaanite nations no longer exist in recognizable form, there is no longer any reason for *milchemet mitzvah*," Rabbi Green said.

Unlike *milchemet reshut*, Divine approval is not required in cases of self defense, say these rabbis, nor is anyone exempt from the effort.

Deuteronomy lists several reasons why soldiers may be exempted from fighting in an optional war: if a soldier has built a house he has not yet dedicated, if he has not yet harvested his crops, if he is newly married or even if he is afraid.

But in the case of *milchemet mitzvah*, said Rabbi Kravitz, "even a hassan (groom) from under the (wedding) chuppah goes."

And while every attempt to avoid war is supposed to be made, there are circumstances where negotiation is not required, according to some authorities.

"When you're dealing with an act

to negotiate. You're permitted to strike," according to Rabbi Bleich. Jewish law also dictates the behavior of a Jewish army during wartime, emphasizing the sanctity of life in Judaism.

"Even in war, the means by which it is fought must be moral, according to Rabbi Harlan Wechsler, assistant professor of philosophy at the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary and religious leader of Manhattan's Congregation Tzaresua.

An army is required to "try to avoid injuring non-combatants," he said, adding that if there is a choice of weapons, the one who would target enemy soldiers without hitting innocents is preferred.

"You are not allowed to mistreat a prisoner of war," said Rabbi Aharon Soloveitchik, rosh yeshiva of Yeshivas Brisk in Chicago and professor of Talmud at Yeshiva University in New York.

POWs have to be "treated fairly, a concept which preceded the Geneva Convention by centuries," said Rabbi Soloveitchik.

And according to Rabbi Wechsler, "Maimonides says that when you lay siege to a city, you surround it only on three sides, allowing those who are innocent to flee. It illustrates the need to protect innocent life, because Torah prohibits murder as a capital crime."

Behavior during war is regulated even down to the obligation to protect trees, according to Deuteronomy 20:19-20. "Thou shalt not cut them down, for the tree of the field is man's life to employ them during the siege."

Only if a tree is known not to be one which provides food may it be cut down, and then only to be used to fortify areas under siege by the enemy.

Rabbi Wechsler cited Maimonides as saying that "it is well known that when armies go out to war, they will eat anything, they will plunder and commit wanton violence, and they will have no shame even to commit rape."

"Therefore, when you can against your enemy you should be wary of all evil. Scripture wants to make sure that even in war, it

# ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE

OF B'NAI B'RITH

823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, N.Y. 10017

## MEMORANDUM

To: Charney Bromberg  
From: Rabbi Leon Klenicki  
Date: February 19, 1991  
Subject: Polish Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Judaism and Catholic Jewish Relations *lt*

The Polish Bishops' Conference has issued a Pastoral Letter on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (No. 4), the Vatican II document on Judaism and Catholic Jewish relations. The Pastoral Letter was mandated by the Bishops to be read in all churches and chapels in Poland at mass on Sunday, January 20, 1991. The document was signed by all the Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops present at the 244th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate, at Jasna Gora, the Catholic center of Czestochowa.

### A Pioneering Effort

The document starts pointing out the reasons for the Pastoral Letter. It says that the Bishops turn to Catholics "today in a matter of immense importance concerned with our relationship to the Jewish nation and Mosaic religion, to which we Christians are tied with singular and irreplaceable bonds." The Jewish reader should remember that this document was written in Poland by Catholics and directed to the Catholic community. The Western reader, especially Americans used for over half a century to interreligious dialogue, would be quite surprised by certain terminology that was used years ago in the relationship between Catholics and Jews, and appears in the present document. In this respect the Polish Pastoral letter is a pioneering effort that will influence the understanding of Jews and Judaism in Polish Catholicism. There are around 10,000 Jews in Poland and the community is not anymore what it used to be. But Catholicism continues to be a stronghold in the country, and was very much involved in overthrowing the Communist regime. The Catholic church is also "exporting" clergy, both priests and nuns to the United States where vocations are very low and in some countries non-existent. This Pastoral Letter will instruct and influence seminarians and the new generations of priests in the meaning of the Catholic Jewish dialogue, and the significance of the Jewish people in God's design.

It is important to remember that Cardinal Bernardin, Archbishop of Chicago, mindful of this matter, started a program for Polish Catholic clergy on pluralism, democracy and the Catholic Jewish relations. ADL was involved in the program that started in Chicago and is now implemented in Poland itself.

### Points of Consideration

Ours is a special consideration of the Bishops' document. It is a Jewish reading entailing respect for the other as a person of God, but sensitive to the presentation of Judaism, traces of the teaching of contempt, and to the memory

of past Jewish experiences in Poland, and present anti-Semitism as was evident in the latest elections. The Episcopal document will hopefully become a tool to fight anti-Jewish feelings.

The positive aspects of the document are:

\*Recognition of the centrality of the Catholic Jewish relationship in Catholic life.

The Pastoral Letter sustains this concept constantly with texts from conciliar documents on Jews and Judaism and Pope John Paul's statements on Catholic Jewish relations. The Polish Bishops remind their people of John Paul II's visit to the Roman synagogue on April 13, 1986, where he called Jews "our elder brethren" in faith. The Bishops also stress the Jewish roots of Christianity, "the Church is rooted in the Jewish nation and in Jewish faith, above all by the fact that Jesus Christ in the flesh descends from that nation."

\*The Chosen People: God's Election of Israel

The document stresses the election of Israel by God. It points out that to "this nation God entrusted a special mission of uniting all people in true faith in the one God and the expectation of the Messiah, Savior."

\*Jesus, the Jew

The Bishops point out that "the Church is rooted in the Jewish nation and in Jewish faith above all by the fact that Jesus Christ in the flesh descends from that nation." The Bishops, following Catholic tradition, stress that "when the fullness of time arrived," Jesus, "foretold by the prophets," was born as part of "the expectation of the Messiah, Savior."

The Jewish reader might wonder whether this language is sufficient to combat the ancient teaching of contempt that denied Israel a place in God's design after Jesus' death.

This has been reflected in catechetical texts and teaching. The Pastoral Letter is mindful of this problem and reminds its readership of the Vatican 1985 document on education and Judaism alerting teachers to the danger of the teaching of contempt, prelude to anti-Semitism. The Pastoral Letter recommends that the Vatican document on education receive the "widest dissemination possible, especially among pastors and catechists." The implementation of the Vatican catechetical suggestions on how to teach the New Testament and the presentation of Jews and Judaism would change, eventually, the effects of the teaching of contempt.

It is important to point out that Within Context, a set of guidelines on how to teach the New Testament and the presentation of Jews and Judaism, prepared by a group of theologians with the cooperation of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and ADL, was translated into Polish and used by the Polish Bishops' Conference.

ADL also started in 1987 a program with the Archdiocese of Krakow on Catholic-Jewish relations and religious education. Translations of ADL-National Conference of Catholic Bishops publications focusing on the teaching of the New

Testament and the presentation of Judaism are used in seminaries and catechetical centers. A recent Polish edition of all Vatican II documents on Jews and Judaism, the first one in Poland, acknowledges ADL's contribution to the interfaith dialogue in the country.

#### \*Poland and the Jews

The Bishops indicate that "Poland became a second fatherland to Jews. The majority of Jews living in the world today are descended from areas of the olden and present-day republic (of Poland)." But the document also points out that "unfortunately this very land became in our century a tomb for millions of Jews but not by our will nor by our hand."

The Letter stresses the fact that Poles helped Jews during the war and that "an eloquent testimony to this help given Jews in those years of Hitler's occupation is now seen in the numerous trees dedicated to Poles in that place of national remembrance in Jerusalem called Yad Vashem and the distinguished title 'Righteous Among Nations' conferred upon many Poles."

The Pastoral Letter, however, reminds their readers of Polish anti-Semitism. It says that "notwithstanding numerous heroic instances of help on the part of Christian Poles, there were those who remained indifferent to this inconceivable tragedy. We deplore especially the action of some Catholics who contributed in any way to the death of Jews."

It continues saying that "they remain forever a reproach of conscience also in a social dimension. If even one Christian could have helped, but did not offer a helpful hand to an endangered Jew, or did contribute to his death -- this direct us to ask forgiveness of our Jewish brothers and sisters."

This statement will impact Polish society and call for a national reckoning of the soul concerning past and present hatred towards Jews.

#### \*The Death of Jesus

The Polish Bishops point out that such an accusation relates to the text of Matthew 27:25, "Let his Blood be upon us and our children," imputing Jews for the death of Jesus. For the Polish Bishops the Matthew text is not a reference to Jewish guilt. For them "this statement means to declare: we ourselves accept full responsibility for his death."

The document reminds Catholics of the catechism of the Council of Trent's statement that "Christian sinners are more guilty of Christ's death as compared to some Jews who participated in it; the latter obviously 'did not know what they were doing' while we know it too well."

The Polish Bishops stress that the Matthew text should not be used to charge all Jews with the responsibility for Jesus' death. They quote the text from Nostra Aetate (No. 4), the Vatican II document on Judaism, that says that "even though the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ (John 19:6) neither all Jews indiscriminately in that time, nor Jews today can be charged with the crimes committed during His Passion."

The reference to Jewish authorities in the Vatican text quoted by the Polish document requires a clarification. Who are those Jewish authorities in the First Century? Can we claim as Jewish authorities the leaders of the Sanhedrin, the teachers of the Pharisaic movement, or the Sadducean priests of the temple hierarchy? It is very difficult to point out exactly who were the authorities in Jesus' days, having in consideration that Israel was dominated by the Romans and Jerusalem was under the tight domination of a dictator, Pilate.

It is desirable that in the future these historical aspects should be explained to teachers and clergy in order to understand the historical background of Jesus' life.

But it is very important that the Bishops clarify the Deicide Accusation and remind Catholics that the guilt of Jesus' death should be placed on humanity following the tradition of Catholic theology and the Council of Trent.

#### After 1945

One common accusation in Poland for years was the fact that in 1945 when the Soviet Union liberated Poland from Nazi oppression the Russians imposed a government that followed Moscow's line. Some of these leaders were Jews and they are accused of imposing a policy of vengeance for past events, especially the anti-Semitism of the 1930s. The document stresses that, "we are aware that there survives among our fellow countrymen a memory of the hurts and injustices inflicted by the post-war Communistic regime in which persons of Jewish descent participated. We must admit, however, that the source inspiring their conduct was certainly neither their descent nor religion but rather that Communistic ideology, from which Jews themselves suffered much injustice."

We would have preferred a stronger clarification. It would have been important to refer to Gomulka's administration and the anti-Semitism that spread through the country dismissing Jews from all levels of Polish life. In those days of official anti-Jewish propaganda, however, the then Bishop of Krakow, now Pope John Paul II, welcomed Jewish intellectuals to write for the Diocesan paper. It would have been very important to remind Poland of the Kielce pogrom in 1946 when the Nazis left the country. This horrible event still needs an explanation after the murder of six million Jews, most in Poland.

#### On Anti-Semitism

The document expresses their condemnation of anti-Semitism:

We also grieve sincerely over the pain brought about by instances of anti-Semitism which took place on Polish soil whenever or by whomever. We do so with deep conviction that manifestations of anti-Semitism are incompatible with the spirit of the Gospel and John Paul II recently underscored it when he said, "these (also) remain completely incompatible with the church vision of the dignity of man and God (John Paul II on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II).

As we express sincere regret over all those injustices and wrongs which were inflicted upon Jews, we cannot refrain from mentioning how we regard as unjust and deeply harmful the use by many of a concept of so-called Polish anti-Semitism which joins again and again the issue of concentration camps not with their factual perpetrators, but with Poles in a Poland under German occupation.

We share the Bishops' grief. We know what the Holocaust means to the Jewish people: everybody has lost someone in the Nazi plan of extermination. What was expected in the Bishops' document is the condemnation of anti-Semitism as Pope John Paul II has done or the Vatican II documents expressed years ago.

Pope John Paul II in 1990 reminded the European Bishops of the meaning of the Holocaust. His words could have been part of the Pastoral Letter.

The war itself with its immense cruelty, a cruelty that reached its most brutal expression in the organized extermination of the Jews, as well as of the Gypsies and of other categories of people, revealed to the European the other side of a civilization that he was inclined to consider superior to all others. Certainly, the war also brought out people's readiness to show solidarity and make heroic sacrifices for a just cause. But these admirable aspects of the war experience seemed to be overwhelmed by the immensity of evil and destruction, not only on the material plane but also in the moral order. Perhaps in no other war in history has man been so thoroughly trampled upon in his dignity and fundamental rights. An echo of the humiliation and even desperation caused by such an experience could be heard in the question often repeated after the war: How can we go on living after Auschwitz? Sometimes another question presented itself: Is it still possible to speak about God after Auschwitz?

The Polish Bishops point out that Poland was a place of great suffering for the Jewish citizens and especially Auschwitz, but also a place of suffering for non-Jews. The document states that, "that same land, which was a common Fatherland for Poles and Jews for ages, that mutual shedding of blood, that sea of monstrous suffering, those wrongs we endured -- these ought not divide but unite us. We are drawn to a sense of community by those special sites of oppression, in many instances locations of common graves."

There was human suffering under the Nazis, people became objects of contempt and destruction. I feel, however, that there is a tendency to lessen Jewish torment by stressing the fact that other people were afflicted by the Nazis. Jews were exterminated by law following a state ideology. The others were sad victims of political terror. A Jew was condemned to death by birth, others by the process of war. Is the attempt to diminish or deny the meaning of the Holocaust another form of the teaching of contempt? This is a discussion that has already been started in Poland by Catholics and Jews to which the Bishops' document contributes but which needs to be carried on with even more depth.

### A Concern Over Language

Throughout the document there are references to Poles and Jews, as if they would be two different nations. I would like to recommend to use rather the terms Catholic Poles and Jewish Poles. It would relate to the spirit of the document that stresses that, "we, Christians and Jews, hold a common bond in our faith in one God, creator and Lord of the universe, who created man to his image and likeness." And that "the ethical principles we recognize in common in the Decalogue and which we now lie locked in the commandment of love God and neighbor draw us to each other." This is a hope that many Catholics and Jews share and should become a reality in Poland, despite past experiences, and the world.

### Conclusion

The document is a unique expression of reckoning and friendship. It is not a perfect document; no document is perfect by itself. But it is an official statement that requires the in-depth consideration of Catholics and Jews in Poland as well as in the United States where both communities are large, active and highly creative. The document should be a source of study and reflection for both communities.

It is the hope that the Bishops' Letter will be implemented in Poland in teaching and in preaching, which have been two classical sources of anti-Jewish feeling and contempt for Judaism.

LK:shv

cc: Abraham H. Foxman  
Melvin Salberg  
Ken Jacobson  
Harry Wall  
Rabbi David Rosen

VATICAN LETTER Feb. 8, 1991 (640 words) Background.

## POPE, WALESA: FAVORITE SONS OF POLISH CATHOLICISM

By Agostino Bono

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- As Pope John Paul II and Lech Walesa entered the frescoed Clementine Room of the pope's palace, thunderous applause rang out.

The favorite sons of Polish Catholicism were being greeted by 3,000 of their fellow citizens.

The pope was dressed in white robes and Walesa in a charcoal-gray suit. Yet both men are cut from the same cloth.

Walesa is the president who cannot separate his Polish politics from his Catholicism. The pope is the head of a universal church and cannot separate his Catholicism from his Polish heritage.

Together, they toppled communist rule in Poland and were instrumental in the recent political changes throughout Eastern Europe.

Their brief meeting with fellow Poles took place Feb. 5, after the pope and Walesa had talked extensively in private. It was Walesa's first trip abroad after election as president last December.

Although he and the pope are old friends, this marked their first meeting as political equals: Both are heads of state.

But for Walesa, it was just another meeting between a loyal Catholic and his spiritual leader. As the pope reached out to greet him with an embrace, Walesa dropped to one knee and kissed the pope's ring.

Later, Walesa told journalists that his papal talks "take place on a family level. I am a son of the church."

The pope speaks "with the goodness of a father," he said.

These "are not negotiations in which special interests are at play," he said.

"Ours is a conversation of affection" in which the pope does not give instructions, he added.

Walesa embodies the fusion of Catholicism and politics advocated by the pope. It is a fusion in which the clergy gives the moral and ethical guidelines while the laity forge the practical, political applications.

Walesa is a take-charge guy whose politics spring from Catholic social teachings and constant advice from the Polish clergy. He nourishes his strength with steady doses of spirituality. Pinned to his lapel is an engraving of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Poland's patroness.

A regular churchgoer, Walesa even had a chaplain, Father Franciszek Cybula, accompany him to Italy.

Also accompanying him was his wife, Danuta, mother of his eight children.

More than 95 percent of Poland's 38 million people profess Catholicism.

As the pope noted, Walesa's visit "in a certain sense is the pilgrimage of the president of a Christian nation at the beginning of its history."

For the pope, Catholicism and Polish history are virtually inseparable, and communism was a heavy-handed intruder. The pope fought it from within as a priest, bishop and cardinal, and then from without as head of the church. But the opposition was always non-violent, as were the methods of Walesa.

From the Vatican, the pope constantly stressed that he was a son of Poland who saw issues from the viewpoint of persecuted Catholics. He spared no effort to draw worldwide attention to Poland and its sister Soviet-bloc nations lacking religious, political and civil freedoms.

While cautioning clergy in the rest of the world to avoid partisan politics, he actively supported Solidarity, Walesa's labor union, which mushroomed into a dissident political movement. Without papal support and the international attention that it drew, Solidarity might not have survived the communist repression of the 1980s.

The pope has proposed the new, democratic Poland as the example for other East European nations emerging from communism.

During their meeting the pope and Walesa exchanged symbolic gifts.

The pope reminded Walesa of his Catholicism by giving him a framed, mosaic bust of Christ. Walesa reminded the pope of his Polish heritage by giving him 11 silver medallions engraved with the different coats-of-arms used by Polish governments throughout history.

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ק"ק ביה ישראל

## *The Great Synagogue, Sydney*

FAX TO: DR. IFFEN A. FELDMAN  
 FAX NO.: 0015-1-212 685 8673  
 FROM: RABBI RAYMOND APPLE  
 FAX NO.: 61-2 264 8871  
 DATE: 13 FEBRUARY, 1991  
 NO. OF PAGES: 1

Now that the World Council of Churches Assembly has got into its stride I felt you would appreciate a brief report.

Last week it took considerable effort to get the Assembly secretariat to acknowledge my existence and to prise out of them the necessary accreditation and conference material. Whether this was due to stupidity or inefficiency or even malice I cannot of course tell.

The Assembly is a massive undertaking with some four thousand or so participants. The plenary and other sessions are not all of much Jewish interest, but quite often - even when it is not part of the official agenda - the Gulf War is debated, usually with a simplistic anti-war-at-any-cost approach. For us the problem is the attempt on the part of participants - however illogically - to link the issue with the Palestinians and Israel. As an observer I have hardly any chance to work on a formal basis, but wherever I am in the Assembly buildings people see my Kippah and head and many opportunities for conversation and lobbying emerge.

Often I am discovered by media persons with requests for comments - on Israel, the Palestinians, the war, anti-semitism, etc. - and this, plus my own contacts with the Australian media, gives me a voice.

Amongst the rank and file delegates - especially from Europe, North America and Australasia - we have friends, but the problem is more with the leadership. Naturally I am in touch with the Israeli Ambassador in order to plan our strategy.

Other "official" Jews present are Sir Sigmund Sternberg, who is working towards an Assembly resolution on anti-semitism in eastern Europe, and Rabbi Brian Fox, who is representing the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. Despite Dr. Riegner's representations to Dr. Castro, Rabbi Marshall Meyer and Ms. Karen Broitman are here, and receive official courtesies. Some obvious problems result, and I hope the W.J.C. will continue to urge the W.C.C. to see the unwisdom of unilaterally choosing its own Jewish guests of honour.

I shall fax you a further report later in the conference.

Best wishes,

[end]

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FROM NSW JEWISH BOARD DEPUTIES

TO 038288555

P.91

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TELEX

# New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies

ועד חקהילה היהודית בנ.ס.וו.

Suite 3, 2nd Floor, 140 DARLINGHURST ROAD, DARLINGHURST, N.S.W. 2010, AUSTRALIA

President  
MR GERRY LEVY

Dr. Feldman  
Synagogue Council  
Jenny

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

PAGES PLUS COVER SHEET

ATTENTION: ISI LEIBLER

FAX NO.: 03-8288555

TIME: 12.30

DATE: February 21, 1991

FROM: GERRY LEVY

OUR FAX NO.: 02 331-4712

Dear Isi,

Herewith for your information is a draft press release regarding the recently concluded World Council of Churches Assembly as prepared by Rabbis Apple and Fox in consultation with Rabbi Levi.

If-deemed necessary, it may be released on behalf of the E.C.A.J., Z.P.A., the Orthodox and Liberal Rabbinate.

Gerry Levy

Encl.

The Jewish Community of Australia is appalled at the public statements issued from the 7th Assembly of the World Council of Churches with regards to Israel, The Gulf War and the Palestinians.

While the WCC's stated commitment to peace was noted with some satisfaction, the Jewish Community is aghast that the onus of action for peace was not placed on Iraq, where it belongs, but on the United Nations and, surprisingly, non-combatant Israel.

Once again the victim of unprovoked aggression - Israel - is being blamed for the aggression, whereas Israel and not the Palestinians has suffered horrendous damage at the hands of the Iraqis.

One could be excused for concluding that the WCC statement was not written by a world religious body believing in the spiritual worth of every human being, but by apologists for the repressive regimes in Iraq and within the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

The Jewish community is outraged at the WCC's abandonment of its responsibility to come to terms with all human suffering - Christian, Moslem and Jewish. Are we once again seeing Christian indifference to Jewish (and Moslem) suffering as we have experienced for countless centuries?

Not one word in the WCC statement recognizes that Saddam Hussein is a cruel and cynical dictator. Not one word is sensitive to the fact that Israel is the only democratic state in a sea of repressive regimes.

Prior to the WCC conference, the Executive Secretary of the WCC, Emilio Castro, expressed his deep concern at the Iraqi bombing of Israeli civilians. It is most surprising that by the time the Assembly concluded this fact was conveniently forgotten. The only allusion to Mr Emilio's concern was the statement: "Shortly after the bombing of Kuwait and Iraq began, they did attack Israel with missiles, some of which fell on Palestinian areas". That 4000 Israeli homes were destroyed is ignored. That scores of Israelis were wounded is ignored. That several Israelis were killed is also ignored. That not one Palestinian was either wounded or killed is a fact that has been lost by the WCC in its scramble to call for Palestinian rights and Israeli concessions.

We, the leadership of the Australian Jewish community, call on the WCC to:

1. Use its good offices to
  - exercise all constructive means to bring about a peaceful resolution to the Gulf conflict and the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.
2. Reject any attempts to equate discussions of the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait - on which the WCC should insist - with other Mid-Eastern problems - a linkage WCC should see as dangerous and destructive.
3. Underline the need for a peaceful resolution of the conflict by reducing the offensive military capacity of Iraq and the need for the elimination of the arsenal and production facilities for nuclear, chemical and biological warfare.
4. Demand a renunciation of belligerence of the Arab states towards Israel.

We believe that this world requires a strong moral voice at this time. We are gravely disappointed that the WCC has not been such a voice.

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ISSUES COMMITTEE

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Amendments and suggestions for changes by delegates should be given in writing to one of the Officers of the Public Issues Committee or to the CCIA office in John Dedman Building, Room G 42, before 12 noon on Saturday 16 February

DRAFT STATEMENT ON THE GULF WAR, THE MIDDLE EAST  
AND THE THREAT TO WORLD PEACE

1. As we gather in the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches (Canberra, February 1991) a war of terrible proportions are being waged in the Gulf. Kuwait, already ravaged by Iraqi invading forces, and Iraq is being bombarded with unprecedented intensity. Hour by hour this war claims a mounting toll of victims, combatants and non-combatants alike, our own sisters and brothers. It is a war of ominous and unforeseeable dimensions which threatens the destruction of the land and people it seeks to liberate. Day by day the war escalates, drawing in more and more nations of the Gulf, the Middle East, and other parts of the world. It squanders the resources of rich and poor countries alike, and no end is in sight.

2. Around the world intensive efforts were made to avoid this war. Urgent appeals were made by the leaders of several nations not to abandon non-violent efforts to cause Iraq to withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait and resolve its differences with its neighbour through negotiation. The churches pleaded with the leaders of the nations not to aggravate further the long-standing conflict in the Middle East which time and again has brought war and terror to the region, causing Israel to fear for its existence, leading to the continuing occupation of portions of Lebanon and Cyprus, and inflicting suffering upon the Palestinian people who have been deprived of their rights to self-determination and national dignity.

3. War promises no lasting solution for the festering wounds of the Middle East, no just, peaceful and durable regional or world order, but rather continued insecurity, pain and conflict.

4. It is never too late to seek peace and a comprehensive settlement. So once again, together, our hearts cry out to the leaders of the nations, especially to those of Iraq and of the coalition forces led by the United States of America: Cease the bombing! Still the missiles! Stop the fighting! Restrain your armies! Negotiate! Trust in the promise of peace!

Peacemaking, the believers' calling

5. We confess that many of us and our churches too have been confused, timid and unfaithful in the face of the present crisis and the daunting complexity of the decades-long problems confronting the Middle East. We have failed to disassociate ourselves from the institutions of militarism which view war either as a solution to human conflicts or as a necessary evil, or to avoid complicity with the powers who trust more in armed might than in the rule of law or the ability of the human spirit to achieve justice by peaceful means.

6. During this Assembly we have sought to open our hearts and minds to one another and to the Holy Spirit, and we have renewed our resolve to be peacemakers, aware of the costs of being disciples of the Prince of Peace.

7. The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches (Amsterdam, 1948) was delayed by a looming world war, and every subsequent Assembly has been confronted with the prospect or reality of war. Yet consistently and persistently the World Council of Churches has sought lasting peace through seeking to eliminate injustices which give rise to war, to create and strengthen institutions capable of safeguarding international peace and security, and in the event of war, to aid the victims.

8. The peace we seek, as the Vancouver Assembly (1983) reminded the churches, "is not just the absence of war. Peace requires a new international order based on justice for and within all the nations, and respect for the God-given humanity and dignity of every person. Peace is, as the Prophet Isaiah has taught us, the effect of righteousness."

9. We trust in the knowledge that the world belongs to God, not the powers of this world, and we take courage from God's promise of peace, righteousness and justice which was embodied in Jesus Christ and made present among us through the work of the Holy Spirit. With God's help, peace is possible even now.

The Churches' advocacy for a just peace in the Gulf and the Middle East

10. The World Council of Churches has repeatedly advocated respect for international law and a peaceful resolution of this conflict. It has:

- a. condemned Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait;
- b. welcomed the Security Council's demand that Iraq withdraw immediately and unconditionally from Kuwait and its appeal to Iraq and Kuwait to initiate intensive negotiations for the resolution of their differences;
- c. supported the application of strict sanctions banning all commercial dealings and trade with Iraq, with the exception of medical supplies and foodstuffs in humanitarian circumstances, as a means to secure compliance and to restore the authority of the legitimate Government of Kuwait;
- d. called upon the Security Council to enforce with equal vigour its earlier resolutions on the territorial integrity of Lebanon, the division of Cyprus, Israel's withdrawal from the territories it occupied in 1967, and the right of every State in the area, including Israel, to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;
- e. appealed for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the region and the exploration of all avenues for negotiations to defuse the crisis and obtain a peaceful settlement;
- f. declared morally unacceptable the holding of foreign nationals in Iraq and Kuwait, appealed to the Iraqi government to facilitate the departure of all foreign nationals desiring to do so, and appealed for strict application of international norms for the protection of refugees.

11. Around the world, member churches and regional ecumenical bodies took the lead in their own nations to press for peace along these same lines.

- a. The Middle East Council of Churches sought a regional solution to the conflict, at the same time expressing hope for a comprehensive, just resolution for all the conflicts and occupations in the region in order to bring harmony and peace among Muslims, Christians and Jews in the region. It contributed significantly to assisting the refugees and other victims of the conflict.
- b. The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA appealed repeatedly to the US Administration and Congress not to abandon sanctions as a means to obtain an end to the occupation of Kuwait, warning against the rapidly escalating military response of the US government to the crisis and the apparently open-ended nature of US

military involvement in the region. A delegation of US church leaders travelled to Iraq and other states of the region in an expression of ecumenical concern and solidarity.

- c. The Canadian Council of Churches issued similar appeals to its own government and also sent a delegation to the region, meeting with churches and leaders of other religious faiths.
- d. The Conference of European Churches and the National Councils of Churches in Europe warned against acceptance of the inevitability of war, recalling the conviction of the European churches, expressed at the Basel European Ecumenical Assembly in 1989, that war is against the will of God and that everything should be done to further peaceful resolution of conflicts.
- e. Churches in Asia, Africa, Latin American, the Caribbean and the Pacific drew attention to the grave effects of the crisis on their nations and cautioned governments against military or economic support for efforts to achieve a military solution.

#### The widening effects of the conflict in the Middle East

12. In the face of impending war with the massive coalition forces facing it in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the region, Iraq warned that it would strike Israel and issued appeals to Arabs and Muslims to support their cause. Shortly after the bombing of Kuwait and Iraq began, they did attack Israel with missiles, some of which fell in Palestinian areas. Though Israel has thus far not retaliated directly, it has imposed a punitive blanket curfew in the Occupied Territories further exacerbating the desperate plight of Palestinians and heightening tensions in the whole region.

13. Lebanon's hard-won, fragile peace was also disrupted as missiles were launched on Israel from its territory and Israel retaliated with a renewal of heavy punitive bombing raids, preventing the Lebanese Government and its Army from establishing its authority over this strife-torn land.

14. Smouldering fires of tension throughout the region have been fanned as countries from the northern limits of the Middle East to the Horn of Africa - Turkey, Iran, Jordan, Sudan and others - have been drawn into the sphere of confrontation. Indeed, the whole of the region armed with huge arsenals of the most modern weaponry is a powder-keg which risks explosion. And the presence of chemical, biological and nuclear weaponry in and around the region threatens a conflagration which could rapidly escape the confines of the Gulf.

15. All wars have serious side effects, but as shown by the oil spillage which has already occurred in the Gulf, and estimates of the consequences for the global warming of the earth's atmosphere should the oilfields of Kuwait, Iraq and Saudi Arabia be set ablaze, the potential for widespread, even global ecological destruction from this war is very great.

#### The Global implications of the war

16. In fact, the war already has nearly global impact. Among its chief victims have been the poor nations of the world, many of whom are already beset by internal conflict and massive foreign debt.

17. The poor nations were in fact among the first to suffer. Workers in the Middle East from countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Philippines, India and Korea were either trapped in war zones or forced to flee under excruciating circumstances. In addition to this human tragedy is added the drain on national economies, some of whom depended heavily on remittances from their

18. The economies of much of the poor world have been dealt yet another massive blow as major markets for their primary exports have been eliminated, prices for fuels and petroleum products and for basic foodstuffs like rice and grain have skyrocketed, and the cost of other essential imports has been made prohibitive.

19. The war has fuelled the flames of religious, ethnic and regional conflicts in many countries, especially in Asia, seriously destabilizing some and giving rise to violent conflicts in others.

20. The obsession of the global mass media, of governments and of international institutions with the war in the Gulf has drawn attention away from efforts to resolve other conflicts raging in the world or massive human tragedy. It is estimated, for example, that some 20 million people are on the brink of starvation and death in the African countries of Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola, Mozambique and Liberia. Much of the world has turned a deaf ear to their cries for help.

The United Nations, the Gulf War, and the "New World Order"

21. The World Council of Churches promoted the formation of the United Nations and through representatives of the member churches it was present when the Charter was adopted. Since the Amsterdam Assembly (1948) it has given its full support to the UN, and through its Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, a leading non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, the WCC has given encouragement to the UN and its related agencies.

22. The achievements of the United Nations over the years have been notable in many fields. Even during the past decade of greatest neglect by the great powers, it continued to lay the groundwork for a role in the peaceful resolution of international conflicts. Much of this work came to fruition after 1985 when the UN was instrumental in negotiating an end to the war in Afghanistan, achieving a settlement of the long-standing dispute over Namibia and guiding it to independence, through the application of comprehensive sanctions drawing closer the end of apartheid in South Africa, and playing new roles in promoting the settlement of regional conflicts in areas like Central America.

23. However, the words of the Bishop of Chichester at the First Assembly remain pertinent. "International law," he said, "clearly requires international institutions for its effectiveness. These institutions, if they are to command respect and obedience of nations, must come to grips with international problems on their own merits and not primarily in the light of national interests... The United Nations was designed to promote friendly relations among the nations. Its purposes in these respects deserve the support of Christians. But unless the nations surrender a greater measure of national sovereignty in the interest of the common good, they will be tempted to have recourse to war in order to enforce their claims."

24. The churches and public opinion in much of the world supported the initial actions of the UN Security Council in condemning the invasion of Kuwait and the application of sanctions to enforce its call for Iraq's withdrawal from this occupied country. They would very much have preferred that the collective will of the United Nations had been responsible for the implementation of UN decisions and the exercise of UN leadership. Unfortunately member nations have not yet empowered the UN for such a role.

25. By adopting Security Council resolution 678, which authorized "member states...to use all necessary means to implement previous resolutions," the UN placed itself in danger of being blamed for being unduly dependent upon a powerful nation or group of nations and for appearing to authorize a war which is not in the interests of an international order of peace based on law.

26. The lessons learned from this experience and the end of the domination of world politics by a balance between the two superpowers make the question of how major international decisions are made one of pressing urgency in an emerging new world order. No one government or group of governments should either take or be left to take primary responsibility for the resolution of major conflicts.

27. It would be an unacceptable perception indeed if the Security Council and especially the Secretary-General were for some reason unable to act independently and in the true spirit of the UN Charter. The community of nations can afford no longer such loss of trust. For the sake of world peace, for the sake of the rule of law, for the sake of the authority of the United Nations, it is imperative that its position as guarantor of a comprehensive international peace order be strengthened.

28. It is imperative, for the sake of world peace, the rule of law, and the restoration of the authority of the United Nations that the parties to the Gulf war cease promptly the conflict and invest efforts in the pursuit of a negotiated peace.

#### The Impact of Racism

29. The war in the Gulf reveals in tragic ways the impact of racism on both the international and domestic policies of the nations. Indigenous peoples have often been the first to suffer from the shift of government priorities from meeting social needs to paying for their involvement in the war. And racial and ethnic minorities frequently bear a disproportionate burden for bearing arms in the field of battle. The United States Department of Defense estimates, for example, that 25% of US troops deployed in the Gulf (and 29% of ground forces and 55% of women in uniform) are black. Yet African-Americans comprise slightly more than 11% of the civilian population over the age of 16. Corresponding figures for other racial or ethnic minority groups are not readily available, but it is safe to assume that Native Americans and persons of Hispanic background are similarly over-represented in the fighting forces.

30. Concern rises in racial/ethnic communities in the United States that a whole generation of black, Hispanic and Native American youth is endangered by intense, endemic poverty, inadequate health care, ever-rising incidence of AIDS, and the impact of drugs and drug-related crime. Now, many of those who joined the military in search of education, stable employment and a way out of these dangers are at peril in the Gulf.

31. Reports have also been received of a shocking international rise in discrimination against persons of Arab nationality, background or appearance. In the name of "national security" and "prevention of terrorism," many are subjected to systematic humiliation, harassment, preventive detention, and open threat of physical harm by both state authorities and private groups in many nations around the world.

#### The situation and role of women

32. This particular conflict, as well as the longstanding institution of war and militarism that feeds it, are created, controlled, and perpetuated by men. Some women may at times support military conflicts and increasingly in some places, women participate as soldiers. In the rare circumstances when women lead governments some promote policies leading to war. Most women and children, however, experience the victimization of war and militarism. They become refugees, the objects of sexual violence by occupation forces, and become trapped as civilians in the midst of violence. Women and children are also the majority of those deprived of basic necessities when societal resources are diverted from institutions that enhance life to those that

little meaningful participation, women are often at the heart of movements for peace with justice, and other activities that promote creative non-violent resolution of conflict. Women have taken the lead in urging that adversaries be recognized as full human beings and not objectified in enemy images.

#### The Impact on Youth

33. Modern warfare takes a particularly terrible toll on youth and children, and there are indications that among the victims both of the occupation of Kuwait and of the bombing of Iraq in retaliation are infants and children. Young people make up the bulk of those exposed in war to conflict as parts of the armed forces... [Include statement by the youth]

#### Appeals and Affirmations

34. Out of this deep human concern for all those who are victimized by this war, the poor, the racially oppressed, women, youth, civilian victims, and those who out of loyalty or due to circumstance are engaged in conflict as members of the armed forces; out of our concern for justice, peace and the integrity of creation; and as an expression of our hope for a truly just, peaceful, democratic, participatory world order and institutions able to govern and sustain it, we cry out: Stop the war! Pursue the way of peace!

#### 35. To the churches

- a. We urge you to be unflinching in your prayer and pastoral care for all those caught up in or victimized by this tragic war on all sides, including the leaders of the nations, those involved in the fighting, and the families and friends who grieve the separation or loss of their loved ones.
- b. We reiterate the appeal of the Sixth Assembly: "The churches today are called to confess anew their faith, and to repent for the times when Christians have remained silent in the face of injustice or threats to peace. The biblical vision of peace with justice for all, of wholeness, of unity for all God's people is not one of several options for the followers of Christ. It is an imperative in our time.

#### 36. To the United Nations

- a. We urge you to reassert your role as peacemaker, peacekeeper, conciliator and negotiator.
- b. We urge you to act decisively now to stop the war and to return to the strict application of non-violent sanctions without deadlines as a proven means of gaining the compliance of Iraq, whose actions are in violation of international law and have been widely condemned by the nations.
- c. We urge you to be consistent in your determination to ensure the compliance of the nations with United Nations resolutions, especially those others calling for an end to illegal occupation of territory in the region of the Middle East: Lebanon, Cyprus and the territories occupied by Israel in 1967.
- d. We urge you to reconvene the Security Council on an emergency basis to map a new course for peaceful negotiation of the dispute between Iraq and Kuwait and of the other outstanding conflicts in the region, and to move with all due speed to the convening of an International Conference on Peace, Security and Cooperation in the Middle East, an instrument of the United Nations.

- d. We call upon all nations to cooperate with the United Nations in convening an International Conference on Peace, Security and Cooperation in the Middle East as a means of obtaining a comprehensive settlement of the inter-related disputes in this region which pose a present threat to world peace and security.
- e. We call upon all external powers to withdraw all forces from the Middle East - except those required to perform peace-keeping roles under UN command - as a means to help restore a climate propitious for the pursuit of a lasting settlement of the regions' conflicts.

38. To peoples of other faiths

In the presence of the representatives of other faiths who have been our guests during this Assembly, we commit ourselves to refuse to be separated from brothers and sisters of other faiths as a result of this war, and to reject especially any effort to divide Christians, Muslims and Jews whose faiths originated in the Middle East, and to join with them in prayers and common endeavours for peace in anticipation of the day when all may live together in peace and mutual respect.

39. Acknowledging that God is in control, and in order to be faithful to that which we say here, we pray:

Come, Holy Spirit  
transform our lives,  
lift and sustain us in this day.  
Give wisdom and faith  
that we may know  
the great hope to which we are called.  
Come, Holy Spirit,  
renew the whole creation.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:  
STRAINS OF ANTI-SEMITIC RHETORIC  
CREEPING INTO ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT**  
By Aliza Marcus

NEW YORK, Feb. 14 (JTA) -- When Alisa Solomon, a Jewish writer who is opposed to the U.S.-led war against Iraq, decided to attend last month's peace rally in Washington, she was not altogether surprised to find anti-Semitic statements mixed with anti-war rhetoric.

"What I've felt (in the anti-war movement) is a kind of Israel bashing which is different from regular criticism," said the 34-year-old, who contributes to the weekly Village Voice.

"It is a kind of gleeful bashing that starts to define the U.S. role in the war as (one) for Israel, which translates into a war for the Jews," she added. "It's easy enough to blame the U.S.; why blame Israel?"

As the anti-war movement continues to grow in strength, many of those within and outside the movement are becoming aware of an anti-Semitic strain that has entered some of the anti-war critiques.

At the Jan. 26 anti-war rally Solomon attended, amid the tens of thousands of people marching under the banner of the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, were placards proclaiming, "No American Blood for Israel," according to Solomon and others there.

"We would look to the peace movement to make a strong statement about anti-Semitism, and to date we haven't heard that," said Rebecca Suber, field director for the Shalom Center, a Jewish activist group involved in peace issues.

Many peace activists -- both Jewish and gentile -- have been among the most vocal critics of Israeli government policy over the past few years. But now they are finding an increasingly blurred line between legitimate criticism and scapegoating.

**Israel Blamed For War**

Much of the rhetoric blames Israel for the war by saying it could have been avoided if Israel had accepted Iraq's purported offer to withdraw from Kuwait in exchange for an international peace conference on the Middle East.

But others say Saddam Hussein's offer was a spurious one, made almost two weeks after his Aug. 2 invasion, and they question whether the former view hides an anti-Semitic perspective.

The anti-war movement has also brought together some seemingly unlikely partners -- leftists and extreme rightists -- who share a similar anti-war perspective and, some peace activists fear, a similar anti-Jewish agenda.

"The radical right and left have for many years focused on Jews and/or Israel and Zionism for scapegoating on many issues, and now they have found their voice on the war issue on many of the same lines," said Alan Schwartz, director of research for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which monitors anti-Semitism.

The Lyndon LaRouche organization, described by critics as a fascist political movement with neo-Nazi touches, has tried to work within the anti-war movement in 30 cities countrywide, according to Chip Berlet of Political Research Associates, an organization based in Cambridge, Mass., that monitors extremist groups.

LaRouchians, as they are known, along with Liberty Lobby, another group trying to infiltrate the peace movement, have a strong anti-Semitic

component, one which is prominent within their anti-war rhetoric.

Most peace organizers refuse to work with these groups, but members may still try to hand out leaflets at rallies or join the anti-war coalition under different names, Berlet said.

He characterizes the Liberty Lobby's platform as espousing a neo-Nazi, racist world view.

**Anti-Jewish Conspiracies**

An anti-war flyer distributed on the streets of New York by the Liberty Lobby blames the war on "America's oil policy, (which) makes international manipulators rich, (and) the Israeli lobby, which controls Congress, wants war to eliminate the threat Iraq poses to Israeli dominance in the Mideast."

In a recent edition of its newspaper, Spotlight, an article titled "Volunteers Flock to Iraq to Help Fight U.S., Israel" favorably compared this with "the building of Waffen SS legions in Europe during World War II," according to a memo for peace groups put out by Berlet's monitoring organization.

LaRouche's newspaper, the New Federalist, formerly New Solidarity, is well known for its conspiracy theories. Articles combine real issues and events with wild hypothesizing that is based in racism and anti-Semitism.

"Somewhere in there is a Jewish banking theory waiting to jump out," said Berlet. "Both LaRouche and Liberty Lobby put Jews up there as the conspiracy, both have a tendency to use code words and both have a soft spot for fascism."

One of the major peace movements, the Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East, has allowed members of extremist anti-Semitic groups, such as the LaRouche organization and Liberty Lobby, to speak on its behalf.

The coalition, which sponsored its own Washington march on Jan. 19, is headed by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who recently returned from a fact-finding mission to Baghdad. Clark said Monday that U.S. bombing missions had killed 6,000 to 7,000 Iraqi civilians, and that the United States was guilty of war crimes.

Organizers within the coalition heatedly deny these extremist groups play any role in it. But Monica Moorehead, a spokesperson for the coalition, acknowledged that Dick Gregory, a comedian with links to Liberty Lobby, acted as the coalition's spokesman for the Jan. 19 march.

**Disavowal Sought From Ramsey Clark**

The Rev. James Bevel, a former prominent civil rights activist who now writes a column for the LaRouche paper, spoke with Ramsey Clark at a Jan. 4 coalition news conference broadcast on cable television, according to Frank Bell, a spokesman for the LaRouche organization.

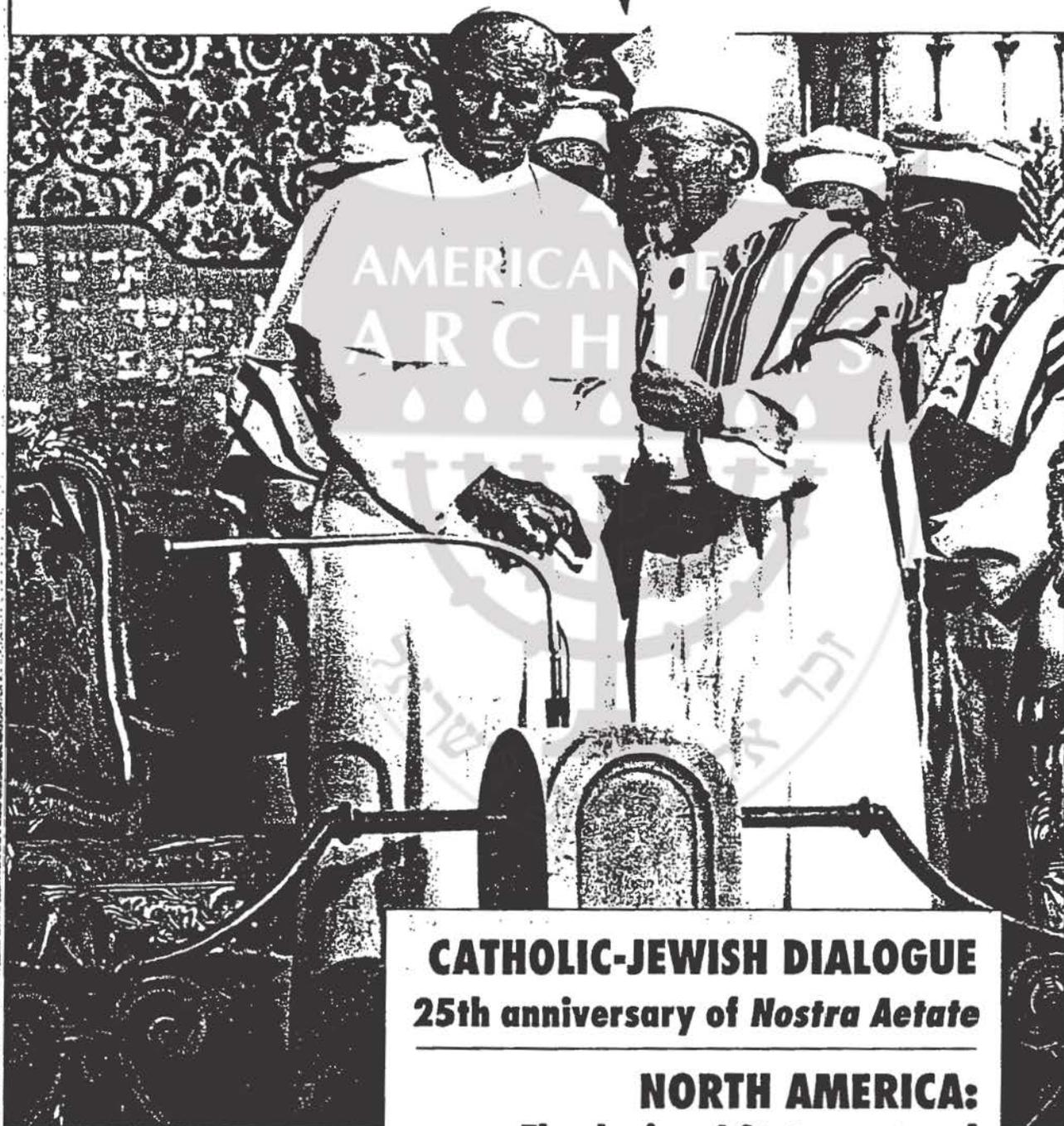
An assistant to Clark, Bob Schwartz, who also serves on the coalition's administrative committee, said he thought Bevel was the relative of a LaRouche supporter.

Schwartz said the coalition would not tolerate LaRouchians in its organization, although he said he did realize LaRouchians were using Clark's name in their publications.

Berlet and others would like to see Clark make a public statement disassociating himself from the LaRouchians who have spoken out on behalf of the coalition. They question why Clark has allowed people associated with extremist groups to appear as speakers on behalf of the coalition.

# CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL

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# EDITORIAL

## Dialogues and 'Allergies'

Cover-photo: John Paul II at the Synagogue of Rome with Rabbi Toaff  
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BAYARD PRESSE

This issue contains several different examples of what might generally be described as 'dialogue.' The best example is in the Dossier section, where twenty-five years of Catholic-Jewish dialogue are reviewed. Over and above the interest of these texts in terms of better understanding of faith, of scripture, of liturgy through shared exploration of a common heritage, this dossier offers a powerful, encouraging and realistic example of what true dialogue involves.

In true dialogue, there are two quite clearly distinct parties, who commit themselves to long-term exchange of ideas; in the course of which, both parties come to discover not just what they do have in common, but what they ought to have in common.

A further mark of true dialogue is the willingness of both parties to take practical steps to implement whatever actions may be necessary to reach and secure perceived common ground. This extension of verbal agreement into concrete practice is an important aspect of dialogue: readers will note a gap in the Catholic-Jewish dialogue between 1985 and 1990, because certain actions by the Vatican and the Church were perceived by the Jewish representatives as inconsistent with what was being expressed verbally.

Equally, though, true dialogue, does not expect to reach total agreement on everything: this would destroy the individuality of the participants, would water down their mutual beliefs into some kind of compromise. Dialogue means respecting and honouring legitimate differences, it means reaching complete agreement on some things, and an appropriate level of consensus on many others. But the quality most required in dialogue is the ability to listen.

The CTSA Statement represents the first step in a move toward a dialogue. If the Vatican can accept it as the beginning of a process, and would extend the same spirit of mutual recognition, respect and appreciation to the North American theologians as to the Jews — with all the hard work that this implies — it would be a major contribution to the constant renewal to which Vatican II committed the Church.

Archbishop Quinn of San Francisco quotes Rahner's analogy of an "anti-Roman allergy." But we should not forget that an allergy is a natural defense mechanism, a warning that a contact with something, through touch or eating, is harmful. A solicitous mother will not oblige her children to eat something to which they are allergic; of course, this does not mean that the particular something has to be eliminated from the family's diet — but it makes the task of preparing meals more onerous. In terms of theological diet, it becomes more cumbersome to accommodate 'allergies,' not something that a bureaucracy is best suited to understand nor administer. However, this is what inculturation, much vaunted by the Vatican, really implies: an openness to genuine differences in culture and in thought patterns, and an effort to accommodate them, without jeopardizing the unity of faith of the Church. That is what we mean when we dare to state in the Creed that the Church is 'Catholic' (which Canon Reardon unpacks in a sensitive but probing contribution in our dialogue section).

It is no accident that our publication has this same essential adjective 'Catholic' in its title: we see our role as being a tool of dialogue, allowing the various local churches throughout the world to exchange their insights, their concerns, and yes, their 'allergies' — as well as how they remedy them!

P. GALLAY

ASSUMPTIONIST



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# 25 YEARS AFTER 'NOSTRA AETATE'

**T**he twenty-fifth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, Vatican II's Declaration on the Church's Relations with non-Christian Religions (28 Oct 1965) provides a natural opportunity for reviewing the progress of Catholic-Jewish dialogue.

Our dossier opens with:

▶ 1. 'Our common spiritual heritage' — the key paragraph 4 from *Nostra Aetate* which opened up what were to be twenty-five years of Catholic-Jewish dialogue.

Since one of the fruits of this dialogue was the setting up of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee. The Dossier offers two key texts from their most recent meeting in Prague, 3-6 Sept 1990:

▶ 2. 'Teshuvah': The address by Archbishop Edward I. Cassidy, representing the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews;

▶ 3. 'Mutual Esteem and Reciprocal Caring': The Prague Statement on Declaration issued by the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee.

In December 1990, various meetings and lectures were organized at the Vatican and at the Lateran University to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*. From these, the Dossier presents:

▶ 4. 'Respect, Understanding and Esteem' by Seymour D. Reich;

▶ 5. 'The Future of Catholic-Jewish Relations' by Rabbi Jack Bemporad.



JASMIN/GAMMA

40th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz (Jan 1985)

## 1. Our Common Spiritual Heritage

*Nostra Aetate* (paragraph 4) ▪

**S**ounding the depths of the mystery which is the Church, this sacred Council remembers the spiritual ties which link the people of the New Covenant to the stock of Abraham.

The Church of Christ acknowledges that in God's plan of salvation the beginning of her

faith and election is to be found in the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets. She professes that all Christ's faithful, who as people of faith are descendants of Abraham (cf. Gal 3:7), are included in the same patriarch's call and that the salvation of the Church is mystically prefig-

• English translation by Father Killian, O.C.S.O., as in Vatican II: the conciliar and post-conciliar documents Volume 1, edited by Austin Flannery; adapted to inclusive language by CI. Title by CI.



ured in the exodus of God's chosen people from the land of bondage. On this account the Church cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Old Testament by way of that people with whom God in his inexpressible mercy established the ancient covenant. Nor can she forget that she draws nourishment from that good olive tree onto which the wild olive branches of the Gentiles have been grafted (cf. Rom 11:17-24). The Church believes that Christ who is our peace has through his cross reconciled Jews and Gentiles and made them one in himself (cf. Eph 2:14-16).

## IMPLEMENTING *NOSTRA AETATE*

### Guidelines on implementing 'Nostra Aetate'

In December 1974 the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews published a short set of Guidelines.

