



# THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

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

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 25, Folder 6, International Jewish Committee for  
Interreligious Consultations, 1978.

Shuster  
✓ JGAC

January 3, 1978  
Zachariah Shuster  
Marc H. Tanenbaum

Thank you for your recent memorandum dealing with the German Catholic Religious Textbook study.

It seems to me that the developments thus far are of a positive nature. I wonder if some of the excellent statements that have been prepared about the theological questions that you refer to could not be made available to the theologians who plan to meet early in 1978.

There is a whole body of work that Pastor Eckhardt has just published together with Ehrlich and Levinson. There are also some excellent essays by Hans Goldweitzer. There is also some good material by Heiko Oberman and the group at Tübingen. I won't mention Hans Kung's recent writings, since he is such a controversial figure in Germany. But among liberal German Catholics he is taken very seriously.

My only point is that this group does not have to invent the wheel all over again in light of the fact that there is such a substantial body of solid material already available. It simply needs to be collated and studied and could save much time.

I will write to you separately about other matters regarding IJCIC, etc. Just one quick note: The IJCIC group here agreed to set up a task force consisting of the ADL and AJC to prepare a background memo dealing with the teaching of Christianity in Jewish religious educational materials. I spoke with Rabbi Klenicki last week and we will be arranging a joint meeting within the next two weeks to prepare an outline. I will keep you informed as to whatever progress we make.

MHT:RPR

cc: Bert Gold

# SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA

12C1C



January 6, 1978

Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner  
World Jewish Congress  
Case Postale 191  
Geneve  
Switzerland

Dear Gerhart:

Thank you for your recent correspondence and for the minutes of your meeting with Mejia and Moeller.

It occurs to me that we are repeating a mistake we have made in the past - that is, we are scheduling a meeting on a Friday. Inevitably, there are individuals on our committee who will plan to return home for Shabat which means that they will, in all likelihood, depart on Thursday. This will be the case with Sobel, and perhaps with others.

To avoid that embarrassment, may I suggest that the meeting be scheduled for April 4th, 5th and 6th, and our preparatory meeting for April 3rd?

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

Rabbi Henry Siegman  
Executive Vice President

HS:hfe

cc/Rabbi Balfour Brickner  
Mr. Theodore Friedman  
Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum

432 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016 / Telephone: (212) 686-8670 / NATIONAL OFFICERS: President, Rabbi Saul I. Tepitz / Hon. President, Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein / First Vice-President, Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld / Second Vice-President, Rabbi Walter S. Wurzbarger / Vice-Presidents, Morris L. Levinson / Peter I. Feinberg / Herbert Berman / Recording Secretary, Norma Levitt / Corresponding Secretary, E. David Rosen / Treasurer, Jeff Shor / Executive Vice-President, Rabbi Henry Siegman / INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH POLICY PLANNING AND RESEARCH: Chairman, Philip M. Klutznick / NATIONAL SOCIETY OF FELLOWS: Co-Chairmen, Moses Hornstein / Rabbi Irving Lehrman / CONSTITUENT ORGANIZATIONS: Central Conference of American Rabbis, Rabbi Eli Pilchick, President / Rabbinical Assembly, Rabbi Stanley Rabinowitz, President / Rabbinical Council of America, Rabbi Walter S. Wurzbarger, President / Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, President / Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, Harold Jacobs, President / United Synagogue of America, Arthur J. Levine, President.



F7 JCIC

January 6, 1978

Rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz  
Congregation Agudath Sholom  
301 Strawberry Hill Avenue  
Stamford, Connecticut 06902

My dear Joseph,

It gives me much pleasure to inform you that the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee wishes to invite you to serve as an official representative of the American Jewish Committee on our delegation represented at the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultation with the Vatican and the World Council of Churches.

As you know from our private conversations, this international body is a coalition of major Jewish groups from the United States, Israel and Latin America who work cooperatively in areas of common interest with the Vatican and the World Council of Churches. More recently, our work has extended to relationships with the Greek Orthodox Church on an international basis as well.

In view of the qualities of your scholarship as well as the demonstrated competence that you have shown in building bridges of understanding and mutual respect between Jews and Christians in this country, we would deem it an honor if you would accept this invitation to help represent the interests of the American Jewish Committee in this vital area of our interreligious activities on an international basis.

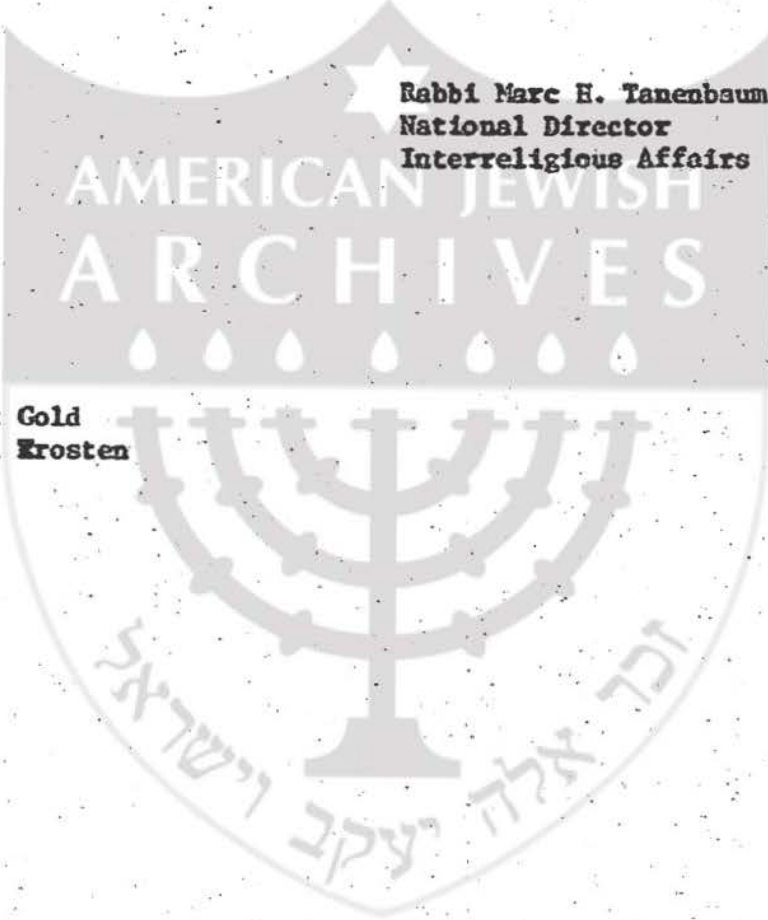
I would be grateful if you would send me a letter acknowledging your acceptance of our invitation. It will be both a professional and personal privilege for me to be associated with you in this vital work.



Simply for the sake of preparing your schedule, you need to know that we generally meet overseas with delegations from the Vatican and the World Council of Churches twice a year to discuss matters of common interest. I will let you know in advance as to the next meeting dates and places.

With warmest personal good wishes, I am,

Cordially, as ever,

  
Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
National Director  
Interreligious Affairs

MHT:RPR

bc: Bert Gold  
Bill Krosten

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE  
*Of B'nai B'rith*

315 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10016, MUrray Hill 9-7400

January 11, 1978

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
The American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, NY 10022

Dear Marc:

I have tried several times to contact you concerning our meeting with no success. The IJCIC study of texts is an urgent matter and any further delay will hurt the project.

Judy Muffs has started to do the research in order to save time.

Cordially yours,



Rabbi Leon Klenicki  
Director  
Department of Jewish-Catholic  
Relations

LK:lg  
cc: Ted Freedman

# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

CASE POSTALE 101  
1211 GENÈVE 20 NEW-YORK N.Y. LONDON W.1 PARIS 8. TEL-AVIV  
1, RUE DE VAREMBE 15 EAST 84th STREET 85, NEW CAVENDISH STREET 78, AV. CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES 123, YEHUDA HALEVI STR.  
TELEPH. 34.13.25 TELEPH. 87.94.500 TELEPH. 935-03.35 TELEPH. 369.94.63 TELEPH. 22.91.59  
TELEX 28 98 78 TELEX 23 61 29 TELEX 216 33 TELEX 650320

MR/ra 9988

Geneva, January 12, 1978

*F. J. U. K.*

Rabbi Henry Siegman  
Executive Vice-President  
Synagogue Council of America  
432 Park Avenue South  
New York, N.Y. 10016  
U.S.A.

Dear Henry,

I have your letter of January 6 with copies to Brickner, Freedman, and Tanenbaum. I am sorry that I cannot agree with you in this matter.

When we scheduled the next meeting of the Liaison Committee in Madrid we planned at the same time that this meeting should be connected with the Spanish-Israel Jewish Christian Seminar. It was generally recognized that the participation of some of us in the seminar would give this institution a new dimension. We therefore elaborated the schedule in a way that we would have our meeting during the first week of April in Madrid, pass the shabbat in Madrid, and start the seminar immediately thereafter so that it could begin probably on Sunday evening.

Under these circumstances it was clear that we could not stop our meeting on Thursday night as those who would participate in the seminar would then have to wait three days for this seminar to begin. This would of course prevent many of us to stay over for at least part of the seminar.

I hope, therefore, that you will not insist. We have been wrong in some other plans, but I believe this time we did the right thing. I personally would not be able to start a day earlier because I have on April 3 an Allocations Committee meeting of the Memorial Foundation in Paris.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

*G. Riegner*

Gerhart M. Riegner

cc: Rabbi Balfour Brickner  
Mr. Theodore Freedman  
Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum



# SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA



## memorandum

to: Members of IJCIC  
from: Rabbi Henry Siegman  
subject: IJCIC Meeting Jan. 19, 1978  
date: January 12, 1978

This will concern the next meeting of IJCIC, to take place

DATE: Thursday, Jan. 19, 1978  
TIME: 4:00 P.M.  
PLACE: Conference Room, SCA Off-ces

There will be two subjects on our agenda:

1. A decision about the person to be commissioned to present the paper on "How Christianity Is Taught Jewish Education" at the next meeting with Vatican representatives.
2. The choice of two scholars to participate in the joint project with the World Council of Churches, as per the enclosed.

Kindest regards.

HS:hfe  
Enclosure

# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

CASE POSTALE 191  
1211 GENÈVE 20 NEW-YORK N.Y. LONDON W.1 PARIS 8e TEL-AVIV  
1, RUE DE VAREMBE 15 EAST 84th STREET 85, NEW CAVENDISH STREET 78, AV. CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES 123, YEHUDA HALEVI STR.  
TELEPH. 34.13.25 TELEPH. 87-94.500 TELEPH. 935-03.35 TELEPH. 359.94.63 TELEPH. 22.91.39  
TELEX 289876 TELEX 23 61 29 TELEX 21633 TELEX 650320

GMR/ra 9905

Geneva, December 21, 1977

Rabbi Henry Siegman  
Executive Vice-President  
Synagogue Council of America  
432 Park Avenue South  
New York, N.Y. 10016  
U.S.A.

Dear Henry,

I have received the enclosed reminder from Dr. von Hammerstein concerning the appointment of the two Jewish professors for the scholars meeting on Man living in Nature - Man living with his neighbour. It seems that Professor Stendahl wants to call these scholars together in Harvard from April 10 to 12, 1978 and it becomes therefore urgent that we appoint our representatives.

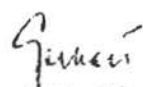
The World Council will apparently be represented by Standahl and by another professor. They have invited Professor Klappert from Germany.

I am also enclosing the memorandum which Samartha sent around on the same subject. However, I have told him and Lucas Vischer that we never agreed on the new heading Conditions of a just society. The subject was defined as I have put it down in the enclosed white sheet.

Please let me know as soon as you can which persons have been designated on our side.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

  
Gerhart M. Riegner

Encl.

Christian-Jewish Liaison Committee

Topic for Next Larger Consultation - 1979

Dr. Riegner, Dr. Vischer and Dr. Samartha met on September 23rd, 1977 to discuss this matter.

The following points were noted :

1. The formulation of the topic should take into account (a) the work done by previous Christian-Jewish Consultations (power, community, human rights, nature etc.) and (b) enable the participants not only to recognize their distinctive heritages but also to state together their common attitudes to certain issues. Tentative formulation: Conditions of a Just Society: Jewish and Christian Perspectives. This could be discussed in two related themes (a) Man living in Nature and (b) Man living in relation to his Neighbours. The first would bring in the question of man's responsibility to created nature and a just distribution of natural resources and the second would bring in the question of the use of power.

Under the sub-theme Man living in Nature possible topics are (a) Technology and human survival, (b) Ecology and (c) Use of resources.