"... This seems the right moment to propose some concrete suggestions born of experience, hoping that they will help to bring into actual existence in the life of the Church the intentions expressed in *Nostra Aetate*. ... On the practical level in particular, Christians must strive to acquire a better knowledge of the basic components of the religious tradition of Judaism; they must strive to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience. ...

We simply propose some first practical applications in different essential areas of the Church's life, with a view to launching or developing sound relations between Catholics and their Jewish brothers and sisters.

#### 1. Dialogue

... While it is true that a widespread air of suspicion, inspired by an unfortunate past, is still dominant in this particular area, Christians, for their part, will be able to see to what extent the responsibility is theirs and deduce practical conclusions for the future. ... In addition to friendly talks, competent people will be encouraged to meet and to study together the many problems deriving from the fundamental convictions of Judaism and Christianity. In order not to hurt (even involuntarily) those taking part, it will be vital to guarantee, not only tact, but great openness of spirit and diffidence with respect to one's own prejudices.

#### 2. Liturgy

... To improve Jewish-Christian relations, it is important to take cognizance of those common elements of the liturgical life (formulas, feasts, rites, etc.) in which the Bible holds an essential place.

... When commenting on biblical texts, emphasis will be laid on the continuity of our faith with that of the earlier Covenant, in the perspective of the promises, without minimizing those elements of Christianity which are original. ... care will be taken to see that homilies based on liturgical readings will not distort their meaning, especially when it is a question of passages which seem to show the Jewish people as such in an unfavourable light.

#### 3. Teaching and education

... Among sources of information, special attention should be paid to the following: catechisms and religious textbooks; history books; the mass media. Effective use of these means presupposes the thorough formation of instructors and educators in training schools, seminaries and universities. Research into problems bearing on Judaism and Jewish-Christian relations will be encouraged among specialists, particularly in the fields of exegesis, theology, history and sociology. ... Wherever possible, chairs of Jewish studies will be created, and collaboration with Jewish scholars encouraged.

#### 4. Joint social action

... Love of the same God must show itself in effective action for the good of all humanity. In the spirit of the prophets, Jews and Christians will work willingly together, seeking social justice and peace at every level — local, national and international.

#### Conclusion

... Bishops will know what best to do on the pastoral level, within the general disciplinary framework of the Church and in line with the common teaching of her magisterium. For example, they will create some suitable commissions or secretariats on a national or regional level, or appoint some competent person to promote the implementation of the conciliar directives and the suggestions made above.

### Preaching and teaching guidelines

In 1985, a further set of guidelines was published, dealing specifically with this area: 'Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church.'

Likewise, the Church keeps ever before her mind the words of the apostle Paul about the Jews: "Israelites, ... they were adopted as children, they were given the glory and the covenants; the Law and the ritual were drawn up for them, and the promises were made to them. They are descended from the patriarchs and from their flesh and blood came Christ (Rom 9:4-5 [JB]), the son of the virgin Mary. She is mindful, moreover, that the apostles, the pillars on which the Church stands, are of Jewish descent, as are many of those early disciples who proclaimed the Gospel of Christ to the world.

As holy Scripture testifies, Jerusalem did not recognize God's moment when it came (cf. Lk 19:42). Jews for the most part did not accept the Gospel; on the contrary, many opposed the spreading of it (cf. Rom 11:28). Even so, the apostle Paul maintains that the Jews remain very dear to God, for the sake of the patriarchs: since God does not take back the gifts he bestows or the choice he made (cf. Rom 11:29; *Lumen Gentium*, 20). Together with the prophets and that same apostle, the Church awaits the day, known to God alone, when a people will call on God with one voice and "serve him shoulder to shoulder" (Zeph 3:9; cf. Is 66:23; Ps 65:4; Rom 11:11-32).

Since Christians and Jews have such a common spiritual heritage, this sacred Council wishes to encourage and further mutual understanding and appreciation. This can be obtained, especially, by way of biblical and theological enquiry and through friendly discussions.

Even though the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ (cf. Jn 19:6), neither all Jews in that time, nor Jews today, can be charged with the crimes committed during his passion. It is true that the Church is the new people of God, yet the Jews should not be spoken of as rejected or accursed as if this followed from holy Scripture. Consequently, all must take care, lest in catechizing or in preaching the Word of God, they teach anything which is not in accord with the truth of the Gospel message or the spirit of Christ.

Indeed, the Church reproves every form of persecution against whomsoever it may be directed. Remembering, then, her common heritage with the Jews and moved not by any political consideration, but solely by the religious motivation of Christian charity, she deplores all hatreds, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism leveled at any time or from any source against the Jews.

The Church always held and continues to hold that Christ out of infinite love freely underwent suffering and death because of the sins of all, so that all might attain salvation. It is the duty of the Church, therefore, in her preaching to proclaim the cross of Christ as the sign of God's universal love and the source of all grace.



## 2. 'Teshuvah'

*Address to the 1990 ILC Prague Meeting by Archbishop Edward I. Cassidy* ■

1. It is indeed a great joy for me to be here with you all today and to have the pleasure of extending to you the greeting of the prophet Isaiah: *Shalom! Mir! Pokoy!* (Isaiah 52:7). We have looked forward over a rather lengthy period to this day; with the psalmist we can say: "this is the day made memorable by God, what immense joy it is for us!" (1).

Our joy at being here together, however, does not in any way diminish our grief and anxiety over the matters that will be the object of our reflections and discussions during these days. The greeting from Isaiah which I have just extended to you was an expression of joy and consolation, but it was intimately associated with a great disaster for Israel: the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile.

Fifty years after the events of 1940 and the subsequent years of the Second World War, it seems appropriate to recall this biblical experience of desolation as we begin this thirteenth session of the International Liaison Committee, during which utmost in our thoughts will be the *Shoah*, which has been described by the late Abraham Joshua Heschel as the "altar of Satan on which millions of human lives were exterminated to evil's greater glory" (2).

2. The *Shoah* has raised important questions for our faith as Christian and Jews, as already illustrated in the conclusions of our last meeting in Rome, in October 1985 (3). We share a common perspective based upon the Sacred Scriptures, according to which the events of history are to be seen as part of God's saving plan for the world. Pope John Paul II reflected on this in his speech to the Jewish community in Miami, Florida, on 11 September 1987:

"Considering history in the light of the principles of faith in God, we must also reflect on the catastrophic event of the *Shoah*, that ruthless and inhuman attempt that resulted in millions of victims — including women and children, the elderly and the sick — exterminated only because they were Jews.

Considering this mystery of the suffering of Israel's children, their witness of hope, of faith and of humanity under dehumanizing outrages, the Church experiences ever more deeply her common bond with the Jewish people and with

their treasure of spiritual riches in the past and in the present.

The terrible tragedy of your people has led many Jewish thinkers to reflect on the human condition with acute insights. Their vision of man and the roots of this vision in the teachings of the Bible, which we share in our common heritage of the Hebrew Scriptures, offer Jewish and Catholic scholars much useful material for reflection and dialogue. And I am thinking here above all of the contribution of Martin Buber and also of Emmanuel Levinas.

In order to understand even more deeply the meaning of the *Shoah* and the historical roots of anti-Semitism that are related to it, joint collaboration and studies by Catholics and Jews on the *Shoah* should be continued".

3. I trust that I shall not be misunderstood if I make a reflection concerning Christianity and the Nazi ideology, not in any way to throw a shadow on the primary place which the persecution and destruction of European Jewry had in that diabolical racial myth of the 'pure' Indo-Aryan man, but in order that we, as Jews and Christians, might more fruitfully examine the problems that face us in the world today.

There was no place in Nazi ideology for either the Jewish people or the Christian Church. As His Eminence Cardinal Willebrands observed in London in 1988 (4), Aaron Steinberg clearly saw as early as 1934 that "the deeper motive of Nazi anti-Semitism is its anti-Christian, politico-cultural Pan-Germanism." The same conclusion had been reached already in the 1920s by a young Jesuit professor named Augustine Bea (5). But let us listen again to the insights of Abraham Heschel:

(1) *Zeh ha-yôm 'asa ha-Shem / Nagila we-nismekha bhô* (Ps 118:24).

(2) A.J. Heschel, "No Religion is an Island," *Union Theological Seminary Quarterly* 21:2,1 (January 1966).

(3) This note lists the six points established by the 1985 ILC meeting, listed in full in the box of page 164.

(4) J. Willebrands, "The Church Facing Modern Anti-Semitism," in *Christian Jewish Relations*, 22,1 (1989) 5-17.

(5) Bea A. "Antisemitismus, Rassentheorie und Altes Testament", *Stimmen der Zeit*, 100 (1920) 171-183.

Original English text of the  
primary remarks addressed  
by Archbishop Edward I.  
Cassidy to the thirteenth  
International Catholic-Jewish  
Liaison Committee (ILC) Meeting  
in Prague, Czechoslovakia, 1  
September 1990. Archbishop Cassidy  
is President of the Pontifical  
Council for Promoting Christian  
Unity, under whose responsibility  
the Pontifical Commission for  
Relations with the Jews.  
Hebrew is Hebrew for  
reference.



## THE INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC JEWISH LIAISON COMMITTEE

### Its creation and membership

In 1966 as a concrete implementation of Vatican II's direct request for the fostering and promoting of the special deep, spiritual relationship between Christians and Jews, Pope Paul VI set up an office, within the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, for Catholic-Jewish relations. In 1974 the *Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with Jews* was established.

On the Jewish side, in 1970 an *International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations* (IJCIC) was set up, with secretariats in New York and Geneva. This Committee is composed of the Synagogue Council of America, the World Jewish Congress, B'Nai Brith International and the Israel Interfaith Committee.

In December 1970, six members of the IJCIC met with an equal number of Vatican representatives (from the Secretariat for Christian Unity, the Commissions for Religious Relations with the Jews, and for Catholic Education, the Congregations for the Doctrine of the Faith, and for the Oriental Churches). The meeting agreed a Memorandum of Understanding, which constituted the first step in setting up the permanent International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee (ILC).

Since 1970, the ILC has met thirteen times. In addition to the full Committee, there is a small steering committee which meets to ensure an ongoing relationship, and to prepare for the meetings of the ILC.

### Meetings and topics discussed

#### 1971 Paris

1. Religious community, people and land in the Jewish and Catholic traditions
2. Spiritual sources and principles of action concerning human rights and religious freedom

#### 1972 Marseille

Religious community, people and land in the Jewish and Christian traditions

#### 1973 Antwerp

People, nation and land in the Jewish and Christian traditions

#### 1975 Rome

1. Discussion concerning the newly established Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, of the Guidelines for implementing *Nostra Aetate*
2. The concept of human rights in the Jewish and Christian traditions

#### 1976 Jerusalem

Joint assessment of progress in Catholic-Jewish relations since *Nostra Aetate* (1965)

#### 1977 Venice

The mission and witness of the Church

#### 1978 Toledo and Madrid

The image of Judaism in Christian education; and the image of Christianity in Jewish education

#### 1979 Regensburg

1. Religious freedom
2. Education for dialogue in a pluralistic society

#### 1981 London

The challenge to religious commitment of secularism

#### 1982 Milan

The sanctity and meaning of human life in the present day situation of violence

#### 1984 Amsterdam

Youth and faith

#### 1985 Rome

1. Assessment of progress since *Nostra Aetate* (20th anniversary: 1965-1985)
2. Analysis of Notes on the correct way to present Jews and Judaism in preaching and catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church (published June 1985)
3. Commemoration of 850th anniversary of the birth of Maimonides
4. Program for the future

#### 1990 Prague

Religious and secular basis of anti-Semitism in the Christian era, and its relationship to the Shoah

"Nazism in its very roots was a rebellion against the Bible, against the God of Abraham. Realizing that it was Christianity that implanted attachment to the God of Abraham and involvement with the Hebrew Bible in the hearts of western man, Nazism resolved that it must both exterminate the Jews and eliminate Christianity, and bring about instead a revival of Teutonic paganism.

"Nazism has suffered a defeat, but the process of eliminating the Bible from the consciousness of the western world goes on. It is on the issue of saving the radiance of the Hebrew Bible in the minds of man that Jews and Christians are called upon to work together. None of us can do it alone. Both of us must realize that in our age anti-Semitism is anti-Christianity and the anti-Christianity is anti-Semitism" (6).

It is this point that I wish to make here in this city of Prague, a city once called 'The Jerusalem of Europe,' in the year 1990, which must be considered one of the most important years of this century for the whole of Europe from the shores of Connemara to the Urals. The Nazism and Communist ideologies have cut deep into the heritage of the peoples of Europe; they have created new forms of idolatry based on the rejection of the universal ethic founded on the Ten Commandments. The human person is no longer considered an 'image of the Other,' beloved child of God with God-given human rights. It is in this sense that I think we must continue to reflect philosophically on Buber and Levinas, as Pope John Paul suggested in Miami.

Recent developments in Europe have offered new possibilities for the creation of a true 'civilization of love' based on the values of the Revealed Scriptures. There is a huge vacuum that waits to be filled — but which provides not only possibilities, but also great dangers: a turning to fundamentalism, to nationalism, or to rightist movements in response to a perceived absence of authority and order. The 'civilization of love,' about which Pope Paul VI and John Paul II speak is one built on those values which are taught in the *Torah* and in the Gospels. To repeat the words of Abraham Heschel: "It is on the issue of saving the radiance of the Hebrew Bible in the minds of man that Jews and Christians are called to work together. None of us can do it alone."

4. In seeking to project your thoughts to this type of future cooperation, I am not attempting to remove our gaze from the past. Indeed, in this meeting we will examine the historical roots of anti-Semitism, so closely associated with the stereotypes which have at times been influenced by theological, exegetical and popular traditions among Christians. In this connection, I should like to quote Pope John Paul once again:

"There is no doubt that the sufferings endured by the Jews are also for the Catholic

(6) A.J. Heschel, *op. cit.*



Church a motive of sincere sorrow, especially when one thinks of the indifference and sometimes resentment which, in particular historical circumstances, have divided Jews and Christians" (7).

In the meeting of prayer for peace at Assisi on 27 October 1986, John Paul II acknowledged that we Catholics "have not always been peacemakers. For ourselves, therefore, but also perhaps, in a sense, for all, this encounter at Assisi is an act of penance."

I am convinced that we cannot speak simply of Christian anti-Semitism, because in themselves the New Testament and Christianity are not anti-Semitic. Nevertheless, as the Second Vatican Council pointed out to all members of the Church, we must work together to eliminate all forms of anti-Semitism, objectively examining the historical events and ideological roots of this abhorrent phenomenon.

Indeed, it seems to me that as Christians, we have a particular obligation to take the initiative in this regard, for the faith that we profess is in a God of love, who reconciles man to God and man to man. If we are to serve him we must too love each and every one of those whom He has created; and we do that by showing respect and concern for our neighbour, by promoting peace and justice, by knowing how to pardon. That anti-Semitism has found a place in Christian thought and practice calls for an act of *Teshuva* and of reconciliation on our part as we gather here in this city, which is a witness to our failure to be authentic witnesses to our faith at times in the past.

5. Twenty-five years ago, on 28 October 1965, the Second Vatican Council approved the Declaration *Nostra Aetate* in which Catholics were encouraged to reflect on their attitudes towards Judaism and to foster a spirit of "mutual understanding and respect" to all members of that "people with whom God in his inexpressible mercy deigned to establish his Covenant" (*Nostra Aetate*, 4). That Declaration did not of course solve all the problems concerning our mutual relations, but it opened the way for a pilgrimage to begin what has brought us here today.

Much has to be done to change attitudes and ways of thought; not a little has already been undertaken, as evidenced from the two important documents published by the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews (8) and the publication by our International Liaison Committee of the papers delivered at the first twelve meetings which it organized (9).

I should like to recall, in this connection, Pope John Paul's visit to the Great Synagogue in Rome, on 13 April 1986, and the continuing catechesis which his Holiness makes during his meetings in Rome and during his pastoral visits abroad. In fact, since that visit to the Great Synagogue, Pope John Paul II has been responsible for no less than twenty-nine public interventions on the theme of Christian-Jewish relations, and this is itself a most important contri-

bution along the lines of the Second Vatican Council to the formation of the Catholic people.

As urged by the Second Vatican Council, Catholic biblical and theological scholars seek through their studies to promote a deeper understanding of our relations, and only two weeks ago in Rome, a private international symposium of about twenty theologians and exegetes debated the fundamental issue of 'The Jewish People in the Mystery of Salvation.'

6. Prague is certainly not the end of our journey, but with the above initiatives, I see it as an important stage-post along the way. It is my hope that at this time, when so many great changes are taking place, particularly in Europe, and when at the same time the spectre of anti-Semitism is once again appearing in some



• The 'sickbay' in a concentration camp

areas and societies, that our endeavors here will help our Catholic community to pursue the path indicated by the Second Vatican Council, a path that leaves no room for any form of discrimination based on race, religion, or ideological stereotypes. I feel sure that our reflections on the *Shoah* and on anti-Semitism will prove valuable not only for promoting better Christian-Jewish relations, but also for fostering a deeper understanding of the brotherhood of all peoples and solidarity with the victims of racism and genocide wherever these may occur.

May God bless our work and both our communities of faith! □

(7) Letter to Archbishop May, 8 August 1987.

(8) 'Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate*,' *Information Service*, 26 (1975/1)1-7, and 'Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church,' *Information Service*, 57 (1985/1) 16-21.

(9) *Fifteen Years of Catholic-Jewish Dialogue* (Rome: Lateran University Press and Vatican Polyglot Press, 1988).



### 3. Mutual Esteem and Reciprocal Caring

1990 Prague Statement by the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee •

#### THE INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE

At the first Meeting in December 1970 of what was to become the ILC, the following Memorandum of Understanding was drawn up:

#### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

In the relationship between Catholics and Jews the concerns of both groups are religiously based but they extend over the whole complex of what people do wherever they live.

A model of the practical development of this relationship must therefore be based on a structure which has religious faith as its premise. It must be so organized as to respect absolutely the integrity of both our faiths and it finds its justification in a shared responsibility based on biblical faith towards one another and towards the world.



• Original English text of the Statement as issued by the Pontifical Commission of Religious Relations with the Jews. Title and subtitles by CI. (a) On the IJCIC, the CRRJ and the ILC, see the box on page 160.



• June 1944: Jewish women and children arriving Auschwitz

**R**epresentatives of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) and the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews (CRRJ) met in Prague 3-6 September 1990. This was the thirteenth meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee (ILC) (■a).

Before the deliberations began, the Catholic and Jewish delegations made a visit of homage to Theresienstadt, one of the Nazi death camps.

The last meeting of this Committee took place in Rome in 1985. Difficulties which arose led to a delay of a further meeting until now. However, during these years the Steering Committee continued to meet on a regular basis to enable its work to proceed. In a special meeting of the Holy See's Commission and IJCIC in Rome in 1987, it was foreseen that the next meeting would seek to lay the basis for the presentation of a Catholic document on the *Shoah*, the historical background of anti-Semitism, and its contemporary manifestations. The intention to prepare such a document was confirmed by the Holy See's Commission.

In this connection, the meeting in Prague discussed the religious as well as the secular basis

of anti-Semitism over the past 1900 years and its relationship to the *Shoah*. This discussion led to the recognition that certain traditions of Catholic thought, teaching, preaching, and practice in the Patristic period and in the Middle Ages contributed to the creation of anti-Semitism in Western society. In modern times many Catholics were not vigilant enough to react against manifestations of anti-Semitism. The Catholic delegates condemned anti-Semitism as well as all forms of racism as a denial against God and humanity, and affirmed that one cannot be authentically Christian and engage in anti-Semitism.

At the conference, Jewish and Catholic witnesses to the *Shoah*, spoke of their experiences. They offered testimony that many Christians failed themselves as well as Jews and other victims by too weak a response to Nazi and Fascist ideologies. Witness was also given by the many courageous Christian Church leaders and members, who acted to save Jews there, risking their own lives during the Nazi terror. Nor was it forgotten that people other than Jews also perished.

The conference acknowledged the monumental role of the Declaration of the Second Vatican Council *Nostra Aetate*, as well as later



forts by the Popes and Church officials, to bring about a substantive improvement in Catholic-Jewish relations.

*Nostra Aetate* created a new spirit in these relationships. Pope John Paul II expressed that new spirit in an audience with Jewish leaders on 15 February 1985, when he said: "The relationship between Jews and Christians has radically improved in these years. Where there was ignorance and therefore prejudice and stereotype, there is now a growing mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect. There is, above all, love between us: that kind of love I mean, which is for both of us a fundamental injunction of our religious traditions and which the New Testament has received from the Old."

While echoing the Pope's recognition that a new spirit is in the making, the delegates called for a deepening of this spirit in Catholic-Jewish relations, a spirit which emphasizes cooperation, mutual understanding and reconciliation; good-will and common goals to replace the past spirit of suspicion, resentment and distrust.

This spirit presupposes repentance as expressed by Archbishop Edward Idris Cassidy, President of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, when he said in his opening statement: "That anti-Semitism has found a place in Christian thought and practice calls for an act of *Teshuvah* (repentance) and of reconciliation on our part as we gather here in this city which is a testimony to our failure to be authentic witnesses to our faith at times in the past."

This new spirit would also manifest itself in the work that the two faith communities could do together to respond to the needs of today's world. This need is for the establishment of human rights, freedom, and dignity where they are lacking or imperiled, and for responsible stewardship of the environment. A new image and a new attitude in Jewish-Catholic relations are required to spread universally the trail-blazing work that has been done in a number of communities in various parts of the world. For example, in the United States an ongoing structure engaging in Catholic-Jewish dialogue recently issued a joint document on the teaching of moral values in public education (mb). Furthermore, the Catholic church there is effectively working to teach Judaism in its seminaries, school texts and educational materials in a positive and objective manner, scrupulously eliminating anything that would go against the spirit of the Second Vatican Council.

Likewise, the Jewish community in the United States in a growing atmosphere of confidence and trust has conducted its own self-study of its texts in terms of what Jewish schools teach about Christians and Christianity.

Many similar examples of such Catholic and Jewish initiatives in other countries could be cited.

Over and above the study of the history of

anti-Semitism, the meeting devoted special attention to recent manifestations of anti-Semitism, particularly in Eastern and Central Europe. It stressed the need to disseminate the achievements of *Nostra Aetate* and past Catholic-Jewish dialogues in those countries where new political developments have created the possibility for cooperative work.

Recognizing the importance of widening the circulation of the teachings of *Nostra Aetate*, the meeting noted with satisfaction the establishment of Joint Jewish-Christian Liaison Committees in Czechoslovakia and Hungary and the diffusion by the Polish Church authorities of official documents concerning Catholic-Jewish relations in their own language.

It was stressed that systematic efforts must be made to uproot sources of religious anti-Semitism wherever they appear through the publication of texts, priestly training, liturgy, and the use of Catholic media.

The Liaison Committee hopes that the new Catechism for the Universal Church now in preparation could serve as an effective instrument to this end.

With regard to the special problems of anti-Semitism in Eastern and Central Europe, the Committee recommended the following:

1. Translation into the vernacular languages and broad dissemination of all relevant church documents on relations with Judaism (notably the Declaration on the relationship of the church to non-Christian religions, *Nostra Aetate*, 4 [28 October 1965]; the Guidelines and Suggestions for implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, 4 [1 December 1974]; and the Notes on the correct way to present the Jews and Judaism in preaching and catechesis in the Catholic Church [24 June 1985].
2. The inclusion of the teaching of these documents in the curricula of theological seminaries, in order to eliminate all remnants of the "teaching of contempt," and the setting up of special courses on the same subject in the seminaries for priests who have not yet received such theological instruction.
3. The monitoring of all trends and events which threaten an upsurge of anti-Semitism with a view to countering promptly such developments.
4. Ongoing actions aimed at guaranteeing freedom of worship and religious education for all citizens (Christians, Jews and others).
5. Active support of general legislation against discrimination on grounds of race or religion including anti-Semitism, and against incitement to religious or racial hatred; promotion of legislative action curtailing freedom of association to racist organizations.
6. Support of general educational programs which would foresee:
  - a. Inclusion in school curricula of knowledge and respect for different civilizations, cultures and religions, in particular of peoples and de-

## THE INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE

Two main areas of concern can be distinguished:

1. Questions concerning our mutual relationship
  - a. Manifestations of anti-Semitism in various parts of the world. Obstacles in Jewish-Christian relations. Origins and causes of lack of mutual confidence.
  - b. Elimination of anti-Semitism in all its forms as demanded by the Vatican Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, particularly in text-books of religious teaching and history in order to present respectful Judaism according to its own understanding on all levels of teaching and education. Liturgical and para-liturgical texts and expressions should be examined with a view to avoiding offensive references to or representation of Judaism, without compromising legitimate differences between the Church and Judaism.
  - c. Promotion of mutual understanding by a fair and adequate presentation of our respective faiths in their specific identities through all means of education. At a later date studies might be undertaken of the common heritage of Jews and Christians in order to further the understanding both of each other and of their common responsibility to humanity and the world.
  - d. Among the problems concerning mutual understanding, special attention should be given to the ways in which the relationship between religious community, people and land are conceived in the Jewish and Christian traditions respectively. ►►►

(mb) 'A Lesson of Value: Joint Jewish-Christian Statement on moral education in the public schools.' Complete text of the Joint Statement in CI Vol 1, No 1, pp. 42-43.



nominations inhabiting the national territory concerned;

b. Special attention to be paid in education to the problem of racial, national and religious prejudice and hatred. This should include the teaching of the history of the disasters brought about by such prejudice or hatred;

c. Elimination from the text-books of all racially or religiously prejudiced content and of material conducive to creating inter-group strife.

It was recommended that a special joint commission be established by the competent authorities of the respective communities in each of the countries of Eastern and Central Europe to facilitate and promote these goals. The Holy See's Commission for the Religious Relations with the Jews and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations are ready to assist such efforts.

We continue to see the need, already envisaged, for closer and more rapid cooperation and exchange of information between IJCIC and the Holy See's commission, in order to avoid future misunderstanding and face together trends and concerns within the two communities.

With regard to the Carmelite Convent at Auschwitz, we note with satisfaction the declaration of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews made by Cardinal Johannes Willebrands in September 1989, confirming the intention to establish in another location "a Center of Meeting, Dialogue and

Prayer, as foreseen in the Geneva agreement of February 1987, which would contribute in an important way to the development of good relations between Christians and Jews."

We look to the early completion of the new edifice in which the Carmelite Monastery will find its natural setting and hope that all difficulties will be overcome.

The Jewish delegation expressed its commitment to the State of Israel and stressed the need for Catholic understanding of the special place Israel has in Jewish consciousness. It manifested its concern with the lack of full diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel.

Furthermore, the Jewish delegation expressed the hope that Vatican archival material would be made accessible for better understanding of the darkest period in Jewish history.

After two millennia of estrangement and hostility, we have a sacred duty as Catholics and Jews to strive to create a genuine culture of mutual esteem and reciprocal caring.

Catholic-Jewish dialogue can become a sign of hope and inspiration to other religions, races, and ethnic groups to turn away from contempt, toward realizing authentic human fraternity.

This new spirit of friendship and caring for one another may be the most important symbol that we have to offer to our troubled world.

Prague, 6 September 1990

## THE INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE

### 2. Questions of common concern

a. The promotion of peace and justice in the world, as well as of human freedom and dignity; the fight against poverty and racism, and all forms of discrimination, and the protection of human rights, both of individuals and groups, should be fields of special collaboration between Christians and Jews. Religious liberty should be a joint concern in all cases where it is threatened or denied.

b. Study should be made of the ways in which Judaism and Christianity as communities deriving from the biblical faith in one God as Creator, concerned with the fate of this world, can face together the problems besetting religion in the modern age.

c. The respective relations of Judaism and Christianity to other world religions should be considered an important field of study. Special attention should be given in this respect to Islam as the other great monotheistic religion.

It was to implement this Memorandum that the ILC was set up, and had its first meeting in Paris in 1971.

### SIX POINT PROGRAM OF ACTION

At the ILC Meeting in Rome in October 1985 (marking the twentieth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*), a six point program of action for the future was established:

1. To disseminate and explain the achievements of the past two decades to our two communities.
2. To undertake an effort to overcome the residues of indifference, resistance and suspicion that may still prevail in some of our communities.
3. To work together in combatting tendencies towards religious extremism and fanaticism.
4. To promote conceptual clarifications and theological reflections in both communities and to create appropriate forums acceptable to both sides, in which this reflection can be deepened.
5. To foster cooperation and common action for justice and peace.
6. To undertake a joint study of the historical events and theological implications of the exterminations of the Jews during World War II (frequently called the 'Holocaust,' or in Hebrew *Shoah*).



ARTURO MARI/L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

• Catholic and Jewish representatives at the Vatican commemoration of the 25th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* (Dec 1990)

## 4. Respect, Understanding and Esteem

Address by Seymour D. Reich,  
Chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations\*

### Two faiths — A common aspiration

This is a significant moment in the relationship between Christians and Jews.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* witnesses the possibility of dialogue, of Christians and Jews interfacing with each other, as equals, and conscious of the challenges of this unparalleled time in human history.

Since 1965 our two ancient communities of faith have achieved many significant programs and accomplishments as we have built sturdy and permanent bridges of mutual respect, understanding and esteem between our two communities. We rejoice in these achievements and we pledge to work jointly with our Catholic colleagues to nurture and strengthen this vital undertaking. But, of course, more, much more, remains to be done.

We represent two distinctly different faiths. We are the spiritual children of Jerusalem and you the spiritual children of Rome. At the same time I am certain that we share a common aspiration that together we may affirm the infinite value of every human life and the advancement of peace among peoples and nations.

The Vatican II Document on the Jewish People and Judaism marked a reckoning of the

soul, a change of heart, of repentance, and a positive response after centuries of alienation and Christian contempt for Judaism. The historic Declaration continues to be an important and timely message, one filled with enormous promise for the future.

This commemoration marks a unique moment in the history of Catholics and Jews. At the same time, we remember the past centuries of Catholic-Jewish relations ... centuries of pain, contempt, persecution, suspicion and hostility.

We feel the presence of the countless generations of Jews who suffered persecutions because they were Jews — those who experienced the agonies of the Crusaders, the Inquisition, the pogroms and the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis in the *Shoah*, the Holocaust.

### Eastern Europe

Anti-Semitism in pre-war Eastern Europe was tragically a common cultural currency. Jews were a constant scapegoat for demagogic leaders seeking to rally the people behind them.

Today a new Eastern Europe is awakening after the enforced slumber of four decades of Communism. With the steel blanket of Commu-

\* Address given in English on 6 Dec 1990 at the meeting held in the Vatican (5-6 Dec 1990) to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*. On the IJIC, see the box on page 160. Title and subtitles by CI.



nist rule removed, Eastern Europe is free to strive for opportunities of freedom — freedom of conscience and freedom of religious and political expression.

Eastern Europe has the free will to choose between moving forward, toward a bright, progressive and hopefully prosperous future, or moving backward, to a darker past, a past of destructive antagonisms and of divisive politics that exploited those antagonisms.

In Eastern Europe today we see signs of both. It is heartening to see one Eastern European country after the other embrace the ideals of democracy and human rights. A number of countries have made real strides.

But we cannot be unconcerned over signs that anti-Semitism has once again become political and populist currency in these countries. In desecrations of synagogues and cemeteries, in graffiti on campaign posters, in innuendoes and sometimes more blatant pronouncements in the media, from political leaders and occasionally a church leader. We see a familiar and frightening pattern.

The Jewish community is gratified that some positive steps have been taken by Catholic leaders to unequivocally denounce and actively counter this trend.

[a] The complete text of the Prague Declaration is reproduced on pp. 162ff of this issue of CI.

[b] This is the address reproduced in full on pp. 159ff of this issue of CI.

[c] Complete text of papal address in CI Vol 1, No 1, pp. 5ff.

## ROME, 6 DECEMBER 1990

The twenty-fifth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* was commemorated in Rome in December 1990 by a high level conference between members of the CRRJ and the IJCIC. The conference concluded with a meeting held with Pope John Paul II on 6 December.

Archbishop Edward I. Cassidy introduced the Conference participants to the Pope as follows:

"... Our coming together here in Rome in these days is itself an eloquent witness to the very significant progress that has been made in such dialogue and cooperation over the past twenty-five years. *Nostra Aetate* was indeed a milestone in this respect, opening the way to a new spirit in our relations, one which you yourself, Holy Father, have described as being characterized by 'mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect.' There is now, as you stated on that same occasion, 'love between us' (Address to Jewish leaders, 15 Feb 1985).

"Holy Father, on behalf of all here present, I wish to express the most sincere and heartfelt gratitude for your constant and untiring teaching and pastoral guidance aimed at fostering an ever more brotherly relationship between the Church and the Jewish people. May God be praised for the way in which Your Holiness leads the Church on the way of reconciliation with the Synagogue!

"I should like on this occasion to thank you particularly for the generous gift which the Holy See has recently placed at the disposal of those responsible for the construction of a center of prayer and dialogue not far from Auschwitz, and of a Carmel Convent which will be established there. It is hoped that this centre will not only recall, with veneration and emotion the memory of the victims of the Shoah, as well as others who suffered with them from among the Polish people and from other nations, but will be an inspiration for all who seek to promote reconciliation and peace for all the nations of the world. . . ."



## The Prague declaration

Just three months ago in Prague (a), at a meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee the Catholic delegates condemned anti-Semitism as well as all forms of racism as sin against God and humanity, and they affirmed that one cannot be authentically Christian and engage in anti-Semitism. In Prague, the President of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, stirred the world with his powerful public call for Christian *teshuvah* (repentance) and of reconciliation for those bitter centuries of Christian hostility towards Jews and Judaism (b). But meaningful, purposeful action is always needed to translate the promise of repentance and reconciliation into concrete reality.

The Prague Declaration devoted special attention to recent manifestations of anti-Semitism, particularly in Eastern and Central Europe. It stressed the need to disseminate the achievements of *Nostra Aetate* and past Catholic-Jewish dialogues in those countries where new political developments have created the possibility for cooperative work.

Recognizing the importance of widening the teachings of *Nostra Aetate*, the Prague meeting noted with satisfaction the establishment of joint Jewish-Christian liaison Committees in Czechoslovakia and Hungary and the dissemination by Church authorities in Poland of official documents in the Polish language concerning Catholic-Jewish relations. Notwithstanding these efforts it is sad to note that anti-Semitism still manifests itself in these and other countries.

The Prague Declaration stressed that systematic efforts must be made to uproot sources of religious anti-Semitism wherever they appear through the publication of texts, priestly training, liturgy and the use of Catholic media, and it recommended a six point plan to combat the resurgence of anti-Semitism in Eastern and Central Europe.

Such action is critically needed today in the struggle against anti-Semitism. The memory of the Shoah, the Holocaust, haunts all of us, and you recently reminded the world of that horror when you declared at the 5-7 June 1990 meeting of European Bishops: "In a way unmatched perhaps by any other war in history, mankind, human rights and human dignity were trampled underfoot. The utter humiliation and desperation of such an experience found echo after the war in the much repeated question: how can we go on living after Auschwitz? Or sometime it was expressed in another question: can we still speak of God after Auschwitz?" (c).

## Church's work against anti-Semitism

We applaud your continuing efforts in publicly condemning anti-Semitism. We are hopeful that your condemnation will influence Eastern Europe.



pean leadership who still continue expressing anti-Semitic remarks in their political activities. The Catholic Church's effort to eradicate anti-Semitism, a sinful social pathology, must increase and intensify throughout the world, and this effort is especially needed today in newly freed Eastern Europe.

With regard to the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz, we note with satisfaction that a new center is under construction. We also warmly welcome last year's declaration by the Commission on Religious Relations with the Jews that gave full support to the implementation of the 1987 Geneva Agreement.

As noted in Prague, we continue to see the need, already envisaged, for closer and more rapid cooperation and exchange of information between IJCIC and the Holy See in order to avoid future misunderstanding and to actively address concerns within our two communities.

We also express the hope that the proposed Universal Catechism for the Church will reflect the teachings and perspectives of the Second Vatican Council and the rich fruits of the past 25 years of positive Catholic-Jewish relations. We hope that it will avoid any reference of contempt, denigrating the role of Jews and Judaism in God's design.

We look forward to the official Catholic document on the *Shoah*, the historical background of anti-Semitism, and its contemporary manifestations. This document, the promulgation of which was announced in 1987, is urgently needed to educate and to sensitize the human family to the ever present danger of anti-Semitism in all its insidious forms. At the same time, we hope that Vatican archival material will be made accessible for better understanding of the darkest period in Jewish history.

One of those ugly forms is clearly recognized in the document, *The Church and Racism: Towards A More Fraternal Society*, published by the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace in 1988: "... Anti-Zionism ... serves as a screen for anti-Semitism, feeding on it and leading to it."

We are particularly pleased that the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States have publicly called for the rescinding of the infamous United Nations General Assembly Resolution of 1975 that calls Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, a "form of racism." This odious Resolution has been an invitation to denigrate and persecute the Jewish people. It must be rescinded. And your voice in this effort would be appropriate.

## The State of Israel

At the heart of Jewish self definition is a profound love for the Land of Israel, and for the Holy City of Jerusalem. And the modern state of Israel is an embodiment of Jewish identity, Jewish hopes, and Jewish faith. For millennia the Jewish people, wherever they lived in the

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Pope John Paul II welcomed the participants, and said:

"... what you are celebrating is nothing other than the divine mercy which is guiding Christians and Jews to mutual awareness, respect, cooperation and solidarity. Conscious of our sharing in the same hope and promises made to Abraham and to his descendants, I am indeed pleased to welcome you in this house! 'Baruch ha-ba be-Shem Adonai!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' (Ps 118/9).

"2. The brief but significant Document *Nostra Aetate* occupied an important place in the work of the Council. After a quarter of a century it has lost none of its vigour. The strength of the Document and its abiding interest derive from the fact that it speaks to all peoples and about all peoples from a religious perspective, a perspective which is the deepest and most mysterious of the many dimensions of the human person, the image of the Creator (cf. Gen 1:26).

"The universal openness of *Nostra Aetate*, however, is anchored in and takes its orientation from a high sense of the absolute singularity of God's choice of a particular people. 'His own' people. Israel according to the flesh, already called 'God's Church' (*Lumen Gentium*, 9; cf. Nm 13:1; Nm 20:4; Dt 23:1ff.). Thus the Church's reflection on her mission and on her very nature is intrinsically linked with her reflection on the stock of Abraham and on the nature of the Jewish people (cf. *Nostra Aetate*, 4). The Church is fully aware that Sacred Scripture bears witness that the Jewish people, this community of faith and custodian of a tradition thousands of years old, is an intimate part of the 'mystery' of revelation and of salvation. In our own times many Catholic writers have spoken of that 'mystery' which is the Jewish people, among them Geremia Bonomelli, Jacques Maritain and Thomas Merton.

"The Church therefore, particularly through her Biblical scholars and theologians, but also through the work of other writers, artists and catechists, continues to reflect upon and express more thoroughly her own thinking on the mystery of this people. I am happy that the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews is intensely promoting study on this theme in a theological and exegetical context.

"3. When we consider Jewish tradition we see how profoundly you venerate Sacred Scripture, the *Miqra*, and in particular the *Torah*. You live in a special relationship with the *Torah*, the living teaching of the living God. You study it with love in the *Talmud Torah*, so as to put it into practice with joy. Its teaching on love, on justice and on the law is reiterated in the Prophets — *Nevi'im*, and in the *Ketuvim*. God, his holy *Torah*, the synagogal liturgy and family traditions, the Land of holiness, are surely what characterize your people from the religious point of view. And these are things that constitute the foundation of our dialogue and of our cooperation.

"At the centre of the Holy Land, almost as its hallowed heart, lies Jerusalem. It is a City holy to three great religions, to Jews, Christians and Muslims. Its very name evokes peace. I should like you to join in praying daily for peace, justice and respect for the fundamental human and religious rights of the three peoples, the three communities of faith who inhabit that beloved Land.

"4. No dialogue between Christians and Jews can overlook the painful and terrible experience of the *Shoah*. During the meeting at Prague in September of this year, the Jewish-Catholic International Liaison Committee considered at length the religious and historical dimensions of the *Shoah* and of anti-Semitism, and came to conclusions that are of great importance for the continuation of our dialogue and cooperation. It is my hope that these may be widely recognized and that the recommendations then formulated will be implemented wherever human and religious rights are violated.

"May God grant that the commemoration of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of *Nostra Aetate* will bring fresh results of spiritual and moral renewal for us and for the world. May it bring above all the fruit of cooperation in promoting justice and peace. In the Babylonian Talmud we read: 'The world stands upon the single column that is the just man' (Hagigah, 12b). In the Gospel Jesus Christ tells us that blessed are the peacemakers (cf. Mt 5:9). May justice and peace fill our hearts and guide our steps towards the fullness of redemption for all peoples and for the whole universe. May God hear our prayers!" □

• Original English texts, Vatican Press Office.



Diaspora, constantly prayed, "Next year in Jerusalem!" Now that prayer, that dream, has been realized in our lifetime.

Like you, we share the belief that true peace will come to that troubled region of the world when nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks," when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

We believe that full and formal diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the state of Israel will dramatically and substantively advance the cause of peace. The normalization of relations will send a strong signal to those nations that are still committed to the destruction of Israel. We live at a time when long held ideologies are being abandoned in many parts of the world, and when new initiatives for peace are taking place every day. Physical, political, and psychological walls and barriers between peoples are falling everywhere. Now is the time for the full ripening of relations between the Holy See and the state of Israel.

In the new and positive atmosphere that has developed since the Second Vatican Council, we welcome and encourage the examples of Catholics and Jews working together on a host of social concerns in many countries. We live in a world of painful contradictions. While we have achieved much in science and technology, millions of our fellow human beings are still dying of hunger. We have sent a person to the moon, but millions still can not read or write; we have solved many mysteries of the human mind, but bigotry and prejudice still remain widespread. We have achieved much in art, lit-

erature, and music, but we still debase millions of human beings who are created in the image of God.

As Catholics and Jews we share many moral principles and values including freedom of the human conscience, religious liberty, human rights, and opposition to all forms of racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination. This commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary *Nostra Aetate* is an appropriate time to pledge ourselves to work for these vital goals.

## Conclusion

Dialogue is a process that goes through different stages of development and crisis, meaningful steps forward and sometimes steps backward, but dialogue is a reality that requires patience and constant communication.

We are hopeful that our meetings and ongoing conversations will project a sense of friendship and mutual respect that is desperately needed in a world plagued with alienation and the denial of human rights.

In the Jewish tradition we are taught that "our day here upon earth is short, and we are sluggish in performing our duties, but the reward is great, and God, our Creator, is most urgent. But it is not incumbent upon us to complete our work, but neither are we free to desist from it."

So much more needs to be done, but at least after twenty-five years, we can say with confidence that we have not desisted from our task. Indeed, I believe that we have only begun our work. □

• Dr Seymour Reich is presented to Pope John Paul II by Archbishop Cassidy





## 5. Catholic-Jewish Relations: Perspectives and Orientations

*Address by Rabbi Jack Bemporad •*

**O**ur respective religious traditions have taught that in the realm of the spirit a breakthrough is always possible. Something new and daring and creative may occur, something that changes irreversibly the course of history. This breakthrough certainly took place twenty-five years ago with *Nostra Aetate* and our commemoration today can only bear due homage to the great work initiated by Pope John XXIII, continued and actualized by Pope Paul VI, and continuing almost daily now by the creative and outstanding work of Pope John Paul II whose deep concern was evidenced by the visit to the Synagogue in Rome on 13 April 1986.

### **Before *Nostra Aetate***

If one were to try to recapture the pre-Vatican II days, one would recognize that what existed between Christians and Jews was a state of suspicion and apprehension. Before Vatican II, as evidenced by a study that was done by Catholic Scholars (according to Claire Huchet-Bishop in her book *How Catholics Look at Jews*) Catholics were all too often taught that "the Jews were an accursed people destined to suffer for the crime of deicide." Since Vatican II a new spirit has emerged.

Pope John Paul II expressed that new spirit in an audience with Jewish leaders on 15 February 1985, when he said: "The relationship between Jews and Christians has radically improved in these years. Where there was ignorance and therefore prejudice and stereotype, there is now growing mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect. There is, above all, love between us: that kind of love I mean, which is for both of us a fundamental injunction of our religious traditions and which the New Testament has received from the Old."

Indeed startling changes have taken place. Many, as I say were instrumental in bringing about these changes, not only the Popes I mentioned but also Cardinal Bea and Cardinal Willebrands in his outstanding and magnificent work and most recently in the valiant and courageous work of Archbishop Cassidy.

Let us review these changes.

First and foremost, the condemnation of anti-Semitism anywhere by anyone.

Secondly, the rejection of the charge of deicide.

Thirdly, in the guidelines and in the observations, the realization that Judaism as a religion is an autonomous independent entity having its own integrity, its own history, its own dynamism, its own creativity which can in no sense be perceived either as a fossil or as simply a predecessor to the Christian Religion. The numerous attempts to picture Judaism as either an incomplete religion, a sterile religion, a stage on the road to Christianity have been rejected and the Jewish Religion is now seen as an autonomous creative entity.

Finally when it comes to the area of what is most dear to us as Jews, our commitment to and connection with the State of Israel, the Observations have undoubtedly understood the significance and the place of this land in the consciousness of the Jews.

### **Real dialogue**

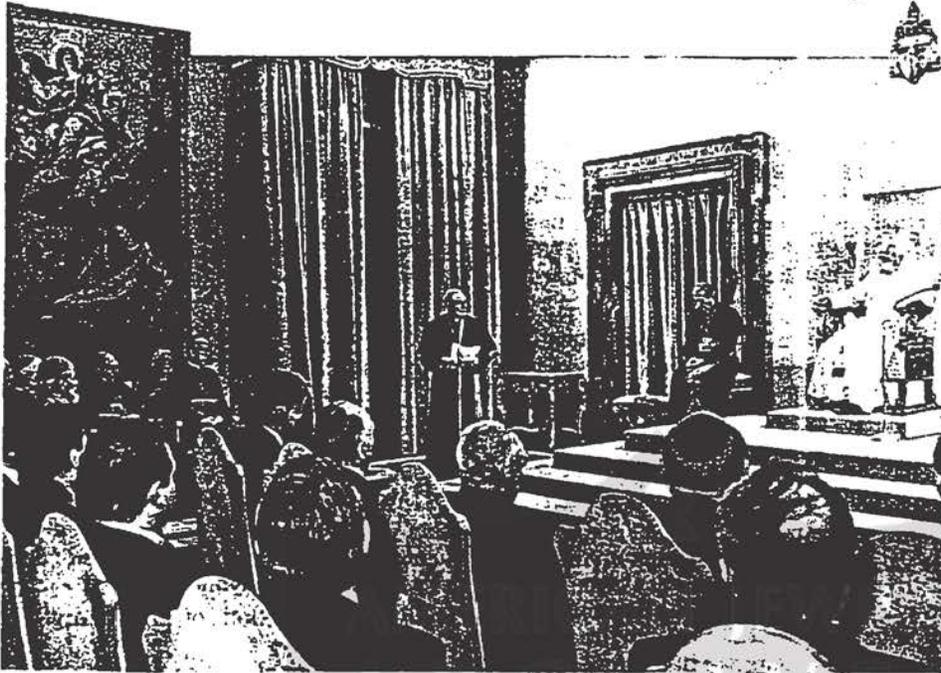
Thus with these momentous changes, a real dialogue is what we are witnessing today.

Dialogue involves a certain flexibility and awareness that we are not conversing simply with a stereotype or a doctrine but with individuals who hold doctrines as true and whose lives are shaped by the truths they believe.

Dialogue must confirm the image of God within all of us. Through dialogue one becomes aware of one's separateness and one's difference in the relationship and yet something may happen, a breakthrough in the dialogue may emerge, a reconciliation that only the dialogue makes possible. A sense of self and of one's own integrity in the tradition of one's fathers emerges in the very process of communication. Dialogue must be on equal terms with mutual respect and the recognition of the integrity of each side.

Dialogue implies an openness a willingness to be still, to be silent and to wait for the other to have his say. It must not be primarily con-

• Original English language text.  
Titles and subtitles by CI.  
Rabbi Bemporad is President of  
the Interreligious Affairs  
Committee of the Synagogue  
Council of America (SCA)



• Exchange of greetings between Catholic and Jewish members of the ILC and Pope John Paul II (Vatican, Dec 1990)

cerned with convincing or refuting but first and foremost with establishing a mutuality of understanding. It also requires respect; that is, the willingness to respect a different way to the hidden truths of things.

### Asymmetry

Since the early Christian centuries there has been a significant asymmetry between Christians and Jews. Largely due to Christian teaching the Jew has been made to feel that he did not exist as a person, that he had little control over his own destiny. His existence was decided in large measure by forces external and alien to himself often with the backing of the Church.

This asymmetry is historical in the sense of the all too vivid medieval *Disputatio* with the Jewish community — a community battered, vulnerable with no power of self determination, subject to the whim of the sovereign having to defend itself against accusations and vilifications. Often a powerful church unleashed a characterization of the Jewish Religion and the Jewish People which all too often made a mockery of their religious beliefs. The Jewish community cannot engage in dialogue without a recognition of this historical asymmetry which simply causes us pain. All too often dialogue was the pretense and conversion the hidden and often not so hidden goal. All too often pronouncements on Jews and Judaism relegated the Jewish religion to a primitive stage, a fossil at best a historic entity to be superseded. It is therefore not surprising that the Jew feels a little bit wary of the significant changes that have taken place within the Church. The most horrendous destruction of Jews in history took place in predominantly Christian Europe. Is there any wonder that it will take a long time

for the Jewish community to genuinely trust the changes that have so radically changed the Church? And yet, as we have seen, just such changes have taken place, important changes which augur a new, significant, and symmetrical dialogue.

### Radical change

The promulgation of *Nostra Aetate* instituted a radical change in Catholic teaching.

Together with the guidelines and observations, this new teaching has indeed brought about a revolution in Catholic thinking. As we review the progress of the last twenty-five years we have seen a cumulative effect that has moved in the direction of revising the Catholic attitude to Jews and Judaism.

Anti-Semitism was condemned. anti-Semitism was viewed as a sin. More recently it was affirmed that no

authentic Catholic could be an anti-Semite. Still more recently, in Prague the gesture of repentance and seeking forgiveness for sins that Catholics may have committed against Jews was declared. The seeking of forgiveness had occurred previously on a regional level, for example, in Germany (28 April 1980) the German Bishops said, "In Germany we have particular cause to ask forgiveness of God and of our Jewish brethren. Even though we thankfully remember that many Christians supported the Jews, often at great sacrifice, we may not, nor do we wish to, either forget or suppress what has been done by our nation to the Jews. We call to mind what the Bishops' Conference at Fulda in 1945, their first meeting after the war, proclaimed: 'Many Germans, including Catholics, allowed themselves to be deluded by the false teaching of National Socialism, and remained indifferent to the crimes against human freedom and human dignity; many abetted the crimes, through their behavior, many became criminals themselves. A heavy responsibility rests on those, who by reason of their position, knew what was happening in our country, who through their influence could have prevented such crimes and did not do so, and so made these crimes possible, and by so doing, declared their solidarity with criminals.'"

One cannot help but quote the remarkable statement of the Bishop of Strasbourg when he said "Why can we not accept from the gospels that magnanimity that renders us able to ask forgiveness in the name of many Christians for so many and so great injustices?"

Pope Paul VI asked forgiveness of all non-Catholic Christians because of all the sins imputable to the Catholic Church in the painful internal division of Christendom, and Pope John Paul II in 1985 stated "We ask forgiveness before our African friends that have for example



suffered so because of the merchandising in slaves." However in the past, it was Cardinal Bea who stated: "Here (relating to the Jews) perhaps we must confess many sins even of the church itself." And it is to the great merit of the Pontifical Commission that, through Archbishop Cassidy, this movement towards reconciliation, asking of forgiveness, has taken place. Bishop Cassidy proclaimed in Prague "That anti-Semitism has found a place in Christian thought and practice calls for an act of *Teshuvah* (repentance) and of reconciliation on our part as we gather here in this City that is Prague which is a testimony to our failure to be authentic witnesses to our faith at times in the past" (ma).

We see a similar development in the recognition of Judaism as autonomous, independent and a continuously creative religion, and not merely a stage in the preparation for Christianity. From the recognition that after all the Catholic faith is rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures to the recognition of the significance of Abraham as the father of the Jewish People, to Jesus being a Jew, the Disciples Jewish, and even that the New Testament emerged out of a Jewish milieu, to the Pope's clarification that the Old Testament must be referred to as the Hebrew Bible and the New as Christian Scriptures, to the recognition of God's irrevocable covenant with the Jewish People. And finally, to the recognition that scripture may even have significance in ways that have not already been discovered or may even not be in line with Christian understandings. That is, the principle of creativity is open and continuous; the notion of inspiration and interpretation is not closed. This is indeed a breath-taking transformation in just twenty-five years, which augurs well for Jews and Christians. This is the beginning of real dialogue.

### The land of Israel

Similarly if we turn to Catholic pronouncements on Israel, we see in the notes and the observations that the "memory of the Land of their Fathers is at the heart of their hope and Christians are invited to understand this religious attachment which finds its roots in Biblical tradition." On the question of Israel, the Pastoral Council of the Dutch Catholic Church of April of 1970 (paragraph four) states: "Religious thinking about the very existence of the Jewish people as such show that there is a particular relationship between the Jewish people and the Promised Land. The Jews consider this relationship not only as historical, cultural, or religious phenomenon but as an indissoluble element in their expectation of the day when all nations will embrace in peace and justice. To neglect or deny this fact may be the cause of misunderstanding and help to nourish prejudice about the nature of the Jewish People and its place among the nations, a misunderstanding which has already led and may lead again to discrimination." An early working document

of the Vatican Council, in my view more correctly stated the place of Israel in Jewish consciousness.