Under the sub-theme Man living with Neighbours possible topics are (a) Individual rights in society, (b) Transfer of power and (c) Foundations of a just society.

2. A small group of four people - 2 Jews and 2 Christians together with some staff members should discuss this matter further. Suggested date: April 10 - morning to April 12 - noon, 1978. Suggested place: Geneva. The groups' work will be based on four papers - two on each sub-theme, one written by a Jew the other by a Christian. The terms of reference to the Group are:
  - (a) to enter into the substance of the topics with clearer focus on perhaps limited areas.
  - (b) to suggest steps or stages in a longer process of study to be carried further, together with a plan for the next larger LPC meeting in 1979.
  - (c) List a number of clearly formulated issues in this area which could be considered by the larger group for future Jewish-Christian Consultations.
3. It was noted that this matter would be discussed by Jewish friends meeting in New York on October 12 and by Samartha and Stendahl when they meet in Boston on October 12-13, 1977.

c.c. Dr. Riegner Dr. Mulder  
Dr. Vischer Dr. von Hammerstein  
Dr. Stendahl Dr. Samartha

S.J.S.

Sept 23 1977



Man living in Nature - Man living with his neighbour

Christian and Jewish perspectives

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

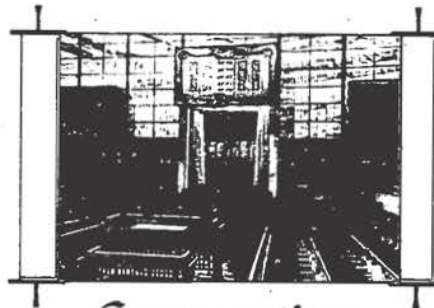
A. Man living in Nature

1. Human survival and technology
2. Ecology
3. Use of resources

B. Man living with his neighbour

1. Rights of individual and society
2. Transfer of power
3. Conditions of a just society.

13C1C



**Congregation  
Agudath Sholom**

301 Strawberry Hill Avenue, Stamford, Conn. 06902  
203 325-3501

January 23, 1978

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
American Jewish Committee  
165 E 56th Street  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum:

Thank you very much for your gracious invitation to become an official representative of the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultation with the Vatican and the World Council of Churches. I am pleased to accept this appointment.

Your kind words did me honor and the confidence you expressed in my ability delighted me no end. May God help me serve the committee well.

Looking forward to working with you in making a better world, I remain

Respectfully,

*Joseph H. Ehrenkranz*  
Joseph H. Ehrenkranz,  
Rabbi

JHE:rb

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

DIALOGUE WITH PEOPLE OF LIVING FAITHS AND IDEOLOGIES

CONSULTATION ON THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

CCJP Contribution to DFI Guidelines

(Proposal by F. v. Hammerstein for meeting in Holland, February 1978)

1. PREFACE

1.1 From June 20-23, 1977, the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People came together in Jerusalem. The fact of gathering in this city, especially associated with Jews, Christians and Muslims, and meeting-place of several religious and cultural identities, deeply influenced our deliberations. There were present CCJP members as well as guests from Africa and elsewhere who added new dimensions to the work and discussions of the CCJP. The papers given by and received from the African guests will form part of the record and will be used in the work on future guidelines. At the present stage of discussion, however, the contribution of the African group could not yet be fully integrated in this report.

1.2 Within the present framework of the WCC, the CCJP, as a sub-unit of the DFI, took into consideration the official statement on "Dialogue in Community" adopted by the Theological Consultation held at Chiang Mai, Thailand, April 18-27, 1977. Of the several reports received by that Consultation one deals with Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations. Paragraph A.2 of Group Report A raises a number of questions and issues to which we address ourselves.

[ A Semantic Note: It is particularly difficult to come to an agreed terminology. Current conversations use words like Jew, Judaism, Jewry, Israel, Israelite, Hebrew, People of God, Covenant, Gentile and many other terms with more than one meaning depending on the context and without adequate definition in most contexts. Even the New Testament is not wholly consistent. We cannot define in precise terms what it is that makes a Jew a Jew, though we recognise that both ethnic elements and religious traditions play a role.]

1.3 Among the various dialogues between Christians and People of Other Faiths and Ideologies the dialogue with the Jews is of a special character because of the unique relationship which exists between the Church and the Jewish People (Faith & Order document, Bristol, 1967; Nairobi 1975; Chiang Mai, Group Report A, 1977). To no other people is the Church historically and theologically so intimately bound. It is a fact of history that Christianity has its roots in the Jewish Community of the first century. Jesus was a Jew; he and his message cannot be properly understood apart from the early history of the Jewish People. Also the apostles and first disciples were all Jews. The scriptures of the Early Church were the scriptures of the Jewish People. Many of the most important concepts we as Christians use are received from the Hebrew Scriptures and Early Judaism - even though they

OT



may have received partially new connotations - as, for instance, sin, redemption, creation and covenant, grace and peace, righteousness and love, repentance and atonement. In addition, Christian liturgy owes much to Jewish liturgy.

- 1.4 Because of their common roots Jews and Christians share some very fundamental convictions. Both worship God, as the One, who is Creator of all that is, who makes his will known to human beings and relates to them as Father, Teacher and Redeemer. Both believe that God created man and women in his image; that they are called to be holy, are given stewardship under God over his creation and are accountable to God for the way they exercise this stewardship. Both share to a large extent a common ethic, holding themselves responsible for their fellows, especially for those who are weak, poor or persecuted. Both have a common hope, looking forward to a renewed creation, where all suffering will be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and in every respect; inspired by this ultimate hope they are called to work for greater righteousness.
- 1.5 It is, however, precisely in the divergent interpretations of that which is held in common that the differences between Christians and Jews often find their sharpest focus. In the course of history, these divergent interpretations have led to tension between the communities and hostile attitudes on the part of Christians, especially in the West.
- 1.6 [In the past when Christians have related to persons of Other Faiths and Ideologies, their tendency has been to emphasize their Christian stance from which they approach Other Faiths. This has changed, for in a shrunken world the very nearness and accessibility of one to the other has thrown into relief our common humanity. This situation should make us feel concerned about and involved with each other. Further, this makes us aware of primary human concerns such as Knowledge of God, Way of Salvation or the Problem of Good and Evil, all of them approached in varied ways by world religions.]
- 1.7 [Christians in Africa and Asia often realize how important the Old Testament, ancient and perhaps also modern Judaism, is for Christian faith and life. Often they do not make our Western historical and theological distinctions between ancient and modern Judaism, ancient and modern Israel. They reject to be burdened with all the weight of Western theology and history on this subject, but rather want to explore their own direct encounter and dialogue with Judaism especially in the Holy Land of ancient and modern Israel, the land of Jesus, of the early Christian church and of manifold present ecumenical relations. Their attitude towards the State of Israel is diverse according to a variety of political convictions.]