"Fidelity to the covenant was linked to the gift of a land, which in the Jewish soul has endured as the object of an aspiration that Christians should strive to understand. In the wake of long generations of painful exile, all too often aggravated by persecution and moral pressures, for which Christians ask pardon of their Jewish brothers, Jews have indicated in a thousand ways their attachment to the land promised to their ancestors from the days of Abraham's calling. It could seem that Christians, whatever the difficulties they may experience, must attempt to understand and respect the religious significance of this link between the people and the land. The existence of the State of Israel should not be separated from this perspective, which does not in itself imply any judgment on historical occurrences or on decision of a purely political order."

Nevertheless even on the area of Israel we find that the Catholic church has attempted to try to see Judaism in terms of the way it sees itself and thus what we find is in this cumulative development in the various statements and in the many pronouncements by the Pope and others a new sense and a new spirit of dialogue in which Jews can recognize themselves in these declarations, perceive themselves as being represented correctly. A dialogue which allows Jews to be Jews.

### Grass roots dialogue

First we have to listen before we can speak. It is when two silences meet that speech occurs, we have to cultivate the capacity to listen, to be still, to go beyond the words of the other to the heart and to the soul and the yearnings and to the dreams of the other. We have to not simply see the other as some ideology or some representation of some text but rather as a person, a full-bodied person, with a history, with a variety of experiences, and as in the case of the Jewish people a history of great and severe suffering.

However such a dialogue cannot be restricted to élites or to the top echelons of our respective organizations, but must be brought down to the grass roots level.

IJCIC and the Vatican should set up a communication committee to guarantee the promulgation of the Prague statement for Catholics and Jews on the local level throughout the world. This would implement the Popes' declaration of 16 March 1990. He stated "We must also be united in combatting all forms of racial, ethnic or religious discrimination and hatred, including anti-Semitism . . . In the new and positive atmosphere that has developed since the [Second Vatican] Council, among Catholics it is the task of every local Church to promote cooperation between Christians and Jews. As the Successor of Saint Peter, I have a special

(ma) The address by Archbishop Cassidy is reproduced in full on pp. 159ff. of this issue of CI.



concern for all the Churches, and am therefore committed to furthering such a policy throughout the world."

We Christians and Jews together have a special concern for Eastern and Central Europe. A concern that the Prague statement encouraging the establishment of Jewish-Catholic liaison committees be translated into action. The Prague statement called for systematic efforts to "uproot sources of religious anti-Semitism wherever they appear through the publication of texts, priestly training, liturgy and the use of Catholic media."

We have to set up a commission to make sure that every parish, every Synagogue and every community will be able to understand the new teaching of Vatican II and its guidelines as well as the Prague statement and in doing so every community throughout the world will be filled with this new spirit of reconciliation, spirit of love and spirit of hope.

We as Jews have a responsibility to educate our own people and explain to our constituencies the great strides made by the Catholic Church since Vatican II.

Still, many Jews — like many Catholics — are not aware of the momentous changes in Catholic thinking about Jews and Judaism that have issued from the highest levels of the Church since Vatican Council II. As part of the future agenda, Jewish students, as well as others in the general Jewish population, need to be informed of these developments both in formal education and through mass communications.

### Common responsibility

It is my hope that Christians and Jews will increasingly be able to elevate our dialogue that we will not just discuss what each has done to or for the other but turn together to our common responsibility for the destiny of the earth and its population. Let us reflect and unite to act out of concern for the destiny of man himself who is so vulnerable. We must bring the best in our respective traditions to bear on the pressing issues of our time which will determine the future of our planet. It is our respective traditions that emphasize our stewardship over creation.

The conference in Prague eloquently spoke of our worldly concerns and our responsibility together to confront the evils afflicting our age — poverty, hunger, starvation and hopelessness. The Prague statement call for the two faith communities to "respond to the needs of today's world. This need is for the establishment of human rights, freedom, and dignity where they are lacking or imperilled and for responsible stewardship of the environment"(ab). We jointly have work to do in the world that desperately needs us. In the United States a small beginning was made when the National Council of Catholic Bishops and the Synagogue Council developed a statement on

the teaching of moral values in public education (ac). There is a world out there that is crying for redemption.

It is consistent with both our self understandings that our special communities have been created by God for the purpose of making his self known to the world, Judaism and Christianity have a mission to make God known to the nations. That constitutes a part of Christian existence is and what Jewish existence is. We do not exist for ourselves. We exist for God's sake. We exist for the sake of the world that God creates. We exist for the sake of the world God redeems. It is the world that is the object of God's activity. The Christian and Jewish doctrines of chosenness must be seen as their being instruments of God's justice and love to all. There can be no authentic Jewish-Christian dialogue unless independently agreed upon together we live up to our common responsibility towards God's world. The problems have to be addressed from the standpoint of what both Jews and Christians believe is the wisdom that has been given them by God. We should live our lives as Jews and Christians, and that means contributing to a solution of those problems. The most significant reason we talk to one another is not just to find out what we each think but come to the recognition of our joint responsibility in the world.

### From faith to action

There is no point in knowing something unless you can do something with it. Commitment and faith must be linked to commitment in action. Every year during the 1980's over 14 million children died of starvation or malnutrition. Just think of that and recognize that is the state of world in which we are living. Even though there is potentially enough food, clothing and housing for every human being on this planet. And it goes on every day. How many children are to be sacrificed to Malach every year because food is unavailable to them given the economic system we have. There must be a concerted attempt of all people of good will to try to think about these problems together to deal with them. It involves the entire world not just Catholics and Jews.

And so *Nostra Aetate* — 'our own age' — not just the age for Catholics. With this new dialogue we as Jews can recognize it is also our age because in your words we also recognize ourselves.

This age, our age of togetherness, turned out to be an age of new beginnings in Jewish-Christian relationships. It is our hope and prayer that this age will also be a new age for breakthrough of Justice and Peace in the World.

A spiritual breakthrough wherein the Prophet's words will be realized: "They shall not perish nor destroy — for the earth would be full of the knowledge of God and the waters cover the sea."

(b) The complete text of the Prague Declaration is reproduced on pp. 162ff of this issue of CI.

(c) The full text of the joint statement is reprinted in CI Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 42ff.



Vatican Radio had confirmed on 30 Nov 1990 that the bishops' had reached a conclusion, but that they had decided not to make the results public. It is certain that the bishops would have sent a copy of the declaration to Rome. The ASCA agency suggested that the Vatican asked the results to be kept secret, pending the completion of the Holy See's own investigation of the alleged apparitions.

The Italian newspaper *L'Avvenire* carried an article

by the French Jesuit mariologist, Father René Laurentin, one of the chief supporters of the alleged apparitions, in which he stressed that the statement says only that on the basis of current evidence, a positive judgement cannot be given. Laurentin wrote, "Be careful: 'Cannot be affirmed' does not mean 'is excluded.' The question, therefore, remains open."

[*L'Avvenire* & *CNS*, 3 Jan 1991]

## SAN SALVADOR

► *Bishop speaks of peace hopes*

In an interview with Vatican Radio on 26 Dec 1990 Bishop Gregorio Rosa Chavez (Auxiliary of San Salvador) declared that the Salvadoran people had celebrated Christmas with high hopes for peace and justice in 1991.

Despite the devastating effects of the eleven-year civil war the bishop said "We believe we have good reasons for hope. We need to adopt a post-war outlook. Peace is possible — even probable. That is what the people are asking for. That is what everyone wants." [CNS, 31 Dec 1990]

## LATIN AMERICA

### BRAZIL

► *First native Indian priest ordained*

Alvino Andrade da Silva, a member of the Makuxi tribe, is the first ever native Indian to be ordained in the history of the Catholic Church in Brazil. He was ordained on 3 January by Bishop Aldo Mongiano of Roraima, in the Cathedral of Boa Vista, in Amazonia.

Bishop Mongiano underlined the symbolic importance of the ordination "at a time when the Church of Roraima is being persecuted for its commitment to the native Indian peoples, whose land rights are being ever more seriously threatened."

Father Silva declared his hope that he would be able to make "the voice of the Indian people better heard." [APIC, 4 Jan 1991]

### HAITI

► *Only one bishop welcomes President Aristide*

Bishop Willy Roméus of Jérémie, Haiti (President of the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace) is the only Haitian bishop to have congratulated Jean-Bertrand Aristide the new President-elect, and welcomed the peaceful and democratic way in which the elections had been conducted.

Archbishop François-Wolff

Ligondé of Port-au-Prince spoke, in a homily on 3 January, of his fears that the new government, "with its leftist tendencies might not install a social-bolshevik régime." He hoped there would be no "squeeze on political liberties, no violations of the constitution."

It is not the first time that Aristide, who was suspended from his priestly functions as a member of the Salesian Fathers in December 1988 because of his involvement in politics, has been criticized by the Haitian episcopate. His social commitment, founded on his own brand of liberation theology, was often judged "extremist" by some of the bishops.

[APIC, 4 Jan 1991]



• **President-elect Jean-Bertrand Aristide**

## MIDDLE EAST

### ISRAEL

► *Christians in the occupied territories accused*

In an internal report by the Israeli military authorities in the occupied territories — but from which extracts have been broadcast on army radio — the leaders of the Christian communities in Jerusalem are described as "extremists," responsible for anti-Israeli propaganda "both inside and outside the country." The report, compiled by Schmuël Hamburger, head of the religious division of the civil administration of the occupied territories, named in particular the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem Samir Kafity, the Greek-Catholic Melkite Patriarchal Vicar Lutfi Laham, the Latin Patriarch Archbishop Michael Sabbah (see his pastoral letter in *CI* Vol 1, no 4, pp. 174ff.), and even the Greek-Orthodox Patriarch Diodoros I.

In a joint statement the Christian leaders of Jerusalem launched an appeal for peace "at this moment when our region is undergoing one of the most crucial crises of modern history," on the eve of war. Rejecting the report's attacks, they restated their duty to defend human rights, and called on all parties involved in conflict to work for reconciliation, pardon, mutual love, and a just solution.

Speaking of the people's despair, the statement noted the deterioration in the living standards of the Palestinians. The leaders denounced "the constant attempts to alter the demographic character of the Old City," referring explicitly to the occupation of the Saint John Hospice by militant Jewish settlers. [APIC, 20 Dec 1990]

## NORTH AMERICA

### UNITED STATES

► *New premises for working pastor*

In December 1990, Bishop Arthur Tafoya of Pueblo, Colorado, moved into a new home in one of Pueblo's poorer neighborhoods. He decided to sell the three storey, century-old sandstone mansion with its ornate woodwork, stained

glass, chapel, and numerous bedrooms, parlors and baths, together with its fifty years' worth of crystalware, books and furniture. The bishop's new home has two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a chapel, a den, a living room, a dining room and kitchen. In addition it has a complete basement.

The mansion was bought by a local medical firm, while

## Hidden Heritage

# Some Older Poles Now Discover That They Were Born Jewish

## Secret Orphans of World War Learn Truth About Past, Not Always So Happily Living Amid Anti-Semitism

By FREDERICK KEMPE

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL  
WARSAW — The 70-year-old Polish woman strained to tell her daughter a secret she had concealed since the worst days of World War II. "Listen, we have one more thing we need to talk about . . . about your childhood . . ." the daughter remembers her stammering over and over for the five weeks she lay on her death bed. But the words always trailed off.

After her mother's death, Jadwiga Asendrych turned detective. Mrs. Asendrych had no siblings to question, and her father was also dead; so she pored through her mother's correspondence and address book and questioned her mother's friends. Finally, one of her mother's correspondents told her the truth. "Your mother was not your real mother, and you are Jewish," she said.

This woman, a Polish Jew living in Sweden, had befriended Mrs. Asendrych's mother after the end of World War II; she often sent packages of clothing for the child but reluctantly agreed to keep the secret of the child's Jewishness. She told Jadwiga this story.

Jadwiga Asendrych was born Barbara Zajdler in a small hospital in the village of Garwolin in 1942, after her pregnant mother had been spirited there from the Warsaw Ghetto. Mrs. Zajdler left the hospital, and her newborn child, to search for her husband. The Nazis had already sent him, a doctor at the hospital, to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Before she left, she had arranged to have her child adopted by a Polish Catholic woman, whose baby had been stillborn the same week. The woman was to give the Jewish infant her baby's name and documents, for a generous fee.

Mrs. Asendrych's first reaction to these revelations was shock. Then came the memory of her adoptive mother's anti-Semitism, leveled against her. "If I didn't wring out the laundry properly, my mother said I was doing it like a Jewess," she recalls. "If I asked too many questions, she told me to quit acting like a Jew." But these sorts of anti-Semitic comments were common in Poland; Mrs. Asendrych had no reason to doubt that she was the daughter of the woman with whom she shared dark hair and olive skin.

Jadwiga Asendrych is only one among hundreds of Jewish-born Poles known as "hidden children." More often than not, their parents were among the estimated three million Jewish Poles killed in Nazi extermination camps. The children survived only because their parents stashed them for safekeeping with Polish families, hoping someday to reclaim them. Few ever could.

The Poles often raised the children as their own. In many cases they concealed from them their Jewish heritage. But with the opening up of Eastern Europe and the aging of the World War II generation, many of these children, now in their 40s and 50s, are learning their true identities. Disconcertingly, in a country where anti-Semitism remains a potent force, the discovery is rarely happy.

"It is not an easy thing to be a Jew in Poland," says Rabbi Chaskel O. Besser, who is trying to revive Jewish culture in Eastern Europe in his role as president of the Ronald Lauder Foundation. "No one around you will ever treat you the same again."

Oddly, Poland has anti-Semitism despite having few Jews. Today, only 10,000 Jews are registered in Jewish organizations and synagogues, though it is assumed that thousands more do not state their religion openly due to fears of prejudice.

Greater democracy has only made such prejudices more evident. In Poland's recent presidential election, former Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a Roman Catholic whom some believed to be Jewish, faced crowds at campaign rallies who jeered, "We are ruled by Jews." Lech Walesa apparently found it helpful to proclaim at campaign rallies: "I am not a Jew."

For many of the hidden children, being a Jew is an unwanted and unfamiliar burden. Mrs. Asendrych's life has become distinctly more difficult. She says her husband's family visits less frequently now, and often makes comments about how they usually don't like Jews, adding "but you are different." At the same time, she says, the cliquish Jewish community often balks at accepting outsiders who are unfamiliar with their traditions.

"I have lost one identity without gaining another," she says. "I don't feel like a Pole any more, but I haven't any idea what it means to be Jewish."

Too few hidden Jewish children have come forward to provide a complete picture, but some patterns are evident. Most of them in Poland were from well-off families who could afford the protection payments. Most of the protectors were poor Poles for whom the reward was worth the risk.

The protectors were a mixture of opportunists and good souls who had long been friendly with Jews, or had worked for them. Whatever their motives, all knew that the cost of their actions could be their

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lives; in some villages, those who helped Jews were hanged in the central square.

"It was pure and simply a business, and I was a product that was so undesirable that my parents had to pay someone to take me," says Barbara Gruberska, a physician in a village near Warsaw.

Dr. Gruberska refers to a contract she recently unearthed between her mother, who was using a false name, and a cobbler couple. The contract stipulated that Barbara was to be hidden by the couple for three months, at 700 zlotys (\$140, in 1942 dollars) per month. The deal was arranged by a broker, who also collected a fee.

If the mother didn't return after three months, the couple was to give the child to an orphanage, saying it was a German or a Polish baby and handing over documents that provided the baby with a false name. Dr. Gruberska never landed in an orphanage; but the documents helped her survive the war. Even now, after piecing together some of her early life, she still doesn't know her true name or birthdate.

From the contract, Dr. Gruberska eventually found the cobbler. He told her that her true mother came back only once during the war—a dangerous mission in the middle of the night—to get a glimpse of her child. Rumors circulated throughout the city that the mother had been a spy and that the Nazis had hanged her in the forest.

The cobbler says his fear for the child and for himself made him seek another broker. He didn't want to take her to an orphanage because officials there might take one look at the emaciated baby and assume she was from the Warsaw ghetto, as indeed she was. Apparently, "I looked more like an animal than a human being," Mrs. Gruberska says now, chain-smoking while her teen-age daughter listens to the story and bites her lower lip. "I wasn't a very appetizing package for anyone to take."

A couple was found to transport the toddler into an area of Poland considered safer for hiding Jews. Instead, they decided to keep her.

After the war, their best efforts to hide the girl's heritage failed. Townspeople knew part of the story and gossiped among themselves. At school, classmates wrote on the blackboard "Jew Go to Palestine." Dr. Gruberska says she would arrive early to erase what had been written overnight before others could see it. Catholic children would spit on her at Mass, she says.

Yet her mother never admitted her child was Jewish, and she instead told her she was the victim of her beautiful black hair. Both her parents are now deceased.

Dr. Gruberska, with the support of her husband, says she has embraced Jewish culture, though she has kept some distance from its purely religious aspects. She has made clear to her own children that they are Jewish. Her son is now attending a Jewish high school in New Jersey, on scholarship from the Ronald Lauder Foundation.

"I was very happy that he has decided to learn Hebrew and look into the traditions, but it shocked me when he decided to have himself circumcised this year," she says.

Barbara Kurek, ne Emma Schiffren, was less than two years old when her mother and two other Jewish women smuggled her and five other children out of the Warsaw ghetto to the nearby town of Lubno. Her father owned the brick factory there; her mother owned property on which a man ran a cobbler shop.

The cobbler consented to take the children for a short while, expecting the women to return when it was safer. But within hours, news reached him that the women had been captured and shot outside the brick factory—a bloody example to any other Jews who might stray from their ghetto prison. The cobbler decided it was too dangerous to keep all the children under one roof, so he and his wife separated them. But they held on to Emma and gave her the name Barbara, after their young daughter who had died of typhus.

When Barbara was 18, she wanted to marry a young Polish officer in a Catholic ceremony. Her mother forbade it. "You can't do that, because you don't belong in the church," she said. Then she told Barbara about her past.

Barbara married the officer anyway. The obliging priest who officiated at the wedding had earlier provided false baptism papers. But Barbara's husband insisted that the secret of her past be kept to protect their children, both of whom were baptized as Catholics. Following the example of her adoptive mother, Mrs. Kurek didn't tell her own daughter until shortly before she was to be married. As it happened, the girl was marrying a Pole who had one Jewish parent, but they will also keep the secret from their children until they are "old enough to understand," says Mrs. Kurek.

Mrs. Kurek, now 49, tells the story fearfully and shyly, her beautiful and almost aristocratic features caught inside the plump and weathered frame of an impoverished Pole. She has failed in her search to find Jewish relatives, and what she has learned has brought her more disquiet. When she visited the town where she was raised, people there told her the name of the Polish police officer who betrayed her Jewish mother to the Nazis. They told her how this policeman's wife was often seen wearing her real mother's fine coat and clothing.

Now Mrs. Kurek wants revenge, and doesn't know how to get it. "Can you help me?" she asks.

Eva Rzdazka says she knew as a nine-year-old that she was different. Her dark, curly hair just didn't fit in the family portrait. Her mother tried to lighten and straighten it by roughly rubbing in rinses and ointments. She also says her mother often beat her, demanding that she act more like her brother.

Mrs. Rzdazka recalls a time when her aunt, who was caring for her, couldn't stand the child's torture any longer. "Your mother only does it because you are not

her child," Mrs. Rzdazka remembers the aunt saying. "You are Jewish, and your mother is dead." The aunt pointed to the large amount of precious jewelry in the otherwise poor household and explained that Eva's real parents had left it, and much more, so that the family would protect their daughter.

But the aunt made the young girl promise not to tell anyone about this, particularly her mother. "I considered this my own special secret," says Mrs. Rzdazka. "I connected it to the jewelry, to the gold. My child's imagination made it something sad and dark."

It was only after her mother's death in 1982 that Mrs. Rzdazka felt free to search for her history in earnest, but the hunt only brought frustration. Only her aunt had all the details, and she had died as well. All Mrs. Rzdazka discovered through another relative was that her real name was Dina Szapiro, and that her family had been well-to-do.

What hurt most, she says, was that after her mother's death her father gave the family jewels to her Polish brother. Only when her father was dying, in 1964, did he beg her forgiveness. "He cried that everything the family had was due to me," she says.

Most of the hidden children will probably never be found. A New York-based organization called The Hidden Child has scheduled, for late May, the First International Gathering of Children Hidden During World War II. From a probable pool of several thousand in the world, they have located 1,000, of whom 300 to 600 have expressed interest in attending the New York conference.

One child who almost certainly won't attend is Lolek Erlister. In April 1943, the six-year-old miraculously escaped from a pit holding bodies of children who had been machine-gunned during the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. But two months later, he was separated from his mother forever. While fleeing from a drunken Pole who had been sheltering them, they jumped onto a moving tram in downtown Warsaw. The six-year-old boy fell underneath it and his foot was crushed.

His mother remembers that she cried so hysterically, a Polish policeman walked up and sneered that she was weeping "as only a Jew could." In terror, she fled, leaving her injured boy and her false papers behind that gave her a phony Polish name, Vera Stodolska.

The policeman apparently took the boy to a nearby hospital, where his life was saved, but his foot was lost. A Catholic friend of the mother's delivered food to the hospital every day for three weeks to check on the child. But then Lolek disappeared. The hospital director, fearing he would be punished if the circumcised boy were discovered, had him moved to a nearby convent

Lolek's parents, who now live in New York, have made frequent visits to Poland over the years, looking for their child. Several years ago, they located the hospital where they were given the name of a nun at the convent run by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul. The nun told Lolek's mother that her son is alive, healthy and "spiritually purified." But that is anyone from the convent would tell her.

Mrs. Erlister is now 81, and she still yearns for the child she hasn't seen since 1943. "We do not seek to change his religion or nationality or his relationship to those who sheltered and loved him," explains his younger brother, Jan, who has never seen him. "We only want to add his love, and to relieve our anguish."

## EDITORIAL

# A rough ride on the Holy See

A short hop forward, then a step to the side, followed by a semi-pirouette. . . It's hard to keep track of what the Catholic Church is up to in its relations with other faiths.

Last September, at a meeting held in Prague, Vatican and Jewish representatives reached an accord in which the Church acknowledged that some aspects of Catholic teaching and practice had fostered anti-Semitism, and outlined steps to combat its resurgence in Eastern Europe. Then in December, Pope John Paul II, marking the 25th anniversary of the encyclical *Nostra Aetate*, met with Jewish representatives and endorsed the Prague statement.

And on Sunday, January 20, a pastoral letter signed by all of Poland's Catholic bishops was read from every church pulpit in that country, declaring that "all cases of anti-Semitism are against the spirit of the Gospel...and are contrary to the Christian vision of human dignity," and expressing "sincere regret over all cases of anti-Semitism that were committed at any time or by anyone on Polish soil."

Certainly, all of this is good news for Catholic-Jewish relations, representing as it does a remarkable maturation of the promise first held out when the Second Vatican Council convened a quarter-century ago.

And yet the day after he met with Jewish representatives in the Vatican, Pope John Paul II signed an encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio*, "The Church's Missionary Mandate," calling on churchworkers to engage in increased proselytizing activity. Moreover, the document declared that "interreligious dialogue is a part of the church evangelizing mission," and that "dialogue does not dispense from evangelization."

Then late last month the Vatican roiled troubled waters some more with another muddled clarification of why, after 42 years, it still is not ready to establish official diplomatic relations with Israel.

The gist of the apologia was that even though the Holy See doesn't have diplomatic relations with Israel, that doesn't imply that it doesn't recognize Israel: witness Pope Paul VI's meeting with Israel's president during his 1964 pilgrimage to the Holy Land; various pontiffs' meetings at the Vatican with Israeli political leaders over the past two decades; and Pope John Paul II's remarks to the Vatican diplomatic corps last month that the Holy See supports efforts "to guarantee at this time to the state of Israel the just conditions for its security..."

Still, the statement noted, there are "legal difficulties" holding

up diplomatic relations: "Those are the difficulties, not yet clear, of the presence of Israel in the occupied territories and the relations of the Palestinians, of the annexation of the Holy City of Jerusalem, as well as the situation of the Church in Israel and the territories under their administration."

Such twists and turns—first a little progress, then a little regress—are appropriate reminders that while we've come a long way since Vatican II, we still have far to go.

With respect to *Redemptoris Missio*, a number of commentators, both Catholic and Jewish, have been quick to note that while the encyclical makes specific references to the Church's dialogues with Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam, no mention is made of Judaism; from this they have drawn a measure of comfort. Indeed, an official of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops told the *New York Times* that the encyclical is not meant to address relations between Christianity and its parent religion, Judaism. That relationship, the official said, is in a different category from Christianity's relations with other major faiths.

Perhaps. But we agree with Rabbis A. James Rudin and Leon Klenicki, of the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, respectively, who expressed regret that this distinction had not been made explicit in the document. We will go one step further: even if Jews were explicitly exempted from proselytization within the scope of this encyclical, we would still find it troublesome.

A different matter is the Vatican's non-diplomatic recognition of Israel. This is essentially a problem for the Holy See, not Israel. The Vatican's concerns for the Palestinians, the status of Jerusalem and of the Church in Israel and the territories are genuine. But surely the Vatican's diplomats are experienced enough to know that the only way to have any direct influence on the disposition of any of these issues is to have direct, open and official relations with Israel. Absent diplomatic relations, the Vatican's role in the future of the Middle East is pretty much reduced to whining.

Many solid advances in mutual respect, understanding, appreciation and tolerance have come from the past quarter-century of discussion between the Catholic Church and representatives of world Jewry. There will be many more meetings between Catholic and Jewish officials, and we trust that they will be cordial and productive. But they have their work cut out for them.

# 'Saint Isabella' would reflect poorly on Catholics

By MARC D. ANGEL

**A** CIVILIZATION expresses its deepest feelings and aspirations through the heroes it chooses. These role models epitomize its highest values; they serve as mirrors to the soul of the culture they represent.

In a profound way, heroes reflect the nature of a civilization more accurately than official pronouncements or public statements. For example, if a culture speaks of peace but idealizes warriors, then it is actually war-like. If it preaches the virtues of poverty and self-effacement but prizes heroes who are rich, aggressive and arrogant, it is really materialistic.

Traditional Jewish communities prized pious Torah scholars. This indicates that their real values included piety, education, devotion and selflessness. Nazi Germany's dominant hero was Hitler. This indicates that their deepest values included racist nationalism, xenophobia, brutality, merciless oppression.

Other civilizations have chosen as their major heroes individuals of different types: philosophers, poets, warriors, athletes, saints, merchant princes and others. In each case, the society's choices have revealed its own inner dynamic.

There has been considerable discussion recently about the possibil-

ity of the Catholic Church declaring Queen Isabella of Spain a saint. Jewish and Moslem groups have been understandably upset by this suggestion. After all, Isabella's Catholic zeal showed itself in the establishment of the Inquisition, which led to the systematic torture and execution of thousands of victims whose beliefs were declared "heretical." Isabella was behind the expurgation of Judaism and Islam from Spain.

My ancestors were among those many thousands of Jews expelled from Spain by Isabella and Ferdinand in 1492. I cannot think of her or mention her name without feelings of outrage and disgust. She symbolizes the very worst in religious fanaticism; indeed, it is difficult to imagine a person who could be so cold-hearted, vicious and savage.

In the name of her religion she caused the torture, death and expulsion of innumerable victims. The tears of those victims are an eternal testimony to the wickedness of a very misguided queen.

Catholic historians and religious leaders no doubt know all of this. They do not need Jews and Moslems to remind them of the frightening and dreadful deeds of Isabella. And yet the Catholic Church still entertains the idea of conferring sainthood on her.

The very fact that the suggestion was not dismissed immediately is troubling. That it might actually be accepted is remarkable.

But if the Catholic Church declares Isabella to be a saint, this is not at all an insult to Jews or Moslems, or to Christians who find the idea repulsive. Isabella's cruelty

will not thereby be erased. Her fanaticism and bigotry will not be forgotten. She will not cease to be remembered as an evil, demonic tyrant.

The real issue should not be central to non-Catholics. Isabella will never be counted among our heroes. This is only a pivotal issue for the Catholic Church.

Is Isabella to be declared a hero of faith, a saint? If so, what does this reveal about Catholicism?

If Catholics think her a saint, what does this say of their own deepest feelings and attitudes? Wouldn't the Catholic Church be indicting itself by declaring Isabella a saint?

King Louis IX of 14th century France called for a crusade. He told crusaders that it was proper and virtuous to murder Jews and plunder their property. He is best known as Saint Louis! It is not the Jewish victims who were shamed by this designation of Louis IX; it is the Catholic Church alone that bears the shame. In calling him a saint, what do people say about themselves and about their own values?

And in calling Isabella a saint, what would the Catholic Church be saying about itself and its own values?

As a descendant of victims of her ruthlessness, I would have no rancor if sainthood were conferred on her. I would be saddened by the thought that after all these centuries the poison of Isabella has continued in the veins of the Catholic Church.

And I imagine that this poison will ultimately kill the faith of good Catholics who would be profoundly ashamed to call Isabella a saint.



Rabbi Marc D. Angel, religious leader of the historic Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of New York City, is president of the Rabbinical Council of America.

# FOCUS

Comment/Opinion/Insight

## Queen Isabella of Spain — saint or sinner?

By MARC H. TANENBAUM

**A** SPANISH PRIEST HAS PETITIONED the Vatican to beatify Queen Isabella of Spain as a saint. The universal reaction in both the Jewish and Moslem communities has been one of shock and disbelief.

How can one comprehend the radical disparity in perceptions of Queen Isabella (1451-1504) — and King Ferdinand (1452-1516) — between some Catholics and virtually all Jews? (Moslems will appropriately speak for themselves.)

There are apparent political-religious motives today on the part of some ultra-conservative clergy and their civic allies to try to embarrass the socialist Spanish government and progressive Catholics who have advocated religious freedom for Jews and Protestants. But I am persuaded that this Queen Isabella sainthood project would not have been undertaken had there not existed a pervasive cultural image in Spanish society of this queen as a person of high moral virtue.

That idealized imagery mocks the painfully recorded details of Jewish (and Moslem) history that for centuries has condemned Isabella as the mother of one of the cruelest reigns of terror in human experience.

Let these comments be viewed as hyperbole or Catholic-bashing, let's look briefly at how representative Catholic and Jewish scholarship have differed in their portrayals of Queen Isabella, the Spanish Inquisition and Tomas de Torquemada, the Inquisition's inspector general.

The New Catholic Encyclopedia is an authoritative 14-volume work published in 1967 in the United States to wide critical acclaim. The Jewish Encyclopedia is a milestone 12-volume work published in 1903 that, despite its age, remains a classic.

On Queen Isabella, the Catholic Encyclopedia states: "Isabella I, Queen of Castile ... was devoted to the religious and political unity of Spain, the modern history of which begins with her reign. ... [She] united Castile with Aragon when Ferdinand V, whom she had married in 1469, succeeded to the throne of Aragon in 1479. Together the *reyes Catolicos* [Catholic rulers] suppressed civil war and banditry; reformed the law, the judiciary and the administration; built a regular army; reconquered Granada (1411-1492); and strengthened the monarchy vis-a-vis the nobles, the cities and the Church." (Vol. VII, p. 664)

**O**N THE SPANISH INQUISITION: "In 1480 the Inquisition was established for all of Spain, and under Tomas de Torquemada (1483-1498) it investigated Marranos, whose conversion to Christianity was suspect. In 1492 Jews were required to become Christian — or leave Castile and Aragon, and in 1502 Moslems had to make the same choice."

On the inquisitor general, Torquemada: "Legend has transformed Torquemada into a cruel monster, but he was actually an energetic, uncouth religious, utterly devoid of ambition, who succeeded in giving his own austere character to the new institution. He carried out his mission until his death."

From these descriptions one would conclude that Queen Isabella was a model ruler of impeccable progressive achievements in statecraft and civility. The Spanish Inquisition appears as a somewhat uncomfortable Catholic-Jewish encounter that had little to do with terror, murder and, finally, cruel expulsion. And Torquemada was not "a monster," but simply "uncouth."

From Isabella's depiction, no Catholic reader would have a wisp of a notion of her brutality, her violence and the Inquisition's systematic destruction of the lives of Marranos, faithful Jews and Moors.

Should such a purified image of Queen Isabella prevail in the Vatican, there would be few, if any, obstacles to bestowing sainthood on her royal person.

*Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, for 30 years the director of international and interreligious relations of the American Jewish Committee, and past chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, has retired to write a book on "The Vatican, the Jews and Israel."*



Queen Isabella

Photo/The Bettmann Archive

But there is another Isabella, another Spanish Inquisition and another Torquemada. For those understandings one needs to examine reliable Jewish sources.

The Jewish scholarly literature on this period is vast. For reasons of brevity I confine myself to the Jewish Encyclopedia's account:

"In early September 1480, Isabella, urged by ecclesiastical dignitaries, affixed her signature to the document which established the Inquisition in her dominions.

"The Tribunals of the Inquisition were objects of fear and terror for nearly 300 years. ... The New or Spanish Inquisition, introduced into the united kingdoms of Castile, Aragon and Navarre by Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic, was directed chiefly against converted Jews and against Jews and Moors. During the cruel persecutions, many thousands of Jewish families accepted baptism in order to save their lives. (JE, Vol VI, p. 588 ff.)

"As soon as the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella ascended their respective thrones, steps were taken to segregate the Jews both from the 'conversos' and from their fellow countrymen. At the Cortes of Toledo, in 1480, all Jews were ordered to be separated in special 'barrios' and, at the Cortes of Fraga, two years later, the same law was enforced. In Navarre, they were ordered to be confined in Jewries at night."

On Feb. 6, 1481, the first *auto de fe* at Seville was held with solemn procession at Tablada. Six men and women accused of desecration of the image of Jesus were burned at the stake.

At Seville, there was at least one *auto de fe* every month. Seventeen Marranos were burned at the *quemadero* (stake) on March 26, 1491. Many others were burned a few weeks later. By the following November nearly 300 had perished at stakes, while 79 were condemned to life imprisonment.

Before the end of the 15th century there were nearly a dozen tribunals in Spain that inflicted inhuman torture, suffering and death, as well as depriving their victims of their property.

Significant for the Vatican's present considerations, the inquisitions at Seville and in other cities were so cruel that complaints were made to Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484). On Jan. 23, 1483, this Renaissance pope sent to Queen Isabella "a brief," in which he wrote:

"It seems to us that the queen is urged to institute and con-

firm the Inquisition by ambition and greed for earthly possessions rather than by zeal for the faith and true fear of God." (Llorente, "Histoire Critique de L'Inquisition d'Espagne," p. 165.)

While sanctioning the Spanish Inquisition, the pope repeatedly endeavored in 1482 and 1483 to check its fanatic zeal. He protested the cruelty and illegality of the Inquisition of Seville, and insisted on appointing a man of his own choice to whom Marranos might appeal.

Ferdinand and Isabella rejected the pope's urgent recommendation to treat Marranos more humanely, and they still more strongly disapproved his giving absolution to heretics condemned by the tribunal.

Isabella not only endeavored to exterminate the Jewish people from her own kingdom, but also compelled Italian princes to do the same. She demanded that Henry VIII promise not to allow the Spanish Jews to stay in England. She offered the hand of her daughter to Dom Manuel of Portugal only on the condition that he would expel both the Spanish Marranos and immigrants and the native Portuguese Jews. (Prescott, "History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain.")

In addition to Pope Sixtus' repudiation of their cruelty and inhumanity, there was violent opposition to Isabella and Ferdinand's Inquisition throughout Aragon and Catalonia. The spontaneous reaction came not only from conversos and their relatives, but also from Catholics who considered the Inquisition destructive of their liberties. Catalonian cities also strongly opposed it, and riots broke out at Barcelona, Valencia, Teruel and Lerida. There was so much opposition that the assembled Cortes sent a deputation to protest to Isabella and Ferdinand, who remained inflexible.

In order to assure greater efficiency and rigor in pursuing their victims, Isabella and Ferdinand established a Supreme Council of the Inquisition. On Oct. 17, 1483, they appointed the Dominican Tomas de Torquemada as inquisitor general. (He was then 63 years old and prior of a monastery at Segovia, his native city.)

To give uniformity to the tribunals, Torquemada drafted an inquisitorial constitution, "Compilacion de las Instrucciones," containing some 28 articles. Among its instructions were the order that if a Marrano remained impenitent, the condemned was to be tied to the stake and burned alive. If penitent, he was to be strangled before being placed on the pile.

**D**URING HIS TERM of 15 years, Torquemada condemned more than 8,000 Jews and Marranos to be burned alive, and more than 6,000 dead were destroyed in effigy.

Adding insult to all this pain and suffering, Ferdinand and Isabella engaged in one moral betrayal after another.

In their early years as queen and king, they were surrounded by baptized Jews or their sons who were their trusted confidential advisers and secretaries. The queen's confessor, Fernando de Telavera, was of Jewish descent on his mother's side. He was persecuted as a Marrano by the Inquisition despite his trusted office. Even avowed Jews, foremost among them Don Isaac Abravanel, enjoyed Isabella's confidence until excluded by pressure from the Dominicans.

Ferdinand was the great-grandson of a Jewish woman, the reputedly beautiful Paloma of Toledo. While still heir to the throne, he had many friendly dealings with numerous Marranos. Pedro de la Caballera, a rich and respected Marrano of Saragossa, donated to Ferdinand some 40,000 ducats for a costly necklace that was Ferdinand's bridal gift to Isabella. He made Francisco Sanchez his major domo, and appointed his son-in-law as governor of Aragon.

Nevertheless, under the powerful influence of the Dominicans, Isabella and Ferdinand showed the greatest intolerance to Jews, whether converted or otherwise.

Their ultimate betrayal of Marranos and Jews came two years before the expulsion of "the heretics and infidels." Isabella and Ferdinand promised the Jews of the Moorish kingdom of Granada all the rights they possessed if they would assist the Spanish Christians in overthrowing the existing Moslem rule. Their promise was dated Feb. 11, 1490, only two years before it was publicly repudiated by the expulsion

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# Isabella

*Continued from Page 27)*  
decree.

Several months after the fall of Granada, an expulsion edict was issued against the Jews of Spain by Isabella and Ferdinand on March 11, 1492. It ordered all the Jews of whatever age to leave the kingdom by the last day of July. Scholars testify that at least 200,000 fled the country, leaving behind the gloriously rich culture of the Golden Age and a large number of relatives who had been forced to convert.

There are a number of basic considerations that emerge from confronting the disparate Catholic and Jewish understandings of Queen Isabella, the Spanish Inquisition and its Inspector-General Torquemada.

First, it would be inconceivable for the Vatican to proceed one step further on the beatification process of Queen Isabella without taking fully and seriously into account the most re-

sponsible Jewish — and Moslem — scholarship on the murderous role of the queen in the Spanish Inquisition. Put plainly, she is no more deserving of sainthood than was Adolf Eichmann.

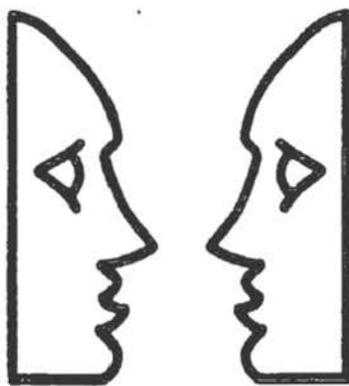
Second, if anything useful is to come out of this Isabella controversy — and before it needlessly inflames Catholic-Jewish relations throughout the world — the Vatican should consider convening a conference of the most competent Catholic, Jewish and Moslem scholars of the period of the Spanish Inquisition. This could help finally close the gap between the idealized and false treatment of Queen Isabella and this entire era in much Catholic teaching and the more realistic and truthful accounts that emerge from the victims' knowledge and experience.

Finally, on a moral and spiritual plane, to beatify Queen Isabella the criminal would make a standing mockery of Vatican Council II and Pope John Paul II's teachings of freedom of religious conscience and human rights.

On Jan. 1, 1991, the World Day of Peace proclaimed by the Vatican, Pope John Paul II preached these words *urbi et orbi* (to the city and the world):

"Today, the many peoples that make up the one human family are increasingly concerned that freedom of conscience, which is essential for the freedom of every human being, be recognized in practice and safeguarded by law.

"A person may not be treated as a kind of object governed solely by forces outside of his or her control. ... No human authority has the right to interfere with a person's conscience. ... Each individual's conscience [must] be respected by everyone else; people must not attempt to impose their own truth on others. The right to profess the truth must always be upheld, but not in a way that involves contempt for those who may think differently. ... Truth imposes itself solely by the force of its truth. To deny an individual complete freedom of conscience — and in particular the freedom to seek the truth — or to attempt to impose a particular way of seeing the truth, constitutes a violation of that individual's most personal rights."



## DIALOGUE

# Religious Pluralism within and beyond the Catholic Church

Cardinal Johannes Willebrands,  
President Emeritus of the Pontifical Council  
for Promoting Christian Unity

► Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, as President Emeritus of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, was invited to take part in the 12th National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations (I), held in Chicago (4-7 Nov 1990). The overall theme of the Conference was 'Face to Face, Christians and Jews, Facing Each Other, Facing the World.' It was in this context that Cardinal Willebrands addressed the topic of religious pluralism since Vatican II.

\* Address given in English at the Twelfth National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations in Chicago 5 November 1990



The U.S. National Workshops on Christian-Jewish Relations have been taking place since 1973. They are held every 18 months, each time in a different city, and are supported by 18 religious organizations dedicated to furthering dialogue. The Chicago Workshop attracted a record 1,500 participants from around the world.

It is both a privilege and a joy for me to be with you this morning, at the Twelfth National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations. I gratefully accepted your invitation to speak on the theme of 'Religious Pluralism and the Second Vatican Council.'

## Defining 'religious' and 'pluralism'

Before entering into this subject, I would like to engage in a brief etymological analysis of 'religious pluralism.' 'Pluralism,' although of Latin origin, is fundamentally an English word. 'Religious,' however, as a basically Latin word, requires a look at its meaning in some classical and Christian Latin authors.

In philosophy the term 'pluralism' was used in opposition to 'monism,' indicating a theory according to which the world is composed of a multiplicity of individual, independent entities which cannot be considered simply as forms or phenomena of a unique and absolute reality.

Used as a sociological concept, we find in Webster's *Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* the following description: "a state of society in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious, or social groups maintain an autonomous participation in and development of their traditional culture or special interest within the confines of a common civilization."

'Religious' pluralism considers the diversity in society according to the relation to God

which a person accepts and confesses. The Latin term *religio* is etymologically derived from *re-legere* or *re-legare* or *re-eligere*, but all three meanings describe a relation to the divine:

Cicero in *De Natura deorum*: "qui omnia quae ad Cultum deorum pertinerent diligenter retractarent et tamquam re-legerent. sunt dicti 'religiosi' (*De Natura deorum*, 2.72).

In the same sense, Saint Isidore of Seville: "*religio a re-legendo ea quae sunt divini cultus*" (*Etymologiae*, X ad litt. R).

Saint Augustine derives *religio* from *re-eligere*: "*Deum re-eligere debemus quem amiseramus negligentes*" (*De Civitate Dei* X, 4), as well as from *re-ligare*: "*Religat nos religio uni omnipotenti Deo*" (*De vera religione*, Cap. LV, n. iii). This etymology had his preference and was also favored by Lactantius. (*Divinae Institutiones* IV, 28).

The word *religio* has always expressed a relationship with the divine, with God and, in Christian literature, a bond with God.

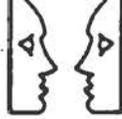
Religious pluralism supposes a diversity among human beings, precisely in what they have in common, namely their relationship with God, their search for God, their way to God. Is their goal, in the end, the same? Have they nothing in common on the way?

The diversities that we find in religious pluralism are very different in content and depth. I would group these into three categories:

1. Religious pluralism among Catholics
2. Religious pluralism among Christians of different communions
3. Religious pluralism among Christian and non-Christian religions.

## 1. Religious pluralism among Catholics

Concerning the first category we may ask the question: is religious pluralism possible within the boundaries of the same church? I raise the



question especially with regard to the Roman Catholic Church. It could be lucidly argued that she is accurately defined by dogma, but also tightly governed by canon law, in such a way that real pluralism seems impossible. At the same time we see, for example, a great variety in religious life for men and women, from monastic life in its various forms and expressions to active engagement, inspired by religious principles, in all fields of human life and society. But we see here a great variety of organic life within the same body rather than real pluralism. This variety of life within the same body has been eloquently described by Saint Paul in his letters to the Romans and to the Corinthians (Rom 12 and 1 Cor 12). The diversity is functional (Rom 12:4), "a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7).

A greater diversity developed from the beginning within the one Christian community between Christians in the East, of Oriental culture, whether they be Greek, Syriac, Chaldean, Coptic, or Armenian, and Christians in the West, of Latin culture. The Christian Church of Jewish origin and tradition had already disappeared as a particular church. A strong process of inculturation caused differences between East and West in all forms and expressions of the Christian faith. The Second Vatican Council speaks of particular churches or churches of the Eastern Rites. The term 'Rite' more specifically indicates the celebration of the sacramental, especially the eucharistic, liturgy. Since "the liturgy is the summit toward which the life and activity of the Church is directed and it is at the same time the fountain from which her power flows" (cf. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 10), the word 'Rite' stands for the Church as a whole. In a wider sense, therefore, the term 'Rite' includes Church order, canon law, discipline, theology, spirituality. It is in this wider sense that the Council normally uses the word.

In a conversation on ecumenical matters, Pope Paul VI once said to me: "Why do you not write something on a typology of the different churches?" I used the opportunity afforded by the invitation to deliver an address in Cambridge (England), at the opening of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 1970. There I briefly developed this idea: "Where there is a long coherent tradition commanding men's love and loyalty, creating and sustaining a harmonious and organic whole of complementary elements, each of which supports and strengthens the other, you have the reality of a *typos*."

I mentioned several such complementary elements, for example:

- a characteristic theological method and approach
- a characteristic liturgical expression
- a spiritual and devotional tradition
- a characteristic canonical discipline.

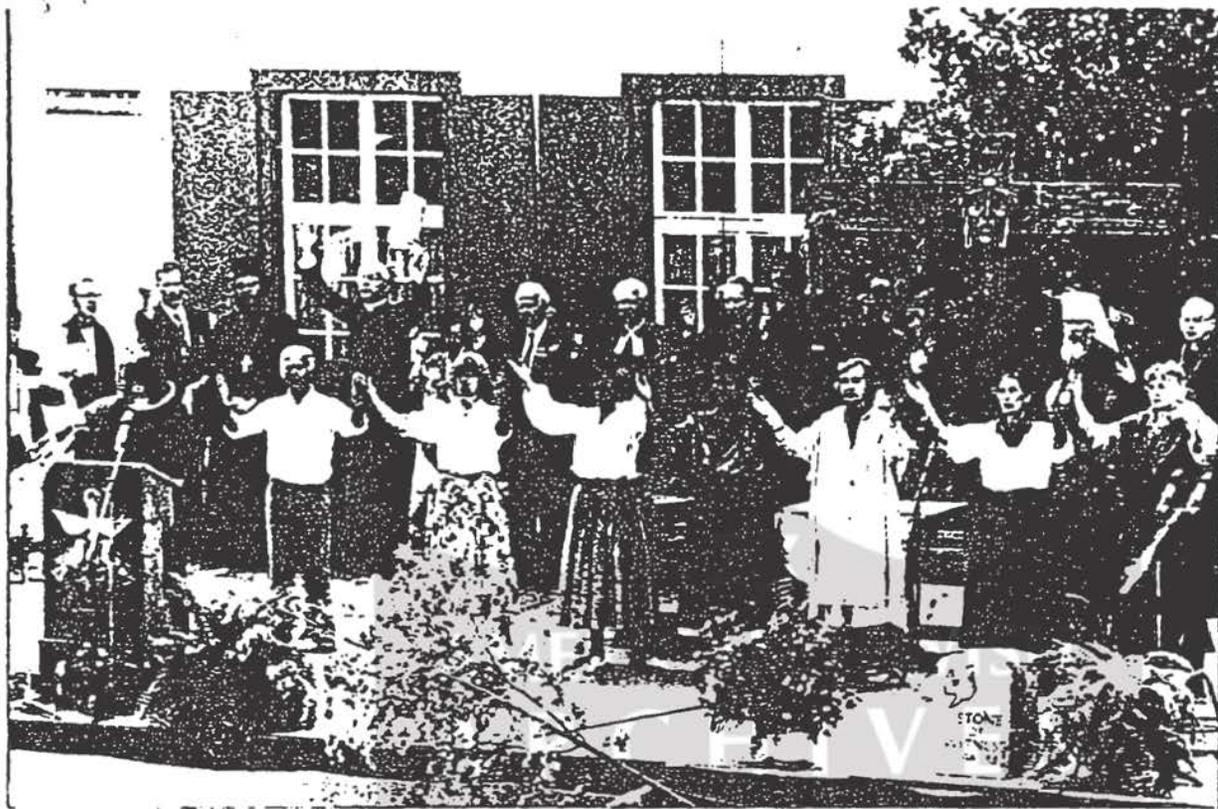
Through the combination of all of these a *typos* can be specified. It goes beyond external differences, it touches people's distinctive ex-

perience of the divine Mystery, their contemplation and action, their joys and sorrows, their art and behavior. For me, this is more than a functional variety. We find here a diversity which causes religious pluralism even within visible boundaries of the one Church. The Second Vatican Council, in the Decree on Ecumenism, writes: "For many centuries, the churches of East and West went their own ways, though a brotherly communion of faith and sacramental life bound them together" (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, 14), and: "the heritage handed down by the apostles was received in different forms and ways" (*ibid.*). In the Constitution on the Church we read: "By divine Providence it has come about that various churches, established in various places by the apostles and their successors, have in the course of time coalesced into several groups, organically united, which, preserving the unity of faith enjoy their own discipline, their own liturgical usage and their own theological and spiritual heritage" (*Lumen Gentium*, 23). These deeply rooted realities, and not territorial or national boundaries, determine a typology of churches. This is the well defined, and at the same time real, possibility of religious pluralism within the ecclesial communion of the Catholic Church. Obviously, the very existence of such diversities which created different *typoi* of churches, "added to external causes and to mutual failure of understanding and charity," and thus, as the Decree on Ecumenism states, they also "set the state for separations" (*UR*, 14). Today the words 'Orthodox' and 'Catholic' indicate two churches which are not in full communion of faith, life and order, with each other. Separation continues to exist. However we should not forget the words of Pope Paul VI, when he said that we remain in a "nearly full communion" (*communio quasi completa*).

## 2. Religious pluralism among Christians of different communions

Here we arrive at the second category of my reflection: religious pluralism in the Christian world. Through the ecumenical movement we have learned to call each other brothers and sisters in Christ, and that is really what we are. At the same time the diversities are many and sometimes they go deep.

Indeed, they are numerous, innumerable. But as a result of the ecumenical movement, Christians have founded worldwide organizations in which they have come together on the basis of a common interpretation of the Gospel. This sense of togetherness has grown into a sense of family, of communion in Christ. Besides the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, we have: the Ancient Eastern Churches of the Armenians, the Copts, the Syrians who live in full communion with each other; the Anglican Communion; the Old Catholics (Union of Utrecht); the Lutheran World Federation; the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (Presby-



• Basel, Switzerland, May 1989: the closing worship of the European Ecumenical Assembly.

terians); the World Methodist Council; the Disciples of Christ; the Baptist World Alliance; the Pentecostals; the Evangelicals.

Most of their member churches are also members of the World Council of Churches. They all confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, but in this very confession they look at each other with both a 'yes' and a 'no'. Saint Paul describes in his lapidary style what should fully unite all Christians: "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." It is significant that in Greek he plays on the threefold gender of the words: "*heis kúrios, mía pistis, hén báphtisma*" the threefold gender of the unique one. Christians have become divided by not responding to the unity which is given in Christ and which he wanted to be achieved among his disciples. "I am the good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father . . . So there shall be one flock and one Shepherd" (Jn 10). The same idea is expressed even more profoundly in the prayer for unity: "that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us" (Jn 17).

The pluralism which we find among Christians is not what defines them as such. In the present pluralism among Christians "the elemental spirits of the world" (cf. Gal 4:3; Col 2:8) still work in us. We oppose different interpretations of Christ against each other and, in this way, dividing ourselves we divide Christ. Paul pointed out this danger to the Corinthians and emotionally asks: "Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor 1:13). Communion in Christ, which for Chris-

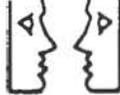
and through Christ, with the Holy Spirit energizing a variety of functions. The highest exemplar and source of this mystery is the unity, in the Trinity of Persons, of one God, the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit" (UR, 2). The variety with which we have been endowed gives life to the body, the Church. All Christians confess Christ as the head of the body, the Church. At the same time, they differ from one another by reason of the nature and seriousness of questions of faith concerning various areas, especially ecclesiology. Therefore, among Christians, while there still exists and lives a real communion, it is very incomplete and not corresponding to the unity of which Christ speaks in the prayer for unity quoted above. There is a Christian religious pluralism which fails to bind us together in full communion. In the one ecumenical movement we are studying together the one apostolic faith, its consequences and demands for full communion.

The Second Vatican Council elaborated Catholic principles of Ecumenism, not a Catholic ecumenism. It recognized and promoted Catholic participation in the ecumenical movement, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit to all Christians: "The Lord of Ages . . . has begun to bestow more generously upon divided Christians remorse over their divisions and a longing for unity" (UR, 1). The Council accepted and promoted religious pluralism starting from our common heritage, urging us to transform differences that separate into that harmonious manifold unity of which Ignatius, the successor of Peter of Antioch and martyr in Rome, speaks so

tians is not a psychological or sentimental attitude, but an objective reality of faith, should bring them to full communion among themselves. However this is very different from uniformity. Paul speaks of "varieties of gifts but the same Spirit . . . varieties of service but the same Lord . . . varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one" (1 Cor 12:4-6). We find here again that mysterious threefold unity: Spirit — Lord — God.

The Council teaches: "This is the sacred mystery of the unity of the Church, in Christ

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beautifully in his letters. Let me give some concrete examples, where, still living in a religious pluralism that causes division and separation, in our time we came from No to Yes. From a period in which the reading of the Holy Scripture was restricted for Catholic lay people and the use of translations made under the auspices of non-Catholic Bible Societies was prohibited (these restrictions were not directed against the Bible, but against Protestants), we have now joined in widespread cooperation in hundreds of projects to prepare common translations, and in fraternal competition in spreading the text of the Bible, in response to the Second Vatican Council's statement: "Easy access to sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful" (*Dei Verbum*, 22). Where formerly common prayer with other Christians was prohibited or restricted to praying the 'Our Father', the Council now says: "in special circumstances such as prayer services 'for unity' and during ecumenical gatherings, it is allowable, indeed desirable, that Catholics should join in prayer with their separated brethren" (*UR*, 8). This practice has developed in a happy way, and since the unity of the Church is a 'sacred mystery,' sharing the Word of God and common prayer are the most effective means for promoting a healthy religious pluralism among Christians in search of full communion.

Other examples could be given, especially on the local and national level, into which I cannot go on this occasion. But it should be clear that religious pluralism exists among Christians, and is considered by Catholics and most Christians with a sense of duty as needing to be transcended. We must move from the present state into full communion of faith, of sacramental life, of ecclesial structure, without destroying a sound pluralism. The Council says: "While preserving unity in essentials, let all members of the Church . . . preserve a proper freedom in the various forms of spiritual life and discipline, in the variety of liturgical rites, and even in the theological elaboration of revealed truth. In all things let charity be exercised" (*UR*, 4).

### 3. Religious pluralism among Christian and non-Christian religions

Religious pluralism among Christians is quite different from pluralism of religions. The question is: how shall we conceive of religious pluralism in all religions or, to be more specific for our purposes: what have all the peoples,

all the nations, belonging to any of the great religions which we find in the world (being all of them creatures of the one God and stemming from one Father), what have they in common in their search for God, on their way to God: what are the elements which we appreciate as 'religious,' so that we can talk not only about pluralism but actually about religious pluralism?

Christianity as a historic reality is a young religion. During the time of the apostles, the followers of Jesus, in Antioch, were called Christians for the first time. Christianity considers itself to be the fulfilment of the promise given by the Creator to the first human couple. Judaism goes back to the origin of the *Torah*. But the first traces of human life and culture which we find in archeological sites go back to the period before the appearance of the Jewish people in history. In this archeological evidence we also have signs of religion.

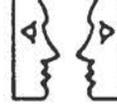
Today we find the great religions spread all over the earth. Besides Christianity we have Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and the popular African traditions, to mention only the greatest and well-known ones. In the great urban centres of all countries you will find all of them.

Recently, Jacob Neusner wrote: "The single most important problem facing religion for the next hundred years, as for the last, is an intellectual one: how to think through difference, how to account, within one's own faith and framework, for the outsider. Indeed, for many outsiders" ("Thinking about the other in religion: It is necessary, but is it possible?" in *Modern Theology* 6 [3 April 1990], pp. 273-285). The



• One of regular meetings between the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Synagogue Council of America: in the center, Rabbi Jack Bemporad (Chairman, SCA Interreligious Affairs Committee) with Cardinal John O'Connor of New York and Archbishop William Keeler of Baltimore.

BONNIE GILLER



problem was put to the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council on more than one occasion (LG. 16; GS. 19,20; the Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to non-Christian Religions), and studies more thoroughly in relation to Judaism, more tentatively regarding the other non-Christian religions.

Cardinal Bea declared in his presentation to the Council: "If I am not mistaken, this is the first time that a Council has solemnly explained the principles (of non-Christian religions)."

The initiative came from Pope John XXIII. Originally it was limited to the Jews. As Apostolic Delegate in Turkey and Bulgaria, he was able to grasp the real meaning of the 'transportation to the East' of the Jews and personally did everything in his power to save Jewish lives. But there was more than sympathy here. When in October 1960 he received a group of American Jews, he greeted them with the words: "I am Joseph, your brother." In a certain way Pope John anticipated the words of Pope John Paul II in the Synagogue of Rome: "You are our most beloved brothers and one might say, in a certain sense our elder brothers."

Later the Declaration was amplified, and also included the great non-Christian religions. Bishops from Africa and Asia insisted on this broader vision. Living together often as a small minority with people of other faiths, they asked for a word of the Church, an appreciation of these religions in relation to Christianity.

The theological principles involved are given by Saint Paul in his first letter to Timothy: "God our Savior desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all... For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle" (1 Tim 2:3-7). In this text three are mentioned: God, Christ Jesus, and the apostle Paul (the Church) in their universal relation to mankind.

A related idea is found in the letter to the Colossians: "He is the image of the invisible God... all things were created through him and for him... In him all things hold together... He is the head of the body, the Church" (Col 1:15-18). The key-words are: 'He' and 'All' affirming the universality of the mission of Christ.

And in the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... In him was life, and the life was the light of all... The true light that enlightens everyone" (Jn 1:1 — Prologue).

Moreover, the principle of universal salvation coming from God as Creator and Savior is testified to in various ways in the books of the Old Testament.

The knowledge of God which we find in other religions is not only based upon natural reason and intelligence (cf. Rom 1:20) but flows also from the light that came to the world in Jesus Christ. The fathers of the first centuries of Church history spoke of the *semina Verbi*, the

seeds of the Word. They lived in a world of non-Christian religions. In his famous discourse at the Areopagus in Athens, Paul addresses himself directly to the pagans, quoting from their own poets and thinkers. It is easy to find beautiful words about the omnipotence and mercifulness of God in the Koran, or to quote verses from the Vedas and Upanishads on the love of God and our unity in him, which sound like Christian mystics or even like the words of Holy Scripture in the New as well as the Old Testament, although they belong to a different context. Are they not the seeds of the Word which bear fruit in the soul of all people? In the Christian view they are mediated by Christ from God to mankind, and by Christ from the human being to God.

The Jews venerate the Scriptures which Christians have received from them and which both, Jews and Christians, venerate as holy and divinely inspired. Therefore, in Judaism we find not only *semina Verbi*, but divine revelation, as it is given in the books of the *Torah* (Pentateuch), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), *Kebuvim* (Hagiographers). They tell us the history of salvation, God speaking to Abraham and Moses. The Constitution on Divine Revelation of the Second Vatican Council teaches: "These books give expression to a lively sense of God, which are a storehouse of sublime teaching on God and of sound wisdom on human life as well as a wonderful treasure of prayers; in them, too, the mystery of our Salvation is present in a hidden way" (DV, 15).

In the Guidelines for implementing the Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, more precisely as it speaks on our relation to Judaism, a very important principle is stated: "Christians... must strive to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience" (NA, Preamble). This applies of course also to our relationships with other religions. Only with respect to such matters of principle can we develop sound relationships and dialogue with 'the other.' It will also make us rethink the truth about ourselves. It will prevent us from thinking about the other solely in terms of ourselves. The Second Vatican Council has laid the foundation of "a Christian theology of the other in terms of the other — or believing Jews" (Neusner, *op.cit.* p. 277). It showed good will and good intentions, and hinted that we should also work in the same direction in regard to other non-Christian religions. The reason for the difference is, on the one hand, the desire of so many fathers of the Council to have a word about this, and, on the other hand, the lack of preparation for it. The Secretariat, now Pontifical Council, for Interreligious Dialogue was created to pursue this task.

After long and sometimes dramatic discussions, the Second Vatican Council issued a Declaration on another principle, which is also important for our subject: the principle of religious liberty. Religious liberty is a natural right of the human person, based on his dignity. It



protects the person against external pressure or coercion. The subject of religious liberty is both the physical human person and moral persons, such as religious communities. Religious liberty demands acknowledgement, respect, protection, and promotion from the authorities. It also has its limits regarding other persons and the common welfare. The children of God, who receive this liberty as a gift from God, their Creator and Savior, through Christ in the Holy Spirit, assert it within the Church as well as within the world, always for the sake of the world and the Church (cf. J. Courtney Murray, in his Introduction to the Declaration in W. M. Abbott, *Documents of Vatican II*, p. 674). The Declaration recorded the theological development from tolerance to respect for the human person in one of his fundamental rights. It opened the way toward new confidence in ecumenical relationships and in relationships with other religions, toward open and respectful dialogue in a common search for religious truth,

which will allow us to cooperate in building a new world and society in which justice and peace will prevail. In a world in which there is pluralism of religions, religious liberty must be acknowledged and practised. At the same time, because all religion comes from God and tends toward him, we may, with his grace in a dialogue of love and truth, come nearer to him and nearer to each other.

The world day of prayer for peace in Assisi (27 October 1986) marked a culminating point in relations between world religions. Prayer is more than dialogue. Although there was no common prayer, except between Christians in the ecumenical prayer service in the cathedral of San Rufino, we stood together in prayer. Assisi provided a solemn and public image of what is possible in religious pluralism. What happened in Assisi continues in a less visible way when all over the world prayers rise to the one God, Father of us all.

LOCHON / GAMMA



• Assisi, 27 October 1986: representatives of the world's religions together for the World Day of Peace.

# Judaism lesson is planned for Polish Catholic clergy

By DEBRA NUSSBAUM COHEN

American rabbis and other Jewish educators hope to travel to Poland by the end of the year to teach Polish Catholic clergy about Judaism, in response to an invitation extended by the Polish Catholic Church.

Bishop Henryk Muszynski, chairman of the Polish Episcopate Commission for Dialogue With Judaism, recently asked the Synagogue Council of America at a meeting here to send rabbis and educators to assist in an intensive education and dialogue campaign to teach Polish Catholics about the relations between Catholics and Jews.

His invitation follows the reading of a pastoral letter in Poland's Catholic churches on Jan. 20 that denounced anti-Semitism and expressed "sincere regret for all incidents" of anti-Semitism by Poles.

The trip is being seen as an opportunity to act on the principles set forth in a declaration signed in September in Prague by Catholic and Jewish religious leaders. The declaration defined anti-Semitism as a sin and called for concrete measures of communication between Catholics and Jews.

Jewish leaders also hope the trip to Poland will serve as a precedent for strengthening relations between Catholics and Jews in other Eastern European nations.

The invitation to Poland is "a very clear and immediate fulfillment of Prague," according to Rabbi Jack Bemporad, chairman of the Synagogue Council's Interreligious Affairs Committee. It is "the first and most important link."

Poland is estimated to have no more than 10,000 Jews remaining from what, at its prewar peak, was a culturally and religiously vibrant community of 3.5 million. Just 2,000 members of the surviving community affiliate with organized Jewish life, according to Muszynski.

The small number of Jews in Po-

land makes the need for a trip by Jewish leaders more acute, say Synagogue Council leaders.

The contribution of Jews to "Polish history must be preserved and transmitted by Jews who are willing to visit," Bemporad said.

Polish intellectuals and theologians have a "genuine but almost macabre moral and intellectual interest" in the Jews, according to Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, a member of the Synagogue Council representing the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly.

They have been devoting an increasing number of seminars and conferences to the subject of Polish Jewish history, and "they found that they were running a number of these without any Jews present," Tanenbaum said. "They were dealing with Jews as an abstraction, almost a caricature."

The invitation to visit grew out of a realization among Polish theologians that "they need to have communication with living Jews," said Tanenbaum. "The Poles know almost nothing about world Jewry."

Tanenbaum added that a successful visit to Poland "could have positive effects in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria."

During his meeting at Synagogue Council headquarters here earlier this month, Bishop Muszynski also spoke of efforts to reorganize the museum at Auschwitz as a state-sponsored museum to "reflect the grim history" and "the tragic role that Jews played in it and its deep meaning for the Jewish people."

"Until now, it has been a museum of anti-Nazi, communist and atheistic propaganda rather than a museum of the true Auschwitz history," he said.

Muszynski expressed hope that the new center would become a vehicle for reconciliation, education and understanding, and that it would have been developed in consultation with Jewish scholars.

*Jewish Telegraphic Agency*

Jewish Week March 22-29, 1991

CONVENT-WEISS Jan. 10, 1991 (480 words)

NEW YORK RABBI SAYS NEW CONVENT CREATED AT BIRKENAU DEATH CAMP

By Rochelle Sidel

Catholic News Service

JERUSALEM (CNS) -- A New York rabbi said he will visit Poland to investigate reports of a new Carmelite convent at the former Nazi death camp of Birkenau and to protest if the convent is not removed.

An American Catholic nun has backed up the reports.

Rabbi Avraham Weiss, head of The Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, N.Y., said he believes the convent at Birkenau, also known as Auschwitz II, is part of a Vatican plan to spread convents to former Nazi concentration camps throughout Europe.

The rabbi led protests against a Carmelite convent at the former Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz, saying it was an attempt to de-Judaize the site where an estimated 2.5 million Jews died.

But a Polish church source at the Vatican said there is no convent at Birkenau. He said two or three nuns do domestic work and live at the parish center, located in a former Nazi building just outside the camp's barbed-wire perimeter.

"We know from very reliable sources of the existence of the convent at Birkenau," Rabbi Weiss told Catholic News Service in Jerusalem. He described it as being in a German administration building overlooking the camp.

"In 100 years the evidence of the camps will have crumbled, and people will believe either that the Holocaust was a Christian tragedy and/or that the Vatican was helping Jews at the camps," he said. "If the new convent is not removed from Birkenau, there is no way I and my group will be silent."

Rabbi Weiss was in Israel leading a primarily Jewish delegation to show solidarity with the Jewish people before the Jan. 15 U.N. deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait or face war. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has said Israel will be his first target if war erupts in the Persian Gulf because Israel has denied statehood to Palestinians.

Dominican Sister Rose Thering, a U.S. nun who accompanied Rabbi Weiss to Israel, said she also knew of a convent at Birkenau. She said there also are Carmelite convents at the sites of Dachau and Sobibor concentration camps.

The parish center at Birkenau was established in 1983 as an extension of the main parish in Oswiecim, the Polish city where Auschwitz is located. The building was used as a candle factory after the war but was later abandoned. The church restored it, adding parish offices and a residence for one permanent priest.

After years of controversy, European Catholic and Jewish leaders agreed to move the Carmelite convent outside Auschwitz to a nearby site of a new interfaith center. Many international Jewish groups said the presence of the Carmelite nuns detracted from the significance of the camp as a place holy to Judaism.

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Contributing to this story was John Thavis at the Vatican.  
....

# Memorial at Auschwitz ... and the case against

Sir, — I think it is deplorable that there is no Jewish monument at Auschwitz. Forty-five years after the liberation of the camp, there is not a single *matzevah* or other Jewish memorial in the open fields there to mark the site of the massacre of our people.

But your report (December 21) on my efforts to do something about this was embarrassingly exaggerated.

The Polish Ministry of Culture did, it is true, last year establish an international council with the brief to examine all aspects of the physical future of Auschwitz, and I was invited to chair a new committee of this council, responsible for information and education.

The hope is that the divisions and misunderstandings that arose in the past, such as the controversy over the Carmelite convent, can be avoided in the future: formal channels now exist that make it possible for all opinions to be listened to.

I should be glad to receive the considered views of anyone with constructive suggestions, and in due course to pass them on for serious discussion with the museum authorities.

In particular, I should be interested to hear from people wishing to work actively with this new committee, whose main purpose is to try to face up to the enormous problem of finding appropriate ways of respectfully commemorating the site into the distant future.

This delicate task is not made any easier through your sensationalist reporting of the "blunders" of Jewish or Catholic authorities. There are no experts on Auschwitz. Auschwitz has no parallel and no precedent. No one can say with any certainty precisely what is the right thing to be done with the place.

Like anyone else, I have my personal views, and the need for a Jewish monument, or monuments, is one of them: for example, to enable individuals to put up their own *matzevah* in memory of family members who were murdered at Auschwitz.

But to suggest that I would "use my new position" to advance just this one cause trivialises the large future agenda of educational challenges that Auschwitz represents.

The establishment of a Jewish monument at Auschwitz is not my own personal mission. On the contrary, I do not agree that something quite so important should be presented to your readers as one person's private initiative or "fight". Should this not be the concern of the Jewish world at large?

To criticise others for their blunders is easy. The real job is to come up with constructive proposals.

The widespread Jewish reac-

tion to the Carmelite convent exemplified the problem only too well. How many of those who protested about the convent gave any real thought to how the building should be used once the nuns had left, or how a brand new Catholic complex — not more than 500 yards from the present site — is going to assuage Jewish fears about being marginalised at Auschwitz, especially given the absence of any comparable Jewish centre?

I am not, by the way, a "top academic"; even if I were, such a status would be irrelevant in the context of Auschwitz. Surely the key to finding constructive solutions for the future of Auschwitz is to approach the whole subject with a sense of humility in front of the almost inexpressible.

(Dr) Jonathan Webber,  
Fellow in Jewish Social Studies,  
Oxford Centre for Postgraduate  
Hebrew Studies,  
Yarnton Manor,  
Yarnton, Oxford.

Sir, — May I appeal to the Jewish public not to support Dr Jonathan Webber, who, it is reported, wishes to encourage a memorial to be built at Auschwitz. I cannot think of a more useless way to spend Jewish money than on monuments built in the countries of Europe in memory of Jews who died during the Holocaust.

Such memorials, as soon as they are erected, become walls upon which the antisemites of today and tomorrow will scribe their hatred of Jews and invite further vandalism.

However beautiful or artistic such memorials are, they can do nothing for the dead victims,

and nothing for those who will become the object of antisemitic abuse.

There is only one place where such memorials to our Jewish dead should be built, and that is Israel. Money from abroad going into Israel will help her economy and provide work for the artists, technicians and labourers who will build and maintain these memorials.

But even in Israel, memorials should serve some useful purpose — such as a beautiful garden or a kindergarten in an impoverished area. Residents and visitors can reflect upon the significance of the garden in which they sit, or the school in which their

children learn and play. In this way, we can remember our dead and at the same time provide something useful for living Jews.

As Dr Webber is so committed to the building of memorials in the diaspora in memory of persecuted Jews, may I suggest a more profound outlet for his energies? He should try to encourage every church in every town in Europe in which Jews were massacred to subscribe to a memorial in Israel. Each memorial should have a plaque upon which is written (for example):

"This garden has been built and will be maintained in perpetuity by the Christian churches of Warsaw in Poland, in memory of the 500,000 Jews who were murdered in that city during 1940-1944. May the Almighty forgive us for our contribution to this inhumanity, and for our sin in forgetting that the Jew we call Jesus Christ our Saviour would also have been a victim."

Dr Webber says that "the Polish authorities had shown great willingness to work with foreign Jews." Are they sufficiently willing to pay for a memorial in Israel?

Over the past few years, there has been much talk by Christian clergymen concerning Christian-Jewish dialogue and reconciliation. Now that it has been admitted how much Christian theology has contributed to the persecution of Jews, it is surely not unreasonable to expect the church theologians to do a little

## WAITING TO REACH THE HIGHEST RUNG ON THE HIERARCHICAL LADDER

By Agostino Bono

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- An archbishop is near the top of the institutional church's hierarchical ladder. But sometimes being an archbishop is a rung short of what's needed.

Such is the case of Italian Archbishop Angelo Sodano, the church's most powerful official after Pope John Paul II.

Under church rules, the 63-year-old archbishop's job is reserved to a cardinal. So, as the Vatican winter progresses, rumors snowball that the pope is about to announce new members for the College of Cardinals, with Archbishop Sodano topping the list.

Speculation started Dec. 1 when the pope named Archbishop Sodano to succeed Cardinal Agostino Casaroli as papal secretary of state, the pope's chief assistant in running the universal affairs of the Catholic Church.

"Pastor Bonus," the apostolic constitution containing the rules for the Roman Curia, the church's central administrative offices, gives the full title as "Cardinal Secretary of State."

Currently, Archbishop Sodano's formal title is pro-secretary of state, meaning that he is acting head of the secretariat. Technically, his job is not permanent until he moves into the cardinal ranks.

A practical but unspoken reason for requiring the secretary of state to be a cardinal is that he often gives orders to other cardinals. In a hierarchical structure, barking out instructions is difficult when looking upward at the next rung on the ladder.

A case in point is Cardinal Casaroli, also an archbishop when the pope appointed him on April 28, 1979. Two months later, on June 30, he and 13 others were inducted into the College of Cardinals.

Fueling the speculation is the fact that another high-ranking Vatican official is in the same boat with Archbishop Sodano: Italian Archbishop Pio Laghi, 68, named to head the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education last April 6. Church rules also require that prefects of congregations be cardinals. Since taking office, Archbishop Laghi has had the title of pro-prefect.

Two other high-ranking Vatican officials are also in line for promotion, although rules do not require that their jobs go to cardinals. They are Australian Archbishop Edward Cassidy, 66, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and Italian Archbishop Vincenzo Fagiolo, 72, president of the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts.

Traditionally, popes put cardinals at the heads of these offices as a sign of the importance of their work.

As the new year began, the pope could name up to 18 cardinals to the College of Cardinals. Church rules limit the college to 120 members under the age of 80. These are the people eligible to elect a pope. There is no limit on the number of cardinals over 80.

There are currently 142 cardinals, including 102 under 80.

The record number is 161, established in 1988.

Besides top-level curial officials, the title of cardinal is given to heads of major archdioceses around the world. This means that with the current vacancies, the pope could boost the heads of many sees that traditionally have been headed by cardinals.

It would also allow him to strengthen hierarchies -- by privileging them with a cardinal -- in newly emerging mission lands where Catholicism is starting to take hold.

The same is true in the Polish pope's backyard of Eastern Europe, where centuries-old but institutionally weakened churches are digging out from under the rubble of communist rule.

For Vatican watchers, speculating about the need to name cardinals is relatively easy. The real guessing game is figuring out when the pope will make the announcement.

The pope keeps the date a close secret, doing most of the preparatory work himself. Vatican officials say that the Secretariat of State does not usually find out until four days before the announcement.

During his 12-year pontificate, the pope has named cardinals four times. Each time he has announced the names about a month before the date of the consistory for their formal induction.

The time lag allows cardinals-designate to clear their calendars to attend the Vatican ceremonies. It also gives their friends and relatives lead time to organize group trips to witness the ceremonies.

The pope has favored the middle of the year for holding consistories. Two have been in June and one in May. Yet May and June of this year are busy times, with two foreign trips and publication of one social encyclical planned.

April, however, is fairly free on the pope's calendar. So is February up to Ash Wednesday, Feb. 13, when Lent begins. Then much of the pope's time becomes dedicated to a one-week spiritual retreat and the liturgical ceremonies leading to Easter.

POPE-PLAN Jan. 14, 1991 (890 words) With photos.

POPE URGES MIDEAST CONFERENCE, IRAQI WITHDRAWAL

By Agostino Bono

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- As the Persian Gulf crisis swiftly moved toward war, Pope John Paul II proposed that Iraq withdraw from Kuwait and its opponents arrange an international peace conference on the Middle East.

The pope capped several days of hectic diplomatic activity by urging Iraq and its U.S.-led opposition to reach a last-minute solution through "generous proposals for peace."

The pope offered his peace plan Jan. 13 during his midday Angelus talk. The proposal came as the Jan. 15 U.N. deadline for Iraq's withdrawal approached without any sign that it would comply or that the United States would reconsider using force to dislodge Iraqi troops from oil-rich Kuwait.

A U.N. Security Council resolution authorizes use of military force if Iraq fails to meet the deadline.

In related activities, the pope sent a telegram encouraging efforts by U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to defuse the crisis in direct talks with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and made a strong peace appeal to more than 100 ambassadors representing countries with diplomatic ties to the Vatican.

However, Perez de Cuellar, who had been instrumental in negotiating an end to the eight-year Iran-Iraq war, said that his two-and-one-half hour talk with Saddam Jan. 13 had failed to achieve a peaceful agreement. He said on his return to U.N. headquarters in New York Jan 14 that he had nearly given up hope for peace and that Saddam remained adamant about keeping Kuwait.

Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, in charge of Vatican relations with states, met separately Jan. 11 with the U.S. and Iraqi ambassadors. All sides confirmed the meeting without saying what was discussed.

The activities came as Iraq and the United States hardened their positions.

Saddam has threatened to use chemical and biological weapons if his troops are attacked. U.S. President George Bush has said U.S. military action would be massive, aimed at ending the conflict quickly.

"A war would not resolve the problems, only aggravate them," the pope said Jan. 13 from his apartment balcony window overlooking St. Peter's Square.

"How many civilians, how many babies, how many women, how many elderly people would be innocent victims?" he said.

The pope asked Iraq to "make an act of peace which would do it honor before history."

The U.S.-led coalition was asked "in turn, to organize a peace conference contributing to the resolution of all the problems of living peacefully in the Middle East."

"Save humanity the tragic experience of a new war," he said.

In the square were 30,000 people who answered a call by the Italian bishops to pray for peace with the pope. The bishops declared Jan. 13 a national day of prayer for peace. Similar prayer days were organized by hierarchies in the Holy Land, the United States and Europe.

The pope's plan was similar to that voiced by several Western European governments which are part of the U.S. coalition. It was the first time the pope directly linked withdrawal to a peace conference.

Since the crisis started with Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of neighboring Kuwait, the pope has asked the international community to give equal attention to similar situations in Lebanon and in Israeli-occupied territories. At the same time, he has repeatedly opposed the invasion as a violation of international law, while criticizing any military solution to the crisis.

Saddam often has linked a withdrawal to resolving other Mideast problems, especially the situation of Palestinians in Israeli-occupied territories. The United States consistently has refused any linkage, saying Saddam did not invade Kuwait to further the Palestinian cause.

In a major speech to foreign diplomats Jan. 12, the pope said the Persian Gulf has been in a "state of siege" since August.

"One cannot accept that the law of the strongest be brutally imposed on the weakest," he said.

Yet military action to end the Iraqi occupation is not the answer because this would be "especially murderous, without taking into account the ecological, political, economic and strategic consequences," he added.

"Peace obtained by arms can only prepare new violence if it leaves intact the profound causes in this part of the world," he said.

"More than ever, this is the time for dialogue, negotiations and the preeminence of international law," he said.

The pope did not call for an international conference in his speech to the diplomats, but he outlined solutions to problems in Lebanon and the Israeli-occupied territories.

"It is time that all the non-Lebanese armed forces commit themselves to evacuating national territory" allowing the Lebanese to decide their future in keeping with their "religious and cultural pluralism," he said.

The pope said Palestinians are "gravely tried and unjustly treated." He favored their "demand to be heard" but opposed the use of violence to further their cause.

Negotiations are needed to assure "undeniable rights" to Palestinians while "equally guaranteeing" security for Israel, he said.

On Jan. 11, the pope expressed hope to Perez de Cuellar that the U.N. official's peace efforts in Iraq "find a favorable echo."

As he left Iraq Jan. 13, Perez de Cuellar said "God only knows if there will be peace or war in the Gulf."



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POPE URGES SOLUTION FOR PALESTINIANS  
By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Jan. 14 (JTA) -- Pope John Paul II, in addresses to thousands this past weekend, coupled calls for peace in the Persian Gulf with appeals on behalf of the "sorely tried" Palestinian people.

Addressing thousands in St. Peter's Square who were gathered Sunday for a special "day of prayers for peace," the pontiff appealed to Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait in "a gesture of peace that would bring it honor in history."

On Saturday, addressing diplomats accredited to the Vatican, including the U.S. and Iraqi ambassadors, the pope said "peace is still possible."

But he said it must embrace a solution of the Palestinian question.

"For decades, the Palestinian people has been sorely tried and unjustly treated," he said.

"This is testified by the hundreds of thousands of refugees dispersed in the region and in other parts of the world, as by  
--More--

the situation of the inhabitants of Jordan and Gaza.

"This people asks to be heard, even if it must be recognized that some Palestinian groups have chosen to use unacceptable and condemnable methods to achieve this," the pope said.

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# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

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Geneva, 9th January 1991

Dr. Emilio Castro  
General Secretary  
World Council of Churches  
P.O.Box 2100  
1211 Geneva 2

Dear Dr. Castro,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your kind letter of 3 January and to thank you for having extended to IJCIC an invitation to send one or two observers to the forthcoming Seventh Assembly of the WCC which will be held in Canberra, Australia, from 7-20 February 1991. I shall not fail to inform the Assembly office of the names of the observers who will be chosen to represent us.

Let me tell you also that I was pleased that I had the opportunity, during my recent visit to your office, of sharing with you some of our major concerns.

I told you on this occasion how much we appreciated your statement of 8 August 1990 on the new wave of antisemitism in Europe. But I also shared with you our deep anxieties which this new development had aroused in all Jewish communities and our strong feeling that in view of the seriousness of the situation, particularly in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the World Council of Churches Assembly in Canberra should speak out unequivocally and make a major pronouncement on the dangers of this resurgence of antisemitism.

Indeed we are deeply concerned about the new wave of antisemitism which is spreading all over Central and Eastern Europe where the old demons of extreme nationalism, chauvinism and religious and national intolerance are raising their heads again and this at a moment when the whole of Eastern Europe has reconquered its freedom after a long period of Stalinist oppression. We face again the same violent slogans and threats which after the terrible experience of the Shoah one had hoped were definitely behind us.

We are again accused of having killed Christ, of having assassinated the Tsar, of being responsible for the Bolchevik revolution, of trying to dominate the world, briefly, of being responsible for every evil in the world; and these slogans are even penetrating intellectual circles which in the past resisted them. All this is happening less than 50 years after the greatest tragedy that ever befell the Jewish people and indeed humanity, and which was responsible for the death of one third of our people.

We are still under the trauma of our recent history and we have not forgotten how lonely and abandoned we were by the entire world in the hour of our greatest need.

We simply cannot witness once again such threatening developments in silence. We believe sincerely that both the State authorities and the great spiritual forces of the world are duty-bound to react, to issue a strong warning to the world, and to initiate specific action to halt this development.

I would like to remind you in this connection of the programme of action contained in the statement of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee in Prague, of 6 September 1990, which I left with you.

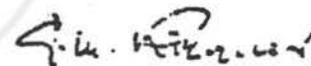
We are certainly no less concerned than you are with the situation in the Middle East. This however should not be used as an alibi to justify hatred and prejudice, all the more so as the wrongs there are clearly not on one side only.

For your information I am enclosing a careful survey on recent antisemitic developments by my colleague Dr. Stephen J. Roth, until recently Director of the Institute of Jewish Affairs. You will see that this is an academic paper written with great restraint.

To be quite frank, I long hesitated before sharing these thoughts with you in a formal way. For this is an issue which should not really have needed our intervention. It rather calls for a spontaneous response of your Assembly born out of the deep moral commitments of Christian consciousness.

With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Gerhart M. Riegner  
Co-Chairman, Governing Board  
World Jewish Congress

Encl.



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Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner,  
World Jewish Congress,  
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3 January 1991

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

Dear Dr. Riegner,

Thank you for your visit and the opportunity we had to share with you our mutual concerns.

The Seventh Assembly of the WCC will be held in Canberra, Australia, from 7-20 February 1991. The theme of the Assembly is: "Come, Holy Spirit - Renew the Whole Creation". We are expecting about 3000 participants, including 15 persons from other faith traditions who would come as guests. In view of the radical changes taking place in the world, we see this Assembly as a significant event in the life of the Council, giving important guidelines to future work.

A number of ecumenical and interfaith organizations are sending observers to the Assembly and I am pleased to extend to the IJCIC, through you, an invitation to send one or two observers.

I am informed by the Assembly office that they would need to arrange their own travel and that accommodation has to be found off campus. However, I am enclosing some accommodation booking forms which will help in finding suitable accommodation. These forms should be returned directly to Australia. Should further assistance be needed, do let us know.

Please inform our Assembly office in Geneva of the name/s of the persons, who should be registered as observers.

With every greeting.

Yours sincerely,

Emilio Castro  
General Secretary

Encl.

## ANTISEMITISM IN A CHANGING WORLD

Paper prepared for the Encyclopaedia Judaica Yearbook

by

Dr Stephen J Roth

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

For distribution to the participants of the  
Institute of Jewish Affairs Seminar

*The Resurgence of Antisemitism: Assessments and Strategies*

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## Antisemitism in a Changing World

A survey of antisemitism figures invariably in any report on the face of world Jewry. This is inevitable. Antisemitism has been such a permanent feature in Jewish Diaspora history that we have become accustomed to looking at the relationship of Jews to their non-Jewish environment entirely under the aspect of antisemitism. When relations are bad or tense, whatever the cause (religious conflict, the Middle East situation) we speak of an increase of antisemitism; when they are good or peaceful, we describe it as an absence or decline of Jew-hatred. It is a one-dimensional perspective that rather simplifies the problems, but it has been well suited as an explanation for the Jewish condition throughout the ages.

At a time of revolutionary changes, as experienced in the last eighteen months or so, the condition of the Jews cannot escape radical shifts and it would be convenient to assess the effect in terms of the antisemitism it has engendered or dampened. But that would not be a true assessment. Antisemitism may have increased in one country or another, but sometimes this could have happened only through other compensatory developments which, on balance, may leave the Jews in a better position than they were in before - or vice versa. These balancing factors have to be taken into account.

An increase in antisemitism could indeed be witnessed in the "breaking out" of freedom in Eastern Europe, in the demolition of communist totalitarianism - just as the opposite happened in 1917 in Russia and in 1948-49 in the other East European countries when Communism came to power. It is slightly ironic that just at the time when through the coming down of the Iron Curtain and Berlin Wall the trend is toward a unification of East and West, we shall have to make a clear separation of East and West in our analysis of the Jewish position, but this is due to the fact that the revolution has not yet run its full course, and the East has not yet become West - certainly not for the Jews.

### In the Soviet Union

Nowhere can this be seen better than in the Soviet Union, with its large Jewish population (the official figure according to the January 1989 census is 1,449,117 but it is widely believed that the truth is nearer to the two-to-three million mark). *Glasnost* and *perestroika* made the appearance of openly antisemitic organisations possible - something that was unimaginable during the tight Communist rule. But was there no antisemitism before? Even if one takes the charitable, or possibly sophisticated view that restrictions on the right to emigrate, on Jewish culture, on the teaching of Hebrew etc. which characterised Jewish existence before Gorbachev, were not simply expressions of antisemitism but part of a complex set of Communist policies, there was the open and crude vilification of Jews and Judaism in Stuermer-type books and press; there was undisguised anti-Jewish discrimination in jobs and admission to Universities; there was harrassment and imprisonment of Jewish activists. These, among other affronts - not to speak of the murderous acts in the Stalin era - could not be explained except in terms of sheer primitive antisemitism. The basic difference was that previous antisemitism was executed or initiated by the government, whereas present antisemitism comes from the "people".

Under the new regime of freedom to speak, organise and demonstrate, there emerged popular organisations with a mixture of extreme Right and Stalinist ideas. ultra-nationalistic and chauvinistic, Slavophile, anti-Western, xenophobic, anti-democratic and anti-reform. Most of them are antisemitic and some reminiscent of the Nazis or a criminal mafia, with a primeval ideology. The best known among them is *Pamyat* (Memory) which was founded in 1983 but first

attracted real attention in 1987 when they marched on the Moscow city council. They engage in the most vulgar attacks on Jews, threatening with pogroms and engaging in anti-Jewish demonstrations, disruption of meetings and other forms of hooliganism. More sophisticated and therefore intellectually dangerous are bodies like *Otechestvo* (Homeland), *Sojus patriotu* (League of Patriots), the Russian Writers' Union, the all-Russian cultural fund and others who are similar to the Nazi *völkisch* attitude and who regard any form of pluralism as Russophobia. In June 1990 these nationalist groups combined into a body known as *Edinenie* (Unification). The revival of nationalism is largely coupled with the revival of Christianity, and in this sense the Orthodox Church is also a source of antisemitism; many of the clerics on the lower level are actively involved with *Pamyat*.

There have been several incidents of antisemitic vandalism. On 16 August 1990 the main Moscow Synagogue in Archipova Street was daubed with swastikas - the first time this has ever happened. In the autumn of 1990 the central Jewish organisation *Vaad* reported that 150 Jewish graves in eleven cities had been desecrated. There have been two cases of murder of Jews, but there is no conclusive evidence that these were deliberate anti-Jewish acts.

The "antisemitism of the street" to which Soviet Jews, notwithstanding all their previous troubles, have been unaccustomed, has struck panic and hysteria among them. It is one of the main causes, though by no means the sole cause, of their mass exodus. Other potent reasons are the fear of a collapse of the Gorbachev regime with a subsequent military dictatorship, a return to orthodox Communism or simply chaos and civil war to follow; the instability of the present regime in Central Asia and other areas of heightened national tensions; and the economic crisis, along with the resulting popular dissatisfaction about which Jews are more nervous than others since the antisemitic movements blame the Jews for all the ills of the Soviet Union, past and present. Jews miss the continuity and stability of Brezhnev's Russia - unpleasant though it may have been - and fear that, the future being so unpredictable, they may miss the last train or aeroplane.

How popular actually is the antisemitic mood and its main proponent, *Pamyat*? We know of two enquiries by the Institute of Sociology of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The first, sponsored by the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, was conducted among 1,000 Muscovites in April 1989 and showed that 79 per cent of the respondents had heard of *Pamyat* and that 3 per cent were "very positive" towards it. Another 28 per cent were positive or partly positive, while 47 per cent were negative. Not unexpectedly the less educated workers and people with lower incomes judged *Pamyat* at least partly positively; a third of the supporters were below 30. The second poll, also in Moscow, conducted in February/March 1990 and commissioned by the American Jewish Committee and the Science Foundation of Houston University, inquired into the degree of support for antisemitism. 42 per cent thought antisemitism was unchanged, while 48 per cent saw it increasing. 23 per cent considered Jews to be too influential, while the question of whether the respondents liked or disliked Jews divided them equally - 18 per cent each way. 63 per cent disliked *Pamyat* and 86 to 90 per cent felt that the Government should ensure equal rights to Jews.

We also have the limited evidence of elections, in which the right wing fared badly. The Bloc of Social-Patriotic Movements in Russia, a coalition of all the ultra-nationalist movements with the exception of *Pamyat*, contested the elections to the Congress of People's Deputies (Parliament) and the Moscow City Council last summer: only two of their candidates were elected to Parliament and twelve to the City Council.

The Government-approved press regularly denounces *Pamyat* and its ilk. There were some allegations of cooperation between the KGB and *Pamyat*, but it would seem that this existed only in the very early period.

The political leaders of the Soviet Union have so far not spoken up properly against the rise in antisemitism. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnaze promised American Jews action against the perpetrators of any antisemitic acts: Boris Yeltsin, in a TV interview following his election victory in May 1990, deplored antisemitism and declared that organisations with fascist policies would not be permitted to operate. But a strong and impressive statement by Mikhail Gorbachev that could influence public opinion is still outstanding. So far he has limited himself to a statement on 11 April 1990 saying "We should not let national feelings run rampant; neither chauvinism, antisemitism or any other 'ism'". A more forthcoming expression was urged on Gorbachev by 250 members of the Soviet Parliament and also in a telegram from 300 Moscow writers, both in 1989, and in the *Vaad's* letter of September 1990 in which, referring to the swastika daubing and cemetery desecrations, the Jewish leaders invited Gorbachev to emulate the firm action of his French counterpart Mitterrand after the events in Carpentras.

Soviet law enables the authorities to curb antisemitism. "Advocacy of racial hostility or contempt" and "incitement of hostility or hatred on religious grounds" are prohibited by Articles 36(3) and 52(1) respectively of the Constitution of the USSR. Article 74 of the RSFSR Criminal Code outlaws "deliberate actions aimed at inciting racial enmity or dissension". After constant urging, this law was finally applied in the case of the *Pamyat* member Konstantin Smirnov Ostashvili who, with some 50 *Pamyatniks*, broke up the meeting of the *April* Writers' Group (the democratic faction of the Soviet Writers' Union) in Moscow on 16 January 1990. Ostashvili was sentenced to two years' labour camp on 12 October 1990. It is the first prosecution of this nature, and as such became a *cause célèbre*, widely discussed - and approved of - in the Soviet media. However, the organisation still remained unmolested. This can now be remedied by the new Law on Public Associations, one of *perestroika's* human rights laws, adopted on 16 October 1990; it stipulates that associations whose purpose or *modus operandi* is "the incitement of...racial, national and religious discord" are prohibited (Article 3(2)). At the "Human Dimension" meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in Copenhagen in June 1990 the Soviet delegation was one of the sponsors of the outlawing of incitement to racial violence by that body, referring, *expressis verbis*, to antisemitism.

One should add that previous anti-Jewish discrimination in jobs, university admissions etc. has practically disappeared. Indeed, one sees a kind of compensatory policy for past sins in favour of Jewish admission to institutes of higher learning.

All this, together with the virtual freedom of emigration, could well have led foreign observers to the conclusion that Soviet Jews today, under a government which condemns antisemitism, are better off than they were under the former regime which sponsored an antisemitic campaign. But Soviet Jews feel differently. They know the long-standing, endemic antisemitism of the Soviet people and leave in masses. It is more the fear of antisemitism than the experience that makes them leave. This fear applies to the future, to which their political antennae are finely tuned. They are leaving before antisemitism has a chance to really create havoc. In the past, Jews mostly left too late.

## Eastern Europe

The situation of East European Jewry shows some similarities to the Soviet situation. There, too, the new freedom of expression has led to antisemitism appearing both in the street and in the political arena, but nobody is able to tell whether this is an increased or perhaps even new antisemitism or simply the old latent antisemites who have come out of the closet.

The situation varies, of course, from country to country. The largest Jewish community - 80,000 to 100,000 by popular estimate - live in Hungary, which is also the country most advanced on the road to democracy. Antisemitism has deep roots in the population which have only been nurtured by the fact that the most prominent leaders of Hungary's Stalinist regime under Rákosi were Jews.

Since liberation from Communism there have been a great number of openly antisemitic atrocities: Nazi slogans on the walls, swastika daubing of synagogues and of the statue of Raoul Wallenberg, vandalism in cemeteries week by week, culminating in a recent Carpentras-type exhumation and desecration of twelve corpses, innumerable abusive and threatening letters and phone calls to Jewish institutions and prominent Jews, the pelting of the new Jewish school with rotten eggs and tomatoes, a stink bomb thrown into a Jewish baker's shop, etc. They cause fear and unease among Hungarian Jews, but it is not panic on the Russian scale because they do not fear a collapse of the regime as in the Soviet Union. What Jews in Hungary do fear is that with the inevitable worsening of the economic crisis Jews will be made the scapegoats both for the past sins of the Communist regime and for insufficient help from abroad by "international Jewish capital".

The authorities react to these breaches of law and order. Probably the most positively valued gesture was the decision taken that in the process of excluding all political crimes from the Penal Code, one should be kept: incitement to racial or religious hatred. It is on this basis that a prosecution has now been initiated against a blatantly antisemitic journal *Szent Korona* (Holy Crown - the symbol of both nationhood and Christianity in Hungary). Government leaders have repeatedly condemned antisemitism. Prime Minister Josef Antall, in his speech at the inauguration of a memorial for the victims of the Shoah in July 1990, pledged that all anti-Jewish activities would be stamped out by the government. President Arpad Goencz made similar declarations. But much more resolute statements would be needed to affect the political culture, mainly statements not to Jewish audiences but in parliament, in the government's programmatic declarations and on similar state occasions.

The antisemitic mood became particularly visible during the elections to parliament in March-April 1990 and again during the municipal elections in September-October 1990. This was due to the fact that one of the main parties, the Free Democratic Alliance (SzDSz), is to a large extent led by Jews (many of them half-Jews or baptised but still Jews in the eyes of the public) and was therefore dubbed "the Jewish party". It is a left-of-centre liberal party with a strong urban base, run by intellectuals, academics, writers and media people - all occupations in which Jews are prominent. Against them stood the other contender - and victor in the parliamentary elections - the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), a right-of-centre conservative party which emphasises its Christian national (or nationalist) character. Election posters of the Free Democrats were frequently smeared with swastikas or Magen David signs. The bitter campaigns revived some old political slogans. One was the populist/urbanist division of the 1930s, in which the populists adopted a racist undertone in their efforts to contrast themselves to the more cosmopolitan urban population with its strong Jewish element. The other was the Christian designation of some parties and

policies, disturbing to Jews and liberals since in the Horthy era it simply meant the exclusion of Jews.

Thus an antisemitism on the political and ideological level came to the fore which in the long run is more poisonous than the antisemitism of the hooligans. Its targets are mainly the numerous Jews in the media who have the greatest facility to preach their liberal creed - and in this way to support the opposition. Well known writers in the camp of Democratic Forum have peppered their attacks on the media people with thinly-veiled antisemitism referring to "aliens", "cosmopolitans", to the "oppressive rule of a tiny minority" which stand in contrast to the "True Magyars", the people with a "völkisch-national backbone". These writers question whether Jews can ever be good Hungarians and say that not only can Jews not assimilate but that they are actually trying to assimilate the Magyars. Such statements have provoked a vibrant debate in the press, going on for many weeks - to the great discomfort of the Jews. For forty years Jews in Hungary have grown used to the fact that "the Jewish question" could not even be mentioned. They feel uneasy at the great attention focused on them now and would very much welcome a benign neglect.

The reaction of a large part of the Hungarian intellectuals is highly positive. In response to the latest press attacks on the Jews ninety-nine Christian intellectuals wrote to the President of the State urging him to stand up energetically against the attempted denial of equality to some citizens on racial or religious grounds.

Similar phenomena are noticeable in Poland, with the great distinction that there it is an "antisemitism without Jews". The total number of identified Jews is about 5,000. Some say that figure might be doubled or trebled to include all the crypto-Jews; on the other hand the main Jewish body, the Cultural and Social Association, has only 1,500 registered members. Certainly Jews as a group do not play any role in the country - only as a reminder of a partly glorious and partly tragic history. But individual Jews (mainly people of Jewish origin) do.

The Jewish question has always been at the centre of the political debate between warring factions. This was the case in 1968, and again in 1980-81 as well as during the period of martial law. The right-wingers or national-Communists adopted the device of identifying their enemies as Jews, referring to their origin and former name and conveniently labelling as Jewish also all non-Jews whom they wanted to discredit.

For some time it looked as if the *Solidarność* (Solidarity) movement had brought a new spirit. Within it Jewish intellectuals and dissidents could work happily side by side with progressive Catholics and secular non-Communists. Except for occasional lapses, Solidarity started out free from anti-Jewish bias and even protested against any sign of antisemitism, including the famous homily of Cardinal Jozef Glemp, the Primate of Poland, in August 1989, in which he attacked the Jews over the issue of the Carmelite convent in Auschwitz. However, the split in Solidarity in the summer of 1990 created a new situation. The centre-right bloc headed by Lech Walesa has adopted a rather primitive populist nationalism combined with devout Christianity and is fighting the centre-left led by Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki by the old method of identifying (or falsely labelling) the leftists as Jews. The main targets are Bronislaw Geremek, Chairman of Solidarity's parliamentary caucus, and Adam Michnik, editor of the influential daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Walesa ultimately succeeded in removing both from their positions). Jews are accused of wishing to dominate Poland. Walesa personally distanced himself from antisemitism but does not interfere with those of his supporters who actively employ it.

Solidarity may have discovered the political expediency of a right-wing stance only lately. But there are several groups which have been ultra-right and antisemitic from the outset. Most influential among them are the Grünwald Patriotic Association and the Polish National Party. In the municipal elections of 27 March 1990, over twenty of the one hundred participating parties advocated antisemitic or extreme nationalist ideas - though most of these were marginal groups. These right-wingers are now supporting Walesa's Solidarity faction.

A special feature of Polish life is the overwhelming influence of the Catholic Church. It always had an antisemitic streak, but in the 1970s and 80s many Catholic intellectuals took a sympathetic stand in the debate which started in those years over the moral responsibility of Poles in the Shoah; many supported the revival of Jewish cultural activities or helped to restore neglected Jewish cemeteries. Most of this has been undermined by the unfortunate debate over the Auschwitz convent, which has poisoned Jewish relationships with the Church and with the Polish population at large.

There is no shortage of anti-Jewish vandalism. Many cemeteries (including the 16th century cemetery in Lublin) have been desecrated. Several synagogues and communal buildings have been daubed (on the building of the Jewish State Theatre in Warsaw the graffiti added "For the Monastery!"); the new memorial for Jewish victims in Kielce has been profaned; Jewish meetings are broken up with smoke bombs; and numerous antisemitic tracts are being distributed, including two new editions of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

On the basis of various public opinion polls it would appear that thirty per cent of the population maintains outspoken anti-Jewish prejudices.

Romania still has a sizeable Jewish population; some estimates put it as high as 20,000, though many question that figure. It is also a country with strong antisemitic traditions, but these have not yet come to the fore to their full extent because in Romania the "liberalisation" has really not yet taken place. People still do not feel free to talk openly, and therefore the "freedom to be antisemitic" does not yet fully operate. The regime likes to refer to the fact that the Prime Minister, Petre Roman, is Jewish and so are some others in the new leadership. But the old Fascist groups are returning, and the old wartime Fascist leader, Marshal Antonescu, is being rehabilitated. The two historical opposition parties, the National Liberal Party and the National Christian Peasant Party, certainly have antisemitic traditions. A number of antisemitic incidents occurred in the last year.

In June 1990 it was reported that some seventy Jewish graves in three Romanian cities were vandalised, and antisemitic publications agitate against the Jews. In October 1990 the Congress of Romanian Jewish Communities issued a desperate appeal to the people, government, political parties and Church of Romania to prevent the revival of Fascism and antisemitism. The main cause for the Jewish fear is the absolute instability, the catastrophic economic situation and the danger of new upheavals.

There are problems in other countries too. In Slovakia the nostalgic memory of an independent national existence between 1939 and 1945 overlooks the fact that it was led by antisemitic murderers - for many, Tiso is a hero figure. Yugoslavia is torn by the conflict of nationalities in which a small ethnic group like the Jews is inevitably vulnerable. The one area in which liberalisation has not created uncertainties for the Jews is the Czech part of Czechoslovakia, which builds on an old democratic tradition free from antisemitism; Czech Jews thoroughly enjoy and benefit from their new freedom in every respect, particularly as theirs was the most Communist-dominated community.

## The New Greater Germany

As one moves in this survey from East to West, one comes at the border of the two worlds to one of the most momentous changes of the last eighteen months: the unification of Germany. Not surprisingly it has occasioned fear that a concentration of power in Germany will make her return to aggressive nationalism and that nationalism may easily turn once again into antisemitism. How justified is that fear?

The record of the Eastern part is difficult to assess because much of its politics, like its virulent stand against Israel, were at the behest of its Soviet masters, in relation to which it played the part of over-zealous lackey. As far as the view of the population goes, we know that particularly in the last years - 1987 to 1989 - there were a number of skinhead actions of an antisemitic character and the authorities of the German Democratic Republic estimated that there were some 1,600 neo-Nazi militants. But the authorities suppressed their excesses: in 1988, 44 criminal proceedings took place against 185 individuals; in 1989 144 proceedings against 296 individuals. A poll in 1989 indicated that one per cent identified themselves with the skinheads and four per cent were sympathisers, but sixty-five per cent of the population "totally rejected" them.

An important observation was made both by German and foreign observers: the uprising in Leipzig and other places which brought down the Communist regime was *against* the bankrupt dictatorship and not *for* unification with West Germany - in other words, the motives were democratic and not nationalistic. In the street demonstrations the crowd first shouted "*Wir sind das Volk!*" (We are the people); only later did it turn into "*Wir sind ein Volk*" (We are one people). The first poll in East Germany after the coming down of the Berlin Wall indicated that forty-eight per cent were against unity. Among the first acts of the People's Chamber (*Volkskammer*) in the reformed German Democratic Republic was to ban the extreme rightist Republican Party, which operates freely in West Germany, and to apologise to the Jewish people for the past. But at the same time, neo-Nazi youth demonstrations were taking place in Dresden, Leipzig and other cities.

West Germany's record is a much more open book (and will be discussed later). It is the policies, the procedures, the laws and ultimately the mentality of the Federal Republic that will rule united Germany. This is important. Though there is right-extremism in West Germany as well, the population of East Germany - dissatisfied, facing uncertainties, unemployment and unknown change - is much more prone to sympathise with radical ideas than the stable, well-settled people of West Germany.

If one does not insist on judging the future entirely on historical experience, there is no evidence that the unification of Germany portends a danger to the Jews. In any event, there is now a new safeguard: the greater Germany can (and should) be deeply embedded in a closely-knit Western Europe.

## On the Western Front

Western Europe has not gone through upheavals in the last two years. If there have been any significant developments they have been towards forging a European unity. This should have led to the beginning of an erosion of the concept of the nation state and with it, of nationalism. While in the long run this may indeed be the fruit of European unification, so far it has touched only a narrow upper layer of intellectuals. On the contrary: "Europeanisation" has had some negative effects. It opened borders through which masses of foreign workers streamed into any and every European country, leading to a backlash of xenophobic nationalism which - on account of the nature of these "aliens" - is also racist. This has

been the main reason why - in terms of race relations - it has not been quiet on the Western front.