## 2. ANTISEMITISM

- 2.1 The WCC, in the Assembly at which it was constituted (Amsterdam 1948) condemned antisemitism: "We call upon all the churches we represent to denounce antisemitism, no matter what its origin, as absolutely irreconcilable with the profession and practice of the Christian faith. Antisemitism is sin against God and man." This appeal has been reiterated many times. The Chiang Mai Consultation, most recently, asked the churches to indicate what steps they were taking towards the eradication of antisemitism. In order to achieve this it is necessary that Christians face honestly their tragic history with regard to the Jews - a history which includes events like the Crusades, the Inquisition and the Holocaust. It is only by facing this history that Christians will come to understand the deep-rooted suspicion that many Jews up to today hold against Christians and Christianity.

It is a lamentable fact that the Western world including/ Eastern Europe has been most guilty of antisemitic attitudes. We believe that Christians from other parts of the world, however, would do well to acquaint themselves with the history of antisemitism and antijudaism, in order that they be forewarned and do not fall into the same sin. Apart from its theological basis, antisemitism has also sociological and other roots. Christians are called upon to fight, with all the resources at their disposal, these prejudices especially in the light of increasing antisemitism in many countries, even under the guise of antizionism.

- 2.2 We should be especially attentive to those traditional convictions which have furthered antisemitic stances and attitudes on the part of Christians. Attention should therefore be given to the following points: Judaism should not be presented as a kind of anachronism after the coming of Christ; the Jews are a living people, very much alive in our present time as, for instance, the establishment of the State of Israel shows. Neither should the impression be given that the Church has just superseded the Israel of old. The Jewish people continue to be a People of God, as regards divine election beloved by him, for God is not unfaithful to those whom he has chosen.

"In Christian teaching, the historic events which led to the Crucifixion should not be so presented as to impose upon the Jewish People of today responsibilities which must fall on all humanity, not on one race or community. Jews were the first to accept Jesus and Jews are not the only ones who do not yet recognise him." (WCC, New Delhi, 1961).

New Testament passages, which reflect internal controversies within the Jewish community of the first century, have often been misused by Christians as weapons in later anti-Jewish polemics. Traditional stereotypes should be avoided, e.g., Judaism as a religion of law over against Christianity as a religion of love. Generalisations of this kind in no way do justice to what Judaism really is.

[As long as Christians regard Judaism as a mere preparation

for Christianity, as long as Christians affirm the validity of God's revelation to them by negating the validity of God's revelation to the Jewish People, acknowledgment of the continued election of the Jewish People, even stress upon the common hope and common ground of Jews and Christians are impossible because Judaism is denied any theological validity.]

2.3

*judism* { The Christian response to the Holocaust should be a resolve that it will never happen again. Christian teaching of contempt for the Jews and Jewish theology was the spawning-ground for the evils of the Nazi Holocaust. We must ask ourselves: In what specific ways can the lessons of the Holocaust be taken seriously by Christian churches and theologians? We must learn so to preach and teach the Gospel as to make sure that it will never again be used by the enemies of the Jewish people? The Christian response to the Holocaust should be a firm resolve that it must never happen again, and that the Christian churches should be in the forefront of any efforts to prevent the conditions which might lead to another slaughter of the people with whom God formed the covenant.

The Holocaust must lay to rest forever the Christian fable that the sufferings of the Jewish people are a judgment of God. The time has long since come for the Church to cease passing judgments on other faiths and people by holding an absolutist tradition or theology that in any way appears to sanction persecution of others. God's love and compassion do not permit us to attribute to him the wounds of body and mind that have been inflicted on the Jews.

The Holocaust is also a challenge to our traditional Christology, especially to our Christology of suffering. This is an issue which requires prayerful rethinking.]

2.4

If the above misrepresentations and misunderstandings are to be counteracted, a constant critical review of all church teaching, preaching and liturgy is necessary. Some churches have done such reviewing, other not yet. They should in close contact with the World Council of Churches as soon as possible do so.



3. UNDERSTANDING AND POSITIVE PRESENTATION OF JUDAISM

- 3.1 Efforts should also be made to present Judaism in a positive way in accordance with its self-understanding.

The correcting of dangerous trends in theology and biblical interpretation, important as this is for combating "Christian" antisemitism, is no substitute for Christians meeting Jews and understanding them in their distinctiveness as Jews. Such knowledge and real understanding might well be the best safeguard that such terrible things as pogroms and holocaust never happen again.

- 3.2 Dialogue is a programme for relationships. Christians have to listen to Jews defining themselves - listening as equal partners in a conversation from which the power dimension has been removed. The disputations of mediaeval times between Christian and Jewish theologians, which were organised from time to time, were never held on a footing of equality; the Jewish partners were not taken seriously.

- 3.3 Christians should be aware of the vibrant and continuing development of Judaism in post-biblical times. Between the first century and today there has been an enormous output of Jewish religious and philosophical literature and commentary. European Jewry was virtually destroyed by the Nazis; it is little short of miraculous that the destruction of six million Jews should have been followed by the reconstruction of Jewish life with its special points of focus in Israel, America and, to a certain extent in Western Europe, not least in France that has now a population of more than 500.000 Jews.

- 3.4 The negative image of the Pharisees found in Christian sources, in preaching and writing is one of the gravest distortions of Judaism prevalent in Christianity. The correction of this injustice is absolutely necessary for honest dialogue with the Jews as well as for Christian self-renewal in itself. To disparage Pharisaism is in a real sense to disparage modern Judaism, for all modern forms of Judaism basically owe their existence to the Pharisaic-Rabbinic movement which produced such a far-reaching revolution in Second Temple Judaism.

Pharisaism was not the empty, legalistic system it is made out to be but rather a dynamic, creative religious movement that formed the context of the teachings of Jesus and the early Church in such areas as ethics, the concept of God, liturgy, ministry and church structure. Jesus basically followed rabbinic patterns in his own ministry, and affirmed the Pharisaic conceptions of the resurrection of the human person after death.