The nationalist and racist backlash has affected Jews in a paradoxical way. On the one hand it can be argued that since the gutter nationalism has been directed primarily against non-Jewish immigrants and guest workers - blacks and Asians in Great Britain, North Africans in France, Turks and Kurds in Germany - they have acted as a shield for Jews, who have become only a secondary target: on the other hand it can equally well be maintained that were it not for the passions whipped up by the presence of these non-Jewish foreign elements, the present wave of racism would not have arisen, as it is unlikely that the massive way in which it manifests itself could be fed on Jew-hatred alone. The fact is that even in a secondary-target role, the Jews of the West find this outpouring of hatred highly disturbing.

There is another dangerous by-product of the extreme right's concentration on the millions of immigrants and guest workers. Whereas the ultra-right after World War II (their ideals being so discredited by Hitler) consisted mainly of the lower strata of society socially as well as culturally and was largely the refuge of the mob, the Lumpen, the hooligans and ruffians, the anti-foreigner attitude has made the political right once again acceptable and respectable to many perfectly reasonable middle-class people. Jean Marie Le Pen in France, head of the *Front National*, and Franz Schoenhuber in Germany, leader of the *Republikaner*, are not the usual neo-Nazi types. It is therefore more difficult to fight them; certainly they cannot be simply dismissed or marginalised as outcasts of society.

Nor are the National Front or the Republican parties so much engaged in the paraphernalia of the neo-Nazis, like uniforms, marches, military exercises, vandalism or even terrorism. They are ultra-conservatives, posing as parties of the little man, extolling the virtues of fatherland, national pride and heritage, the family etc. and mainly fighting for narrow ethnic-national interests. "France for the French", "Germany first" are the rallying-cries of their philosophy. Both Le Pen and Schoenhuber deny that they are antisemitic, but their pronouncements and attitudes belie this. However, the Jews are certainly not their main concern.

For quite some time, nationalistic right-wing policies have no longer been the only source of antisemitism. The attack against the Jews, mostly in the form of anti-Zionism, has in recent years come more effectively from the left: the Communists, the Trotskyites, the New Leftists, gauchists and Third Worldists. Their role was particularly dominant during the Lebanon war. They have since diminished as organised groups, some almost to the point of disappearance - the perdition of Marxism and Communism has a lot to do with this. Their impact is still noticeable in the media, where many of the 1968 student-revolt generation found their home, but their ideas, if surviving, are not expressed in an antisemitic way (though an anti-Israel bias is frequently detectable). The left has also become a nuisance on campus, but the Jewish students usually get enough support from the political mainstream groups to successfully stand up against the anti-Jewish arguments. By and large, the left is not causing a problem of antisemitism at present.

There is a widespread feeling, however, that right-wing antisemitism has greatly increased. Is this true? How does one measure antisemitism? I usually apply six indices to assess it.

(1) The first indicator is the attitude of governments and parliaments. After all, most suffering from antisemitism has historically been caused by anti-Jewish laws. There are no discriminatory laws against Jews in any Western countries now.

As far as their protection from incitement to racial and religious hatred is concerned, there are positive laws on the subject in most countries and just in the last year or two some of the *lacunae* have been remedied: Ireland has adopted a law, Switzerland is in the process of drafting one, while France and Sweden have improved their existing legislation (the French amendment includes the criminalisation of the negation of the Shoah - something that exists only in German legislation). On the international level, incitement to hatred was outlawed in the Copenhagen document of the Helsinki (CSCE) Process in June 1990, referring explicitly to antisemitism. This is quite a breakthrough, as in the United Nations the condemnation of antisemitism *per se* has always been rejected - unless it were to be coupled with a condemnation of Zionism.

The legal situation is not equally satisfactory in the implementation of these laws. In Germany and France, the laws have teeth - Le Pen, for instance, has been convicted three times for provoking racism or allied offences. In Britain, however, the Attorney General has to approve the opening of proceedings, and in all the 19 cases of blatantly antisemitic publications submitted to him in the last three years he has refused to do so - on legalistic grounds, certainly not out of sympathy with the slanderers. The British Government's otherwise positive attitude can be seen, after all, in its insistence on introducing a law for the prosecution of Nazi war criminals, despite the strong opposition - once again mainly on legal grounds - from the House of Lords.

(2) The second indicator is election results. A good measure of the European scene are the elections to the European Parliament in June 1989. In Germany, the Republican Party got 5.6 per cent of the vote and 6 seats: in France, the National Front (Le Pen) 11 per cent and 10 seats, in Italy, the neo-Fascist *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI) 5.5 per cent and 4 seats. The only other successful ultra-right group was the *Vlaams Blok* (Flemish Bloc) in Belgium with 4.1 per cent and 1 seat. But the Greek KYPEN which had one deputy in the previous session, declined to below one per cent of the vote and lost its representation. All in all, there are now 21 deputies from racist, antisemitic parties in the European Parliament of 518 members - less than the Greens (39) or the Communists (41). (If there was anything worrying in the European elections, it was the increased strength of the far left and other forces unsympathetic to Israel).

Domestic elections show a similar picture. The most spectacular advances have been those of the French National Front. In the 1986 parliamentary elections they received 9.72 per cent of the popular vote and sent 35 deputies to Parliament. Then followed the April 1988 Presidential election; in the first round Le Pen got 4,367,926 votes (14.2 per cent). But a year later, in the parliamentary elections in the summer of 1989, the NF got only 9.2 per cent of the vote and its representation shrunk to one deputy. In two by-elections in December 1989 the NF returns were quite phenomenal: 61 per cent in Dreux and 47 per cent in Marseilles. However in the election to the European Parliament it was only 11 per cent.

In Germany, the Republicans made their first breakthrough in the Berlin elections of January 1989 when they got 90,000 votes (7.5 per cent) and 11 seats. But after the 5.6 per cent national result in the European Parliament election in the summer of 1989, their success in 1990 was diminishing: 3.3, 1.8 and 1.5 per cent respectively in the Land elections of Saarland, North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony, 5.4 and 0.9 per cent in the municipal elections of Bavaria and Schleswig-Holstein. Other right-wing parties, like the National Democratic Party (NPD) or *Deutsche Volkunion - Liste D*, both of which are virulently antisemitic, achieved dismal results.

In Italy, the MSI has held 35 seats in Parliament since the 1987 elections.

They somewhat declined in the European Parliament elections (5.5 per cent down from 6.5 per cent in 1984), and are generally considered to be weaker today, following the defeat of their charismatic leader Giorgio Almirante in 1988. An outstanding success was achieved in 1990 by the Freedom Party (FPÖ) in Austria under its popular leader, the "yuppie-fascist" Joerg Haider. Neither the MSI nor the FPÖ has antisemitism in their programmes, but they have antisemitic tendencies and co-operate with Le Pen and Schoenhuber.

In Great Britain the various right-wing groups, particularly the National Front, have fairly regularly participated in municipal elections and parliamentary by-elections - and ended up with a few hundred votes only in each constituency.

There are far right parties in most other European countries, more anti-foreign than anti-Jewish. Occasionally they achieve quite good electoral results, but they are playing no great role in national politics.

(3) My third index is organised membership. Germany provides the most accurate data through the work of the *Verfassungsschutz*, the watchdog for the Protection of the Constitution in the Ministry of the Interior, which monitors extremism on the right and the left. According to their last (1989) report there were 70 right extremist organisations in 1989, with a total membership of 35,900 - a 26.9 per cent increase over 1988, but not an impressive figure in a nation of 60 million. Only 5 of these organisations, with 1,500 members (but only 170 "militants"), count as neo-Nazis. In addition, there are 250 skinheads. The neo-Nazis show a decline from 1,900 members in 1988 and 2,600 in 1987. The proliferation of right extremist organisations (often by splitting) indicates weakness, not strength; it produces a membership of 500 on the average.

The above figures do not include the Republican Party because it is defined as "right radical" and not as "right extremist", and right radicals do not fall under the *Verfassungsschutz*'s terms of reference. But other reports indicate that the Republicans had 8,500 members in January 1989, which by January 1990 had increased to 25,000 but dropped 40 per cent in August 1990. The unification with East Germany may have made the Republicans somewhat irrelevant; it has taken the wind out of their nationalist sails, and the anxieties about foreigners are superseded by the concern at absorbing the East Germans. An influential German weekly (*Parlament*) wrote in September 1990 of the "rapid rise and deep fall" of the Republicans.

The other country for which figures are available is Great Britain. They are not official, and the estimates are therefore vague. The National Front is credited with 400 to 3,500 members, the British National Party with 1,000 to 1,500, the British movement with 200, the League of St George with a mere 50. The most recent addition to the list of the right wingers is a Klu Klux Klan organisation formed in February 1990; its membership is estimated at between 500 and 1,000. These are low figures considering that in the 1970s the National Front threatened to become a serious political force.

The membership of the National Front in France is estimated at 100,000, that of the MSI in Italy at 350,000 - a drop from one million in the 1960s. Other groups in these and other countries have a few hundred and more often below 100 members. The proliferation (and split) of these small right extremist organisations has enriched the political vocabulary with the term "groupuscule".

(4) A small membership, however, is enough to engage in acts of vandalism, violence and even terror. My next index, therefore, is the number and nature of antisemitic incidents. Here we see a considerable increase, and this is

largely responsible for the somewhat panicky cries about a new wave of antisemitism.

Again, Germany supplies the most reliable information. The *Verfassungsschutz* recorded 1,853 "incidents" in 1989 (against 1,607 a year earlier) of which, however, only 103 count as acts of terror (73 in 1988) and 103 as threats of terror. The rest were what the Germans call "propaganda offences" like desecrations, publications etc. Of the 1,853 incidents only 207 (14.4 per cent) could be ascribed to antisemitic motives, against 314 (19.5 per cent) in the previous years. The vast majority of hostile acts were directed against refugees and guest workers.

Figures are also available from Great Britain. The Police say that in 1989 racial crimes grew by 22 per cent, racially motivated assaults by 25 per cent. Antisemitic incidents grew faster - by 50 per cent - but "they constitute a tiny proportion". In the first eight months of 1990 there were 22 anti-Jewish attacks in London, mainly on property: physical attacks on individuals are minimal.

The most abject act was, of course, perpetrated in France, at Carpentras in May 1990. The increase in the desecration of cemeteries in Britain, France, Germany and elsewhere after the wide publicity given to the Carpentras outrage could well have been something of a copycat syndrome.

In some countries, particularly Britain, these incidents caused a panicky reaction and fringe elements of the community started to question whether the official Jewish bodies were doing enough to meet the challenge. But the leadership rightly insists on engaging the law and the powers of the state in the fight against antisemitism rather than becoming vigilantes or calling the Jews out onto the streets as some hotheads demand. The police have certainly promised their full co-operation.

(5) Antisemitic publications are my next index. In all Western countries one finds racist and antisemitic journals, published by the organisations mentioned or by independent bodies who support those movements. The National Front in France, for instance, now has the support of the periodicals *National-Hebdo*, *Présent*, *Minute* and *Identité*. Some have a circulation of 100,000. The German weekly *National-Zeitung* has a print-run of 120,000 copies. In Britain *Spearhead*, *British National*, *Choice* appear - the latter distributed freely. *Holocaust News*, a journal devoted to the denial of Shoah, is distributed mainly in schools.

In addition to these regular periodicals, a great number of publications and books are being produced and spread by right extremist groups; they are either on the theme of the *Protocols* - Jewish domination and conspiracy - or focus on Holocaust denial. Their quantity is impossible to measure, but the impression is definitely one of increase.

(6) Finally, I turn to public opinion polls in an attempt to quantitatively measure antisemitism. They are the least reliable source and very sporadic, but should not be ignored.

In October 1988 Eurobarometer, the public opinion monitor of the European Community (EC), looked for the first time into the question of racism and xenophobia. More than half the respondents in the twelve countries of the Community felt that there were too many "Others" (in terms of nationality, race, religion, culture or social class) in their country, more than a third that there were too many of another nationality or race. The struggle against racism held a low priority for them, less important than protecting wildlife or fighting poverty. But only one in ten approved of racist movements, while 19 per cent

disapproved of them completely and 63 per cent to some extent. 71 per cent supported the anti-racist bodies.

Nationally, recent studies have shown that 75 per cent of German respondents thought there were too many foreigners in the country; in France, according to a more detailed inquiry, 76 per cent considered that there were too many blacks, 46 per cent said there were too many Arabs and 24 per cent too many Jews. In France, 31 per cent agreed with Le Pen on the immigration issue, and 18 per cent would favour him as Minister of Immigration. In Italy 51 per cent said that the influx of foreigners should not be encouraged.

Specifically on Jews, the German data shows an antisemitic proportion amongst the population of 15 to 20 per cent - a figure that has not changed since the 1950s. In France a survey of May 1990 gives the proportion of antisemitic people at 55 per cent, while 25 per cent are non-antisemitic. 35 per cent regard it as normal to make hostile remarks about Jews and nearly one fifth dislikes them. A survey in Austria among students in 1988 produced the startling result that 20 per cent put the number of Jews in Austria at several hundred thousand, and 12.8 per cent at over a million (10,000 or 0.1 per cent is the true figure). But only 5 per cent were hardcore antisemites.

The important point about these public opinion polls is that they do not show much change in comparison with previous years. Feelings about Jews seem to be rather constant in post-war Western Europe.

#### Outside Europe

In looking at the situation in the West, we have really dealt so far exclusively with Western Europe. Since the Americas - North and South - as well as the Arab countries are outside the terms of reference of this study, there remain few Western countries with a sizeable Jewish population to be considered - really only Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

The position in Australia and New Zealand does not differ from Western Europe, except that in the past it was probably more favourable. Nazi-type organisations have always existed but - as one commentator remarked - antisemitism was hardly more than "background noise". Lately, there has been some increase in antisemitic incidents.

This is true also of South Africa, but nobody knows how recent developments will affect the situation. There certainly will be a white racist backlash, perhaps an increase in strength amongst right extremists, but it will be directed against the changes, not against the Jews - and in any event such a gathering of strength on the right will, in the long run, appear to be only a transitory phenomenon.

#### The Western Balance Sheet

What do all these indices add up to? A constant, perhaps slightly increasing antisemitic mood in the population (differing in the various countries); a definite increase in antisemitic incidents; but certainly no danger from the antisemitic forces in political terms. And if the incidents are the most worrying feature of current antisemitism, then we are facing a problem more of policing than of policies. Moreover, the increase in vandalism and violence must be assessed within the perspective of the general decline in law and order, the breakdown of social inhibitions, the loss of civility, the increase in hooliganism, the easy flouting of the law. The anti-Jewish incidents are but a small proportion of the totality of vandalistic and violent acts, even of

violence with racist motivation.

The increase of antisemitic propaganda is somewhat different, though this too must be judged in proportion to other racist slurs. Again, it is not a matter of ideological confrontation but of criminality, and effective action against such propaganda must be achieved through better laws or better mechanisms of implementation.

One must also look at the other side of the coin, and consider the reactions to antisemitism. Opposition to antisemitism was most importantly manifested by what happened in France after Carpentras. The fact that the President of the country, for the first time since the war, joined a street demonstration of 200,000 people, accompanied by the leaders of all the political parties (except the FN) and the churches, speaks volumes. There have been other important expressions against antisemitism. Reference has already been made to the unanimous decision of 35 States in the Helsinki Process to condemn and outlaw antisemitism. In the same vein was the declaration issued by Catholics and Jews in Prague in September 1990, branding antisemitism as a sin against God and humanity and declaring that no authentic Christian can be antisemitic. The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches issued a similar declaration. The European Parliament instituted a detailed inquiry into racism and xenophobia in Europe and adopted a forceful declaration.

Not only do Jews not suffer discrimination today, they are, in fact, able to occupy the most important positions in the lands where they live, from ministerial posts to academic and social leadership.

There is an increase in antisemitism - more in the atmosphere than in terms of hard facts. But polluted atmospheres are not only a cause of irritation - they are a hazard. In their initial state they are not a danger, but they can develop into one. In the West, present antisemitism is not a serious danger; in the East we are regrettably already one step further - or one step behind.

# Campaign to nominate Queen Isabella for sainthood protested

By DEBRA NUSSBAUM

A campaign by the Catholic Church in Spain to win sainthood for that country's Queen Isabella I could cause a dangerous breach in Catholic-Jewish relations, according to leaders of both faiths.

"It is a potentially divisive issue and has enormous international implications," warned Rabbi A. James Rudin, national director for inter-religious affairs at the American Jewish Committee.

Rudin is chairman of a panel investigating the issue that was set up by IJCIC, the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, which represents world Jewry in contacts with the Vatican.

Isabella has been nominated for veneration, the first step toward sainthood, by conservative elements in the Spanish Catholic hierarchy.

She is remembered as a despot by both Jews and Moslems, who suffered torture, forced conversion and expulsion under her reign from 1474-1504.

Her veneration "would be a disaster for dialogue," admitted Dr. Eugene Fisher, director for Catholic-Jewish relations at the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the organization which represents 350 bishops in the United States.

"I don't think her cause should be moved forward," Fisher said. "No matter what one can say about her personally, the symbolic meaning of her reign as queen was the expulsion of the Jews, and that symbolism is too massive in Jewish history" for it to do anything but "an incredible amount of damage."

Isabella's nomination has prompted an outcry from Jewish leaders and organizations around the world, among them the World Jewish Congress, the International Jewish Committee for Sepharad '92, the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, the British Council of Christians and Jews and B'nai Brith Canada.

"It is outrageous and obscene, because that lady, under any set of rules, does not deserve sainthood," declared Andre Sassoon, vice president of the Sepharad '92 Committee and international secretary for the World Sephardi Federation.

The Spanish church officials who are promoting her cause hope to have her approved by the Vatican by 1992, when the church will celebrate 500 years of Christianity in the Americas.

Christianity was brought to the New World by Christopher Columbus, whose voyage was financed by Isabella and her husband, Ferdinand, in 1492.

But 1992 is an important anniversary to Jews, especially Sephardic Jews, for another reason: It marks the quincentennial of the edict, signed by Isabella and Ferdinand, ordering Jews to convert to Christianity or be forcibly expelled.

About 400,000 Jews lived in Spain at the time. Almost half went into exile, and the rest converted to Christianity or pretended to.

Many of those who pretended to

convert but secretly continued Jewish practice, known as Marranos, were tortured and burned at the stake during the Inquisition, which was instituted in Spain under Isabella and Ferdinand's rule.

Spain's current monarch, Juan Carlos, will formally revoke the expulsion edict on March 31, 1992, exactly 500 years after it was issued. Sephardic Jews around the world

***'It is outrageous and obscene, because that lady under any set of rules does not deserve sainthood.'***

will use the occasion to celebrate the rich cultural heritage from the Golden Age of Spanish Jewry, which ended with the decree.

The petition on Isabella's behalf may have been submitted to the Vatican at least seven years ago, according to Fisher.

It is not known exactly how long her case has been before the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints, which considers nominations, because of the secrecy cloaking the process.

"There are hundreds of causes of saints sitting in the Vatican," Fisher said. "Some of them stay there for centuries and never get moved forward."

Rev. Anastasius Gutierrez, representing the Spanish Archdiocese of Valladolid, near the site of Isabella's death in 1504, is serving as postula-

tor, arguing her case before the Vatican congregation.

That body will decide whether there is enough evidence of extraordinary virtue in her life to pass her case on to the cardinals, then to the pope.

If Isabella is declared venerable, the next step to sainthood is beatification. To be beatified, a candidate must have performed one miracle of intercession, and a second miracle is required to be canonized.

Gutierrez admitted no miracles are attributed to Isabella. "We need a miracle that does not exist," he told The New York Times.

Isabella's nomination is being pushed by conservative church elements who oppose some liberal steps recently taken by the Spanish government, according to Rudin of AJCommittee.

Spain's Socialist government established full diplomatic relations with Israel in January 1986 and last February extended the same legal status enjoyed by Catholics to Jews and Protestants.

Those steps and the apology that Spain is offering, with King Juan Carlos' revocation of the expulsion edict, send a positive message that is negated by the effort to beatify Isabella, Rudin said.

If Isabella were to be honored in this way by the church, say Jewish leaders, it would send a mixed message to world Jewry at a time when the Vatican's relationship with the Jews is enjoying renewed strength after three years of distance.

That chill began in 1987, after a Carmelite convent was established

on the grounds of the Auschwitz death camp, and Pope John Paul II met with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat and Austrian President Kurt Waldheim, a former Nazi who served in a German army unit linked to wartime atrocities.

At a Dec. 6 Vatican meeting with Jewish leaders, the pope voiced his unequivocal support of a declaration issued three months earlier in Prague that called anti-Semitism a "sin against God."

December's meeting commemorated the 25th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, the 1965 decree of the Second Vatican Council that redefined Catholic-Jewish relations and

opened the way for dialogue between the two faiths.

Isabella's is not the first case of beatification or canonization to be opposed by Jews.

Edith Stein, a Jewish-born Carmelite nun who was taken from her convent in the Netherlands in August 1942 and murdered in the gas chambers of Auschwitz, was beatified May 1, 1987, despite objections from world Jewry.

Jewish groups opposed her beatification as a Catholic martyr because she was killed "not because she was a nun or a Catholic, but because she was born a Jew," according to Rudin.

Jewish Telegraphic Agency



01-09-91

13750

## **Jewish leaders warn against canonization of Queen Isabella**

**By Religious News Service**

(RNS) — Jewish leaders around the world are warning the Vatican that the canonization of Queen Isabella I of Spain would provoke a new crisis in interfaith relations.

The concern has been prompted by a petition submitted by an Argentine-born priest seeking to put the queen on the road to possible sainthood in time for 1992, when the church plans to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Isabella's commissioning Christopher Columbus on his voyage which led to the Christianization of the Americas.

For Jews, however, the year 1492 was also the year when they were expelled from Spain by Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. Jews also note that the Inquisition began in Spain in 1478 under Isabella's rule.

For these reasons, the canonization of Isabella "would take Catholic-Jewish relations back to the Middle Ages," according to Rabbi Leon Klenicki, director of interfaith affairs for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

In letters to church officials in the United States and the Vatican, Rabbi Klenicki warned that "Jews would take the canonization to mean that the church was approving of or at least condoning the policy of expulsion" of the Jews.

Samuel Toledano, head of the Federation of Spanish Jewish Communities, has called Isabella "a symbol of intolerance" and said her canonization "would reopen old wounds that we thought were closed forever."

Tullia Zevi, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, said Isabella's reign destroyed "a unique example of fruitful cooperation among Jews, Muslims and Christians."

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**Anti-Defamation League**  **of B'nai B'rith**  
 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017 (212) 490-2525 FAX: (212) 867-0779

BARBARA WALDEN  
 Director, Communications Division

JAN 07 1991

**NEWS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York, NY, January 3 ..Canonization of Queen Isabella I of Spain "would take Catholic-Jewish relations back to the Middle Ages," the Anti-Defamation League warned today.

The ADL statement came amid reports that the Vatican is considering canonizing the Queen, who expelled Jews and Muslims from Spain and played a key role in the Spanish Inquisition.

In recent letters to church officials in the U.S. and the Vatican, Rabbi Leon Klenicki, director of ADL's Interfaith Affairs Department said:

"Should the canonization of Queen Isabella take place, the new rapport between Catholics and Jews would be jeopardized. Jews would take the canonization to mean that the Church was approving of or at least condoning the policy of expulsion."

ADL has been assured by the Apostolic Nunciature of the U.S. that the League's concerns will be conveyed to the appropriate Vatican offices.

Rabbi Klenicki pointed out that "only in very recent years have Jews been allowed back into Spain after their expulsion from Spain brought an end to their flourishing religious and cultural life known as the Golden Age of Judaism.

"Whatever the merits of Isabella in her own historical context, her policy of expulsion of Jews and Muslims, her links with the Inquisition, would seem to make it impossible to view her as a model for Christians and religious people after the Second Vatican Council. For the Jewish community, she is a reminder of the Holocaust of Hitler and his crusade that took six million Jews, including one million Jewish children, to the gas chambers."

The canonization is connected with the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, who set sail under Queen Isabella.

#

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**The American Jewish  
Committee**

Institute of Human Relations  
165 East 56 Street  
New York, New York 10022-2746  
212 751 4000/FAX 212 319-0975

January 2, 1991

**Most Rev. Agostino Cacciavillan**  
**Apostolic Pro-Nuncio**  
**Apostolic Nunciature**  
**3339 Massachusetts Avenue, NW**  
**Washington, DC 20008**

Dear Archbishop Cacciavillan:

As we begin the New Year, I am pleased to extend my best wishes to you with the hope that 1991 will be a time of peace for the entire human family.

I am writing as the American Jewish Committee's Interreligious Affairs Director and as a member of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC). The purpose of this letter is to convey the deep concern that is being felt by the Jewish community, both here and overseas, regarding the possible beatification of Queen Isabella of Spain. The New York Times and The Washington Post have recently published articles reporting that Isabella is being proposed for beatification, and ultimately, sainthood within the Roman Catholic Church. If this were to happen, it would have an enormous negative impact upon Catholic-Jewish relations throughout the world.

Isabella's involvement with the Spanish Inquisition and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 is well documented by historical scholarship. The wide spread use of physical and psychological coercion and the systematic denial of human rights and religious liberty during her reign are direct contradictions of the principles and teachings of the Second Vatican Council, especially the NOSTRA AETATE Declaration.

The beatification of Isabella would represent a rejection of the spirit and teaching of the Second Vatican Council and would seriously undermine the historic gains that have been achieved in developing positive Catholic-Jewish relations during the past quarter century. These efforts have created extraordinary bonds of mutual respect, understanding, and esteem between Catholics and Jews. In addition, the beatification of Isabella would also severely damage Catholic-Muslim relations. It is difficult to believe that the Roman Catholic Church would intentionally send such a divisive message to the world.

Isabella's beatification would surely reopen old wounds within the Spanish Jewish community. It would come at a time when the Spanish Government has recently restored legal rights to the Jews of that country, and when Spain has established full diplomatic relations with Israel.

Page 2

While some confrontations and controversies in history can not always be anticipated, the negative impact of the beatification of Isabella can, however, be safely predicted. Hopefully, it can be averted.

I would appreciate your conveying this letter to the Sacred Congregation for the Cause of Saints and to other appropriate Church officials. The possible beatification of Isabella and its harmful ramifications are serious issues that urgently need to be addressed. Thank you for your courtesy in this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Interreligious Affairs Director

AJR/ch





3339 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20008-3687

APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1872

January 9, 1991

No. ....

*This No. Should Be Prefixed to the Answer*

Rabbi A. James Rudin  
Interreligious Affairs Director  
The American Jewish Committee  
Institute of Human Relations  
165 East 56 Street  
New York, NY 10022-2746

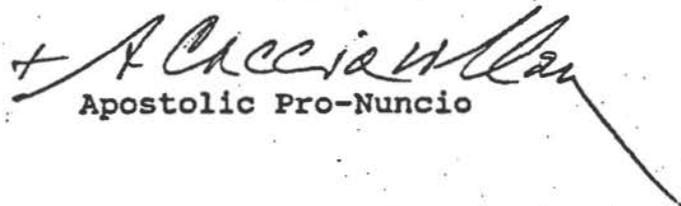
Dear Rabbi Rudin:

With gratitude I acknowledge your kind letter of January 2, 1991. I reciprocate your gracious sentiments by extending to you my hopes for a blessed and happy New Year.

You may be assured that I have carefully reviewed the contents of your correspondence, and that, at your request, I have sent a copy to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints in Rome.

With every good wish and cordial personal regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

  
Apostolic Pro-Nuncio

November 29, 1990

His Eminence  
Bernard Cardinal Law  
2121 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02135

Dear Cardinal Law:

I am taking the liberty of writing this letter out of a deep concern and sadness over recent news. I am responding to the news of the possible canonization of Isabella, Queen of Spain to mark the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America. This date also marks a very sad date for my people, that is the expulsion of Jews from Spain with great suffering. With that came the end of a flourishing religious and cultural life known as the Golden Age of Judaism. Both events were the decree of Queen Isabella's actions.

Only in very recent years have Jews been allowed back into Spain. A new relationship between them and Catholics has began once more in a very creative manner. Should the canonization of Queen Isabella take place, the new rapport would be jeopardized. Jews could receive the impression that the Church was approving of, or at least condoning the policy of expulsion.

Religious people all over the world realize that the beatified moreover, are proposed as models to the whole Church and the world. Our world requires saints as a way of reminding humanity of God's covenant as well as a testimony of personal spirituality.

Whatever the merits of Isabella in her own historical context, her policy of expulsion of Jews and Muslims, her links with the Inquisition, would seem to make it impossible to view her as a model for Christians and religious people after the Second Vatican council. For the Jewish community she is a reminder, a of the Holocaust of Hitler and his crusade that took six million people, one million Jewish children, to the gas chambers.

The Jewish community is respectful of the religious vocation of the Catholic Church, its theology, and the canonization of saints projecting a special spirituality to the world. We feel, however, that in this case the canonization of the Queen of Spain will take the Catholic Jewish relationship back to the Middle Ages. The canonization would also contradict the Holy See's excellent document on racism that denounced and condemned anti-Semitism in any form and any time. It would also contradict the work of his Holiness, Pope John Paul II, denouncing the sinful nature of anti-Semitism.

Thanking you in advance for your attention, as always,

In friendship and prayer,

Rabbi Leon Klenicki  
Director  
Department of Interfaith Affairs

✓ LK:ps

Enclosure

cc: The Most Reverend Bishop William H. Keeler  
Dr. Eugene J. Fisher  
Leonard Zakim





CARDINAL'S RESIDENCE  
2101 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE  
BRIGHTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02135

December 28, 1990

Rabbi Leon Klenicki  
Director  
Department of Interfaith Affairs  
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith  
823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

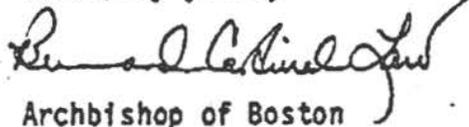
Dear Rabbi Klenicki:

Thank you for your letter of November 29th in which you share your thoughts with me regarding the consideration of Queen Isabella of Spain for possible beatification and canonization. I have read your letter carefully and have given it serious consideration.

Recently I wrote to Cardinal Angelo Felici, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. In that letter, I transmitted to him your concerns, and expressed my desire that those concerns be given careful consideration by the Congregation. I am confident that Cardinal Felici and his collaborators will do just that.

May I take this opportunity of sending you my personal best wishes and my prayers for a happy and blessed New Year.

Sincerely yours,

  
Archbishop of Boston

BCL:pb



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

5001 EASTERN AVENUE  
POST OFFICE BOX 29260  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20007

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

November 28, 1990

Rabbi Leon Klenicki  
Director  
Department of Interfaith Affairs  
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith  
823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, New York 10017

Dear Rabbi Klenicki,

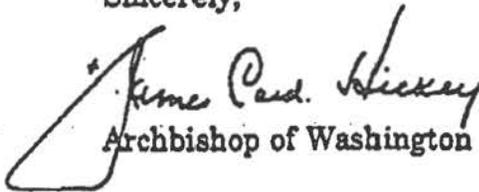
Just after my return from a brief Thanksgiving vacation, I received your letter of November 12, 1990 with respect to the possible canonization of Queen Isabella. Thank you for sharing for me your very deep concerns regarding this matter. I truly do not know how far her Cause has progressed. I know you are aware that canonization is a long and careful process, one in which people with a variety of perspectives and viewpoints are heard. I believe it would be important that your observations on the matter be shared with the Holy See; consequently, I have forwarded a copy of your letter to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

I also want to thank you for sending me a copy of the volume which you co-edited with Dr. Eugene Fisher, *In Our Time*. I look forward to reviewing this important volume which fittingly commemorates *Nostra Aetate*.

I look forward to seeing you next week. In the meantime, please be assured of my very special prayers.

With kind personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

  
Archbishop of Washington



3339 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20008-3687

APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 1410/90/4

29 November 1990

*This No. Should Be Prefixed to the Answer*

Rabbi Leon Klenicki  
Director  
Department of Interfaith Affairs  
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith  
823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, New York 10017

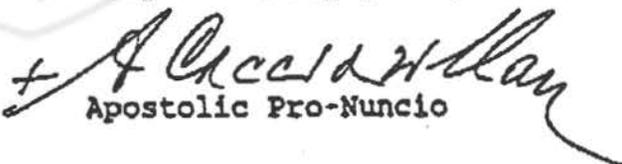
Dear Rabbi Klenicki:

Thank you very much for your kind letter of November 12, 1990 and the enclosed copy of the book which you and Dr. Eugene Fisher have edited: *In Our Time: The Flowering of Jewish-Catholic Dialogue*.

Please rest assured as well that the observations you made relative to the possible canonization of Queen Isabella of Spain will be conveyed to the appropriate office at the Vatican.

With cordial regards and every best wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

  
Apostolic Pro-Nuncio



CARDINAL'S OFFICE  
1011 FIRST AVENUE  
NEW YORK, NY 10022

December 6, 1990

Dear Rabbi Klenicki,

Thank you for your gracious letter concerning the beginning of a Cause for Canonization for Queen Isabella of Spain. Your letter was waiting for me upon my return from Rome.

As I am not part of the formal proceedings of this case, I am not able to comment on its status at this time. Please know, however, that I understand your grave concern. Moreover, I appreciate the respectful way in which you have addressed your thoughts and acknowledge the sense of cooperation which underlies your letter.

Please know that the process involved in the canonization of any individual involves painstaking care and lengthy investigation into all aspects of the person's life. I am sure that these procedures will be meticulously observed in the case of Queen Isabella and that the proper authorities will examine the historical facts of her life and times.

Again, I appreciate your concern and appreciate your understanding. As the holidays approach you and your loved ones are in my prayers.

With every best wish, and

Faithfully,

  
Archbishop of New York

Rabbi Leon Klenicki  
Director  
Department of Interfaith Affairs  
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith  
823 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017

ITALY-JEWS Jan. 9, 1991 (340 words)

ITALIAN GROUP SAYS ANTI-SEMITIC ACTS OBSCURE ACTS OF FAITHFULNESS

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) -- The example of faithfulness offered by Christian communities in Eastern Europe during years of communist repression can be obscured by increasing incidents of anti-Semitism in those countries, an Italian group said.

The Italian Committee Against Anti-Semitism, in a statement sent to each of the national bishops' conferences and each Orthodox bishop in Europe, asked for increased efforts at stopping attacks against Jews and Judaism.

The statement was written in preparation for the Jan. 17 celebration in Italy of a day of Catholic appreciation for the Jewish community. The observance is sponsored by the bishops' conference.

The Rome-based religious information service of the Italian bishops' conference published the text Jan. 9.

While celebrating the "revival of those glorious Christian churches of Eastern Europe," the Italian committee said "ever more frequent news" of anti-Semitic incidents is a cause for "deep concern."

"Anti-Semitism, in fact, is incompatible with Christianity," the statement said. Judaism is the root of Christianity, and it was to the Hebrew people that God first revealed his plan for salvation.

"God does not want the beacon of a faith defended by the blood of so many martyrs to be obscured by a loathsome climate of intolerance," the statement said.

"The new sufferings and humiliation to which our brother Jews are subjected, in countries with a great Christian tradition, is cause for profound sadness," the committee wrote.

After the Holocaust, the world expected that it never again would be "stained by such shame," the statement said.

"We beg those responsible for the Christian communities" to reinforce efforts "to eradicate from the heart of all men every residue of anti-Jewish prejudice."

The new democracies of Eastern Europe, it said, must be built on the ideals of freedom, social justice and mutual respect.

"No one ever again should be forced to flee their land or even to renounce, out of despair, the gift of life because of the wickedness and sectarianism of men," it said.

◆◆◆

AN ANALYSIS OF THE POLISH BISHOPS' PASTORAL LETTER  
RABBI A. JAMES RUDIN, NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS DIRECTOR  
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

JANUARY 8, 1991

I have recently returned from a series of conferences in the Vatican, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Austria. While in Poland (it was my third visit in 14 months), I received a copy of the Polish Bishops' Pastoral Letter that will be read in every Catholic church in that country on January 20, 1991. Poland's population of about 38,000,000 people is approximately 90-95% Catholic. Today's Polish Jewish community is less than 10,000.

Thanks to the extraordinary skill of Professor Thomas E. Bird of Queens College, we have an excellent English translation of the Pastoral Letter. I am also attaching a copy of the December 21, 1990 AJC news release along with the December 28th Religious News Service story. Bishop Henryk Muszynski of Wloclawek, Poland and the Chairman of the Polish Bishops' Commission for Dialogue with Judaism played a major role in the development of the Letter. Bishop Muszynski was a keynote speaker at the May, 1990 AJC Annual Meeting in New York City, and I was pleased to be his house guest during my recent visit to Poland.

While in Poland I also met with President Lech Walesa in Sopot, a small town near Gdansk. During our meeting he pledged "a new chapter in Polish history: one free of anti-Semitism, extreme nationalism, and chauvinism. . . a Poland that will be pluralistic and democratic." Walesa also strongly affirmed the teachings of the Second Vatican Council regarding Jews, Judaism, and anti-Semitism.

Here in the United States, the AJC has for a decade been a partner in dialogue with the Polish American Congress. Our two organizations have established a positive working relationship that has survived some strains and crises during the past ten years.

In any analysis of the Pastoral Letter, it is important to recognize that it will be read in Polish churches on January 20th without any discussion, amendment, or commentary. The Letter represents the unanimous position of the entire Episcopate (Bishops) of Poland, including the Primate, Joseph Cardinal Glemp. I believe the Letter is a significant breakthrough in Catholic-Jewish relations.

This is the first time that such an inclusive and detailed document dealing with Jews, Judaism, anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust has ever been issued by the Bishops of Poland. Like many other important documents in Catholic-Jewish relations, this Pastoral Letter will be cited in coming years as a vital "building block" in developing mutual respect, understanding, and esteem between Catholics and Jews. The Pastoral Letter is part of the on-going implementation of the principles and teachings of the NOSTRA AETATE Declaration that emerged from the Second Vatican Council in 1965.

In reading the Pastoral Letter, it is always necessary to remember the obvious: this is a Roman Catholic document written by Bishops for the Catholics of Poland, and although it addresses several political issues, the Letter is firmly rooted to a theological and religious foundation. The words of Pope John Paul II and NOSTRA AETATE are frequently cited throughout the Letter along with relevant Biblical verses.

The first part of the Letter is a strong Papal affirmation of NOSTRA AETATE, a "teaching to which one must adhere. . . an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as a word of Divine Wisdom." Pope John Paul II's words immediately deliver the basic message that NOSTRA AETATE is a fundamental and irrevocable teaching of the Catholic Church.

The Letter also clearly establishes that Christianity is uniquely linked to Jews and Judaism: "There is no other religion with which the Church has such close relations, nor is there any other people with which it is so closely linked. . .The Church is rooted in the Jewish people and in the faith of the Jews. . ."

But unlike some other Christian statements that make similar affirmations, and then proceed to announce in triumphal terms that Christianity has "replaced" or "fulfilled" Judaism, the Polish Pastoral Letter declares that "The Church. . .did not disinherit God's people of the first election and covenant. . .God thus has not revoked his selection of the Jewish people as the chosen people, but continues to bestow his love."

The Letter also reaffirms the Second Vatican Council's repudiation of the "accusation that all Jews bear responsibility for the death of Christ." The deicide charge, of course, has historically been a major source of Christian anti-Semitism throughout the centuries. And the Letter specifically focuses on one of the New Testament verses (Matthew 27:25) that has often been used as "proof" for alleged Jewish "guilt" in the death of Jesus.

Indeed, this verse, "Let his blood be upon us and upon our children" was still retained in the 1990 Obcrammergau Passion Play in Germany, despite many strenuous objections by Christian and Jewish leaders. The Polish Pastoral Letter quotes language of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) to assert that "Christian sinners are more responsible. . .in comparison with certain Jews who participated in it (the death of Jesus)."

Having built a sturdy theological and scriptural base, the second half of the Pastoral Letter is devoted to Polish-Jewish relations. This section of the document has attracted the greatest media and public attention, and for good reason.

The Letter recognizes the rich 1000 year history of Jewish life in Poland, and it even asserts that Poland became "a second fatherland" for "many Jews." This is an overstatement to be sure since the Land of Israel has always been the one, unique Jewish homeland, but there is no denying that "the majority of Jews living in the world today are by origin" from Poland or former Polish territory. In 1939 3,300,000 Jews lived in Poland, and Jews constituted a third of Warsaw's pre-war population.

But tragically during the Holocaust "this particular land became the grave for several million Jews. Not by our wish, and not by our hands." The last sentence is certain to create controversy. Elsewhere in the Letter, the Bishops declare that Polish Catholics "must ask for forgiveness of our Jewish brothers and sisters" for acts of anti-Semitism that were "were committed at any time or by any one on Polish soil." The Pastoral Letter will surely open up an intense discussion of Polish Catholic attitudes, beliefs, and actions vis a vis Jews and Judaism in the years leading up to 1939 and during the Nazi occupation of the country. Such a discussion may, in fact, be one of the unintended positive results of the Pastoral Letter.

The Letter correctly notes that many of the "Righteous Gentiles" who are honored at Yad Vashem (the Israeli Holocaust Memorial) in Jerusalem are Poles. Yet, the Bishops admit that "In spite of so many heroic examples of help. . .there were also people who remained indifferent to this incomprehensible tragedy [the Holocaust]." Those "Catholics who in some way were the cause of the death of Jews" are especially disheartening to the authors of the Pastoral Letter.

Of particular importance are these sentences, words certain to evoke intense feelings in the Jewish community:

## Bishops Acknowledge Role of Poles in Holocaust

Special to The New York Times

WARSAW, Dec. 19 — Poland's Roman Catholic bishops today issued a document condemning anti-Semitism in this country and acknowledged that some Poles helped Nazis kill Jews during World War II.

"We express our sincere regret over all cases of anti-Semitism which were committed at any time or by anyone on Polish soil," the bishops said in a four-page statement that is to be read during masses in Catholic churches here on Jan. 20. "All cases of anti-Semitism are against the spirit of the Gospel ... and are contrary to the Christian vision of human dignity, the bishops said.

The move follows Pope John Paul II's endorsement on Dec. 6 of an earlier statement forged by Catholic and Jewish leaders from Europe and the United States who met in Prague and called for an aggressive effort by the church to combat anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe.

"From the Polish perspective this is a major breakthrough," said Konstanty Gebert, a political columnist in Warsaw who is Jewish. "It formally confirms that anti-Semitism exists here, that it is reprehensible, and that it is a Catholic duty to combat it." More than 90 percent of Poles identify themselves as Catholics.

"But as a Jew I find serious flaws in this," Mr. Gebert said. "It has simply come too late."

Since Eastern Europe's first non-Communist government took office 16 months ago, anti-Semitism has moved into the open. While anti-Jewish graffiti became a common sight on city streets this year, the phenomenon was perhaps most striking during Poland's first popular Presidential campaign, which ended with a landslide victory for Lech Walesa on Dec. 9.

In the campaign, voters often said they were voting against Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a Catholic, because they believed he was of Jewish

origin. His aides have ascribed his defeat in the first round of voting Nov. 25 in part to anti-Semitic accusations.

Mr. Walesa, who is to be inaugurated Saturday, last summer repeatedly called on politicians of Jewish origin to declare themselves as such.

Mr. Walesa later said that his comments were meant to rid the campaign of anti-Semitism, not inspire it. He later apologized for the comment, saying that he had misspoken, and last week he told an American rabbi that under his tenure Poland would enter a new phase free of anti-Semitism.

Before World War II, Poland was the center of world Judaism, with a population of more than three million Jews. After the war, only 300,000 remained. Thousands more emigrated during Government-sponsored anti-Jewish purges in 1968 and today only some

10,000 people who identify themselves as Jews live here, and their average age is 70.

But the specifics of Polish anti-Semitism are such that it has persisted even without great numbers of Jews and has most recently found its targets in people whose ancestors may or may not have been Jewish or those who are thought of as cosmopolitan, or internationalist in their outlook as well as those who are suspected or professed agnostics or atheists.

In the document, the bishops repeated Vatican pronouncements that Jews have no responsibility for the death of Christ. The bishops said that anti-Semitism was against the spirit of the gospel.

"There is no other religion with which the church would have such close relations, nor is there any other

nation with which it would be so closely tied," the statement said.

The bishops went on to refer to the period when the Nazis killed millions of Jews in death camps, many of which were built on Polish soil.

"If there was only one Christian who could help but did not extend his hand to a Jew in danger or contributed to his death, then it makes us ask our sister and brother Jews for forgiveness," the bishops said, adding that the awareness that there were Poles who assisted the Nazis would "forever gnaw at our conscience."

But the bishops said it was unfair to single out Poland as anti-Semitic.

REMEMBER THE NEEDIEST!

12-28-90

13685

## American Jews hail Polish bishops' pastoral on anti-Semitism

By Religious News Service

NEW YORK (RNS) — Leaders of the American Jewish Committee say a pastoral letter on anti-Semitism issued by the Polish Catholic bishops is "unprecedented and represents an extraordinary breakthrough."

The letter, which was issued in Warsaw Dec. 19, expresses "sincere regret for all the incidents of anti-Semitism which were committed at any time or by anyone on Polish soil." It was approved by all 244 of the country's bishops, including Cardinal Josef Glemp, and is to be read during masses in all of the Catholic churches in Poland Jan. 20.

In the document, the Polish bishops address controversies that have divided Polish Catholics and Jews for much of the 20th century, including the role of Poles during the Holocaust and anti-Semitism during the Communist period.

Referring to World War II, the letter says that "many Poles saved Jews during the last war. Hundreds, if not thousands, paid for this with their own lives and the lives of their loved ones. For each of the Jews saved there was a whole chain of hearts of people of good will and helping hands. The witness of that help for Jews in the years of the Hitler occupation are many trees dedicated to Poles in the place of national memory, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, with the honored title, Just among the Nations, given to many Poles."

At the same time, the bishops acknowledge that "in spite of so many heroic examples of help on the part of Polish Christians, there were also people who remained indifferent to this inconceivable tragedy. What is especially painful for us is those Catholics who in some way were the cause of the death of Jews. They will always, forever, gnaw at our conscience in the judgment of society. If only one Christian could have helped and did not stretch out a helping hand to a Jew during the time of danger or caused his death, we must ask for forgiveness of our Jewish brothers and sisters."

The pastoral letter also notes that "many of our compatriots still remember the injustices and harm committed by the post-war Communist authorities in which people of Jewish origin also took part." It acknowledges, however, that "the source of inspiration of their activity was clearly neither their origin nor religion but the Communist ideology from which Jews themselves suffered many injustices."

In expressing "sorrow for all the injustices and harm done to Jews," the Polish bishops note that "we consider untrue and deeply harmful the use by many of the concept of what is called Polish anti-Semitism as an especially threatening form of that anti-Semitism, and in addition frequently connecting the concentration camps not with those who actually were involved with them but with Poles in occupied Poland."

The pastoral letter advises that "one cannot forget and overlook the fact that the Poles as a nation were one of the first victims of the same criminal racist ideology of Hitler's Nazism."

The bishops say that Christians and Jews are "united in respect for the biblical books of the Old Testament as the Word of God and by common traditions of prayer" and in "the common hope of the final coming of the reign of God." Together, they say, "we are awaiting the Messiah, the savior, although we, believing that he is Jesus Christ of Nazareth, await not his first but his final coming, no more in the poverty of his manger in Bethlehem but in power and glory."

In hailing the pastoral letter, Rabbi A. James Rudin, the American Jewish Committee's interreligious affairs director, and Arnold B. Gardner, who chairs the committee's Interreligious Affairs Commission, said it represents the first time in history in which the Polish bishops "have directly addressed the critical issues in Polish-Jewish relations in a strong, honest and direct manner."

As another sign of significant change in Poland, Rabbi Rudin reported that President Lech Walesa pledged to work for a nation free of "all forms of anti-Semitism, extreme nationalism and chauvinism" during a meeting of the two men had in Warsaw Dec. 12, three days after Mr. Walesa was elected president of the country.

"I always believe it's very important to put public officials on the record on important issues," Rabbi Rudin said. He said Mr. Walesa's "presidency will be judged not only on the economic record that it sets out, it will also be judged on how it attacks the problem of xenophobia, anti-Semitism, extreme nationalism."

# 'A Light Has Shined...'

Pope's 'Urbi et Orbi' message recalls the words of Isaiah

Here is the Vatican text of Pope John Paul II's traditional Christmas message "urbi et orbi" (to the city of Rome and the world).

**1** At midnight the prophet Isaiah spoke to us  
With inspired voice he proclaimed:  
"The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who dwell in a land of deep darkness,  
on them has light shined" (Is 9: 2).  
A light has shined.  
Only the light seen by the shepherds at Bethlehem?  
Was it only that light which shone on the horizon?  
In truth, that light became a guiding sign, like the star which guided the wise men from the East.  
The light shone in a different way.  
It shone more clearly.  
To man's interior eyes God has revealed himself.

**2** In broad daylight the evangelist speaks to us,  
the apostle John: "The true light that enlightens every man  
was coming into the world" (Jn 1: 9).  
This light is born in God. It comes from God.  
It is God.  
It is the eternal Word.  
The Word is the Son, of one being with the Father.  
"God from God, light from light."  
The Word has come into the world.  
The Word was made flesh.  
"In him was life,  
and the life was the light of men.  
The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not overcome it" (Jn 1: 4-5).

**3** The night persists. The night of advent.  
The peoples walk in darkness—  
yet the light is with them:  
the Word, who was made flesh in the midst of the nations.  
The Word, in whom the unknowable God has made Himself known to mankind,  
the Word who is the Son.  
In Him the world is eternally known and eternally loved.  
And He is the measure of this love, the divine measure:  
"For God so loved the world  
that He gave his only Son" (Jn 3: 16).  
The divine measure of love is the gift:  
It is the Son as gift.  
As the absolute gift, not comparable with other gifts:  
God—man.  
In Him is life.  
Above the heritage of death, present in the world,  
man inherits the life which is from God;  
he inherits it in the Son, who became man on Bethlehem night  
and was born of the Virgin Mary.  
He was born by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
through whom is realized the absolute gift.

**4** The night persists. The night of advent.  
The peoples walk in darkness—  
yet with them is this absolute gift.  
He is present: the Spirit of truth,  
revealed in the Son and by the Son.  
The light of the Son ceases not to be with man  
through the power of the Spirit, who bears witness to him.  
He bears witness to the Word, who was made flesh  
and, on Bethlehem night  
has come to dwell among us.  
Our earthly eyes see the child  
placed in a manger (cf. Lk 2: 7),  
while the eyes of faith see the glory,  
"glory as of the only Son from the Father  
full of grace and truth" (Jn 1: 14).



CHRISTMAS IN BETHLEHEM—Patriarch Michel Sabbah, Latin-rite patriarch of Jerusalem, cradles a baby Jesus doll as he leaves St. Catherine's Church in the occupied West Bank town of Bethlehem following a Christmas Eve Mass. In his "Urbi et Orbi" Christmas message, Pope John Paul II called for a peaceful solution to "the whole question" of the Holy Land.

—CNS

On this day we ask for light:  
we ask that the eyes of our hearts be enlightened  
(cf. Eph 1: 18).  
We ask for harmony and unity  
for families wounded by misunderstanding  
and torn by division.

**5** The night persists, but the light of Christ is  
with mankind.  
It is with the people in Europe;  
above the tumbled walls  
of ideological and political opposition  
there appear for believers demanding challenges  
and prospects.  
Yes, Europe's future  
will be filled with wonderful spiritual vitality,  
if hedonism and practical materialism are overcome  
and also if the barriers which divide the followers  
of the Redeemer  
are broken down.  
Unity in the Church,  
and among all believers in Christ:  
this is the commitment of Christians  
for building the new Europe in the third millennium.

**6** The light of Christ  
is with the tormented nations of the Middle  
East.  
For the area of the Gulf, we wait with trepidation  
for the threat of conflict to disappear.  
May leaders be convinced  
that war is an adventure with no return!  
By reasoning, patience and dialogue  
with respect for the inalienable rights  
of peoples and nations,  
it is possible to identify and travel  
the paths of understanding and peace.  
The Holy Land, too, has been awaiting this peace  
for years:  
a peaceful solution to the whole question which  
concerns it,  
a solution which takes into account the legitimate  
expectations  
of the Palestinian people  
and of the people which lives in the state of Israel.

**7** May the light of Christ shine upon the conti-  
nent of Africa,  
especially where freedom is compromised  
because of underdevelopment, where peace and  
harmony  
between different peoples and traditions  
is disrupted by fratricidal struggles,  
where hope for peace  
is still fragile and must be strengthened.  
I call once again for a more just sharing  
of the earth's resources,  
a new and more just world ethical and economic  
order.  
Only effective and respectful cooperation between  
the rich  
countries and the emerging peoples  
can prevent the contrast between North and South  
from becoming a widening abyss  
which will increase the already vast and disturb-  
ing archipelago  
of poverty and death.

**8** But the shadows, though they seem to be  
growing deeper  
on the horizon, cannot dim the light of Christ.  
To humanity seeking joy  
He offers the treasure of his own life:  
He gives himself,  
lavishing the signs of His love  
upon our weary present.  
How, for example, could we fail to bless Him  
for the religious awakening today influencing  
so many people, young and old?  
How could we fail to thank Him  
for the new openness of peoples to His Gospel,  
to which the recent "ad limina" visit  
of numerous bishops from Vietnam  
also bears promising witness?  
Christ travels with humanity;  
He travels and lives with us.  
He is among us! Living and glorious  
in His triumph of mercy.  
Let humanity go to meet His unapproachable  
light,  
which today reveals itself to us with power.  
With the tongues of the peoples and nations  
let us ask for light.



3339 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20008-3687

APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE  
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No. 1671/90/4

17 December 1990

*This No. Should Be Prefixed to the Answer*

Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk  
President  
National Conference of Catholic Bishops  
3211 Fourth Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20017

Dear Archbishop Pilarczyk:

On behalf of Bishop Pierre Duprey, W.F., Vice President of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, I forward the enclosed letter he has addressed to you concerning the Thirteenth Meeting of the International Liaison Committee between representatives of the Catholic Church and world Jewry which was held in Prague last September.

With cordial regards and best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Apostolic Pro-Nuncio

COMMISSION  
FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS  
Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity

22nd Nov., 1990

Prot.n. J.575/90

The Most Reverend Daniel E. PILARCZYK  
Archbishop of Cincinnati  
President of the United States National Conference of Catholic  
Bishops (N.C.C.B.) Washington

Your Excellency,

I have the pleasure of sending you the enclosed report of the 13th meeting of the INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE between representatives of the Catholic Church and the world Jewry, which took place in Prague, from September 3 to 6, 1990.

We wish to keep the Episcopal Conferences and the Eastern Catholic Synods directly informed about what has been taking place concerning the Holy See's efforts to promote religious relations with world Jewry.

I assure you of my fraternal greetings in our Lord.

  
+ Pierre Duprey  
Vice-President

Encl

PROGRESS IN CATHOLIC-JEWISH DIALOGUE

# New spirit should extend to Eastern Europe

The International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee, instituted in 1970, held its 13th meeting in Prague, Czechoslovakia, from 3-6 September; at the end of the meeting the Catholic and Jewish delegations published a joint statement.

The Catholic delegation was headed by Archbishop Edward I. Cassidy, President of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, and was composed of 23 members, including Bishop Pierre Duprey, Vice President of the Commission, Archbishops William Keeler of Baltimore, U.S.A., and Marcos McGrath of Panama, and Bishops Henryk Muszynski, Frantisek Lobkowicz and Frantisek Radkowski.

The Jewish delegation was composed of 35 members, including Mr Seymour Reich, President of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, Prof. Israel Singer, Secretary of the World Jewish Congress, Dr Gerhart Riegner and Rabbis Mordecai Waxman, René S. Sirat, Walter Wurzburger and Leon Feldman.

The delegations were received by the President of the Union of Jewish Communities of Czechoslovakia, Dr Desider Galski, and were also visited by Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek, who encouraged them in their work. The main theme of the reports and discussions was "The Historical and Religious Dimensions of Anti-

semitism". Ten major reports were presented, all of them of noteworthy scientific value. These reports provided background information for the preparation of the final document, which condemns "antisemitism and all forms of racism as sins against God and humanity", affirming that "one cannot be authentically Christian and practise antisemitism", as the Popes had already expressed in the first half of this century (Pius X, Letter of 3 December 1905; Pius XI, 6 September 1939; see also the Holy Office's condemnation of 25 March 1928).

Preparations for the Prague meeting required many years of deeper analysis and research, and was a moment of synthesis of the progress made since the 12th meeting held in Rome in 1985.

Even the obstacles and difficulties which had to be overcome in the interim proved to be opportunities for the further maturation of the Catholic-Jewish dialogue, as was shown by the atmosphere of complete trust and frank confrontation which characterized all the meetings. A new and decisive turn has been taken, as Pope John Paul II stated on 15 February 1985: "Relations between Jews and Christians have radically improved in these years. ...Where there was ignorance and therefore prejudice and stereotypes, there is now grow-

ing mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect. There is, above all, love between us, that kind of love, I mean, which is for both of us a fundamental injunction of our religious traditions and which the New Testament has received from the Old."

In its final document, "the Committee acknowledged the basic role of the Second Vatican Council's Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, and of all the subsequent efforts of the Popes and Church authorities to give a substantial improvement to Catholic-Jewish relations."

The new attitude, the fruit of this first 25 years of patient dialogue following the Second Vatican Council, was expressed by the delegates, who "desire a further development of such a spirit in Catholic-Jewish relations, a spirit which underlines cooperation, mutual understanding and reconciliation, goodwill and common purpose, in place of the former spirit of suspicion, resentment and mistrust."

This new spirit should also be manifested in the work which the two faith communities could do together in order to respond to the needs of today's world: *the need to obtain rights, freedom and human dignity wherever these are lacking or threatened*, the need to behave responsibly towards the environment. A new image and a new attitude are needed in Catholic-Jewish relations in order to spread worldwide the pioneering work which has been done in many communities in various parts of the world."

Most of all, in the current context of serious tensions and violations of basic human rights, we can hope that the commitment expressed in the document may be realized concretely in all cases where Jews and Christians live together side by side.

Consistent with these principles, the delegates also examined some particular situations and outlined some practical ways of action and cooperation: "Besides the study of the history of antisemitism, the meeting devoted special attention to recent manifestations of antisemitism, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. Emphasis was placed on the need to spread the results of *Nostra Aetate* and successive Catholic-Jewish dialogues in those nations in which new political developments have created the opportunity for joint work."

From this perspective some concrete recommendations were made which could serve to guide and help those who have the responsibility to promote this new spirit.

In fact, it was recommended that, "in order to facilitate and promote these objectives, the proper authorities of the respective communities in each region of Central and Eastern Europe should establish a special joint committee. The Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations are ready to assist in these efforts."

Pier Francesco Fumagalli

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE  
ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

December 21, 1990

Seymour Reich  
Chairman

Dr. Leon Feldman  
Consultant

TO: All members of IJCIC:

FROM: Seymour D. Reich, chairman  
Dr. Leon A. Feldman

American Secretariat  
Synagogue Council of America  
327 Lexington Avenue  
New York, NY 10016  
(212) 686-8670  
Fax: (212) 686-8673

European Secretariat  
World Jewish Congress  
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Constituent Agencies

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(202) 857-6600

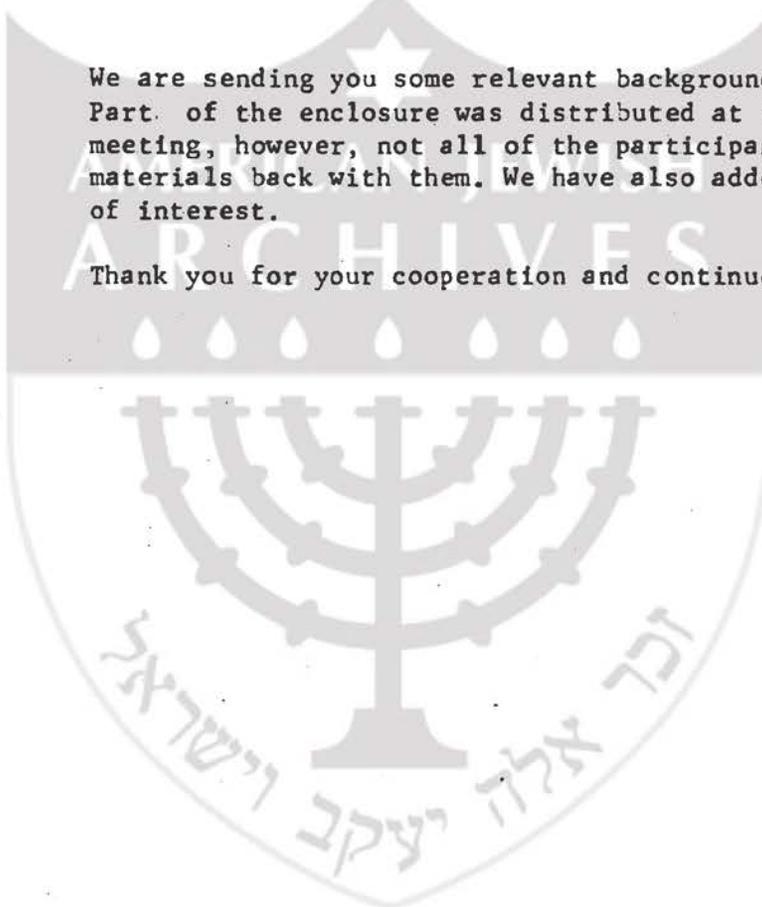
The Israel Interfaith Association  
P.O.B. 7739  
Jerusalem 91.077, Israel  
(02) 63-52-12

Synagogue Council of America  
27 Lexington Avenue  
New York, NY 10016  
(212) 686-8670

World Jewish Congress  
61 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10022  
(212) 755-5770

We are sending you some relevant background information. Part of the enclosure was distributed at the last IJCIC meeting, however, not all of the participants took the materials back with them. We have also added some new items of interest.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued interest.



**POLAND'S BISHOPS ISSUE STATEMENT  
CONDEMNING COUNTRY'S ANTI-SEMITISM**  
By Gabrielle Glaser

WARSAW, Dec. 20 (JTA) -- In an unprecedented move, Poland's Roman Catholic bishops today issued a document condemning anti-Semitism in this country, and acknowledging that some Poles had helped Nazis kill Jews during World War II. But Jewish leaders criticized the bishops, saying they were too late.

"We express our sincere regret over all case of anti-Semitism which were committed at any time or by anyone on Polish soil," the bishops said, in a four-page statement that is to be read during Catholic mass here on Jan. 20.

"All cases of anti-Semitism are against the spirit of the Gospel . . . and are contrary to the Christian vision of human dignity," the bishops declared.

The declaration follows a statement made by world Catholic leaders in Prague last week, which accepted blame for the recent recurrence of anti-Semitism in Europe and called on fellow Catholics to aggressively combat it.

"From the Polish perspective this is a major breakthrough," said Konstanty Gebert, a political columnist in Warsaw who is Jewish. "It formally confirms that anti-Semitism exists here, that it is reprehensible and that it is a Catholic duty to combat it." More than 90 percent of Poles identify themselves as Catholics.

"But as a Jew I find serious flaws in this," Gebert said. "It has simply come too late."

Pawel Wildstein, head of the coordinating commission of Jewish organizations in Poland, said: "We kept asking that the bishops make a such a statement earlier, but in vain."

**'Major, Major Breakthrough'**

In New York, Rabbi A. James Rudin, national director for interreligious affairs of the American Jewish Committee, emphasized the importance of the Bishops' statement.

"It is a pastoral letter, not just a statement," he said, "It is approved by every bishop of the Catholic Church in Poland, including Cardinal Glemp, and is a major, major breakthrough."

Rudin, who just returned to New York from meetings with high-ranking church officials in Poland and with newly elected president Lech Walesa, said that the pastoral letter will be read in all of Poland's more than 6,000 churches on Jan. 20 "without comment, and with the full authority of the Polish bishops."

Seymour Reich, chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, said that the Bishops' statement "confirms that the Prague declaration has meaning and that the countries of Eastern Europe are implementing it on their own."

In early September, Catholic leaders issued a statement, after meeting with Jewish leaders in Prague, that anti-Semitism is a sin against God.

Since Eastern Europe's first non-Communist government took office 16 months ago, anti-Semitism has emerged in Poland in many ways.

While anti-Jewish graffiti has become a common sight on city streets this year, the phenomenon was perhaps most striking during Poland's first popular presidential campaign that ended with a landslide victory for Lech Walesa on Dec. 9.

Voters complained that Prime Minister

Tadusz Mazowiecki, a devout Catholic, was of Jewish origin. Campaign aides have blamed his humiliating defeat in the first round of voting Nov. 25 partly on anti-Semitic accusations.

Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress, was critical of the timing of the statement, saying "All figures of conscience were remiss in not standing up to an election campaign so tainted by anti-Semitism."

Walesa, who is to be inaugurated Saturday, called repeatedly on Jews last summer to identify themselves. He later said that his comments were meant to rid the campaign of anti-Semitism, not inspire it. He then apologized for the comment, saying that he had misspoken.

Last week, Walesa told Rudin that under his tenure, Poland would enter a new phase free of anti-Semitism.

**Issued In Timely Fashion**

"We're pleased that the statement has finally been issued, but it would have been more helpful had it been issued in a more timely fashion, when it might have impacted anti-Semitism in the campaign," said Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress.

"We hope that they will follow up this statement with the kinds of educational programs on the local parish level that they have promised to do."

Before World War II, Poland was the center of world Judaism, with a population of more than 3 million Jews. Only 300,000 remained after the war. Thousands more emigrated during government-sponsored anti-Semitic purges in 1968. Some 10,000 live here today.

In the document, the bishops explained at length that Jews should not be blamed collectively for the death of Jesus Christ.

"If there was only one Christian who could help but did not extend his hand to a Jew in danger or contributed to his death then it makes us ask our sister and brother Jews for forgiveness," the statement said.

In an unusual admission that there were Poles who assisted Nazis during World War II, the bishops said such people would "forever gnaw at our conscience."

The bishops also said: "We are aware that many of our compatriots still keep in mind the memory of injustices perpetrated by post-war Communist governments in which people of Jewish origin also participated."

**Linked To Communist Regime**

"We must recognize, however, that the source of inspiration for their activity was apparently neither in their origin nor in their religion but in Communist ideology from which the Jews themselves had also experienced many injustices."

Many of the first Communist leaders Joseph Stalin appointed here, especially those who headed the Interior Ministry, were Jewish.

"This little word 'apparently' I find extremely insulting," Gebert said. "It shows questionable judgment."

The bishops added, however, that it was unfair to single out Poland as an anti-Semitic nation.

"We feel it is unjust and deeply unfair to speak of so-called Polish anti-Semitism as an especially virulent form of anti-Semitism," they said.

(JTA staff writer Debra Nussbaum Cohen in New York contributed to this report.)

WARSAW, Poland (AP) -- The Polish Roman Catholic church has for the first time ordered that sermons express "sincere regret" for anti-Semitism in the country.

In a pastoral letter released Wednesday that is to be read at all Sunday Masses on Jan. 20, the church also emphasizes the "multiple and diverse" links between Judaism and Catholicism.

"With no other religion does the church remain in such close relations, with no other nation does it have so close ties," the letter says.

Nearly 95 percent of Poles consider themselves Catholic and the letter, long awaited by international Jewish groups and others concerned by resurgent anti-Semitism, can be expected to have substantial impact.

In rural areas especially, the parish church is the most influential force in [22H]JPress (CR) for more !  
[H]JExecutive News Svc.

daily life.

However, the letter does not directly mention the current wave of anti-Semitism in Poland, and it also criticizes the image of Polish anti-Semitism as "an especially dangerous form."

"Speaking about the unprecedented extermination of Jews, one should not forget ... Poles as a nation were among the first victims of this same criminal, racist ideology of Nazism," the letter states.

"For Poles and Jews, the blood spilled together ... the horrendous suffering and harms experienced should not separate us, but join us."

The pastoral letter was drafted by a church commission and approved by the council of bishops last month.

"We ... express sincere regret about all instances of anti-Semitism which have ever taken place on Polish soil," the text states.

The letter highlights the teachings of Polish-born Pope John Paul II, and his commentaries on Judaism are also being published in book form so "the church's point of view is absolutely clear," said Jerzy Turowicz, editor of the Catholic newspaper Tygodnik Powszechny and a member of the church commission.

The conservative Polish church has fought assaults on Poland's independence [22H]JPress (CR) for more !  
[H]JExecutive News Svc.

through the centuries in part by emphasizing the national identity of Poles -- not including the Jews who have lived on Polish soil since the 13th century and numbered 3.5 million before World War II.

However, the church has been criticized for not taking a stronger stand condemning anti-Semitism.

The pastoral teaching is "a very significant event," Turowicz said in an interview. "It is actually the first document by the Polish church on religious relations between Judaism and Christianity and the problem of anti-Semitism."

He said it is a "paradoxical" situation that anti-Semitism is resurfacing even though war, purges and emigration have reduced the Jewish population to a few thousand.

The letter comments on the stereotype that Jews played a prominent role in the immediate post-World War II Communist government, acknowledging some people of Jewish origin did participate.

"However, we must recognize that the source of inspiration for their actions surely was not their origin, nor even their religion, but Communist ideology, from which Jews themselves experienced much injustice," it states.

In the recent presidential campaign, anti-Semitic graffiti abounded, and there were claims that Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a devout Catholic, was Jewish and his government Jewish-controlled.

President-elect Lech Waleśa publicly repudiated anti-Semitism frequently during the campaign, but was criticized for not doing enough to suppress anti-Semitism among some of his supporters.

The letter calls for "dialogue leading to the elimination of mistrust, bias and stereotypes ... to better knowledge of one another, and an understanding based on respect for different religious traditions."

[22H]JLast page !

## Polish Catholic Bishops Denounce Anti-Semitism

Special to The New York Times

WARSAW, Dec. 19 — Poland's Roman Catholic bishops today issued a document condemning anti-Semitism in this country and acknowledged that some Poles helped Nazis kill Jews during World War II.

"We express our sincere regret over all cases of anti-Semitism which were committed at any time or by anyone on Polish soil," the bishops said in a four-page statement that is to be read during masses in Catholic churches here on Jan. 20. "All cases of anti-Semitism are against the spirit of the Gospel... and are contrary to the Christian vision of human dignity, the bishops said.

The move follows Pope John Paul II's endorsement on Dec. 6 of an earlier statement forged by Catholic and Jewish leaders from Europe and the United States who met in Prague and called for an aggressive effort by the church to combat anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe.

"From the Polish perspective this is a major breakthrough," said Konstanty Gebert, a political columnist in Warsaw who is Jewish. "It formally confirms that anti-Semitism exists here, that it is reprehensible, and that it is a Catholic duty to combat it." More than 90 percent of Poles identify themselves as Catholics.

"But as a Jew I find serious flaws in this," Mr. Gebert said. "It has simply come too late."

Since Eastern Europe's first non-Communist government took office 16 months ago, anti-Semitism has moved into the open. While anti-Jewish graffiti became a common sight on city streets this year, the phenomenon was perhaps most striking during Poland's first popular Presidential campaign, which ended with a landslide victory for Lech Walesa on Dec. 9.

In the campaign, voters often said they were voting against Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a Catholic, because they believed he was of Jewish

origin. His aides have ascribed his defeat in the first round of voting Nov. 25 in part to anti-Semitic accusations.

Mr. Walesa, who is to be inaugurated Saturday, last summer repeatedly called on politicians of Jewish origin to declare themselves as such.

Mr. Walesa later said that his comments were meant to rid the campaign of anti-Semitism, not inspire it. He later apologized for the comment, saying that he had misspoken, and last week he told an American rabbi that under his tenure Poland would enter a new phase free of anti-Semitism.

Before World War II, Poland was the center of world Judaism, with a population of more than three million Jews. After the war, only 300,000 remained. Thousands more emigrated during Government-sponsored anti-Jewish purges in 1968 and today only some

10,000 people who identify themselves as Jews live here, and their average age is 70.

But the specifics of Polish anti-Semitism are such that it has persisted even without great numbers of Jews and has most recently found its targets in people whose ancestors may or may not have been Jewish or those who are thought of as cosmopolitan, or internationalist in their outlook as well as those who are suspected or professed agnostics or atheists.

In the document, the bishops repeated Vatican pronouncements that Jews have no responsibility for the death of Christ and said anti-Semitism was against the spirit of the gospel.

"There is no other religion with which the church would have such close relations, nor is there any other nation with which it would be so closely

tied," the statement said.

The bishops went on to refer to the period when the Nazis killed millions of Jews in death camps, many of which were built on Polish soil.

"If there was only one Christian who could help but did not extend his hand to a Jew in danger or contributed to his death, then it makes us ask our sister and brother Jews for forgiveness," the bishops said, adding that the awareness that there were Poles who assisted the Nazis would "forever gnaw at our conscience."

But the bishops said it was unfair to single out Poland as anti-Semitic.

"We feel it is unjust to speak of so-called Polish anti-Semitism as an especially virulent form of anti-Semitism," they said. Reports of Polish anti-Semitism have drawn international criticism in recent months.

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# Nostra Aetate 25 Years Later: A Continuing Challenge

Eugene J. Fisher

Foundations

*Nostra Aetate*, no. 4, represents one of the first items taken up on the agenda of the Second Vatican Council; yet the document was one of the last to be approved of by the Council.

Between 1962 and 1965, the debate on the draft raged furiously both on the floor of the Council and behind the scenes. Anti-semitic tracts were passed out to the Council fathers and debunked by defenders of the statement. Intense diplomatic pressure was put forth by Arab governments. Compromises in wording and nuance were made and remade. The document was originally intended to be a lengthier one put out on its own. Then, a suggestion was made to attach it to the statement on ecumenism. The final compromise was to include it in a statement on "Non-Christian Religions" in general. Thus, the thought given to Christian Jewish relations, in particular, expanded to include dialogue with Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and the native traditions.

In many ways, the 15 long Latin sentences that make up the Council's declaration on the Jews and Judaism, the first ever issued by a Council in the history of the church, constituted a mini-version of all of the debates of the Council as a whole. Scriptural and liturgical studies, ecclesiology and church history, all were brought to bear on, and in turn tested by, this remarkable distillation of scholarship and pastoral sensitivity. *Nostra Aetate* remains to this day a litmus test for the implementation of the conciliar vision as a whole, so pervasive in Catholic thought are the challenges it raised and still raises for Christian teaching and preaching.

*Nostra Aetate* (In Our Time) marks the

end of one long era in the history of Catholic/Jewish relations and the hopeful beginning of a new age of positive dialogue between our two ancient communities. To understand *Nostra Aetate's* profound significance, it would be useful to review briefly the history of Catholic/Jewish relations, divided here into six stages:

1. The first stage is the most brief, encompassing the period from Jesus' ministry to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple by the Romans in the year 70 of the first century of the common era. In this period, Christianity is perhaps best understood as a Jewish movement, although one can see the beginnings of its distinctive liturgical life reflected in the writings of St. Paul.<sup>1</sup>

2. The second stage may be called "the parting of the ways," a phenomenon that took place gradually, reaching maturity and definitiveness by the middle of the fourth century. This was the period that saw the setting down of the bulk of the New Testament, including the four gospels and the later epistles, such as the Epistle to the Hebrews. During this stage many of the New Testament and Patristic polemics against Jews and Judaism were written (against, for example, the Pharisees and the Temple cult), reflecting the confrontations between the emerging church and the developing rabbinic tradition. By contrast, the *Mishnah*, the earliest and "core" volume of the Talmud, was written at the end of the second century and, for its part, contains remarkably little anti-Christian polemic.<sup>2</sup>

3. The third stage begins at the end of the fourth century with the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire. It ends in the tenth century with the massive violence perpetrated

against the helpless Jewish communities of Christian Europe by the Crusaders (despite the strong opposition of the papacy and St. Bernard). In consolidating its secular power, church policy sought on the one hand to suppress the attractiveness of Judaism to potential converts and on the other to protect Jewish existence, as a witness to the validity of the Hebrew Bible upon which the Christian proclamation is based. No such protection was accorded pagans, Muslims, or those deemed by the church to be heretical.<sup>3</sup>

4. The fourth stage, from the tenth through the 16th centuries, marks in a sense the nadir of Jewish/Catholic relations. It begins with massacres of Jews by the crusaders. During this period, the teaching of contempt against Jews and Judaism, initially only theoretical, came to fruition in such sinful acts by Christians against Jews as forced exiles and baptisms, ghettos, Talmud burnings, and blood libels. By the end of this period the Jewish communities of Western Europe were decimated and severely oppressed.<sup>4</sup>

5. The fifth stage lasts from the Enlightenment to the eve of World War II. Though freed from the ghettos and contributing significantly to European culture and society, Jews were still considered "outsiders" by much of European society. Simultaneously, this period saw the development of pseudo-scientific racism, in great part as a means of rationalizing colonization and the slave trade to the New World. These "racialist" theories sought to justify what was being done to native peoples on the grounds that they were lower forms of humanity and were soon extended to the most "alien" group within Europe, namely, the Jews. Nazism carried these theories to their most extreme to "justify" the Holocaust in which, ultimately, two-thirds of the Jews of Europe were coldly and systematically murdered. The Holocaust, therefore, represents a crisis not only for church teaching but for Western civilization as a whole.

6. The sixth stage begins with the liberation of the death camps by the Allied armies, and with the shock of realizing what had happened there. A high point was

reached when a Jewish state was reestablished in the land of Israel, manifesting the Jewish people's renewed ability to hope. This spirit of hope for the future continued as the church began to embark upon a profound examination of conscience and renewal, resulting in *Nostra Aetate* and similar statements by other churches.<sup>6</sup>

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### The Jewish communities of Europe were severely oppressed.

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The progress of the churches in addressing and reviewing their own teaching since Vatican Council II has been remarkable, as has been the intensity of the dialogue between Catholics and Jews. In many respects, American Catholics and Jews have been at the leading edge of the dialogue today. Central to and reflective of this dialogue have been several books worth noting. In 1980 the Stimulus Foundation published a volume honoring the 15th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*. The book, *Biblical Studies: Meeting Ground of Jews and Christians* (Paulist), was edited by Lawrence Boadt, Helga Croner and Leon Klenicki. In 1986 Rabbi A. James Rudin and I put out a volume entitled *Twenty Years of Jewish-Christian Relations* (Paulist). In 1988, the International Catholic/Jewish dialogue published its papers in a volume entitled *Fifteen Years of Catholic-Jewish Dialogue (1970-1985)* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana/Lateranense, 1988).

Still, we in America have much to learn. Recently, for example, the bishops of Italy announced a national day of reflection on Catholic/Jewish relations, to involve all seminaries, Catholic schools, religious education classes, and adult groups. So far as I know, such a measure has no precedent at the national level in this or any other country, though several dioceses in America have launched similar efforts over the years. Today the necessary documents and official statements have come forth from the international, national and local levels. However, this great vision remains to be fully implemented in the lives of our

Catholic people. Here in America, where we are blessed with such active and faithful Jewish and Catholic communities, we can do no less than continue this critical work.

## Contemporary Challenges for Christian Educators

The above historical survey illustrates something of what was at stake in the conciliar debate on the declaration on the church's attitude toward the Jewish people as God's Chosen and on Judaism as the religion of the Jewish people. Its implications are pervasive. Here, we can indicate only a few. Others have been taken up by Rabbi Leon Klenicki and myself in our articles for PACE over the years. A handy booklet of "programs and resources" for Catholic educators on the theme of "Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, no. 4" has been prepared for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and is available through your local ADL office.

Most Catholic teachers, whether familiar with the actual text of *Nostra Aetate* or not, are aware that one must be cautious not to present the New Testament texts in such a way as to impute collective guilt on the Jewish people, then or now, for the death of Jesus, since this charge lay at the heart of the "teaching of contempt" which rationalized so much persecution of the Jewish people within Christendom in the past. For teachers with questions regarding particular depictions of Jesus' passion and death, the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has provided an excellent tool, entitled "Criteria for the Evaluation of Dramatizations of the Passion" (USCC, no. 211-x, Washington, D.C., 1988).

Many teachers, however, may not be aware of the binding force of the biblical hermeneutic introduced by the Council for the first time. It at once clarifies many erstwhile problems in interpretation and challenges age-old misunderstandings of the New Testament text. The Council stated, without equivocation, that "the Jews should not be spoken of as rejected or

accursed as if this followed from Sacred Scripture." Here, the record of our Catholic textbooks is not so unambiguous as is that concerning the repudiation of the collective guilt canard.

The dynamic of "rejection" can insinuate itself into our teaching (and preaching!) in various ways. Quite often, it is through an unremittingly negative portrait of the Pharisees as the foil over against which Jesus proclaims his teaching. The most recent issue of a major Catholic journal, for example, can still speak of "Pharisaical purism" as a foil for contemporary Catholic thought. And charges of "legalism" and "materialism" against the Pharisees are common in our textbooks and from our pulpits. One goes on from such negative and historically false portraits of what the Pharisees (we Christians think) taught, to the "conclusion" that the Pharisees "rejected" the teachings of Jesus. The step from "rejecting" the teachings of Jesus to "rejecting" the person of Jesus is a short one.

The dynamic that follows, usually, is as devastating as it is deceptive. What is said about Pharisaism (the tradition in fact closest to Jesus' own teaching in all of Second Temple Judaism) is easily and unreflectively applied to all of Judaism. What is said about "the Pharisees" in Matthew, for example, is imputed to all of "the Jews" of Jesus' time. And if "the Jews" rejected Jesus, then of course God must, albeit reluctantly, have rejected the Jews. In such a way, by bits and pieces and despite warnings against it in the textbook manuals themselves, a picture is developed, ostensibly based upon the New Testament, of a mutual "rejection" between "the Jews" and their God. And we are back, functionally, to a starting point not very distant from that rejected by the council. One must watch all collective nouns, not only "the Jews" (most of whom, living outside Israel in Jesus' time, would never have heard of Jesus, much less "rejected," him) but also "the Pharisees." Jesus' condemnation of religious hypocrisy, Matthew 23 notwithstanding, is essentially Pharisaic in tone and substance. It is not something with which most Pharisees would have dis-

agreed, since they preached the same virtues in this regard as did he.

So the first thing Catholic educators can do is to dispense with collective terminology and with the word "rejection" and its cognates altogether. It is not really accurate or adequate to say, as we often hear, that "the Jews" (or even "the majority of Jews") rejected Jesus or even the church's post-resurrection proclamation about Jesus. True, the majority of the Jewish people did not take the path of Paul and the apostles but rather followed that developed by the successors of the Pharisees, the rabbis and Talmudic/Rabbinic Judaism.

But is this choice properly understood as a "rejection" as we Christians tend to put it? Is it not more accurate to call it an acceptance on the part of the Jewish people of the obligations of God's covenant with them as interpreted by the rabbis? The Jewish people, to be accurate, continued to accept God's covenant even after the destruction of the Temple in the year 70 (A.D. in our Catholic terminology, C.E. for "Common Era" in theologically neutral terminology). This faith-filled acceptance, held to despite the sufferings and persecutions (shamefully often at Christian hands), of God's choice of and for them is hardly adequately sloughed aside as we generally tend to do by calling it a "rejection." Is it not more accurately called a heroic witness of faith, the longest and most tenacious in all of human history? Ought not we Christians, who after all do acknowledge the validity of the revelation of Sinai and hold that God is faithful and does not renege on the divine promises, celebrate this faithful witness for what it is?

There used to be a feast in our liturgical calendar honoring "the Holy Maccabees, Martyrs." Truly they were, and just as truly have been those Jews who refused to bow to the crusader's sword and accept forced conversion. These, too, we should honor in our liturgy if we are to be consistent with what the Council has said.

All of the above is stated eloquently in two passages from the 1985 "Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Catholic Preaching and Teaching" issued by the Holy See to mark the 20th anniversary

of *Nostra Aetate*. The first states: "The history of Israel did not end in A.D. 70. It continued, especially in a numerous Diaspora which allowed Israel to carry to the whole world a witness often heroic of its fidelity to the one God and 'to exalt Him in the presence of all the living' (Tobit 13:4), while preserving the memory of the land of their forefathers at the heart of their hope (e.g., Passover Seder)."

While the above passage invites Catholics to meditate upon the history of Israel after the close of the biblical age as before, i.e. precisely as the story of God's Chosen people in history, with all that it entails, the second passage, with which I shall close this meditation, invites us to look toward the future, toward that divinely ordained end of history which, we believe, defines the meaning of the present age of history: "In underlining (as Catholic teachers and preachers) the eschatological dimension of Christianity we shall reach a greater awareness that the people of God of the Old and the New Testament are tending toward a like end in the future: the coming or return of the Messiah even if we start from two different points of view. . . . Attentive to the same God who has spoken, hanging on the same word, we have to witness one same memory and one common hope in Him who is the master of history. We must also accept our responsibility to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah by working together for social justice, respect for the rights of persons and nations, and for social and international reconciliation. To this we are driven, Jews and Christians, by the command to love our neighbor, by a common hope for the Kingdom of God and by the great heritage of the Prophets. Transmitted early enough by catechesis, such a conception should teach young Christians in a practical way to cooperate with Jews, going beyond simple dialogue."

## Notes

1. Cf., E. Fisher, ed., *The Jewish Roots of Christian Liturgy*, (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1990).

Philip Cunningham, *Jewish Apostle to the Gentiles* (Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third

# Highs and lows of meeting with the pope

By RUTH E. GRUBER

ROME — An international Jewish delegation emerged from a nearly hour-long meeting with Pope John Paul II elated with the warm atmosphere, if not entirely satisfied with the results.

The pope himself described the meeting with a 30-member delegation of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations as "very important."

And Seymour Reich, chairman of the IJCIC delegation, called it "the beginning of a new chapter" in Catholic-Jewish relations. He praised the pope's warmth, as well as the "obvious desire on the part of the Vatican to have good relations with the Jewish community."

But at the same time, Reich expressed some disappointment that the pope did not go further in some of his statements, particularly on the Vatican's continued refusal to recognize Israel.

The occasion of the meeting, the first of its kind in three years, was a two-day gathering of Vatican and Jewish leaders called to commemorate the 25th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate," the 1965 decree by the Second Vatican Council that redefined Catholic-Jewish relations and opened the way for a continuing dialogue between the two faiths.

During the gathering, the Vatican demonstrated its desire to resolve the painful three-year dispute with world Jewry over the establishment of a Carmelite convent on the grounds of the former Auschwitz death camp.

Archbishop Edward Cassidy, chairman of the Holy See's Commission on Religious Relations With the Jews, announced that the Vatican is giving substantial financial assistance to help complete construction of a new convent and ecumenical center where the nuns at Auschwitz will be relocated. A Vatican spokesman said the aid amounted to \$100,000.

During his meeting with the Jewish leaders, the pope said, "This has been a very important day. Let's hope to continue."

He called the "Nostra Aetate" anniversary "nothing other than the divine mercy which is guiding Christians and Jews to mutual awareness, respect, cooperation and solidarity. He also affirmed the "absolute singularity of God's choice of a particular people, 'His own' people, Israel."

Using the Hebrew word for the Holocaust, he added that "no dialogue between Christians and Jews can overlook the painful and terrible experience of the Shoah."

The pope also confirmed the conclusions put forward in a landmark joint Jewish-Catholic statement made in Prague Sept. 6. He urged that the Prague declaration and its recommendation to fight anti-Semitism everywhere "be widely recognized and implemented wherever human and religious rights are violated."

Leaders of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, here to mark

the "Nostra Aetate" anniversary, thanked the pope for his efforts to fight anti-Semitism. But much still has to be done, especially in Eastern Europe, they said.

Reich remarked later that "the significant thing is the loud and clear confirmation of the Prague statement" by the pope.

"This is now official Vatican/church policy. It calls for repentance" for past Catholic wrongs against Jews, and "it calls anti-Semitism a sin. It envisages a plan to implement the concrete proposals to fight anti-Semitism set forth in the Prague document."

Nonetheless, Reich said he was "somewhat disappointed that the pope did not go beyond that which was set forth in his text."

In his own remarks to the pontiff, Reich called for concrete action in the future, particularly in fighting anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe. He also urged the Vatican to recognize Israel.

"We believe that full and formal diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel will dramatically and substantively advance the cause of peace," Reich told the pope. "The normalization of relations will send a strong signal to those nations that are still committed to the destruction of Israel."

"We live at a time when long-held ideologies are being abandoned in many parts of the world, and when new initiatives for peace are taking place every day," he said. "Physical, political and psychological walls and barriers between peoples are falling everywhere. Now is the time for the full ripening of relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel."

The pope, however, scarcely touched on the issue, referring only to his reverence for Jerusalem as a holy city.

"At the center of the Holy Land, almost at its hallowed heart, lies Jerusalem," he said. "It is a city holy to three great religions: to Jews, Christians and Moslems. Its very name evokes peace."

"I should like you to join in praying daily for peace, justice and respect for the fundamental human and religious rights of the three peoples, the three communities of faith who inhabit that beloved land," he said.

The Jewish delegation also raised the Israel issue during a 45-minute meeting following the papal audience with the newly appointed Vatican secretary of state, Monsignor Jean-Louis Tauran.

"He told us there are problems with full normalization with Israel," Reich reported. "He said they are issues relating to Jerusalem, to the Palestinians, to borders."

"We had anticipated this; we have heard this in the past," he added.

But he stressed, "There can't be full normalization of relations between the Jewish and Catholic communities until the Vatican has full, normal relations with Israel. That is a basis for us."

Reich said the meeting with Tauran was particularly significant as it marked the beginning of a formal communication mechanism between IJCIC and the Vatican Secretariat of State.

Such communications will eventually, it is hoped, parallel in the political sphere the religious dialogue IJCIC already has with the Commission for Religious Relations With the Jews.

"Our religious relations don't deal with political matters," Reich said. Political cooperation, he said, should help "put out brush fires," heading off conflicts and misunderstandings between the two communities.

The Jewish Week, Inc. — December 14, 1992 27

Conflicts in the political sphere have included the pope's embrace of Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat, his meetings with ex-Nazi Austrian President Kurt Waldheim and the convent controversy, which curtailed top-level Catholic-Jewish meetings for three years before it was resolved.

Reich said several other topics were touched on during discussions. One was the repeated assertion that

in the future, Catholic-Jewish dialogue must not be confined to hierarchies or elites.

"It's getting down to the grassroots level that's important," he said.

Another was Jewish concern over recent reports that the Vatican was considering beatifying Queen Isabella of Spain, the monarch who expelled the Jews from Spain in 1492.

Jewish Telegraphic Agency

teachers in Germany. Schultz said

## DEAD SEA SCROLLS EDITOR FIRED AFTER ANTI-SEMITIC REMARKS

By Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) -- The editor of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the ancient documents which shed light on the evolution of Judaism and the origin of Christianity, has been fired after making anti-Semitic remarks, The New York Times reported.

In an interview in a Hebrew newspaper in November, John Strugnell, the editor of the scrolls and a professor at the Harvard Divinity School, was quoted as saying about Judaism: "It's a horrible religion. It's a Christian heresy, and we deal with our heretics in different ways. You are a phenomenon that we haven't managed to convert -- and we should have managed."

The New York Times also reported Strugnell, a Catholic, was quoted as describing Judaism as "originally racist" and "not a higher religion." He also said the state of Israel was "founded on a lie, or at least on a premise that cannot be sustained."

The interview was published Nov. 9 in Haaretz, a Tel Aviv newspaper. One Haaretz journalist said that when Strugnell was asked what annoyed him about Judaism, he replied, "The fact that it has survived when it should have disappeared."

A report on the interview was scheduled to appear in the January issue of Biblical Archeology Review.

The New York Times said it learned of Strugnell's firing from "scholars and others close to the controversy."

The newspaper said those involved in removing him from the editorship said their decision was based on his longstanding poor health and recent hospitalization.

Several colleagues, however, said the anti-Semitic remarks were "the straw that broke the camel's back."

The first of the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947 in a cave in what is now the Israeli-occupied West Bank. The scrolls contain religious writings, laws and literature from about 200 B.C. and 50 A.D. Among the documents are the oldest known copies of the Old Testament.

"These texts, for most of the scholarly world, have helped to create greater interreligious understanding," the Times quoted Lawrence H. Schiffman, professor of Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University, as saying. "And here comes the custodian of these materials and drenches the scrolls in the blood of the victims of anti-Semitism. How can we have confidence in the fairness and scholarship of a man who comes to the material with such deeply ingrained prejudices, prejudices which are repugnant to most of his colleagues, both Christians and Jews?"

The firing must be approved by the Israeli Antiquities Authority, which reportedly was in "general sympathy" with the decision. In November, the Times reported, the authority appointed a co-editor, Emmanuel Tov of Hebrew University in Jerusalem, because of concern over Strugnell's health and slow progress in publishing scroll research.

## POPE, WALESA SHARE SOCIAL VISION FOR POLAND

By John Thavis

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — When Lech Walesa won the Polish presidency in early December, Pope John Paul II had reason to cheer.

Over the last 10 years, Walesa has forged a special relationship with the Polish-born pontiff. The two men shared a social vision and were the figures most able to inspire Poland's frustrated people.

Together, they came to symbolize the church-worker alliance that helped bring democracy to Poland and end 45 years of communist rule.

Today, the pope is exhorting Poles to bring their Christian traditions into clearer focus, and Walesa is expected to strongly push a similar political agenda.

"There is satisfaction (at the Vatican) at Walesa's election -- especially as an alternative to (Stanislaw) Tyminski," said one Polish Vatican source close to the pope. Tyminski, a political maverick whose message of easy prosperity had little to do with the church, touched off alarm at the Vatican when he forced Walesa into a run-off election.

Walesa's overwhelming victory Dec. 9 completed a remarkable turnaround from a decade earlier -- a time when Walesa was getting his baptism as a labor activist, and the pope was earning a reputation as a human rights spokesman.

From the beginning, Walesa's role in forming the Solidarity trade union movement drew the pope's full support. Walesa first met the pontiff in January 1981, five months after he was catapulted into the international spotlight during the shipyard strikes in his native Gdansk.

Although he visited Italy as a guest of Italian trade unions, Walesa made clear that he had come to obtain the pope's blessing. He received that and more: the pope welcomed Walesa in private and public audiences that had all the trappings of an official visit from a head of state. A few days later they got to know each other better over breakfast.

During this first encounter, the pope defended Solidarity's right to exist -- a message he repeated during his trips to Poland in 1983 and 1987, when the trade union was outlawed and Walesa was closely watched by the government.

Unlike many observers in and outside Poland in the 1980s, the pope refused to count Walesa out of the political picture.

During the June 1983 visit to his homeland, the pope requested and obtained a private meeting with Walesa. Afterward the vice director of the Vatican newspaper, Father Virgilio Levi, editorialized that Walesa was no longer a key force in Poland's future; a few days later, Father Levi was forced to resign.

Later that year, the pope sent his congratulations when Walesa won the Nobel Peace Prize. Walesa, a devout Catholic who wears a lapel pin depicting Mary, announced he was giving the prize money to the church.

In 1987, during a Mass in Gdansk attended by Walesa and more than a million others, the pope stung the communist regime by again defending Solidarity in ringing terms. Free labor unions are a matter of basic human rights the pope said. But more specifically, he explained, Solidarity represented an ideal blend of faith and social action -- a chance, finally, for Poland's Christian values to come out of the sacristy and into society.

"Work and Christ? Work and the sacraments? Yet here it was so. And rightly so," he said.

When communism fell and the Solidarity-led government came to power in 1989, it was a sweet vindication for the pope and Walesa. But Walesa gradually grew disenchanted with the policies of then-Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki -- a fellow Catholic and a friend of the pope.

Last September, many people were urging Walesa to drop the idea of challenging Mazowiecki. The Polish church stepped in to try to patch up differences between the two. The pope refrained from taking sides, but he se-

a subtle signal when he told reporters not to write Walesa off as a political force.

"He's still an active figure and full of dynamism, and I think his social and political charisma is not exhausted," the pope said. Three months later, events proved him right as Walesa defeated Mazowiecki and Tyminski in the presidential voting.

If the pope did not give up on Walesa, Walesa never abandoned hope of seeing social life transformed in Poland. The pope recognized this in a congratulatory letter to the new president Dec. 10, saying Walesa was "one who had faith, hoping against all hope."

The task now facing Walesa, Vatican sources said, is to demonstrate that he has the political acumen to go along with his loyalty to political and religious ideals.

The pope, in a recent series of weekly talks aimed at Poles, has bluntly told his compatriots that he expects them to reshape their post-communist society in a Christian image.

There are several practical applications of this, and the pope has named a few. One is rewriting the constitution and revising legal codes -- a task that should be done according to "moral law," the pope said Dec. 5.

A more specific task is outlawing abortion, which is widespread in the pope's predominantly Catholic homeland. The pope has challenged legislators to pass a proposed law making abortion illegal. But the proposal, which would institute criminal penalties, is controversial in Poland, even among some Catholic legislators.

Many believe Walesa will push these points strongly, perhaps more so than other Catholic politicians in Poland. On the other hand, Vatican sources are aware that there are political dangers here for the new president, especially on the abortion issue. There is also worry that if Walesa presides over further economic decline, a "new Tyminski" could emerge to take advantage of the electorate's "immaturity."

The hope at the Vatican is that when the pope arrives in a democratic Poland for his fourth visit next June, President Walesa will be able to welcome him in the name of a people united in spirit. For the pope, that would be a special kind of homecoming.

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WALESA PLAYED INTO CAMPAIGN ANTI-SEMITISM, SAYS JEWISH LEADER

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- An American Jewish leader said Polish President-elect Lech Walesa played into the anti-Semitism that crept into Poland's presidential race.

Henry Siegman, executive director of the New York-based American Jewish Congress, said "overt manifestations of anti-Semitism during the campaign ... were not repudiated" by Walesa.

In November, the American Jewish Congress sent an open letter to the Polish bishops raising concerns about the note of anti-Jewish bias that had emerged during the race.

Stories were circulated that Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, who lost in the first round of voting, had Jewish blood, and the word Jude, German for Jew, was scrawled on Walesa campaign posters.

About 95 percent of Poland's 37 million population professes Catholicism. An estimated 5,000 to 15,000 Jews live in Poland -- a remnant of the country's large pre-World War II Jewish community. An estimated 3 million Polish Jews were killed during the Holocaust.

Siegman said in a Dec. 10 telephone interview that there is a mistaken impression that the American Jewish Congress had accused Walesa of anti-Semitism.

"We have never said that," he said.

But Siegman said Walesa "failed to deal with it, and he himself played into it in a rather shabby way."

Knowing Walesa's courage early in the Solidarity years, Jewish leaders expected more courageous statements from the prominent activist-turned-candidate during the campaign, he said.

"We were very much disappointed in Walesa's behavior," Siegman said.

Walesa condemned anti-Semitism at the beginning of his campaign. But as the electioneering progressed and anti-Semitic remarks surfaced at Walesa rallies, the candidate failed to condemn them, he said.

Walesa also "played into this notion that Mazowiecki was of Jewish ancestry," and was thus less worthy of the presidency, Siegman said.

During an October rally, Walesa said his family's history was "clean."

"Some people talk about anti-Semitism and I have an answer for that," the candidate said. "I have nothing to do with that because since my family's history began I have been clean. I am a Pole and I was born here."

At another point in the campaigning, Walesa said Jews should publicly declare their heritage. "I am proud of being a Pole," he said. "Jews should be proud of being Jewish."

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## POPE, JEWISH LEADERS PROMISE TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope John Paul II and international Jewish leaders, meeting for the first time in three years, promised to continue the dialogue begun with the Second Vatican Council and outlined areas of continuing concern.

During the Dec. 5-6 meeting, Jewish leaders asked the Vatican to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

The pope, meeting the 30 members of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations Dec. 6, called for peace among Christians, Jews and Muslims in the Holy Land.

Seymour D. Reich, chairman of the committee, also asked the pope to continue speaking against anti-Semitism, especially in his native Poland and other East European countries.

Sponsored by the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, the meeting was a celebration of the 25th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate," the Vatican II document on relations with non-Christian religions. The document was promulgated Oct. 28, 1965.

Vatican meetings with the international Jewish group, the church's official Jewish partner in dialogue, broke off in 1987 after several incidents that Jews felt displayed Catholic insensitivity.

The incidents included the presence of a Carmelite convent at the former Nazi death camp of Auschwitz and Pope John Paul's meetings with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat and Austrian President Kurt Waldheim, who has been accused of participating in Nazi war crimes.

At the December meeting, a Vatican official announced that Pope John Paul had approved a \$100,000 Vatican contribution to help build a new Carmelite convent and prayer center outside Auschwitz's boundaries.

Reich said the Jewish leaders met with officials from the Vatican Secretariat of State and "established a mechanism for communication" about papal meetings and statements on "political matters which are sensitive to the Jewish community."

The pope said the 25th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate" is a celebration of "the divine mercy which is guiding Christians and Jews to mutual awareness, respect, cooperation and solidarity."

He prayed that the anniversary celebrations would bring "fresh results of spiritual and moral renewal" and "above all, the fruit of cooperation in promoting justice and peace."

In his only comment on Israel, the pope said the city of Jerusalem is holy to Christians, Muslims and Jews.

"I should like you to join in praying daily for peace, justice and respect for the fundamental human and religious rights of the three peoples, the three communities of faith who inhabit that beloved land."

Reich told the pope, "Now is the time for the full ripening of relations between the Holy See and the state of Israel."

He said such recognition could "advance the cause of peace" in the region by sending "a strong signal to those nations that are still committed to the destruction of Israel."

Reich said officials at the Secretariat of State reiterated the Vatican position that three issues prevent Vatican recognition of Israel. They are:

- Israeli borders. Israel and Jordan must sign a treaty defining their common border.
- Jerusalem. The Vatican insists that it be internationally protected as a holy city for Jews, Christians and Muslims.

-- Palestinians. The Vatican is concerned about Israeli treatment of Christians and Muslims and has insisted on their right to a homeland.

Rabbi Jack Bemporad, a member of the Jewish delegation and chairman of the Interreligious Affairs Committee of the Synagogue Council of America, said the church has shown it is beginning to understand the religious significance Jews give to Israel as the land promised to their ancestors.

"Why not go all the way and establish relations?" he asked during a Dec. 5 conference held in conjunction with the dialogue.

Recognition would "not imply an agreement" with all Israeli government policies, he said.

"Startling changes have taken place" in Catholic-Jewish relations since the Second Vatican Council, Rabbi Bemporad said.

The Catholic Church had a history of making "a mockery" of Jewish beliefs, of engaging in dialogue with conversion being "the hidden and often not so hidden goal" and of approaching Judaism not as a living faith, but as a precursor to Christianity, he said.

The future of Catholic-Jewish relations should include working together to meet "our common responsibility for the destiny of the earth and its population," the rabbi said. "There is out there a world that is crying for redemption."

Retired Cardinal Franz Konig of Vienna, Austria, also speaking Dec. 5, said, "the contemporary urgency of working with all men for the promotion of justice, peace and human and religious rights" is one of the factors motivating Catholic-Jewish dialogue.

Another is the obligation to overcome the "contradictions, prejudices and persecutions" that marked Catholic-Jewish relations in the past and contributed to the Holocaust, he said.

The December meeting with the pope followed a September meeting of the Vatican and Jewish delegations in Prague, Czechoslovakia, where work was begun on a Vatican document on the Holocaust.

The pope praised the work of the September meeting, which included a statement calling anti-Semitism a sin. The statement was prompted by recent incidents of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe.

The incidents included accusations of anti-Semitism connected to the recent presidential elections in Poland and the desecration of synagogues and cemeteries in several countries.

"The Catholic Church's effort to eradicate anti-Semitism, a sinful social pathology, must increase and intensify throughout the world, and this effort is especially needed today in newly freed Eastern Europe," Reich said in his speech to the pope.

"No dialogue between Christians and Jews can overlook the painful and terrible experience of the Shoah," the Holocaust, the pope said.

He supported the statement's call for more efforts to overcome anti-Semitism, including frequent Catholic teaching and wider distribution of Catholic documents against anti-Semitism and other forms of prejudice.

...

## RABBI URGES VATICAN-ISRAEL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) -- Progress in Catholic-Jewish dialogue has been "breathtaking" in the past 25 years, but Vatican recognition of Israel would improve relations even more, a New York rabbi told a Vatican-sponsored conference.

Official recognition would show that the Vatican understands the importance of Israel to Jews, said Rabbi Jack Bemporad, chairman of the interreligious affairs committee of the Synagogue Council of America.

Retired Cardinal Franz Konig of Vienna, also speaking at the Dec. 5 conference, said the church recognizes the rights of both Jews and Palestinians to live in security and peace in the Middle East.

The conference at Rome's Lateran University was part of a Vatican-Jewish commemoration of the 25th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate," the Second Vatican Council document on relations with Jews and other non-Christian religions.

The evening conference took place in the middle of a Dec. 5-6 meeting between the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations.

"Startling changes have taken place" since the Second Vatican Council, Rabbi Bemporad said. Progress has been made in overcoming the "suspicion and apprehension" which marked Catholic-Jewish relations before the council.

The Catholic Church had a history of making "a mockery" of Jewish beliefs, of engaging in dialogue with conversion being "the hidden and often not so hidden goal" and of approaching Judaism not as a living faith, but as a precursor to Christianity, he said.

"It is therefore not surprising that the Jew feels a little bit wary of the significant changes that have taken place within the church," the rabbi said. "It will take a long time for the Jewish community to genuinely trust the changes that have so radically changed the church."

"Thus when the pope sees (PLO leader Yassar) Arafat, who is dedicated to the destruction of Israel, or (Austrian leader Kurt) Waldheim, a former Nazi, or when the Holocaust is de-Judaized, Jewish wounds that have yet to heal rupture anew," he said.

Rabbi Bemporad said the church has shown that it is beginning to understand the religious significance Jews give to the modern state of Israel as the land promised to their ancestors.

"The pope has clearly stated that no theological objections to Israel exist and that the Jewish state has a right to exist," he said. "Why not go all the way and establish relations?"

Vatican recognition of Israel "could do a great deal to alleviate and assist in both the relations and the dialogue," he said.

The rabbi also said recognition of Israel "does not imply an agreement" with Israeli government policy toward the Palestinians or on other matters.

The Vatican has withheld recognition of Israel and of neighboring Jordan pending resolution of Arab-Israeli tensions. Figuring in the Vatican's position, say knowledgeable observers, is the possible repercussion on Arab Catholics from recognition of the Jewish state.