The rich body of worship, prayer and teaching that developed after the rise of Christianity in Judaism found its source and inspiration in the Pharisaic tradition. Christians have tragically ignored or rejected this rich development which is part of the continuing fulfillment of Jewish life to the present day. One can see the hand of God continuing to bless those chosen as bearers of revelation in the work of Universal Salvation.

teaching  
liturgy  
commentaries  
[Commentaries]



- 3.5      Sensitivity and balance in use of New Testament texts. There are numerous NT texts which might be interpreted as reflecting negatively on Jews and Judaism. In reading and interpreting such texts we must constantly remember that Jesus was a Jew. His forebears were Jews. He lived and taught among the Jews. His dress, his manner of speaking, his mode of life, his teaching reflected the Judaism of the time. Therefore, conflict and controversies must be seen as taking place within a framework which he not only shared with fellow-Jews, but which he and God affirmed.
- 3.6      Preaching which portrays or refers to Jews, Judaism, and the OT in a positive light. Christian preaching employs negative as well as positive examples, images and experimental analogies. Preachers must guard against any tendency to portray Jews or Jewish groups as negative models. The truth and beauty of Christianity should not be enhanced by setting up Jews or Judaism as false and ugly. Likewise the OT witness should not be portrayed as less authoritative, less normative, or superseded. It is central to the tradition which our Lord accepted as his own and which he reaffirmed as He interpreted it in his life, work and thought. The Judgment and the redeeming love of God should be presented as existing from the beginning to the end of both Testaments. (cf. the new study paper of Faith and Order, The Significance of the Old Testament in its Relation to the New, 1978).
- 3.7      We both believe in the one God. Creator of all what is, who in his free grace has bound Himself to man, who loves man, has made his will for man known to him and who wants that all men should turn to Him, know Him and worship Him.  
and women
- We both believe that He has created men/in his image, as crown of creation, that as such man, called to be holy, is given stewardship in God's name over the creation and that he is accountable to God for the way he exercises this stewardship.
- Christians and Jews share for a great part a common ethics. Taught by their scriptures they know themselves responsible for their fellowmen, especially for those who are weak, poor, persecuted.
- Christians and Jews have a common hope, looking forward to the fulfilment when this earth will be renewed, all suffering be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and respects. In this ultimate hope they work here for greater righteousness, trusting that all human work will in some way be a factor in the world to come.
- 3.8      However, we are separated through a different interpretation of Jesus Christ. A growing number of Jews look at him as a member of their people, perhaps as a prophet, but not as their Messiah, while Christians look at him as their saviour and redeemer. The dialogue between Christians and Jews about this basic difference has scarcely begun, but will be of increasing importance.
- As Christians we witness to God the creator, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel, who in and through Jesus Christ has called us to be a fellowship in the name of Jesus and in the Holy Spirit, to live in faith, hope and love. This messianic fellowship, the Church, is for the coming of God's Kingdom, for the redemption of the whole creation. Thus, as Christians, we glory in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.



#### 4. AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN WITNESS

- 4.1 Proselytism, as distinct from Mission or Witness, is rejected in the strongest terms by the WCC: "Proselytism embraces whatever violates the right of the human person, Christian or non-Christian, to be free from external coercion in religious matters, or whatever, in the proclamation of the Gospel, does not conform to the ways God draws free men to himself in response to his calls to serve in spirit and in truth." (Ecumenical Review 1/1971, a study document of the Joint Working Group between the R.C. Church and the WCC, p.11).

We now realise more than ever before that the world in which we live is a world of religious pluralism. This demands from us that we treat those who differ from us with respect and that we strongly support the religious liberty of all.

- 4.2 This rejection of proselytism and our advocacy of respect for the integrity and the identity of all peoples and faith-communities is the more urgent where Jews are concerned. For, as stated above, our relationship to the Jews is of a unique and very close character. Moreover, the history of "Christian" antisemitism and forced baptisms of Jews in the past makes it understandable that Jews are rightly sensitive towards all religious pressures from outside and all attempts at proselytising.

- 4.3 We reject proselytism both in its gross and more refined forms. This implies that all triumphalism and every kind of manipulation are to be abrogated. We are called upon to minimise the power dimension in our encounter with the Jews and to speak at every level from equal to equal. We have to be conscious of the pain and the perception of the others and have to respect their right to define themselves, *respect dignity & integrity of Judaism*

- 4.4 We are called upon to witness to God's love for and claim upon the whole of humankind. Our witness to Christ as Lord and Saviour, however, is challenged in a special way where Jews are concerned. It has become discredited as a result of past behaviour on the part of Christians. We therefore are seeking authentic and proper forms of Christian relations with Jews. Some of us believe that we have to bear witness also to the Jews; some among us are convinced, however, that Jews are faithful and obedient to God even though they do not accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Some maintain that as a separate and specific people the Jews are an instrument of God with a specific God-given task and, as such, a sign of God's faithfulness to all humankind on the way towards ultimate redemption.

- 4.5 [Hebrew Christians are both a problem and a challenge to Judaism as well as to Christianity. They recently often claim to remain Jews, but are not accepted anymore by Judaism. They want to contribute a specific Jewish aspect to the life of the Church which often rejects such contribution. Therefore, many Hebrew Christians are organised ecumenically in the International Hebrew Christian Alliance and locally often in groups or even parishes. The Churches should take the problems and contributions of Hebrew Christians more seriously and keep close contact with Jewish partners in dialogue concerning their view of this group. Basically we believe with Paul that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek.]

*and pressures  
at present*

*undue influence*

*Many?*

X



## 5. THE STATE OF ISRAEL

5.1 Repeatedly and on several occasions the WCC has explicitly affirmed the right to existence of the State of Israel. In particular, we recall the Canterbury statement of 1969, which says: "No lasting peace is possible ... without effective international guarantee for the political independence and territorial integrity of all nations in the area, including Israel." We affirm also the strong concern expressed by the General Secretary of the WCC when, in 1975, Zionism was equated with Racism. Our recognition of the State of Israel can be based on several considerations but it is especially motivated by our respect for the Jews in their identity and self-understanding: in the self-definition of the great majority of Jews there is an indissoluble bond between the people and the land. Jews look upon the establishment of the State of Israel as the realisation of a centuries-old longing for a return to the land.

5.2 Our acceptance of the State of Israel should not be misinterpreted as unqualified approval of all which this State does. We recognise that through the ages the Jews shared this land with others. Just as we respect the identity and the right of self-determination of the Jews, we respect also the identity and the right of the Palestinian Arabs to self-determination. There are still many questions about the ways and means by which a just and durable peace in the Middle East should be achieved and how Christians could possibly play a role of reconciliation.

5.3 Under present conditions the State of Israel is the form in which the indissoluble bond between people and land can be realised. Some of us, however, want to be more explicit. On the basis of their understanding of the Bible they look upon the special relation of the Jewish People to this Land as a God-given relationship and see the State of Israel in this perspective. But in this respect much study and mutual clarification of views will be needed before a consensus on these issues may emerge.

5.4 It is of equal importance that the Palestinians have a right to self-determination. We agree with the statements of the Nairobi Assembly (1975) on the Middle East conflict and Jerusalem. Christians and especially the WCC should be more concerned and more active in promoting reconciliation and peace in the Middle East.

5.5 [A special opportunity is Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Group travel is able to bring this within the reach of most people. Such Pilgrimages today are not only an opportunity of revitalising the Christian faith by direct contact with the places associated with the ministry of Jesus, but are also opportunities for witnessing the unique Jewish presence in the Land of Israel, as well as Arab Christian communities which form a link with the historic Eastern Churches.]



## 6. FUTURE WORK

- 6.1 We are aware that the questions dealt with in this statement do not cover the whole area of Jewish-Christian encounter. We therefore recommend that attention be given to such issues as were suggested, for example, in the Chiang Mai papers. We express our hope that contributions to work in the future will also come from Christians in Africa and Asia. We are very much aware that the differences of opinion among us demand further study.
- 6.2 Our dealing with these issues will show that in our thinking about Israel and the Jews very important and vital tenets of our Christian faith are at stake. Is it too much to hope that Christians and Jews may live in creative tension, enriching and encouraging each other, despite the appalling record of the relationship between the two communities over the centuries?
- 6.3 [Theological consultations between Jews and Christians should be encouraged in which the basic convictions and differences of their respective faiths are discussed not merely in the hope of a better understanding of the faith of our partners and an enrichment of our own faith, but also in the hope of reaching a common understanding of divine revelation and thus healing the breach which exists between the synagogue and the church.]
- 6.4 [Christians and Jews share with other believers the conviction that all people, regardless of race, religion or nationality are equally God's children and equally precious in His sight. This conviction is based on a concept of God as Creator of the universe, who continues to care for his creation, whose mercies are over all His creatures. Such common concept of God should unite believers in trying to understand each other and in caring for God's creation, including nature and all creatures.]
- 6.5 [The past has all too often been a time of alienation, even bitterness. Happily today we have entered into a new stage of conversation. The present contains seeds of hope that under the same one revealing God, Jews and Christians will fulfill God's purpose of bringing justice, peace and holiness to the whole human family.]
- 6.6 Specifically the three themes recommended in the group report of the Chiang Mai consultation should be taken seriously:
- a) In what sense are the Christian Old Testament and the Bible of the Jews "the same Scripture"?
  - b) Is there a mission and are there concerns that Jews and Christians have in common?
  - c) How can our two communities contribute to world-wide community through dialogue?

The question of man's responsibility towards nature, science and technology on the basis of biblical teaching is certainly one of the most important to be worked on by Jews and Christians together because God entrusted us with stewardship over the earth.





# THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

PARIS OFFICE • 30, Rue La Boetie Paris 75008, France • Elysees 69-11, 83-63 • Cable: Wishcom, Paris

Abraham Karlikow, European Director

February 24, 1978.

## Memorandum

To: Mark Tanenbaum  
From: Zachariah Shuster

### Developments in Interfaith relations:

The object of this paper is to discuss a number of current and forthcoming developments in the field of Interreligious relationship in Europe.

### Oberamergau

As you know the population of Oberamergau voted in a recent referendum to maintain the old text in the 1980 performances and thus expressed opposition to the Rosner-text as elaborated by Alois Fink. I learned from sources in Germany that most of those who voted against the new text were middle-aged and older people, while the younger element supported the new text. It should also be noted that in spite of the results of this referendum the City Council of Oberamergau voted in favor of the new text. However, as indicated before, a newly elected city council will be meeting on March 5th and may then review the decision. My contacts in Germany are rather optimistic about the outcome, but nothing can be predicted with certainty.

The statement of the American Jewish Committee as presented in its letter to the mayor of Oberamergau has become widely known among the interested groups in Germany. I should like to suggest, however, that nothing be done further publicly by us until after the city council of Oberamergau acts on this matter.

### Catholic Jewish Liaison Committee in Madrid

As you know the forthcoming Annual Meeting of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee is to take place in Madrid on April 5-7, 1978. From the list of Catholic representatives, who are planning to attend this meeting, I have the impression that our partners are taking this meeting very seriously and are prepared to discuss fundamental matters in Catholic-Jewish relations.

RICHARD MAASS, President ■ MAYNARD I. WISNER, Chairman, Board of Governors ■ MORTON K. BLAUSTEIN, Chairman, National Executive Council ■ HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, Chairman, Board of Trustees ■ GERARD WEINSTOCK, Treasurer ■ LEONARD C. YASEEN, Secretary ■ ROBERT L. HOROWITZ, Associate Treasurer ■ THEODORE ELLENOFF, Chairman, Executive Committee ■ Honorary Presidents: MORRIS B. ABRAM, LOUIS CAPLAN, IRVING M. ENGEL, ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG, PHILIP E. HOFFMAN, ELMER L. WINTER ■ Honorary Vice-Presidents: NATHAN APPLEMAN, MRS. JACOB BLAUSTEIN, JACK A. GOLDFARB, ANDREW GOODMAN, EMERY E. KLINEMAN, JAMES MARSHALL, WILLIAM ROSENWALD ■ MAX M. FISHER, Honorary Chairman, National Executive Council ■ MAURICE GLINERT, Honorary Treasurer ■ JOHN SLAWSON, Executive Vice-President Emeritus ■ Vice-Presidents: JORDAN C. BAND, Cleveland; EDITH S. COLIVER, San Francisco; EMANUEL DANNETT, Westchester; RAYMOND F. KRAVIS, Tulsa; DAVID LLOYD KREEGER, Washington, D.C.; RICHARD H. LEVIN, Chicago; ALFRED H. MOSES, Washington, D.C.; ELAINE PETSCHKE, Westchester; MERVIN H. RISEMAN, New York; RICHARD E. SHERWOOD, Los Angeles; SHERMAN H. STARR, Boston ■

13C 1C



Among the Catholic participants there will be Msgr. Charles Moeller, Father Mejia, Father Vincent Serrano, Dr. Eugene Fischer, Msgr. George Higgins, Professor Marcel Dubois, Father Bernard Dupuy and others. I have the feeling that the Catholic side is ready to discuss in a profound way the trends within Catholic education on attitudes towards Jews. I should like to hear from you as to the efforts made on our side with regard to Jewish educational material on Christianity, along the lines decided upon at the last IJCIC meeting in New York.