In addition, the book "The Papacy and the Middle East," by Middle Eastern expert George Irani quotes a Vatican official saying in 1983 that "it is the common custom of the Holy See not to be an initiator of diplomatic relations with any country, although it welcomes and appreciates diplomatic relations."

Rabbi Bemporad said the results of the 25 years of dialogue "must be brought down to the grass-roots level," both in Catholic parishes and Jewish synagogues.

Every Catholic should know of the church's condemnation of anti-Semitism and its rejection of the idea that the Jewish people are responsible for the death of Christ, he said.

Every Jew should be aware of the changes in Catholic attitudes and should be helped to overcome their suspicion of Catholics.

The future of Catholic-Jewish dialogue should not be just a discussion "of what each has done to or for the other," he said. Catholics and Jews should "turn together to our common responsibility for the destiny of the Earth and its population."

"There is out there a world that is crying for redemption."

Cardinal Konig agreed that the past 25 years have seen "great changes" in Catholic-Jewish relations which offer "great hope for the good and the peace of peoples."

But he also acknowledged "the rise of new, acute tensions where we would like to see the growth of dialogue and solidarity."

Dialogue with the Jews, he said, has three main motivating factors:

-- "The contemporary urgency of working with all men for the promotion of justice, peace and human and religious rights."

-- Overcoming the "contradictions, prejudices and persecutions" that marked Christian-Jewish relations in the past, including the Holocaust.

-- The awareness that Christians have "spiritual links" with the Jews.

While Christianity and Judaism are distinct faiths, they share a belief in one God and they respect Scriptures, tradition and "the land of the fathers."

"We want to respect, appreciate and cooperate with the modern Jewish people, without intentions of proselytism, moved solely by the desire to offer testimony together to the God of peace and to the building of the kingdom," Cardinal Konig said.

Catholics recognize that the coming of Christ did not negate the special relationship of God with the Jews, his chosen people, the cardinal said.

They also recognize the need to ask the Jews forgiveness for centuries of persecution and false accusation.

"An attitude of delicate tenderness must always inspire us -- Catholics and Jews -- to join in the respectful remembering of the victims and the place of their martyrdom during the Shoah (the Holocaust)," he said.

As the relationship between Christians and Jews matures, he said, the two should undertake the "urgent and necessary" task of promoting "human rights, liberty and dignity wherever they are lacking or threatened."

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## OPERATING BYLAWS

### INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

#### I. Functions

The International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) shall serve as an instrument of its constituent agencies to maintain and develop relations with the World Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church and other international central religious bodies.

#### II. Composition

IJCIC shall be composed of the American Jewish Committee, the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, The Jewish Council on Interfaith of the Committee in Israel, the Synagogue Council of America and the World Jewish Congress.

#### III. The Chair

a) The chairperson of IJCIC shall be named in rotation by each of the constituent agencies and shall serve for a two year period. Any organization whose turn it is to name a chairperson and prefers not to do so will be placed at the head of the list for the next rotation.

b) The organization naming a chairperson shall consult with the other constituent agencies before an official designation is made.

c) The chairperson will preside at all meetings of the IJCIC board and will serve as Jewish co-chairperson at the joint consultations with other religious bodies.

#### IV. Structure

a) There shall be a Governing Board to which each constituent agency may name up to three members. However, each agency shall have only one vote on the Governing Board.

b) The Governing Board shall serve as the policy-making body of IJCIC and shall be responsible for all policy decisions made in the name of IJCIC.

c) There shall be an Executive Committee, to which each constituent agency will designate one person, which shall be authorized, in the event of special emergency situations when the Governing Board cannot be readily convened, to act on behalf of IJCIC. Actions of the Executive Committee shall be ratified at a subsequent meeting of the Governing Board.

d) There shall be two permanent Secretariats of IJCIC, one in the United States staffed by the Synagogue Council of America, and the other in Europe, staffed by the World Jewish Congress.

e) The Secretariat of IJCIC shall be responsible for implementing decisions both at the internal meetings of IJCIC and by the joint consultations with other international central religious bodies. It shall also communicate to the member organizations developments within the general field of Christian-Jewish relations on the international scene and of situations which might need speedy demarches.

## V. Communications

Communications from IJCIC are to be sent on the letterhead of IJCIC and not on that of any constituent agency. Wherever possible communications should bear the signature of the IJCIC chairperson.

## VI. International Consultations and Conferences

a) Attendance at conferences and consultations with central international religious bodies will be shared by the constituent organizations with each naming one or more representatives.

b) So long as the Union of American Hebrew Congregations conducts inter-religious programs with full time and permanent staff it shall name a delegate to conferences and consultations referred to above and shall be identified as UAHC part of the Synagogue Council delegation, in all public references made by IJCIC to such meetings.

c) The designation of attendees to international conferences and consultations other than organizational designees shall be made by the Governing Board.

## VII. Budget

a) The annual budget will be prepared by the Secretariat and approved by the Executive Board.

b) Each constituent agency of IJCIC shall bear whatever expenses it incurs in connection with the normal administration of IJCIC and shall be responsible for the expenses of their own representatives to all meetings of IJCIC.

c) Constituent agencies shall share equally in all common expenses, such as travel costs and honorariums for speakers and specialists, translations and clerical services at international conferences.

d) The expenses of the chairperson of IJCIC will be assumed by the agency who designates that person.

## VIII. Meeting Times

a) The Governing Board shall meet regularly but no less than four times per year.

b) From time to time, as determined by the Governing Board, special meetings shall be called for the purpose of assessing achievements and progress in the area of international relations with other religious bodies as well as to consider directions for the near future.

## IX. Official Statements and Actions

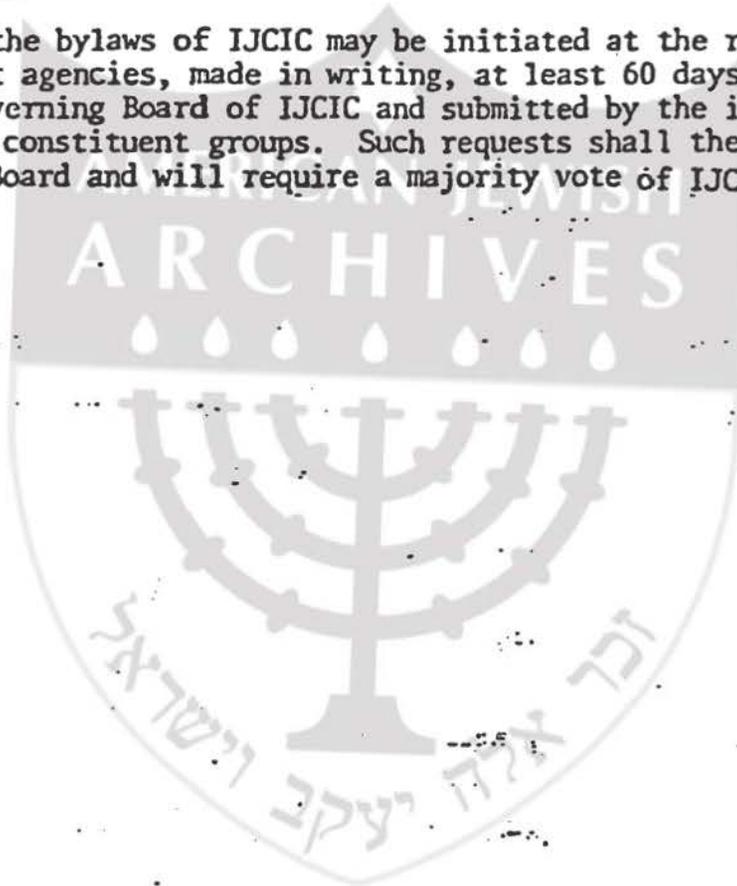
a) Official statements on the part of IJCIC outlining positions on specific issues should be made only by the chairperson on behalf of the entire membership. The chairperson's statement should be first discussed and agreed upon by the Governing Board or the Executive Committee.

b) In the event there is no agreement on a statement to be issued the Governing Board shall, if possible, refrain from issuing any statement at all. Should it be necessary to issue a statement, such a statement should indicate both the majority and minority opinion.

c) No statement shall be made, nor action taken, by IJCIC if any constituent agency expresses disagreement on the grounds of religious opinion.

X. Bylaw Changes

Changes in the bylaws of IJCIC may be initiated at the request of any of its constituent agencies, made in writing, at least 60 days before a meeting of the Governing Board of IJCIC and submitted by the initiating organization to the other constituent groups. Such requests shall then be considered by the Governing Board and will require a majority vote of IJCIC membership for passage.



## Readers write

tion of Israel's right to live in peace and security as a society and a nation.

Schonfeld was present, along with 25 other Jewish leaders, in my office on Nov. 21, 1989, to meet the new president of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, Archbishop Edward Cassidy. During that meeting the archbishop reminded those present that the question of full diplomatic relations between the Holy See and Israel was not an issue for the Catholic-Jewish Dialogue but rather for the competent authority of diplomats of the Holy See and the State of Israel.

While those of us who are involved in Jewish-Catholic dialogue truly look forward to that day when the Holy See and Israel will enjoy full diplomatic relations, it does not serve either of our communities in being simplistic about the complexity of diplomats of the Holy See and the State of Israel.

Israel is central to our dialogue insofar as it is important for us as Catholics to understand what the State of Israel means to each and every Jew. It is not within our competency to be diplomats but rather builders of a real, healthy mutual understanding and respect for each other's community.

**Brother William Martyn**  
*Director*  
*Commission on Ecumenical*  
*and Interreligious Affairs*  
*Archdiocese of New York*

### Approach too simplistic

I found Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld's remarks concerning diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the State of Israel rather simplistic and grossly unsubstantiated.

Schonfeld was quoted in the Nov. 30 issue of *The Jewish Week* as saying: "They really have a problem because we have come back to the Holy Land when, according to their belief, we were exiled because we didn't believe in Jesus."

While this may have been the attitude of my forefathers, it hardly is so today.

In his apostolic letter of April 20, 1984, Pope John Paul II wrote: "For the Jewish people who live in the State of Israel and who preserve in that land such precious testimonies to their history and their faith, we must ask for the desired security and the due tranquility that is the prerogative of every nation and condition of life and of progress for every society."

This is an indisputable affirma-

# Young Israel of Kew Gardens Hills



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Mrs. Pearl Hametz  
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FABIAN SCHERER  
Rabbi

November 29, 1990

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His Excellency

Archbishop Edward J. Cassidy

President, Commission for Religious

Relations With the Jews

I 00120

Vatican City

Dear Archbishop Cassidy:

I was happy to have the opportunity to meet you again last week in New York. I am still under the impact of the Prague meeting and again tell you how very much we appreciated your open statement and your call for Teshuvah. I believe that throughout the entire period of Catholic-Jewish relations such an expression had never been heard before. If future relations will continue to be improved then it will be due in no small measure to your own contribution in this matter. Permit me, however, to add a comment which refers to your remarks that you made at the meeting.

When discussing the problem of the diplomatic relations between Israel and the Vatican you presented the usual arguments which are well known to us and which from a Vatican perspective are not new and have been publicly stated before. What did cause me some uneasiness was your observation that if Israel wants to be a member of the civilized family of nations then she would have to behave like one. A second observation that you made was in the form of a request. That instead of putting pressure on the Vatican to extend recognition to Israel, the Jewish community should pressure Israel to be more responsive to the concerns of the Vatican.

Having had the pleasure of knowing you and of meeting you I know that those observations were made in good faith and in a spirit of great friendship. Nevertheless, they did touch upon a raw nerve not only in myself but with others to whom I have spoken. I believe Israel's behavior in difficult circumstances is far superior than that of those who seem intent constantly to condemn her, especially the resolution regarding the incident on the Temple Mount which certainly had an air of hypocrisy and double standard. Given the difficult conditions which pertain in the Middle East and the danger with which Israel is surrounded we believe that Israel is behaving

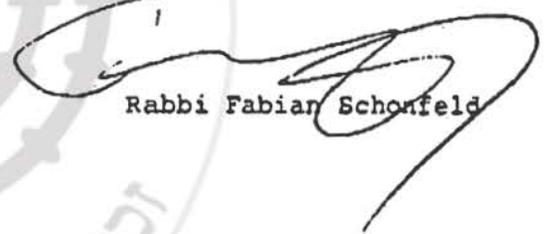
a far more civilized manner than any other nation, both in the Moslem and Christian community. I need not cite you examples of what takes place in other countries, including those in Europe. Secondly, there is no possibility of American Jews putting pressure on Israel since Israel is a sovereign State and makes up its own mind. Especially when it comes to the recognition that she seeks from the Vatican you will find that Jews throughout the world agree with Israel's position.

My dear Archbishop, I write these lines to you because you have demonstrated your friendship to Israel and the Jewish people and I know you will accept my comments in the same spirit in which you made your own.

While we have accomplished a great deal we have a long way to go before real brotherhood will reign and before our dialogue will reach a level to which both of our faith communities aspire.

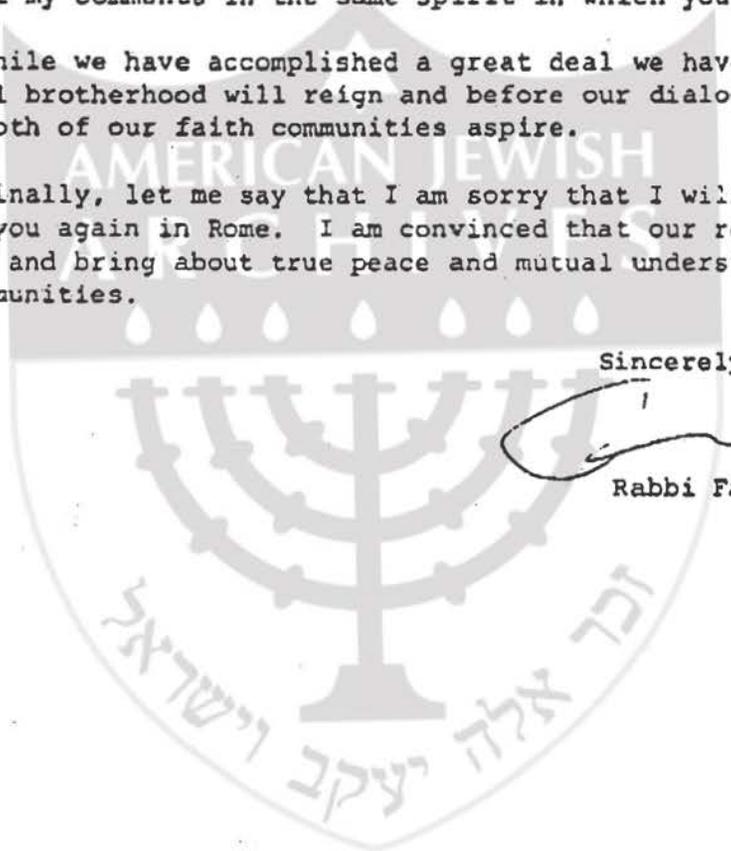
Finally, let me say that I am sorry that I will not have the opportunity of seeing you again in Rome. I am convinced that our relationship will continue to prosper and bring about true peace and mutual understanding between Catholic and Jewish communities.

Sincerely yours,



Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld

FS:ph





Archdiocese of New York

COMMISSION ON ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

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1011 First Avenue, New York, New York 10022  
(212) 371-1000 ext. 3055 Fax (212) 319-8265

December 14, 1990

Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld  
Young Israel of Kew Gardens Hills  
150-05 70th Road  
Flushing, New York 11367

Dear Rabbi Schonfeld:

Cardinal O'Connor asked me to respond to your letter of December 4th concerning the PLO slogan placed upon the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The Cardinal appreciates your frustration and concern about the graffiti placed on the dome.

It is not always the most prudent thing to speak out about every event which occurs within any given society. As you are aware, the Cardinal does speak out when he believes he has a message to share with others. He speaks with a deep sense of integrity.

To be quite honest with you, I find it difficult to equate the graffiti on the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher with the incident of the Hospice. I have observed during visits to Israel anti-Israeli as well as anti-Palestinian graffiti on many buildings throughout the land. Yes, the question of double standard should be asked in regards to the graffiti one sees.

Rabbi, I think that we are at a point where we both agreed at the last Synagogue Council of America and Bishops Consultation meeting that we have to begin to look at how our perceptions may differ on things which effect each of us.

I do not speak for the Cardinal, but I do believe that if he were to write about the graffiti on the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, should a more serious event happen in Jerusalem or in Israel, his words would hold less weight. I respect the judgement of the Cardinal to speak at the proper moment without prodding from anyone.

With best regards, I am

Sincerely,

*William J. Martyn S.A.*

Brother William J. Martyn, SA  
Director

December 4, 1990

His Eminence  
John Cardinal O'Connor  
Archbishop of New York  
1011 First Ave.  
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Cardinal O'Connor:

I have recently returned from Israel and brought with me a picture of the Dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher which has been defaced by PLO slogans. I do not know whether at the time of this writing this desecrating image is still there. Upon my return I showed the picture to Brother Martyn who made a copy and assured me he would show it to you.

I am fully aware of your own feelings of outrage at the time of the incident relating to the Hospice. We have had opportunity to exchange views on that matter. I am equally aware of a subsequent column in which you so courageously attacked the prejudicial U.N. vote which made Israel, to use your own strong words, the scapegoat for the present Gulf crisis.

Without going into details regarding the events surrounding the Hospice I do wish to tell you that I felt a sense of outrage myself at seeing the PLO symbols on the Dome of the church. I am sure that you will find an opportunity to express your own views on the subject. However, I am puzzled by the total silence of the world Christian community at this act of desecration by the PLO. As controversial as the Hospice situation may be, you will readily agree that no desecration or disfacement had taken place. So one can readily understand the puzzlement which many of us feel at the total silence of the church community as regards the Dome of the Holy Sepulcher situation.

I feel somehow frustrated that the world at large had not been informed of that insult perpetrated by the PLO. Is there not, one may justifiably ask, a double standard applied to this situation?

- 2 -

Knowing you to be a pious man of honor and integrity I am sure that you will want to make some comments.

With expressions of esteem,

I am,

Respectfully yours,

FS:ph

Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld



November 29, 1990

AMERICAN JEWISH

Brother William J. Martyn, S.A.  
Executive Director  
Archdiocese of New York  
1011 First Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Brother Martyn:

It was nice seeing you last week at the meeting with Bishop Cassidy.

I am wondering if you had an opportunity to show the picture of the defaced dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to the Cardinal. I believe there should be some reaction of some high official of the Catholic community.

I would appreciate your response.

Sincerely yours,

FS:ph

Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld

Since 1943

# The Catholic League for Religious Assistance to Poland

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 7, 1991  
From: Bishop Abramowicz  
Rev. Joseph F. Mytych *JM*  
Subject: Pastoral letter of the Episcopate of Poland  
Polish-Catholic-Jewish Relations

The enclosed is a copy of the text of the document which is to be read in all churches and chapels of Poland concerning this troubling relationship.

Also enclosed is a statement of the Commission on Dialogue with Judaism made on behalf of the Polish Episcopate recently.

The third item is a Press Release consisting of a review of this Pastoral Letter and a further overview of work and dialogue which continues to explore ways of ameliorating past problems and undertaking constructive programs for the future. Please feel free to use this as may suit your position.

P A S T O R A L   L E T T E R  
on the occasion of the  
25th anniversary of the proclamation  
of the Conciliar Declaration  
NOSTRA AETATE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We turn to you today in a matter of immense importance concerned with our relationship to the Jewish nation and Mosaic religion, to which we Christians are tied with singular and irreplaceable bonds.

We do so on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of the Conciliar Declaration, NOSTRA AETATE, in which the Church more closely defined her relationship to non-Christian religions, with that also to Jews.

This Declaration, confirmed on October 27, 1965, still stands today without any loss of its gravity and pertinence.

Our Holy Father Pope John Paul II has stressed this more than once as, for instance, in this statement:

"With deepest conviction I desire to affirm that the teaching of the Church brought forth during the Second Vatican Council in the Declaration "Nostra aetate", remains ... ever for us, for the Catholic Church, for the Episcopate ... for the Pope, a teaching to be adhered to, a teaching which should be received not only for its suitability, but more so as an expression of faith, as the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as a word of Divine Wisdom.

(Address to a Jewish commune in Venezuela,  
January 15, 1985.)

The Council Declaration points above all to the greatness and variety of links between the Church, the Mosaic religion and the Jewish nation.

With no other religion does the Church remain in such close relationship, nor does the Church find itself bound to any other nation so intimately.

"The Church of Christ acknowledges," the Council Fathers assert in the Declaration, "that in God's plan of salvation the beginning of her faith and election is to be found in the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets". (Nostra Aetate ç4)

For that reason when John Paul II, the first of the Apostle Peter's successors to do so, visited a Roman synagogue on April 13, 1986, he felt able to turn to the Jews as "our elder brethren" in faith.

The Church is rooted in the Jewish nation and in Jewish faith above all by the fact that Jesus Christ in the flesh descends from that nation.

This central historico-salvific event was within the design of God's eternal plan of salvation from the beginning.

It was to this nation that God revealed His proper Name and entered into covenant with it. This election was not an exceptional privilege alone. It also became a great responsibility in faith and fidelity to that One God unto a witness of suffering, and not too rarely even of death.

To this nation God entrusted a special mission of uniting all people in true faith in the one God and the expectation of the Messiah, Savior.

When the fullness of time arrived, the Everlasting Word of God, the only-begotten Son of the Father, assumed flesh of the Virgin Mary, daughter of the Jewish nation.

Foretold by the prophets and awaited by the people, Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, Son of David, Son of Abraham.  
(Mt 1,11)

"She (the Church) is mindful moreover, that the apostles, the pillars on which the Church stands, are of Jewish descent, as are many of those early disciples who proclaimed the Gospel of Christ to the world". (Nostra Aetate #4)

The Church as the People of God of the New Election and Covenant did not disinherit the People of God of the First Election of the gifts it had received from God.

For St. Paul teaches:

"The (Israelites) Jews ... in respect to their election ... are beloved by him because of the patriarchs. God's gifts and His call are irrevocable." (Rom 11, 28-29)

To them also belongs

"the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the law-giving, the worship, and the promises". (Rom. 9, 4)

Hence, God did not take back His election from the Jewish nation, but continues to bestow upon it His love; He alone, the One Most High and Merciful God, knows the day when

"when all peoples will call on God with one voice and serve Him 'shoulder to shoulder!'" (Nostra Aetate, #4)

In the Declaration the Council Fathers step forward in a clear and decisive manner against the principal charge encumbering all Jews with responsibility for Christ's death.

The Declaration asserts:

"Even though the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ, (John 19,6) neither all Jews indiscriminately in that time, nor Jews today, can be charged with the crimes committed during His passion." (Nostra Aetate, #4)

Some, however, appealing to the words of the Gospel of St. Matthew:

"Let his blood be upon us and our children."

(Mt. 27,25)

imputes Christ's death to the Jews.

As a matter of fact, this statement means to declare: we ourselves accept full responsibility for His death.

It was not the whole Jewish nation who called for it, but only the incited crowd which had gathered at Pilate's palace.

Neither are we to forget that Jesus prayed for these people as well as for us, saying:

"Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23,34)

The Catechism of the Council of Trent presents the matter of Christ's death in this manner:

"Christian sinners are more guilty of Christ's death as compared to some Jews who participated in it; the latter obviously 'did not know what they are doing, while we know it all too well,'"

(Pars 1, cap. V, questio IX)

The Declaration "Nostra Aetate" holds the traditional teaching of the Church that:

"Christ ... out of infinite love freely underwent suffering and death because of the sins of all." (Nostra Aetate, #4)

The Church's teaching which is contained in this Declaration is developed in later documents of the Apostolic See. Especially important is the one of 1985 entitled, "Jews and Judaism in the Proclamation of the Word of God and Catechesis of the Catholic Church". It deserves the widest dissemination possible, especially among pastors and catechists.

The links which join us to the Jewish nation are special, and these reach back to the first centuries of our history.

Poland became a second fatherland to Jews. The majority of Jews living in the world today are descended from areas of the olden and present-day Republic (of Poland).

Unfortunately, this very land became in our century a tomb for several million Jews: but not by our will nor by our hand.

Recently - on September 26, 1990 - our Holy Father, speaking of our common history, said:

"There is one more people - one special people - a people of Patriarchs, Moses and Prophets - the heritage of Abraham. This people lived arm in arm with for generations on that same land which became a kind of new homeland during the diaspora. This people was afflicted by the terrible deaths of millions of its sons and daughters. First, they were marked with special signs. then they were shoved into ghettos, into isolated quarters. Then, they were carried off to the gas chambers, put to death, simply because they were the sons and daughters of this people. The assassin did all this on our land, perhaps to cloak it in infamy. However, one cannot cloak a land in e infamy by the death of innocent victims. By such deaths the land becomes a sacred relic."

(Wednesday audience address to Poles on September 26, 1990).

Then at a historic meeting in Warsaw in 1987 with a small group of Jews still living in Poland the Holy Father declared:

"Please be convinced of this, dear brothers, that Poles - this Church in Poland which had to look from close upon the atrocious reality of extinction lived through it in a spirit of solidarity with you. Your endangerment was our endangerment. Ours was not realized; in the same measure as yours - simply because time ran out (for our tormentors). It may be said that you suffered this frightful sacrifice for those others who had been destined for similar extinction. (Circular Letter of the Press Bureau of the Polish Episcopate 28/1987/179.

There were many Poles rescuing Jews during the last war. Hundreds, if not thousands, paid for this help by their own lives and the lives of their loved ones. Back of every rescued Jew there extended a chain of hearts of people of good will and helping hands.

An eloquent testimony to this help given Jews in those years of hitlerite occupation is now seen in the numerous trees dedicated to Poles in that place of national remembrance in Jerusalem called YAD VASHEM, and the distinguished title, RIGHTEOUS AMONG NATIONS, conferred upon many Poles.

Notwithstanding numerous heroic instances of help on the part of Christian Poles, there were those who remained indifferent to this inconceivable tragedy. We deplore especially the action of some Catholics who contributed in any way to the death of Jews.

They remain for ever a reproach of conscience, also in a social dimension. If even one Christian could have helped, but did not offer a helpful hand to an endangered Jew, or did contribute to his death - this directs us to ask forgiveness of our Jewish brothers and sisters.

We are aware that there survives among our fellow countrymen a memory of the hurts and injustices inflicted by the post-war communistic regime in which persons of Jewish descent participated.

We must admit, however, that the source inspiring their conduct was certainly neither their descent nor their religion, but rather that communistic ideology, from which Jews themselves suffered much injustice.

We also grieve sincerely over the pain brought about by all instances of anti-semitism which took place on Polish soil whenever or by whomever.

We do so with deep conviction that manifestations of anti-semitism are incompatible with the spirit of the Gospel - and John Paul II recently underscored it when he said:

"these (also) remain completely incompatible with the Church's vision of the dignity of man."

(John Paul II on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II.)

As we express sincere regret over all those injustices and wrongs which were inflicted upon Jews, we cannot refrain from mentioning how we regard as unjust and deeply harmful the use by many of a concept of so-called Polish antisemitism which joins again and again the issue of concentration camps not with their factual perpetrators, but with Poles in a Poland under German occupation.

Speaking of an unprecedented extermination of Jews, we can not forget, even more so, remain silent, over the fact that Poles as a nation were among the first victims of that same felonious nazi ideology of hitlerite nazism.

That same land, which was a common Fatherland for Poles and Jews for ages, that mutual shedding of blood, that sea of monstrous suffering, those wrongs we endured - these ought not divide but unite us.

We are drawn to a sense of community by those special sites of oppression, in many instances locations of common graves.

We, Christians and Jews, hold a common bond in our faith in One God, Creator and Lord of the Universe, Who created man to His image and likeness.

The ethical principles we recognize in common in the Decalogue, and which now lie locked in the commandment of love of God and neighbor draw us to each other.

We are joined in that mutual reverence we have for the biblical books of the Old Testament as containing the Word of God, and by our tradition of prayer.

We are joined in the end in the one hope for the final coming of God's Kingdom. Together we await the coming of the Messiah Savior, though we believe that he is Jesus Christ of Nazareth - we await not the first but his final coming, now not in the poverty of the stable of Bethlehem, but in power and glory.

The most valid means of overcoming difficulties still existing today is the posture of a dialogue which shall lead to the elimination of distrust, prejudice and stereotype, as well as to reach better acquaintance with and understanding of each other, basing this on reverence for one another's distinct religious traditions; this shall open the way to cooperation in many fields.

It is important as well that we learn and appreciate the proper religious contents of Jews and Christians just like Christians and Jews experience these themselves.

Dear brothers and sisters, we conclude our pastoral message by recalling a recent observation of our temporal and ultimate destiny by the Holy Father which he described recently as he said:

"The (Jewish) people, who had lived for so many generations among us, remained with us following the frightful death of millions of its sons and daughters. Together we (now) await the day of Judgement and Resurrection."

(Address to Polish pilgrims in Rome at the Wednesday Papal audience, September 26, 1990)

As we commend all the victims of oppression and hatred to the merciful God, we bless you heartily and pray that the "God of peace be with you always". (Phil. 4,9)

AMERICAN JEWISH  
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Signatories

All Cardinals,  
Archbishops and Bishops  
present at the Conference

The 244th Plenary Conference of the Polish Episcopate  
Jasna Gora (Czestochowa), November 30, 1990

Mandate: this letter is to be read in all churches and chapels  
at Mass on Sunday, January 20, 1991

Translated from the official text by the Rev. Joseph F. Mytych,  
Chicago, IL, USA, as authorized by the Commission for Dialogue  
with Judaism, Polish Episcopal Conference, Bishop Henry  
Muszynski, Chairman.

Since 1943

# The Catholic League for Religious Assistance to Poland

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## CATHOLICS IN POLAND TO HEAR PASTORAL LETTER

### ON CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

by the Rev. Joseph F. Mytych

On Sunday, January 20, 1991, the Church and the people of Poland will give attention to a pastoral letter, issued by the Episcopate of Poland to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Declaration "Nostra Aetate" issued in October, 1965, by the Vatican Council on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, including a section on the Jews.

The letter is to be read in all churches and chapels of Poland. It had been signed by the cardinals, archbishops and bishops attending the episcopate's 244th plenary session at Czestochowa, Poland. Its contents are urgent in view of the general impressions and accusations of Polish anti-semitism.

The three-page letter calls attention to the Council Declaration and its demand for achieving deeper and peaceful relations between Polish Catholics and Jews. It is no secret that in the past few years these were at a highly painful state, and threatened the whole effort of the universal Church in its dialogue with Judaism at highest levels.

The letter begins by asserting the desires of the Church in Poland to implement provisions of the Council Declaration: "(It) points above all to the greatness and variety of links between the Church, Mosaic religion and Jewish nation".

It traces these links, and so shows Polish Catholics how deeply set in the Old Testament are the roots of Catholic faith, and therefore ought not be looked down upon. "The Church did not disinherit the people of God of the first election (Jews) of the gifts that it had received from (Him)."

Even that widely spread misconception that Jews were the primary cause of Christ's death, is not to be accepted unconditionally and without careful interpretation.

"The links", the letter declares, "which join us (Polish Catholics) to the Jews are special, and these reach back to the first centuries of our history".

Relations became distressed after disaster struck during World War II, "when this very land (Poland) became in our century a tomb for millions of Jews - but not by our will nor by our hands".

The letter draws from a statement by Pope John Paul II made to a group of Polish pilgrims at a Wednesday audience in Rome on September 26, 1990, when the Pope said, "This people was afflicted by the terrible deaths of millions of its sons and daughters (on this land). ... The assassin did all this on our land, perhaps to cloak in infamy. However, one cannot cloak a land in infamy by the death of innocent victims. By such death lands become a sacred relic,"

The message calls attention to Jewish efforts to honor Poles who distinguished themselves during the war by heroic efforts to save or rescue endangered Jews, and so today are honored with the title of "Righteous Among Nations", particularly at the site of national remembrance in Israel called "Yad Vashem". "Hundreds, if not thousands, paid for this help by their lives and the lives of their loved ones."

This notwithstanding, "there were those who remained indifferent to this inconceivable tragedy. ... If even one Christian could have helped but did not offer a helpful hand to an endangered Jew, or did contribute to his death - this directs us to ask forgiveness of our Jewish brothers and sisters".

Yet, the letter notes that there is another issue to be considered and placed in proper perspective. The intense repression of the Church and faithful by the post-war marxist government of Poland remains a painful memory. The fact is that Jews were present in that government, some in high position. Yet this should be construed as coming "neither from their descent nor from their religion, but rather that communistic ideology, from which Jews themselves suffered much injustice".

The letter appeals for a restoration of unity, "The same land which was a common fatherland, ... the shedding of blood, ... monstrous sufferings ... ought not divide but unite us."

The message concludes as it "commends the victims of oppression and hatred to the merciful God", and asks that "the God of peace be ... with all".

Thus, the Church puts forth its message hoping that it can defuse the heat of controversy and antagonism which produced repeated charges of anti-semitism and anti-polonism.

In recent years the critical issue had been the presence of the Carmel convent on some controversial land next to the concentration camp at Auschwitz (Oswiecim). This is now being resolved through the building of a separate Center for Education, Meeting and Prayer a short distance apart from the Museum, as the camp is now named.

There is yet another activity aimed at establishing peace and trust.

In Chicago there exists a Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Center for the Studies of Eastern European Jewry at the Spertus College of Judaica. In July 1989, at its invitation a group of 23 priests-professors were brought from Polish theological seminaries for an intense six-week study of biblical, theological, social and cultural Judaism with the hope that upon their return to Polish seminaries they could impart this knowledge and experience to the formation of a new generation of Polish priests.

This was followed then in 1990 by a visit to Poland by representatives of the Center, Father Joseph F. Mytych, Rabbi Byron Sherwin and Dr. Richard Terry with calls at several major seminaries to address students and faculties.

The most recent step is being taken by the establishment of an academic con-institutional relationship between the Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Center for the Studies of Eastern European Jewry at the Spertus College of Judaica and the Academy

of Catholic Theology in Warsaw and is sanctioned by Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, archbishop of Chicago, and Joseph Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland. Its program will encourage, promote and enhance projects for deepening relations between Polish Catholics and Jews.

Added to this, there shall be two weeks of visits to Polish theological seminaries by the previous committee with talks and discussion with seminarians and faculties.

These steps far-reaching efforts to secure the goals of the Vatican Council Declaration "Nostra Aetate" and the desires of the Church for peaceful and respectful relations with Jews and other non-Christian religions.

The fact that only some 25,000 Jews remain in present-day Poland among its more than 35 million people makes this a most singular effort with highest dedication and intent.

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Circular letter  
Episcopal Commission for Judaism Dialogue  
December 10 - 16, 1990

STATEMENT

In view of the many voices directed at the Polish Episcopate concerning the intensification of anti-semitism during the recent election campaigns, the Commission wishes to make the following statements:

1. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Vatican Council declaration "NOSTRA AETATE" was observed by the Church in Poland with translations of all documents and Papal declarations concerned with Jews and Judaism: JEWS AND JUDAISM IN THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH AND JOHN PAUL II (Warsaw, 1990). This publication constitutes an invaluable aid to all levels of catechesis, especially middle-school (high school) youth.

2. At the same time the Conference of Bishops of Poland determined that on Sunday, January 20, 1991, a pastoral letter be directed to all the faithful in which the relationship of the Church in Poland to the Jewish nation and Mosaic religion be presented.

3. Expressions of regret by reason of all instances of anti-semitism which occurred on Polish soil by whomever and wherever make up the text of the communique of the Commission of the Episcopate for Dialogue with Judaism (May 10, 1990, as reported by the Press Bureau of the Polish Episcopate) which states:

"With reference to the actual situation in Poland the Commission is disturbed by the recent manifestations of anti-semitism at certain times in some localities. Certain groups had turned to using anti-semitic slogans for their own political goals. The Commission feels obliged to recall the words of the Holy Father, spoken on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II: "Hostility to and hatred of Judaism stands in contradiction to the Christian vision of the dignity of man. (Circular letter 21/1990/7)

4. The Commission grieves that this declaration did not succeed in receiving due recognition on the part of those to whom it was addressed, even also notice by the Jewish community.

In the name of the Commission,  
Bishop Henry Muszynski  
Czestochowa, November 30, 1990



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*Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk, S.T.D., Ph.D.  
Archbishop of Cincinnati*

**ARCHBISHOP DANIEL PILARCZYK  
PRESIDENT, NCCB/USCC**

**STATEMENT ON THE PERSIAN GULF  
JANUARY 15, 1991**

These are days of dread and uncertainty, a time of fleeting hope and fervent prayer. Congress has acted to authorize the use of force in the Persian Gulf, the U.N. deadline is upon us and there is no sign of Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. Saddam Hussein's presence there is a continuing act of aggression which the world must resist and reverse. War seems imminent. These facts leave our Bishops' Conference deeply disappointed, saddened and fearful for our nation and the world. In the midst of these difficult days, our faith calls us not to yield to the certainty of violence, to the impossibility of dialogue, and to the inevitability of war. Our faith calls us to the continuing quest for justice, the constant pursuit of peace and fervent prayer that God will help the world find the ways to both justice and peace at this ominous time. Before the first bomb is dropped, the first shot is fired, the first missile is launched, the moral imperative remains to find a way to achieve both justice and peace in response to Iraq's aggression.

As Americans, we wish to support our President and our other national leaders, to understand their anguish and difficult choices, to stand by the men and women of our homes, cities and towns and our families who are deployed in the Persian Gulf. As citizens, we are also called to share our convictions about how our nation can best protect both human life and human rights in the Gulf. Over the past several months, our Bishops' Conference has consistently urged our nation to resist and reverse Iraq's brutal aggression by determined but peaceful means. We renew that call today. The apparent failure of recent diplomatic efforts, the Congressional actions or the passing of this deadline do not relieve our nation and our leaders of the terrible responsibility of clearly meeting the moral tests to justify the resort to war.

As pastors, we are deeply concerned about the human consequences of the crisis -- the lives already lost or damaged by Saddam Hussein's indefensible aggression, the many more lives which could be destroyed by war and the suffering and loss that inevitably come with it. I fear that talk of "minimal" casualties underestimates the uncertainties of war and the grief

of a parent -- American or Iraqi -- who loses a child to war. The human costs of war touch both aggressors and innocent people, including the Kuwaiti people who are victims of aggression and Iraqi civilians under harsh dictatorship.

As moral teachers, we are heirs of a tradition of moral reasoning that can permit war under rare circumstances but creates a presumption against the use of deadly force. In our teaching this presumption can only be overridden if several strict conditions can be met. This is why we have asked: Is war the proper path to justice if it is not the only available path? Will the people of Kuwait, the Middle East and the world be better off after a war? Has every means of diplomacy been fully pursued, every form of reasonable international pressure been tried? Are the economic sanctions achieving their objectives and have they been given enough time to work? We know that people of good will can disagree about the application of these principles, but we are profoundly concerned about the moral dangers of war and we believe that offensive force in this situation would likely violate the principles of last resort and proportionality.

Our Conference has strongly condemned Iraq's aggression, actively supported the determined global pressure to reverse it and clearly acknowledged that the deployment of military force can add credibility and effectiveness to the economic and political pressures we support. However, we fear that war in this situation will destroy many lives, divide our nation and leave the world in a condition none of us can predict. With our Holy Father we fear "war is an adventure with no return." We renew his call to "save humanity the tragic experience of a new war" which "would not resolve the problems, only aggravate them." The presumption, in my view, is still for blockades not bombs, diplomacy not destruction, words not war.

As religious leaders, we have tried to share these convictions with clarity and civility, believing that honest dialogue and respect for the motives and convictions of others will best advance the cause of peace with justice. We especially renew our constant call for prayer. If there is a believer in America who has not gone to his or her knees during these days, then there is more that can be done. We join with other religious leaders and with people across our nation and from every other land in appealing to Saddam Hussein to abandon his aggression, to President Bush to intensify the search for justice by peaceful means and to all the world to pray and work for peace with justice in these dangerous days.

MEMORANDUM

February 27, 1991

To: Dr. Eugene Fisher, Bishops Committee on Ecumenical and  
Interreligious Affairs

From: Mark E. Chopko, General Counsel *MEC*  
(Katherine G. Grincewich, Ass't General Counsel)

Subject: Free Speech Issues Involved in Restrictions on  
Pornography -- Preliminary Views

=====

At your request, I am providing some preliminary thoughts on the possible range of First Amendment questions involved in the regulation and control of pornography. I understand that, on March 6, 1991, representatives of the Conference will meet with the Synagogue Council of America to explore the possibility of a joint statement on pornography. Because of the subtlety and complexity of the topic, I would prefer to be able to discuss this matter with the meeting participants personally. However, because I have only recently learned of the meeting, I had already committed myself to be in Chicago that day. I would be pleased to make time available to meet with any subcommittee appointed to draft a statement on the regulation and control of pornography or, if that is not feasible, to review any draft of a statement for the purpose of identifying any potential legal issues.

Among the legal issues presented by this topic, three should be addressed even preliminarily in this working session: indecent communication; obscene communication; and child pornography. The Supreme Court consistently acknowledges "the inherent dangers of undertaking to regulate any form of expression." Miller v. California, 413 U.S. 15, 23 (1973). As a result, the Court excludes from First Amendment protection only a limited, narrow class of sexually-related "obscene" material which it calls "hard core" pornography. Specifically, to be deemed "obscene" and therefore lacking in First Amendment protection, material must meet a three-pronged test: (1) whether

the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; (2) whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law; and (3) whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. Miller, 413 U.S. at 24. This narrow category of material is not meant by the Supreme Court to include all depictions or descriptions of sexual activity or nudity, only those which fulfill all three portions of the Miller definition. State laws which prohibit the distribution or public exhibition of obscene material within the meaning of Miller are valid. Paris Adult Theatre I v. Slaton, 413 U.S. 49 (1973). However, such laws must include provisions for a procedurally fair judicial determination of obscenity, or they will be deemed unconstitutional as prior restraints on speech. Freedman v. Maryland, 380 U.S. 51 (1965). Although the public distribution of obscenity is restricted, United States v. Reidel, 402 U.S. 351 (1971), the private possession of obscenity by an adult within his home is not. "If the First Amendment means anything, it means that a state has no business telling a person sitting alone in his own house what books he may read or films he may watch." Stanley v. Georgia, 394 U.S. 557, 565 (1969). The treatment of obscenity by the courts implies a balance, albeit one weighted toward the state.

Child pornography represents a separate category of material. Because child pornography gravely harms the child-subjects of that material, the state has a compelling interest in preventing such harm. Osborne v. Ohio, 110 S.Ct. 1691 (1990). By contrast to obscenity, even the private possession of child pornography may be controlled. In Osborne, the Supreme Court highlighted the uniqueness of the child pornography situation and it specifically rejected the application of Stanley. 110 S.Ct. at 1696. Thus, the state has a strong, and virtually overriding interest in prohibiting the exploitation and degradation of children.

As to indecent communication, the courts have generally skewed the balance in favor of dissemination. In part, these decisions may be explained by the breadth of the definition of indecent speech. Indecent speech has been defined by the Supreme Court as a description or depiction of sexual or excretory activities which is patently offensive as judged by contemporary community standards applicable to the broadcast medium. Sable Communications of California v. Federal Communications Commission, 109 S.Ct. 2829 (1989); Federal Communications Commission v. Pacifica Foundation, 438 U.S. 726 (1978). Sexual expression which is indecent but not obscene is protected by the First Amendment and its sale to adults may not

be prohibited in order to protect children from it. Butler v. Michigan, 352 U.S. 380 (1957). The Court has emphasized that it intends that restrictions on indecent material must be narrowly drawn to achieve the precise government interest at stake, the protection of children from sexually explicit, but non-obscene material. In Pacifica, the Court upheld the F.C.C.'s authority to channel the distribution of indecent material by radio or television to hours of broadcast when children most likely would not be exposed to it. In Sable, the Court signalled it might uphold restrictions on "dial-a-porn" telephone numbers intended to prevent children from gaining access (requiring a customer I.D. number issued only to customers who prove that they are over 18, a credit card, or the use of descrambler, issued only to persons over 18), but held that an outright ban on such communications was unconstitutional. Where the line is to be drawn is still the subject of dispute and litigation.

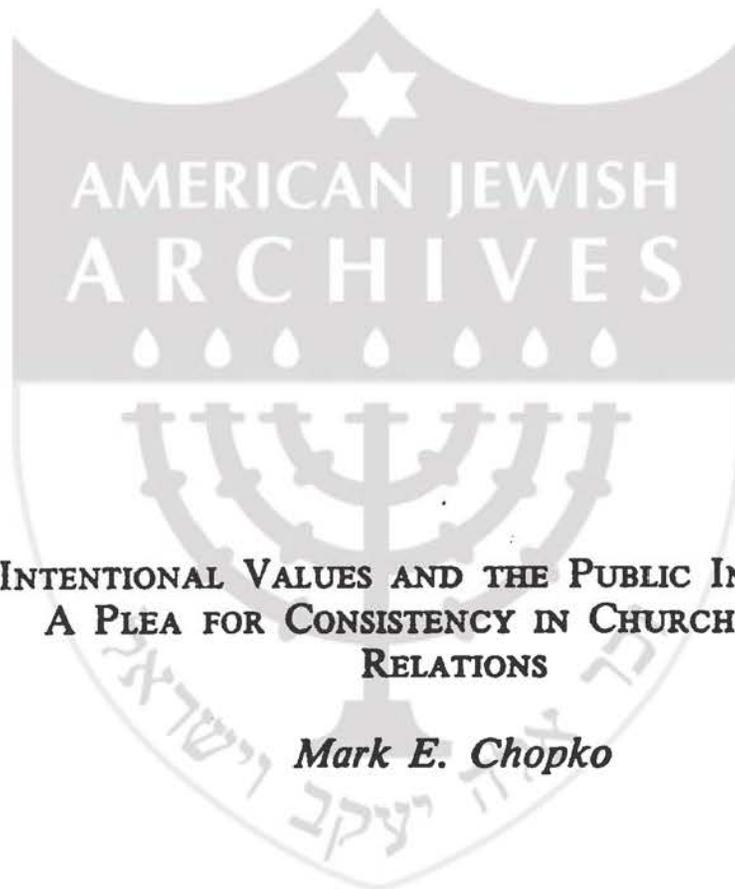
As matters stand, even descriptions of historic or artistic significance are swept within the definition of indecency. By contrast to obscenity, the merit of the expression is not relevant in evaluating whether speech is indecent (thus, some have opined that "The Silent Scream" may be indecent). Last year, in an article in the DePaul Law Review, I reviewed questions concerning the construction of the First Amendment Religion Clauses. As a way of illustrating further applications, I commented on the complex issues presented by indecent speech, requiring a balance of protected private interests and a construction of some overarching public interest. The portions of that article concerning indecency are attached for the information of your Committee. It illustrates the kinds of sensitive inquiry that must be undertaken.

Thank you allowing us to contribute to the important work of your Committee.

Attachment

cc: Sr. Euart  
Fr. Schnurr  
Mr. Daw

# DEPAUL LAW REVIEW



INTENTIONAL VALUES AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST—  
A PLEA FOR CONSISTENCY IN CHURCH/STATE  
RELATIONS

*Mark E. Chopko*



AMERICAN JEWISH  
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#### IV. TOWARD A CONSISTENT LEGAL THEORY—OTHER APPLICATIONS

The search for constitutional value and the use of the public interest as a guide for resolving disputes (including adjudication) invites the application of constitutional value theory to other areas. The broader this theory is applied in other areas, the more utility it might have. Of particular conceptual importance is the way in which this method of dispute resolution leads towards a consistent legal theory—a theory providing some certainty as to the manner in which issues will be approached and under which disputes may be properly evaluated and ultimately resolved. Given the unique origins of this theory and its particular context—rooted as it is in Catholic social and political writings—the utility of this methodology might lack a broader appeal and application. However, as a process for exploring constitutional issues permeating with moral questions, it might be a useful exercise. In turn, this Article briefly touches three areas for possible exploration: indecency, civil rights, and euthanasia.<sup>216</sup> Others will have to determine ultimately after further analysis whether the methodology works.

##### A. *Indecency*

There are many rights and interests that are implicated in the regulation of indecent speech. Both sides in this debate claim that important first amendment speech interests are implicated by any kind of intrusion, forced or unforced, into the area of the creation and dissemination of information, entertainment, or ideas by any medium. Writers, cinematographers, store

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216. Indeed, even briefer reflection is offered on the subject of capital punishment and the eighth amendment. See *infra* note 247.

owners, among others, and the public all claim rights to create, sell, or receive certain information or material that entertains, educates, panders, or even titillates to one's own personal satisfaction.

Others are concerned about the impact that such material has on the greater society. For example, to the extent that such material tends to exploit or trivialize women,<sup>217</sup> it is certainly a serious concern for all to assure equal treatment and dignity for women as unique persons, both in society and in the law. Certainly, the dissemination of indecent material also implicates certain parental interests in the upbringing and education of children.<sup>218</sup> Acting on these concerns, the state claims broad regulatory power over the dissemination of indecent material at least in the broadcast medium.<sup>219</sup>

The balance of these barriers, rights and interests, is of course, often the prerogative of the Federal Communications Commission<sup>220</sup> or the courts. In numerous cases, the Supreme Court has given some direction to the regulatory problem presented by indecent material. For example, the Court has long held that the protection of children does not require reducing adults to receiving only that information which is appropriate for children.<sup>221</sup> This does not necessarily mean that children must be exposed to indecent material as the price of living in a free society. But, as every parent knows, difficult social and ethical questions are often beyond the ability of children either to comprehend or learn, whether indecent or not.

Last term in *Sable Communications v. FCC*, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that a twenty-four hour ban on telephone subscription services that rigorously promote indecent material was not sustainable.<sup>222</sup> The Court explained that the broad first amendment protections over the creation and dissemination of material could not be abridged absent a record demonstrating any invidious harm to children that would require a broader application of regulatory authority.<sup>223</sup>

There would appear to be a strong sense of intentional values inherent in the speech clause to protect the freedom to create and disseminate material even if it might offend the taste or sensibility of others in society. The

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217. *American Booksellers Ass'n v. Hudnut*, 771 F.2d 323, 328-32 (7th Cir. 1985), *aff'd mem.*, 475 U.S. 1001 (1986).

218. *Ferber v. New York*, 458 U.S. 747, 756 (1982) ("It is evident beyond the need for elaboration that a State's interest in safeguarding the physical and psychological well-being of a minor is compelling") (citation omitted); *Ginsberg v. New York*, 390 U.S. 629, 640-41 (1968).

219. *FCC v. Pacifica Foundation*, 438 U.S. 726, 748 (1978).

220. Federal Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 223, 303, 639 (Regulating obscene or harassing telephone calls in interstate communications, transmission of radio communications containing profane or obscene words).

221. *Butler v. Michigan*, 352 U.S. 380, 383 (1957).

222. 109 S. Ct. 2829 (1989) (Court upheld the constitutionality of "dial-a-porn" regulations by upholding a blanket prohibition on *obscene* speech by a 6-3 margin while unanimously invalidating a blanket ban on *indecent* speech).

223. *Id.* at 2837-38, 2840 (Scalia, J., concurring) This conclusion was also supported on the ground that an alternative approach less restrictive than a 24-hour ban was available but untried. *Id.* at 2837-38.

*Canterbury Tales* of Chaucer are often cited as one of somewhat bawdy material that is nonetheless literature often studied and repeated.<sup>224</sup> Given this historic and intentional commitment towards the freedom to create and disseminate information enshrined in the speech clause, the sufficient interest of parents and others for the education of their children, and the interest in the growing equality and mutual respect that is penalized somewhat by the unrestricted dissemination of indecent material, the balance of these objectives becomes more critical. The courts have skewed the balance in favor of broadcasters, writers and other creators and disseminators of information.<sup>225</sup>

The ultimate question for us is the extent to which the balance of these various interests must be adjusted in light of the public's interests. Depending on the weight attached to the various values in competition, one reaches different conclusions. Most important for both the application of the methodology described above, as well as the resolution of the numerous disputes that do in fact occur, is the consideration of the public's interests. On balance, the public's interest would seem to require express consideration of all the values rather than the views of one side to the exclusion of the other.<sup>226</sup> The precise balance and blend of the various interests is, of course, difficult. But one might see that there are some positive applications for a different balance based on express application of the above methodology. For example, the FCC has routinely considered whether it might write rules limiting the broadcast of indecent material to particular times and places.<sup>227</sup> Many object categorically to any restraints over the dissemination or broadcast of indecent material. Such demands, unbalanced in their considerations of the other interests and rights that are implicated as discussed above,

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224. *Kingsley Int'l Pictures v. Board of Regents*, 360 U.S. 684, 688-90 (1959) (invalidating New York statute which banned screening of "Lady Chatterley's Lover").

225. *American Booksellers Ass'n v. Hudnut*, 771 F.2d 323, 328-32 (7th Cir. 1985).

226. For example, there are some that would advocate a complete ban of indecent material from the airwaves without regard to either the constitutional tradition which we inherit or the ways in which the application of *this* governmental power might be used to the detriment of *others* in the future. The Constitution appears to have set certain personal interests ahead of those of the government. Compare *Stanley v. Georgia*, 394 U.S. 557, 565 (1969) ("If the First Amendment means anything, it means that a State has no business telling a man, sitting alone in his own house, what books he may read or what films he may watch.") with *United States v. Reidel*, 402 U.S. 351, 356 (1971) (*Stanley* "does not require that we fashion or recognize a constitutional right . . . to distribute or sell obscene materials"). But see *Osborne v. Ohio*, 58 U.S.L.W. 4467 (April 18, 1990). The price that one pays for the maintenance of this freedom, is the willingness to endure, perhaps, the results of someone else's use of those personal freedoms.