#### Madrid Symposium

I have written you some time ago about the symposium on Christian-Jewish relations which is planned to take place in Madrid immediately following the IJCIC meeting. There is no definite agenda yet drafted for this symposium, but from the list of Israeli participants I have the impression that it will be on a highly academic level. Among the Israelis there will be Professor Talmon, Professor David Flusser, etc. I should like to know whether you intend to participate in this symposium and generally as to our position on this subject. As you know I have recommended some time ago that we take part in this enterprise on a permanent basis with an appropriate contribution. I should like to have your reactions to it at the earliest convenience.

#### WCC

A meeting of the WCC European Regional Conference on the Church and the Jewish people took place in Holland in the middle of February. According to the information I have just received the group expressed extreme consternation at not having been consulted about Dr. von Hammerstein's removal from office. Professor Krister Stendahl who took part in this meeting stated that responsible for this action is Mr. Mulder, the lay leader of the sub-commission on Dialogue with people of living faiths. The group then condemned this action and particularly the behavior of Stendahl himself.

Various names were mentioned as possible successors but for the time being no agreement was reached.

As you probably know, Dr. von Hammerstein is being seriously considered to be the successor of Reverend Simpson as General Secretary of the International Council of Christians and Jews, after Simpson's retirement at the end of this year. I shall write you more about this in a separate memorandum.

cc: B. Gold  
M. Fine

GUIDELINES FOR  
CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS  
(a collection of proposals)



WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
DIALOGUE WITH MEN OF LIVING FAITHS AND IDEOLOGIES  
CONSULTATION ON THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Guidelines for Christian Jewish Relations

In preparation and follow up of the Jerusalem conference of the WCC/DFI "Consultation on the Church and the Jewish people" (June 16-26, 1977) the following contributions have been submitted.

following contributions have been submitted.			<u>Page</u>
I.	USA Study Group		2
II.	British Working Group		8
III.	Theological Research Fraternity in Israel		12
IV.	Dr. Flesseman van Leer in cooperation with Dr. von Hammerstein		16
V.	Jerusalem Conference Paper		26
VI.	Summary of Rev. Peter Jennings	} at the request of the Moderator of CCJP	31
VII.	Summary of Dr. F. von Hammerstein		39

The Advisory Committee of CCJP meeting in Holland February 13 and 14, 1978, decided that all these documents should be made available to the DFI Commission meeting in Trinidad, to the members of CCJP and to interested study groups. All these contributions can help both in drafting regional as well as ecumenical guidelines. The latter should not be done without further consultation with Christians from Africa, Asia and South America, because ecumenical guidelines should not only be addressed to them but rather be drafted with them (cf Christian Jewish Dialogue in Ecumenical Perspective, edited F. von Hammerstein, Geneva 1978). We are grateful for all advice concerning future work on regional and ecumenical guidelines.

The first four papers were prepared for the CCJP Conference in Jerusalem which then worked on a conference paper. Since the latter was produced quite hurriedly, the Moderator asked first Rev. P. Jennings to produce a summary which was sent to the consultants for comments. With the help of the comments the last summary was produced. It proves rather difficult to produce true Ecumenical Guidelines, because there are controversial opinions and there are different levels of consciousness concerning the task. Therefore, further ecumenical work is needed.



WCC - CCJP meeting

From Israel Study Group, U.S.A.

=====

(Guideline Proposal)

I. COMPLEMENTARY VIEWS OF SALVATION

Judaism and Christianity are different religions which contain complementary aspects of salvation theology.

We rejoice in our new-found awareness of the distinctive relationship we have with those divinely chosen as God's people. As Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox Christians, we are grateful for this new consciousness of what we share with the Jews despite the diversity of our faiths. Our Christian theology must maintain the uniqueness of the Christ-event without detracting from the continuing validity of Jewish faith and the Jewish covenant.

Genuine Christian-Jewish dialogue demands that we re-examine the implications of the death and resurrection of Christ in relation to the Jewish longing for the Messianic age. The Christian concept of a personal Messiah has led to a soteriology that is inclined to be individualistic, other-worldly and productive of "cheap grace." The Jewish yearning for a Messianic era has often stressed peoplehood, sometimes with a communitarian, sometimes with a secular orientation. The dialogue should recognize, without detriment to the salvation claims of either, the diversity of the two religions, each containing different but complementary aspects of salvation theology.

II. THE COVENANT

God's covenant with the Jews continues. Christianity is engrafted into Israel but does not replace it.

Ancient Israel was chosen by God as bearer of salvation. The infinite God and finite Israel promised to carry out the terms of the covenant with fidelity. Israel at times broke the covenant but God never broke it. Isaiah wrote, "The word of our God will stand forever" (40, 8).

As agent of salvation, Israel played a role in salvation history as representative of the whole human family. The covenant in Christ in no way replaces or supersedes the covenant with Israel. Christianity without the Jews is incomplete: they are partners of God in the covenant. They survive to this day as a people who still recite the Shema, study the Scriptures of their ancestors, offer prayers to God and continue as bearers of salvation.

The Christian Church, although composed almost entirely of Gentiles, worships the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We use Hebrew concepts to express our deepest concerns when we speak of sin and redemption, creation and covenant, grace and peace (shalom). In the Hebrew Scriptures we hear the voice of the same God the Jews hear. Our attention is focused on Israel as a real people in a real world responding to the God of history. Jesus has drawn us into Israel's longing for the promised redemption of the world and has challenged us to work for the establishment of the kingdom.