227. Enforcement of Prohibitions Against the use of Common Carriers for the Transmission of Obscene Materials, Third Report and Order, 2 FCC Rcd 2714 (1987); Enforcement of Prohibitions Against the use of Common Carriers for the Transmission of Obscene Materials, Second Report and Order, 50 Fed. Reg. 42,699 (1985); Enforcement of Prohibitions Against the Use of Common Carriers for the Transmission of Obscene Materials, Report and Order, 49 Fed. Reg. 24,966 (1984). See *Action for Children's Television v. FCC*, 852 F.2d 1332 (D.C. Cir. 1988).

subvert one set of the public's rights and interests to others. Reasonable regulations along these lines would appear to be not only consistent with the intentional values that would guide consideration, but also the public's interest in compromise and balance as a way of articulating public policy.<sup>228</sup> The methodology offers a different way of addressing and resolving an old problem.



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November 30, 1990

**An Open Letter to the Religious Community and Its Legal Counsel:**

The undersigned have been active for many years in both scholarship and litigation regarding religious liberty, and have close associations with many in the religious community who are now deciding whether to support the proposed Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Based on both our researches as scholars and our experience as litigators, we enthusiastically endorse the proposed Act and urge you to support it as well. We agree with some of the criticisms of the specific language of the bill in its present form and understand that its sponsors and supporters are open to improvements in the drafting and hearing process. We believe it is important for the religious community to unite in support of the bill's basic approach. If we do not speak out in support of the freedom of religious conscience, who will?

The Supreme Court's decision in Employment Division v. Smith (1990) was a sweeping disaster for religious liberty. The Court decided that a law forbidding a religious practice presents no issue to be decided under the free exercise clause, so long as it is framed in terms that are ostensibly "neutral" and "generally applicable." The fact that the case involved a worship service (the sacramental use of peyote in the Native American Church) lends credence to the Court's statements that the importance or centrality of a religious practice is irrelevant. Smith applies only to neutral laws of general applicability, but clever lawyers can state almost any law in formally neutral terms, by carefully selecting the level of generality at which the law will be stated. Thus, the implications of Smith affect every free exercise controversy in America.

We are not aware of any disagreement in the religious community about the desirability of overruling Smith. We do understand that some religious leaders and their counsel have reservations about the means. We believe that something like the proposed Religious Freedom Restoration Act is the only promising means.

The principal reservation is that it would be better, as a first step, to attempt to get the Court itself to change Smith. Further litigation might proceed on two fronts. First, litigants might ask the Court to overrule Smith and return to the law of Sherbert v. Verner (1963) and Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972) (cases holding that the government may not burden the practice of

sincerely held religious beliefs unless it is the least restrictive means of attaining a compelling governmental interest). We believe that this has very little chance of success. Prompt overrulings of the Court's mistakes are extraordinarily rare, and they usually result at least in part from new appointments. In this case, new appointments are more likely to increase the majority for Smith. One of the three dissenters has already retired; the other two are over eighty and have health problems. New appointments for the foreseeable future will presumably come from the same political and jurisprudential perspective that created the Smith majority.

Smith has deep roots in the current majority's jurisprudential philosophy, and that is not likely to change. Smith results from the same deference to democratic decisionmaking that made the Court so reluctant to apply Sherbert and Yoder vigorously and honestly in the years prior to Smith. The Court's avoidance of judicial activism may be a good thing in some contexts; we believe it is misplaced in the context of a textually clear constitutional right.

It is true that the Court decided Smith without briefing or argument on whether the Free Exercise Clause protects religious conduct. The Justices were unaware of Michael McConnell's work on the original understanding of free exercise, and they probably did not appreciate all the implications of what they were doing. But all of this was brought to their attention in the unsuccessful petition for rehearing. The chances of a square overruling are very low.

The other litigation approach is to fit most free exercise cases into one of the limits or exceptions in the Smith opinion. We (among others) have taken that approach in litigation and discussed its merits and limitations in law review articles. But again there is little reason for optimism. Competent counsel for state and local governments are arguing with equal vigor that no cases fit into any of the exceptions. It is unlikely that the Court will allow the exceptions to swallow its new rule. It is far more likely that the Court will gradually eliminate the exceptions as inconsistent with the logic of Smith. It is not encouraging that the first lower court decisions applying Smith have given short shrift to its limitations and exceptions.

Either litigation strategy is likely to take several years. We are told by persons whose political judgment we respect, including Congressional staff and persons with experience lobbying for religious causes, that the chances of enacting the Religious Freedom Restoration Act will steadily decline over time. The repudiation of prior law is fresh in memory now; the angry reaction is now; much of the coalition is assembled now. The bill's supporters have enlisted more than one hundred co-sponsors. If the religious community walks away from those co-sponsors now, it will have much less credibility when it

returns to seek their help in five years. We believe it would be a serious mistake to let the legislative opportunity pass while we pursue a judicial remedy that is unlikely to succeed.

A second reservation about the bill is closely related to the first. It is that the bill delivers free exercise rights into the hands of Congress, leaving them vulnerable to future amendment or repeal. The dangers of amendment or repeal are real, but the Religious Freedom Restoration Act is not the culprit. The Court in Smith delivered free exercise rights into the hands of Congress and of every state legislature, city council, and administrative agency in the land. Every lawmaking body is now free to forbid religious exercise with formally neutral rules. Exemptions must be won over and over again at every level of government. Every legislative fight for an exemption will be in the context of some specific legislative proposal supported by its own coalition of interest groups, and those coalitions will resist any exemptions. Any exemptions that are granted will be vulnerable to amendment or repeal, or to overriding legislation from another level of government. Needless to say, nonmainstream religions, and those whose tenets are particularly antithetical to powerful political interests, are particularly at risk if exemptions are decided on a piecemeal basis.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act would confine the issue to Congress and, more importantly, it would present the issue in general terms. Congress would be asked to vote on the principle of exemptions for religious exercise, with a broad coalition urging an affirmative vote. Congress would not be asked to decide the legitimacy of particular religious practices or to balance religious liberty against the demands of other interest groups on a case by case basis. By legislating generally, Congress would avoid the danger of protecting only large and influential faiths while ignoring the needs of small or unpopular faiths. The Court has thrown free exercise into the political process, and this bill is the most favorable ground on which to wage the political fight.

A third reservation is that the bill would somehow change the rules of standing, or the rules of substantive law, to create free exercise claims that could not have existed before and that might be undesirable in the judgment of some denominations. We see no basis whatever for this fear. The law of standing will not be affected in any way, and the substantive law will at most be restored to the principles of Sherbert and Yoder. Any claim that could be brought under the Act could be brought under the free exercise clause if Smith did not stand in the way.

Fourth, some have expressed reservations about the substantive standard for governmental interest articulated in the bill: that the restriction be "essential to further a compelling governmental interest." The concern is that this language, which was taken from numerous Supreme Court free exercise decisions

prior to Smith, may not adequately protect religious freedom.

We must acknowledge that one of us (McConnell) has expressed the view in print that the "compelling" interest test is not the best possible formulation of either the original understanding of the free exercise principle or of a workable modern interpretation. See McConnell, Free Exercise Revisionism and the Smith Decision, 87 U. Chi. L. Rev. 1109, 1127-29 (1990). Nonetheless, for purposes of this legislation, we agree that the term "compelling interest" is the best formulation for a statute that has as its purpose the restoration of constitutional principles as they existed prior to Smith.

At a verbal level, the "compelling" interest test is the strongest test in constitutional law. In the area where the test originated -- invidious discrimination against racial minorities -- the Supreme Court has not found the test satisfied in almost half a century. If taken seriously, the test would be more than strong enough to protect religious liberty. To be sure, in a series of decisions in the 1980s, the Supreme Court purported to apply the "compelling" interest test, while giving it so little "bite" that it more closely resembled a "rational basis" test than a "compelling" interest test. E.g., United States v. Lee (1982). Such are the limitations of language that no verbal standard is impervious to misapplication.

But the solution to this problem is not to craft new language, which would create great uncertainty about the meaning of this legislation. The better solution is to explain in the committee report that the "compelling" interest test is a reference to the test applied in Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972), Thomas v. Review Board (1981), and Sherbert v. Verner (1963). There is no need for Congress to express a view on whether other cases, in which free exercise claims were rejected by the Court, were correctly decided.

We would also recommend against any attempt by Congress to address specific cases or contexts involving free exercise claims. Conflicts between religious conscience and governmental authority can arise in virtually any context, and it would not be feasible for Congress to anticipate them all. Moreover, almost by definition free exercise claims involve the rights of minorities against the majority. While a broad coalition can agree, in principle, on the importance of free exercise of religion, it is too much to ask that they agree on the specifics of religious practices about which they will, naturally, entertain different convictions. The "compelling" interest test of the proposed bill, being general, is superior to any attempt to address particular cases in detail.

Finally, some concern has been expressed about the potential impact of the bill on the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Establishment Clause. Many of the religious and civil liberties groups that agree on the proper interpretation of the Free

Exercise Clause do not agree about the Establishment Clause. Some think that the Court's current test is too stringent; some think it too lenient; some think it about right. It has been suggested by some who are critical of the current Establishment Clause test that Section 6 of the proposed bill might freeze that interpretation in place. We do not think this criticism is well founded.

Section 6 provides: "Nothing in this Act limits or creates rights under that portion of the first article of amendment to the Constitution that prohibits laws respecting an establishment of religion." In our judgment, this language is purely precautionary and has no substantive effect at all. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act does not address the Establishment Clause, and (with or without Section 6) does not affect it.

The relation between the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses is a source of great contention. Some believe that the pre-Smith free exercise interpretation is inconsistent with the Court's current interpretation of the Establishment Clause. Others do not. This bill does not, and should not, resolve that question. All it does is to return the question to the same state of contention and confusion that reigned before the decision in Smith.

In conclusion, we strongly endorse the concept of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (even though we believe the language of the bill should be modified in some respects). We share the regrets and concerns of some critics of the bill that these principles are now to be given mere statutory protection, when we are convinced that they are entitled to constitutional protection. But if statutory protection is available, it can supplement constitutional protection. The fear that statutory protection might be counterproductive is inconsistent with modern experience. Racial minorities have sought protection from the courts and the Constitution, but they also turned to Congress and procured passage of the great civil rights acts. Even more pertinent to our situation is the Equal Access Act, by which Congress protected the constitutional rights of student religious groups struggling against discrimination in the high schools, where years of litigation in the courts had failed to win redress. Congress's emphatic defense of religious free speech rights over countervailing Establishment Clause fears surely contributed to the Supreme Court's thinking on the constitutional question, as well.

We have come to think of the courts as the branch of government most responsible for protecting liberty. But the original conception was that our representative institutions would themselves be the first protectors of our liberties, with the courts serving as backstops when the representative branches failed. One of the virtues of separation of powers is that each branch of government can protect liberty when it is so inclined,

and that each branch can fill part of the gap left by the errors and omissions of the other branches.

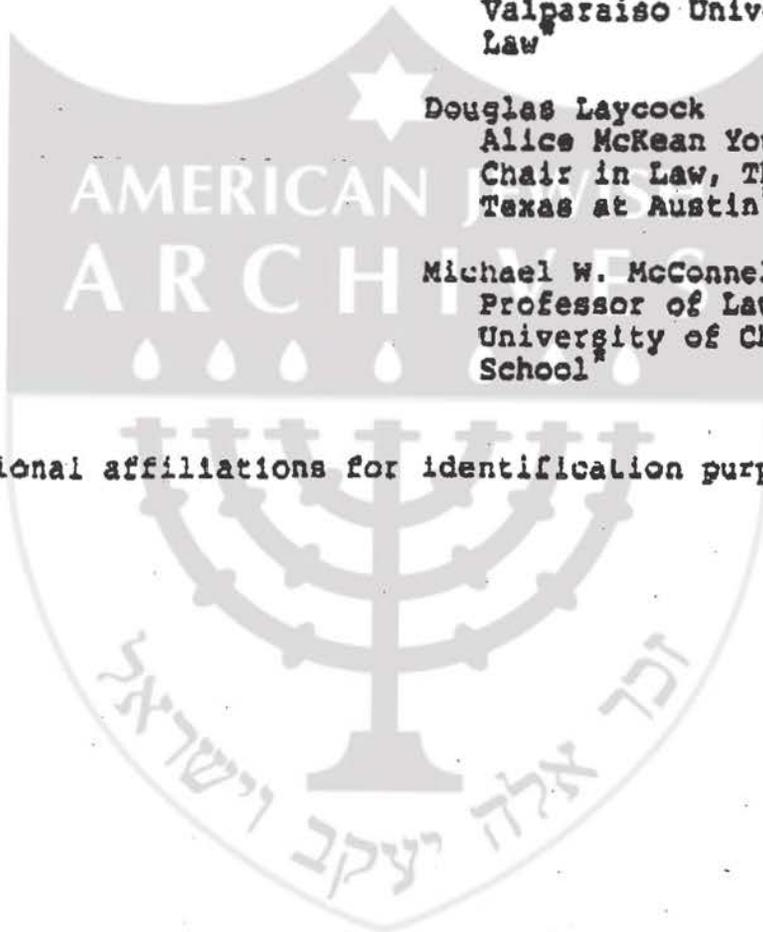
We therefore believe that passage of a properly worded Religious Freedom Restoration Act is the best practicable means of correcting a grave interpretive error by the Supreme Court, and will help to ensure that all Americans, whatever their religious faith, will be protected in their exercise of religion, as the framers and ratifiers of our Constitution intended them to be.

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March 1, 1991

The Honorable Stephen Solarz  
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U.S. House of Representatives  
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Dr. Billy A. Melvin  
Executive Director

Dear Representatives Solarz and Henry:

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) is contending that the proposed Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) could have the effect of recreating a constitutional right to abortion should Roe v. Wade be overruled. While constitutional scholars have thoroughly refuted that contention, we would like to augment their analysis from the perspective of a pro-life member of the RFRA Coalition.

The "abortion-neutral" language that NRLC insists be incorporated in the bill reads as follows: "Nothing in this Act shall be construed to grant, secure or guarantee any right to abortion, access to abortion services, or funding of abortion."

NRLC's "abortion-neutral" language is not abortion neutral. It would preclude free exercise claims even when abortion is required by religious beliefs. Yet it would allow persons to use RFRA to avoid participating in abortion procedures. It endorses an absolutist pro-life position; it rejects the pro-choice position, as well as pro-life viewpoints that recognize exceptions in extreme cases.

NRLC's "abortion-neutral" language is also unconstitutional. That language, in prohibiting free exercise of religion claims to abortion, would violate the First Amendment which provides: "Congress shall make no law . . . prohibiting the free exercise [of religion]." Moreover, the NRLC language also violates the Establishment Clause. It would legislate NRLC's religious viewpoint on abortion, while treating the views of others as illegitimate. The tenets of Orthodox Judaism, for example, require abortion when the pregnancy jeopardizes the life of the expectant mother. (Agudath Israel of America, the largest grassroots Orthodox Jewish organization in the United States, and a staunch pro-life member of the RFRA Coalition, has indicated in a well-reasoned letter to NRLC that its "abortion-neutral" language is unacceptable.) In thus legislatively endorsing one religious view while disapproving others, the NRLC "abortion-neutral" language violates the Establishment Clause prohibition against laws that prefer one religious group over another.

Reduced to its simplest terms, NRLC's position is tantamount to opposing the very existence of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment unless it includes abortion-neutral language. Hence there is no principled way NRLC's language can be added to RFRA. But that is by no means a setback for those who are pro-life and pro-religious liberty. The proposed Act is itself abortion neutral.

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act, as its title indicates, was introduced last year to restore First Amendment free exercise jurisprudence as it stood before the Supreme Court's April 1990 decision in Employment Division v. Smith. In Smith the Supreme Court abruptly abandoned its own precedents requiring the government to justify burdens on religious exercise imposed by laws of general applicability. The Court, employing a flawed rationale no one expected, discarded the compelling governmental interest test long established in its prior decisions. For all practical purposes, the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment is at present a dead letter.

The purpose of RFRA is simply to restore the compelling governmental interest test. That test, while not perfect, has proven to be a workable way for striking sensible balances between religious liberty and competing governmental interests. The heart of the proposed Act reads as follows:

#### FREE EXERCISE OF RELIGION PROTECTED

(a) IN GENERAL.--Government shall not burden a person's exercise of religion even if the burden results from a rule of general applicability, except as provided in subsection (b).

(b) EXCEPTION.--Government may burden a person's exercise of religion only if --

- (1) it demonstrates that application of the burden to the person--
  - (A) is essential to further a compelling governmental interest, and
  - (B) is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest.

NRLC contends that this language "would provide pro-abortion groups with a powerful new legal weapon with which to attack state and federal restrictions on abortion." However, this straightforward language merely restates the substance of the Supreme Court's compelling governmental interest test as it existed before being discarded in Smith. The test is not new; it is decades old.

In the same vein, NRLC alleges that RFRA could open a "tremendous loophole" to widespread abortion based upon free exercise claims. However, free exercise claims are protectable by the courts only when government threatens to burden actions motivated by religious belief. The free exercise of religion does not encompass the right to engage in any conduct that one's religion merely deems permissible. Thus in Harris v. McRae the Supreme Court spoke of free exercise considerations when an abortion must be procured "under compulsion of religious belief." (Emphasis added.) We are unaware of any religion which requires abortion except in extreme cases, such as a threat to the life of the mother.

Any abortion free exercise claim, of course, would have to be weighed against the government's compelling interest in protecting unborn human life. If the government's interest is sufficiently compelling to override a woman's privacy

claim under Roe v. Wade, surely it is sufficiently compelling to override her free exercise claim under RFRA. In any event, these considerations are largely academic because states which restrict abortion commonly provide exceptions for extreme cases. Incidentally, free exercise claims, even if successful, generally do not result in laws being held unconstitutional. If successful, a free exercise claim results in the court's holding that a law, as applied, violates the free exercise rights of the person, based on the facts and circumstances of that particular case. And it is a precedent only for other individuals who are able to prove that their free exercise claims are substantially the same.

In the final analysis, judicial resolution of the abortion issue is up to the Supreme Court. If the present Court wants to uphold a right to abortion, it can do so by declining to overrule Roe v. Wade. If, however, Roe v. Wade is overruled, and a future Supreme Court decides to once again uphold a right to abortion, it can do so either by reinstating Roe v. Wade, or perhaps formulating some other legal theory in support of a constitutional right to abortion, at least in some cases. If the Court decides in a particular case to rely on free exercise of religion, it can always rely on the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment. The Free Exercise Clause will remain part of the Constitution, whether RFRA passes or not.

NRLC apparently thinks that Smith will forever bar free exercise claims to abortion even in the unlikely event that the Court wished to recreate a right to abortion after overruling Roe v. Wade. That is wishful thinking. The Supreme Court often sidesteps cases which stand in the way of a result it decides to reach. Indeed, the Court could simply ignore its decision in the Smith case. For example, Justice Scalia, speaking for a majority of the Court in Smith, ignored West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette, a landmark case squarely in point. Or the Court could simply distinguish Smith, as it distinguished Wisconsin v. Yoder, its seminal compelling governmental interest decision, in the Smith case itself. (Any free exercise claim to abortion could readily be treated by the Court as a "hybrid" case involving free exercise and other rights; that was the ostensible basis upon which Wisconsin v. Yoder was "distinguished" in Smith.) Considering these jurisprudential facts of life, it is wholly unrealistic to argue that future abortion free exercise claims are going to be barred by Smith if RFRA is not passed.

As it becomes clear to the American people that the Supreme Court in Smith gutted the Free Exercise Clause, the pressing need to pass RFRA will become more and more evident. Government officials, emboldened by Smith, are already turning a deaf ear to free exercise claims. RFRA, whose limited purpose is confined to restoring the Court's own compelling governmental interest test, should pass with broad bi-partisan support. It is not an "abortion bill," a wolf in sheep's clothing. In crying wolf, NRLC only confuses the issue. Worse, its political opposition, if successful, would jeopardize our religious freedom. It would be tragic if our First Liberty were to be sacrificed for nothing.

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NRLC has sought to augment its theory that RFRA is an "abortion bill" by making several insinuations in a memo to "Interested Parties" and a letter to Congressman Stephen J. Solarz, both dated January 18, 1991. These insinuations, which impugn the motives of some associated with this legislative effort, are addressed below.

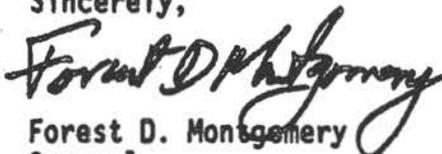
NRLC insinuates that some members of the bi-partisan RFRA Coalition have a sinister hidden agenda -- abortion rights. Wrong. We have worked since last May with RFRA Coalition members who span the religious/political spectrum. Coalition members -- liberals, moderates, and conservatives -- stand together, united by their mutual commitment to passage of RFRA. Diversity is the strength of this unusual Coalition. We have no reason to question the integrity of any Coalition member; all have been candid throughout our many discussions.

NRLC insinuates that pro-life members of the RFRA Coalition initially did not realize the abortion ramifications of the bill, which only came to light when NRLC's General Counsel analyzed the bill. Wrong. From the first consideration of proposed legislation in the drafting stage, pro-life members of the RFRA Coalition took all ramifications of the bill into account, including the abortion issue. We concluded then that the proposed legislation we helped draft was not an "abortion bill." We remain convinced that conclusion is correct.

NRLC insinuates that Congressman Stephen J. Solarz, who is admittedly pro-choice, introduced RFRA to further that cause. Wrong. Congressman Solarz introduced RFRA because of his commitment to religious liberty. His efforts to protect religious freedom are a matter of public record. Congressman Solarz, over the course of his twenty years in public life, has been a tireless advocate for the rights of religious minorities throughout the world and here at home. He was the author of the "Yarmulke Bill" which protected the rights of U.S. soldiers to wear religious articles while serving our country. (Incidentally, enactment of that bill legislatively overruled another decision of the Supreme Court which infringed free exercise of religion.) He also successfully fought for passage of legislation which requires the federal government to allow public employees to observe religious holy days. Last year he introduced similar legislation to protect the rights of workers in the private sector. Congressman Solarz is himself a member of a minority religion, and perhaps that accounts for the fact that he has been in the forefront of these battles for religious liberty. In any event, he fully appreciates the religious oppression that is threatened in the aftermath of the disastrous Smith decision. He shares our desire to see the compelling interest test restored, and with it, a restoration of our religious freedom.

We look forward to working with the primary RFRA sponsors, Congressmen Stephen Solarz and Paul Henry. Congressman Henry, son of respected evangelical theologian Carl F. H. Henry, is committed to the pro-life cause. We also look forward to bi-partisan passage of the most crucial legislation in American history relating to religious liberty.

Sincerely,



Forest D. Montgomery  
Counsel

FDM:jdk

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February 21, 1991

Hon. Stephen Solarz  
Hon. Paul Henry  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Representatives Solarz and Henry:

Some have expressed an opinion that the proposed Religious Freedom Restoration Act would have the effect of recreating a constitutional right to abortion in the event Roe v. Wade is overruled. This is obviously a matter of grave concern to those in the religious community who value both religious freedom and the rights of the unborn. Upon full consideration of the arguments, however, we have come to the conclusion that the possibilities of an abortion-rights interpretation of the proposed Act are sufficiently remote, and the concrete advantages of the Act sufficiently high, that those who support both religious freedom and the pro-life cause should support this legislation. Moreover, we consider the Act as drafted to be abortion neutral.

We begin with the proposition that the proposed Act would simply restore (as a matter of federal statutory law) the interpretation of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment most consistent with its language and purposes. Congress has the authority and affirmative responsibility to enforce the substantive rights protected under the Fourteenth Amendment, among which are the enumerated rights of the Bill of Rights. If the proposed Act does no more than provide a statutory remedy for

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\*/ For purposes of these comments we express no opinion on whether Roe should be overruled. We believe that those on both sides of the abortion question can and should support this bill. We also assume for purposes of these comments that any remaining questions regarding the precise language of the bill will be satisfactorily resolved, and express no opinion here regarding those questions.

violations of the Constitution as properly interpreted, it would be strange to oppose it on the ground that it might be subject to misinterpretation. The First Amendment itself is subject to misinterpretation, but that does not mean we would be better off without it.

Defeat of the proposed Act would come at a high cost to those whose religious consciences may be at variance with the dominant political and social norms of the current age. This would include orthodox and conservative Jews, evangelical and fundamentalist Protestants, and traditionalist Catholics who make up a large part of the pro-life constituency. Without the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, these persons lack substantial legal protection for their religious practices, including the right conscientiously to refuse to perform or facilitate abortions.

Balanced against the immediate need for enactment of legislative protections for the free exercise of religion is the possibility that the Act might be interpreted to permit women who claim a religiously-motivated need to obtain an abortion, and thus recreate the right to abortion under the guise of free exercise. Obviously, we cannot discount this, or any other, legal theory entirely. Nonetheless, we consider the possibility that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act will be interpreted to perpetuate abortion rights after the demise of Roe as extremely remote, for several reasons.

First, the free exercise of religion does not encompass the right to engage in any conduct that one's religion deems permissible. It protects only conduct that is motivated by religious belief. The only instance of which we are aware where a sizable religious group teaches that abortion is religiously

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\*/ It is difficult to capture the idea of the dictates of conscience in statutory language because different theological traditions conceptualize the force of God's moral order in different ways. Some treat it as a binding moral law; others view it as an expression of God's will, which believers will freely conform to out of love and devotion to God. For example, consider the question: must a believer tithe? Some will easily answer "yes." Others will answer: "no, but a believer will tithe, because he will want to act in conformity to God's will for him." For this reason, it would be a mistake to tighten the language of the Act by confining it to conduct "compelled by" religious belief. By the same token, the Act should not refer to conduct "consistent with" religious belief, since this would go beyond the dictates of conscience. The language in the operative section of the proposed Act -- "the practice of religion" -- seems to avoid the extremes.

compelled confines that teaching to circumstances so extreme (such as endangerment of the life of the mother) that any anti-abortion statute likely to be passed by a state would already exempt it.

Second and most important, the proposed Act permits the government to enforce laws, notwithstanding their interference with the exercise of religion, when necessary to achieve a "compelling governmental interest." This is the same legal standard that applies in the abortion context. The Webster plurality held that "the State's interest, if compelling after viability, is equally compelling before viability". 109 S. Ct. at 3057. It is this statement that caused observers to conclude that the otherwise-modest Webster decision was an implicit overruling of Roe. See also Thornburgh v. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 476 U.S. 747, 828 (1986) (O'Connor, J., concurring in part) (the "State has compelling interests in ensuring maternal health and in protecting potential human life, and these interests exist 'throughout pregnancy'"). If Roe is overruled on this ground -- that the states have a compelling interest in protecting fetal life throughout pregnancy -- then the question under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (does the government have a "compelling" interest?) will already have been answered. If the state's interest in protecting fetal life is compelling under the due process clause, that interest will be equally compelling under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

The argument of those who fear the enactment of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act thus reduces to the claim that Roe might be reversed for reasons other than the government's "compelling interest" in protecting unborn lives, in which case there would be no inconsistency in holding that the government lacks any such interest under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. This is unlikely, given the doctrinal formulation of the abortion issue by both Justice O'Connor and the Webster plurality. Moreover, holding that anti-abortion laws are constitutional even in the absence of a "compelling interest" in protection of fetal life would be, in effect, a repudiation of the entire line of "privacy" cases, including Turner v. Safly (protecting the right to marry) and Griswold v. Connecticut (protecting the right to use contraceptives), and would be vastly more controversial and vulnerable to political attack. And even if this were the basis for overruling Roe, it would still be more likely than not that the Justices would conclude that protection of fetal life is "compelling" under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. An abortion-rights interpretation of the Act is therefore doubly improbable.

We must also bear in mind the "political" factors and subjective elements involved in judicial decisionmaking. The same judges and Justices who would decide whether to overrule Roe

would also interpret the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. While one could imagine that committed "pro-choice" judges might construe the Act to create abortion rights, it is hardly likely that the same set of judges would be against abortion rights under one provision of law while straining to recreate the same rights under a different provision. If the Court overrules Roe, it will be because of a fundamental jurisprudential judgment that the abortion issue is not appropriately resolved by judges -- that "the answers to most of the cruel questions posed are political and not juridical." Webster, 109 S. Ct. at 3064 (Scalia, J., concurring). Having made that judgment, the Court will not re-create abortion rights under a different label.

It has been suggested that the courts might interpret the Religious Freedom Restoration Act itself as codifying the legal proposition that the protection of unborn life is not a "compelling governmental interest," on the ground that this was the prevailing holding of the Supreme Court at the time the bill was enacted. We think this concern can be dismissed, for two reasons. First, the Court's judgment regarding the compelling character of the government's interest in protecting fetal life is currently in flux, with five votes in Webster suggesting that it is, in fact, compelling. Second, it would be contrary to established principles of statutory construction to interpret a statute that does not even mention "abortion" as codifying the then-current law of abortion, especially when pro-life as well as pro-choice legislators are among its prominent supporters.

We recognize that those who have expressed concern about the abortion implications of the proposed law do not oppose it in its entirety, but suggest only that "abortion-neutrality" language be appended to it. But informed observers of the political situation are nearly unanimous in their judgment that inclusion of any reference to abortion would make passage of the statute impossible. We must, therefore, choose between the proposed Act without any language on abortion, and no Act at all. Moreover, we believe that inclusion of the proposed abortion-neutrality language would be unwise, even apart from political realities, for two reasons. First, pro-choice supporters of this bill would presumably insist that any abortion-neutrality language cover all abortion-related conflicts; this would in all probability result in an Act that would provide no protection for religious organizations and individuals who seek exemption from pro-abortion legal requirements. Allowing one group to invoke the Act on abortion-related matters and not the other would not be seen as "abortion-neutral." Second, if the door is opened to substantive exemptions regarding particular subject areas, there will be many more amendments limiting the scope of the Act as it applies to various politically sensitive matters. In all likelihood, the result would not be favorable to positions held by the pro-life constituency.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that this issue arises only because the Court has largely eliminated free exercise protection for religious conduct. Any pro-life opposition to the bill depends on the argument that it is better to have no right to religious exercise in any context than to have even a slight risk of a free exercise right to abortion. We believe it would be a serious mistake to abandon the only promising source of protection for religious exercise in order to avoid this largely theoretical risk.

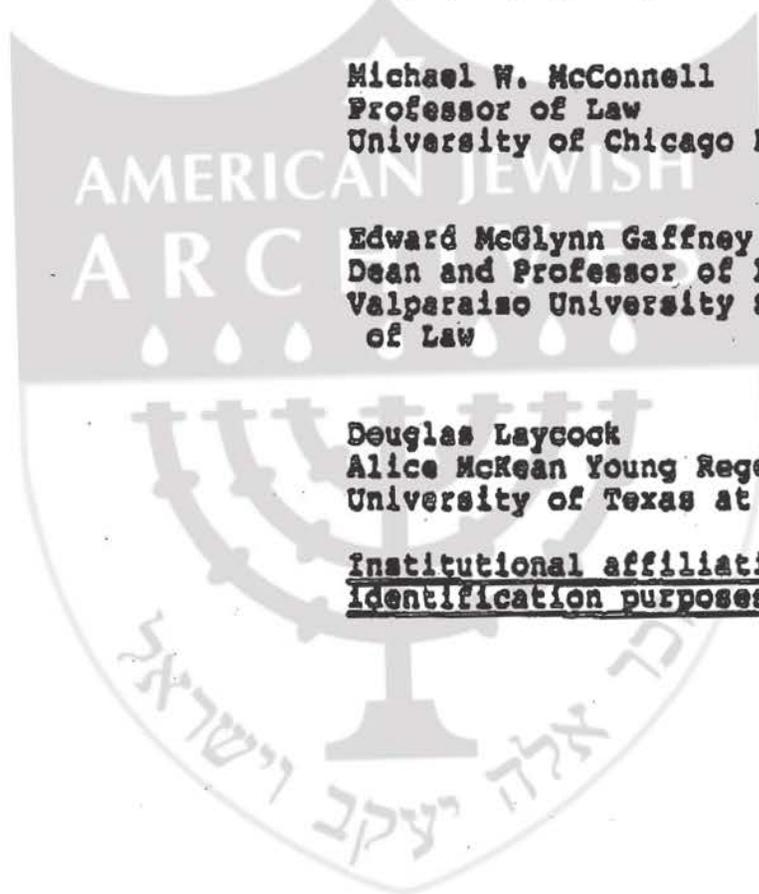
Very truly yours,

Michael W. McConnell  
Professor of Law  
University of Chicago Law School

Edward McGlynn Gaffney  
Dean and Professor of Law  
Valparaiso University School  
of Law

Douglas Laycock  
Alice McKean Young Regents Chair  
University of Texas at Austin

Institutional affiliations for  
identification purposes only



★ ★ ★  
**AJ Congress**

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February 27, 1991

COMMISSION ON LAW  
AND SOCIAL ACTION

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Mr. Herb Block  
Office of the Mayor  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Herb:

AMERICAN JEWISH

As we discussed, I am writing to explain our problem with the Mayor's proposed revision of the religious exemption contained in the Mayor's proposed revision of the city Human Rights law. Under existing law, an organization is exempt from any decision it makes on the basis of religion if it is "calculated by such organization to promote the religious principles for which it is established or maintained."

The Mayor's proposed amendment would require an organization desiring to discriminate on the basis of religion other than in housing, to demonstrate as a precondition for exemption that the exemption was required by the Free Exercise Clause of the Constitution.

After last spring's decision in the so-called Peyote case, Employment Division v. Smith, 110 S.Ct. 1595 (1990), there is probably no organization which can meet this pre-condition. (There is some indication that some discrimination may be permitted under the rubric of freedom of association but by the literal terms of the Mayor's proposed bill, such a claim would not suffice.) Even if Smith is overturned legislatively, the exemption would not be applicable since the source of the right would be a statute, not the Free exercise clause.

Finally, the section is circular. Part of the pre-Smith free exercise jurisprudence was a requirement that the interest in free exercise not be outweighed by a compelling state interest. Under the proposal, however, a court would have to weigh compelling interests as a pre-condition for determining whether the exemption applied. However it is

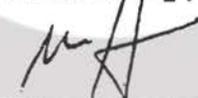
Mr. Herb Block  
February 27, 1991

-2-

unclear how a court would determine whether the City had a compelling interest in enforcing the Human Rights law against a religious institution claiming an exemption written into that statute.

I look forward to discussing this with you further.

Sincerely,



Marc D. Stern

cc: Marcia Eisenberg  
Dennis Rapps  
drs



December 12, 1990

MEMORANDUM

TO: Marc Stern  
Michael Farris

cc: David Lachmann

FROM: Mark E. Chopko <sup>MEC</sup>

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendments to H.R. 5377

I appreciate the concerns expressed by my brother and sister counsel in various religious groups about the need for beginning the legislative process to establish statutory standards of proof for religious freedom cases that the decision in Employment Division v. Smith eviscerated. Over the last week I have received countless (even unsolicited) amendments, words, phrases, and opinions. Some purported to speak to my concerns without having the benefit of our December 5 meeting. Given the political judgment that a legislative process could take longer than any of us think and therefore would not preclude the pursuit of a litigation strategy to force the Court to consider the consequences of its judgment in Smith, we are prepared to consider support for legislation assuming that certain serious concerns are satisfactorily resolved. Except with respect to the abortion issues (which remain a substantial concern), the attached outline of amendments addresses other issues. I submit them to you for review and comment. For my own part I too will continue to review them, and request others at the Conference to do the same, to see if they can be improved. I will continue to pursue internally our position on these issues as well as the abortion question. Thank you for your willingness to share these concerns with others in the drafting process.

In the attachment we address concerns which were much debated at our meeting on December 5. We understand the focus of the Act to provide an avenue for a person and his or her community to challenge a government action, otherwise neutral,

MEMORANDUM

December 12, 1990

Page 2

that burdens or impairs in any way the practice of religion by that individual or community. There was considerable discussion whether the scope of the bill, as thus understood, would include injuries that can only be stated in terms of the "offense" or "denigration" that one might feel through the allocation of tax revenues or exemptions for the pursuit of certain activities undertaken by religious groups. There is no simple answer to this concern that would be satisfactory to all. Quite frankly, it would be difficult to persuade my clients why, after ten years and countless thousands of dollars, they should support legislation that reopens the door otherwise closed by the dismissal of the ARM lawsuit by the Second Circuit last year. In addition, there may likely be more resistance to the bill if it is thought to confer some broad right-to-sue on those who have not had any religious practice in any way actually impaired by governmental action.

The proposed amendments seek to address these issues. Your comments are most earnestly invited. We also eagerly await a revised draft of the bill incorporating comments of others for the Conference's review.



Proposed Language for  
Religious Freedom Restoration Act

Section 1(c) "Purposes" (as proposed by Forest Montgomery):  
Add a new subsection "(6) - provide a cause of action to persons whose religious practices are actually burdened or impaired by governmental rule, practice, or conduct."

Section 2(a) and (b) of H.R. 5377:

In (a), replace the phrase "restrict any person's free exercise of religion" with the phrase "burden or impair the practice of religion by any person"; in (b), conforming amendment to lines 6 and 7. Finally, in (b)(2), the governmental authority should demonstrate "by clear and convincing evidence that such a burden or impairment....."

Comment: These changes lower the threshold for the statement of injury under the Act and increase the burden on the government. These changes underlie our resolve to make the standard not the status quo before Smith but after Yoder.

Section 2(c): Replace "party aggrieved" with "A person whose religious practice is burdened or impaired..."

Comment: We understand the essential purpose of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to provide a cause of action to those whose religious practices may become impaired, however inadvertently, by otherwise neutral governmental action. In such a case the government should be prepared to demonstrate why an individual exception to the rule of general applicability cannot be accommodated. This amendment avoids an argument that the government might make under existing language in H.R. 5377 that a mere burden or impairment is not within its scope, because the scope now speaks only to outright "restrictions". By focusing on religious practices, we also acknowledge several things. First, beliefs are beyond the ability of the government to reach. Second, the statute covers only "as applied" challenges and not facial challenges to governmental action. Third, potential government opponents of this legislation might argue that they will be litigating against persons who generally disagree with one or another government activity or policy even though those persons themselves have suffered no injury to any religious practice.

Redesignate the above referenced provision as paragraph (1) of section 2(c); add the following paragraph (2) to section 2(c):

"(2) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize a private cause of action by any person to challenge the tax status of any other person or the use of government funds or property derived from or obtained with tax revenues."

Comment: This change necessarily limits potential uses of the bill but arguably strengthens its saleability in the political process. It would eliminate inquiries that occur exclusively by one's participation in the tax system from the scope of this Act. It does not eliminate the cause of action for any person (as defined in the RFRA) for any change in his/her/its own tax status. Thus, the denial of a tax exemption for conduct related to religious practices would be litigable under the Act; but it does deny third party challenges to one's tax exempt status. See, e.g., In Re United States Catholic Conference, 885 F.2d 1020 (2d Cir., 1989), cert. denied, 110 S.Ct. 1946 (1990).

Section 4, Definitions - Strike "religious" in the definition of "person".

Section 6, Establishment Clause: If this section is surplusage, as it seems to be, then it should be deleted and its deletion explained in the legislative history. If something is needed the following should be considered:

"Section 6, Neutrality. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect, interpret or in any way address the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment."

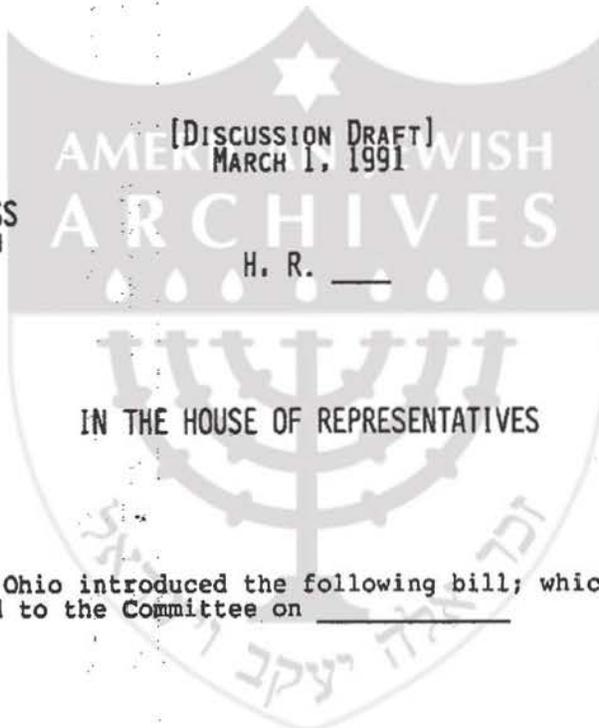
Comment: This language replaces current language in H.R. 5377 which some have argued establishes an absolute interpretation of the Establishment Clause along a separatist model. Because that had not been in the intention of the framers of this bill, a more neutral approach seems necessary.

Post-It <sup>®</sup> Fax Transmittal Memo		7672	No. of Pages 13	Today's Date 3/4/91	Time 10:30
To RABBI JOEL ZAIMAN	Company SCA	Location ATTENTION: CHARLOTTE	Fax # 301-486-4050	From GAIL AMIDZICH	Company REP. TONY HALL
Comments AS DISCUSSED, REP. HALL'S VALUES BILL FOR MAR. 7 MEETING. PLEASE CALL WITH REACTIONS, SUGGESTIONS, ETC.		Original Disposition:	<input type="checkbox"/> Destroy	<input type="checkbox"/> Return	<input type="checkbox"/> Call for pickup

HALLOH014

HLC

102D CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION



Mr. HALL of Ohio introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

**A BILL**

To establish a commission to examine the issues associated with the teaching of values in elementary and secondary schools and to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish a demonstration program of grants to innovative projects relating to civics and character values in education.

- 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives
- 2 of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the "Civic and Character Values-  
3 In-Schools Act of 1991".

4 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

5 The purposes of this Act are--

6 (1) to establish a commission to examine the issues  
7 associated with the teaching of values in elementary and  
8 secondary schools and to stimulate research in ethics and  
9 values;

10 (2) to recommend to the President and to Congress how  
11 the Federal Government, through executive action and  
12 legislation, can promote the teaching of values in  
13 American schools, including encouraging the offering of  
14 independent courses on values, and the integration of  
15 values into existing courses;

16 (3) to explore and assess a variety of approaches to  
17 teaching values;

18 (4) to identify civic and character values that are  
19 supported by a consensus of the people of the United  
20 States as essential to a complete education and  
21 preparation for becoming productive members of society  
22 and that may be appropriately endorsed and promoted by  
23 the Federal Government; and

24 (5) to identify the ways in which judgments of

1 values and of right and wrong are implicated in  
2 matters of public and private concern.

3 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress finds that--

5 (1) many Americans of all economic and social  
6 classes, religious persuasions, and ages, no longer make  
7 determinations of right and wrong as to their own actions  
8 or the actions of others in matters of both public and  
9 private concern;

10 (2) educational institutions, which have  
11 traditionally played a role in assisting students to make  
12 such determinations, no longer exercise this  
13 responsibility;

14 (3) the Nation has witnessed a national moral  
15 recession in governmental and political activities,  
16 scientific research, and business and commerce, in which  
17 individuals have failed to consider the ethics governing  
18 their behavior;

19 (4) statistics show alarming increases in individual  
20 and gang violence, drug and substance abuse, and suicide  
21 among both young people and adults;

22 (5) polls show that Americans overwhelmingly prize  
23 values such as honesty, but believe that people are less  
24 honest today than in the past;

25 (6) leaders representing a broad spectrum of

1 political, social, and religious beliefs believe that  
2 education in moral issues contributes to good citizenship  
3 and have called for strengthening the teaching of  
4 democratic values; and

5 (7) while education remains the responsibility of  
6 local and State governments, the Congress and the Federal  
7 Government may appropriately provide assistance to  
8 educational agencies and institutions attempting to  
9 promote civic and character values.

10 **TITLE I--COMMISSION ON VALUES EDUCATION**

11 **SEC. 101. ESTABLISHMENT.**

12 There is established the Commission on Values Education  
13 (in this Act referred to as the "Commission").

14 **SEC. 102. DUTIES; REPORT.**

15 (a) **DUTIES.**--The Commission shall--

16 (1) consider the widest range of values for inclusion  
17 in the consensus of values that should be taught,  
18 including honesty, integrity, tolerance, self-discipline,  
19 self-respect, civility, importance of family, justice,  
20 equality, the rule of law, individual rights, the common  
21 good, love of country, love of knowledge, responsibility  
22 and accountability, protection of oneself and others from  
23 degradation and abuse;

24 (2) conduct interviews, meetings, hearings, and  
25 conferences in various regions and localities in the

1 United States to gather the opinions of a wide variety of  
2 individuals, including educators and educational  
3 administrators, students, parents, philosophers and  
4 theologians, civic, religious, and professional leaders,  
5 social service professionals, political leaders, persons  
6 prominent in the arts, entertainment, and sports, and  
7 concerned citizens;

8 (3) seek the cooperation, advice, and assistance of  
9 the Department of Education and such other Federal,  
10 State, and local agencies, and private and religious  
11 organizations, institutions, and associations, as may be  
12 helpful in carrying out its purposes and duties; and

13 (4) recognize individuals and institutions who have  
14 demonstrated outstanding success in teaching values; and

15 (5) identify the potential of values education for  
16 reducing the incidence of problems such as those  
17 described in section 3(4).

18 (b) REPORT.--The Commission shall report its findings and  
19 recommendations to the Congress and the President not later  
20 than 1 year after the enactment of this Act. Such reports  
21 shall include--

22 (1) its recommendations for specific legislation or  
23 executive actions and broad policy goals and objectives;

24 (2) a recommendation as to the establishment within  
25 the Federal Government of a clearinghouse for programs

1 and ideas relating to values education; and

2 (3) in the case of the report to the Congress, a  
3 recommendation as to the appropriateness of institutional  
4 changes in the House of Representatives and the Senate,  
5 including the establishment of a Select Committee on  
6 Values Education.

7 **SEC. 103. MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION.**

8 (a) **MEMBERSHIP.**--The Commission shall be composed of 17  
9 members as follows:

10 (1) Seven members each appointed by the Speaker of  
11 the House of Representatives and the majority leader of  
12 the Senate, in consultation with the respective minority  
13 leaders, from among individuals who are broadly  
14 representative of, but not restricted to--

15 (A) professional educators and educational  
16 administrators;

17 (B) parents of students at elementary, secondary,  
18 and postsecondary levels;

19 (C) students at secondary and postsecondary  
20 levels;

21 (D) philosophers, theologians, and religious  
22 leaders;

23 (E) State and local elected and appointed  
24 government officials, including members of State and  
25 local boards of education;

1 (F) individuals prominent in sports, the arts,  
2 and entertainment;

3 (G) individuals active in business, the  
4 professions, or civic activities;

5 (H) social service professionals; and

6 (I) the general public.

7 (2) One member each of the House of Representatives  
8 and the Senate, designated by the Speaker of the House  
9 and the majority leader of the Senate, respectively.

10 (3) The Secretary of Education or a designee of the  
11 Secretary.

12 (b) VACANCIES.--A vacancy in the Commission shall be  
13 filled in the manner in which the original appointment was  
14 made.

15 (c) TERMS.--Each member shall be appointed for the life  
16 of the Commission.

17 (d) CO-CHAIRS OF COMMISSION.--The Speaker of the House  
18 and the majority leader of the Senate shall each designate a  
19 co-chair of the Commission from members appointed under  
20 subsection (a)(1) or (a)(2).

21 **SEC. 104. COMPENSATION.**

22 (a) PAY.--Members of the Commission shall serve without  
23 compensation.

24 (b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.--Members of the Commission shall  
25 receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of

1 subsistence, in accordance with sections 5702 and 5703 of  
2 title 5, United States Code.

3 **SEC. 105. POWERS.**

4 (a) **MEETINGS.**--The Commission shall first meet not more  
5 than 30 days after the date on which the last member is  
6 appointed to the Commission and thereafter upon the call of  
7 either co-chair or a majority of the members.

8 (b) **HEARINGS AND SESSIONS.**--The Commission may, for the  
9 purpose of carrying out this title, hold hearings, sit and  
10 act at times and places, take testimony, and receive evidence  
11 as the Commission considers appropriate. The Commission may  
12 administer oaths or affirmations to witnesses appearing  
13 before it.

14 (c) **ACCESS TO INFORMATION.**--The Commission may secure  
15 directly from any Federal agency information necessary to  
16 enable it to carry out this title. Upon the request of  
17 co-chair of the Commission, the head of such agency shall  
18 furnish such information to the Commission.

19 (d) **DIRECTOR.**--The Commission shall have a Director, who  
20 shall be appointed by the co-chairs. The Director shall be  
21 paid at a rate not to exceed the maximum rate of basic pay  
22 payable for grade GS-18 of the General Schedule.

23 (e) **STAFF.**--The Director shall appoint such staff members  
24 as may be necessary to perform the work of the Commission. In  
25 allocating authorized, appropriated, and contributed funds,

1 priority shall be given to those activities, such as hearings  
2 and conferences, designed to elicit the broadest public  
3 participation in the Commission's deliberations, rather than  
4 to the payment of professional staff.

5 (f) USE OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES.--Upon the request of  
6 the Commission, the head of any Federal agency may make  
7 available to the Commission any of the facilities and  
8 services of such agency.

9 (g) PERSONNEL FROM OTHER AGENCIES.--Upon the request of  
10 the Commission, the head of any Federal department or agency  
11 may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of  
12 such department or agency to the Commission to assist it in  
13 carrying out its duties.

14 **SEC. 106. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

15 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this  
16 title \$500,000 for the fiscal year 1992, and such sums as may  
17 be necessary for the fiscal year 1993. Amounts appropriated  
18 pursuant to this section shall remain available until  
19 expended.

20 **SEC. 107. TERMINATION.**

21 The Commission shall terminate 30 days after the date of  
22 the submission of its final report to the Congress.

23 **SEC. 108. CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS REQUIRED.**

24 Within 90 days after the submission of the Commission's  
25 report to the Congress, the Committee on Education and Labor

1 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Labor  
2 and Human Resources of the Senate shall conduct hearings on  
3 such report and the recommendations contained therein and  
4 shall report to their respective houses on the results of  
5 those hearings within 30 days after the completion of the  
6 hearings.

7 **TITLE II--ETHICS AND VALUES DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM**

8 **SEC. 201. AMENDMENT TO SECRETARY'S FUND FOR INNOVATION IN**  
9 **EDUCATION.**

10 (a) **PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**--Paragraph (2) of section 4601(a)  
11 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20  
12 U.S.C. 3151(a)) is amended--

13 (1) by striking "and" at the end of subparagraph

14 (C);

15 (2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph

16 (D) and inserting "; and"; and

17 (3) by adding at the end the following:

18 "(E) help stimulate understanding of ethics, civic  
19 and character values, and the principles of democracy as  
20 a means of enhancing and improving elementary and  
21 secondary education in accordance with section 4609."

22 (b) **ETHICS AND VALUES DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.**--Part F of  
23 title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of  
24 1965 (20 U.S.C. 3151 et seq.) is amended--

25 (1) by redesignating section 4608 the second place it

1 appears as section 4610; and

2 (2) by inserting before section 4610 (as redesignated  
3 by paragraph (1) of this subsection) the following:

4 ``SEC. 4609. ETHICS AND VALUES DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

5 `` (a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.--The Secretary is authorized to  
6 make grants to State educational agencies, local educational  
7 agencies, institutions of higher education, and other public  
8 and private agencies, organizations, and institutions to  
9 conduct activities designed to help stimulate understanding  
10 of ethics, civic and character values, and the principles of  
11 democracy as a means of enhancing and improving elementary  
12 and secondary education.

13 `` (b) USES OF FUNDS.--Grants made under this section may  
14 be used for--

15 `` (1) the development of teaching materials;

16 `` (2) teacher training and seminars;

17 `` (3) the establishment of clearinghouses for values  
18 education programs;

19 `` (4) proposals seeking to involve the whole school  
20 environment;

21 `` (5) research and follow-up studies of existing  
22 programs of values and ethics education;

23 `` (6) civic and character values education projects  
24 demonstrating a beneficial effect on individual ethical  
25 behavior and on the incidences of individual and gang

1 violence, drug and substance abuse, and suicide;

2 "(7) projects that assist in identifying a consensus  
3 of values within a community that may be appropriately  
4 promoted in schools of the community;

5 "(8) projects that seek to develop model programs to  
6 promote values and ethics; and

7 "(9) projects examining values and responsible  
8 citizenship.

9 (c) APPLICATION.--Each applicant desiring to receive a  
10 grant under this section shall submit an application in such  
11 form, in such manner, and containing or accompanied by such  
12 information as the Secretary may reasonably require. Each  
13 such application shall--

14 "(1) identify values and ethics accepted by a  
15 consensus of individuals in the United States;

16 "(2) describe the school population intended to  
17 benefit from the proposed activities;

18 "(3) demonstrate how the proposal fulfills the  
19 purpose described in subsection (a);

20 "(4) describe the methods to be used to evaluate the  
21 results of the proposed activities; and

22 "(5) provide assurances that the applicant will  
23 appoint an advisory board to assist the applicant in  
24 conducting the proposed activities, which board shall  
25 consist of individuals representative of--

- 1           “(A) parents;
- 2           “(B) educators;
- 3           “(C) community leaders;
- 4           “(D) social service professionals; and
- 5           “(E) the general public.”