"Something went wrong in the beginning" is a phrase that trenchantly expressed the intra-family misunderstanding about Israel's mission in the first and second centuries. Instead of seeing itself as a new branch engrafted into Israel, the Christian Church eventually came to conclude that it was destined to replace Israel. But the very raison d'etre of the Church is at issue, for "it is when pondering her (sic) own mystery that the Church encounters the mystery of Israel" (Vatican Guidelines, 1975). Part of that mystery is the fact that God cannot be unfaithful to those divinely chosen. St. Paul insisted that the gifts and call of God are irrevocable (Romans, 11, 29). If God had been unfaithful to the people chosen long ago, there would be good reason to doubt God's faithfulness now to us who claim to be chosen more recently.

### III. MISSION

It is inappropriate to claim that Christians have a mission to Jews. Christian witness should respect the liberty of the individual conscience.

Against the deplorable background of nineteen centuries of Christian teaching of contempt for the Jews, it is incongruous for us to proclaim that we Christians have a mission to the Jews. We do however have a Christian duty to bear witness, an endeavor seldom taken seriously in 1900 years. We can strive to imitate Jesus by respecting the Jewish people, welcoming their presence, helping them in sickness and health, sharing their joys and sorrows. God has not abrogated the covenant made with them and we do well to revere the values and religious experiences that are their heritage under the covenant. In addition to a normal humanitarian concern for the Jews, our witness can also be a reflection of the love of God for God's chosen people.

Proselytism is an abuse of Christian witness that must be scrupulously avoided and rejected. It includes not only the more obvious forms of missionary solicitation but also those coercive forms that constitute a psychological or cultural constraint on Jews, as individuals or as a community, in violation of their free exercise of religious liberty and personal conscience. Anti-semitism of any kind is always reprobate, but anti-semitism nuanced with such dishonesty in witness is particularly unconscionable. Honest witness, sincere and conscientious, requires on the part of the Christian a knowledge of the history and mission of Israel, its amazing survival after long centuries of persecution, and its sacred privileges as recognized in the New Testament.



It is sometimes said that we should not monopolize the riches of our Christian faith but share it with the Jewish people. In the broad sense, however, it is the Jews who have shared the blessings of salvation with us. As the French Catholic Bishops said in their 1973 Statement, "The Jewish people is conscious of having received through its particular vocation a universal mission with regard to the nations. The Church for its part estimates that its own mission can only be inscribed in this same universal project of salvation."

#### IV. THE HOLOCAUST

The Christian response to the Holocaust should be a resolve that it will never happen again.

It is frequently said, and correctly - we believe, that Christian teaching of contempt for the Jews and Jewish theology was the spawning-ground for the evils of the Holocaust. We must ask ourselves: In what specific ways can the lessons of the Holocaust be taken seriously by Christian churches and theologians? How can we change our teaching so that it will never again be used by the enemies of the Jewish people? The Christian response to the Holocaust should be a firm resolve that it must never happen again, and that the Christian churches should be in the forefront of any efforts to prevent the conditions which might lead to another slaughter of the people with whom God formed the covenant.

#### V. THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Christians should support Israel's legal and moral right to exist as a state.

That the possibility exists for the Jewish people to flourish in their homeland, thirty years after the Holocaust, is a sign of God's love for the Jewish people. It is a challenge and a plea addressed to Christians to work for those conditions of peace that are necessary for Israel to fulfill its destiny, especially recognition of its moral and legal right to exist. Jewish life in Israel should be viewed by Christians as a clear refutation of the old myth that God had condemned the Jews to wander forever over the face of the earth, never to have a homeland.

#### VI. CHRISTIAN PERCEPTIONS OF JEWS AND ISRAEL

The Christian understanding of Jews and Judaism must undergo basic transformation in order that both peoples may live in harmony and friendship.

Christian preachers sometimes describe Judaism of the first century A.D. as having degenerated to an inordinate degree politically, socially, and morally. The implication is that the infidelity of the Jews pointed to the need of a Messiah, and highlighted by contrast the exalted purity of Jesus' religious message. In fact, the Jewish people of the first century were a



people of high morality, sound commitment to family life, sensitivity to the needs of the stranger, concern for the poor and oppressed, fidelity to international agreements. The above-mentioned distortion of history derives from a reading of the Old Testament in which the sacred writers held up a high standard of personal perfection. It was not enough for Israel to be moral: these inspired Hebrew authors called on Israel to be a holy people, a light to the nations, a witness to the demands of a holy God.

While not always attaining this lofty ideal, the Jews of the first centuries were nevertheless superior to the pagans. Jewish life in all its diversity demonstrated rich spiritual and ethical vitality in all phases of life. It is altogether unfair and wrong to claim the afflictions suffered by the Jews in the years following 70 A.D. were due to a divine curse laid upon the Jewish people for being unfaithful to the covenant. Christian writers should be careful not to give any credence to such fables as that of "faithless Israel," or the "blood curse" allegedly imposed by God on the Jews as penalty for the crucifixion of Christ, or the designation of the Jew as "eternal wanderer."

We rejoice that many of the Third World peoples have not experienced in the same degree the lamentable anti-semitic influences associated with the entrenched social, cultural and political power of Western Christendom. There are however in the Third World three factors that prompt concern for the future: 1) the rise of hostility towards Jewish people and the State of Israel, 2) New Testament interpretations inimical to the Jews, 3) theological traditions which are supersessionist and triumphalist. Fortunately, there is in some of the Churches outside the West a particular zeal for the Hebrew Scriptures and a lively interest in Rabbinic tradition.

The negative image of the Pharisees found in Christian preaching and writing is one of the gravest distortions of Judaism prevalent in Christianity. The correction of this injustice is absolutely necessary for honest dialogue with the Jews as well as for Christian self-renewal in itself. To disparage Pharisaism is in a real sense to disparage modern Judaism, for all modern forms of Judaism basically owe their existence to the Pharisaic-Rabbinic movement which produced such a far-reaching revolution in Second Temple Judaism.

Pharisaism was not the empty, legalistic system it is made out to be but rather a dynamic, creative religious movement that formed the context of the teachings of Jesus and the early Church in such areas as ethics, the concept of God, liturgy, ministry and church structure. Jesus basically followed rabbinic patterns in his own ministry, and affirmed the Pharisaic conceptions of the resurrection of the human person after death.

The rich body of worship, prayer and teaching that developed after the rise of Christianity in Judaism found its source and inspiration in the Pharisaic traditions. Christians have tragically ignored or rejected this rich development which is part of the continuing fulfillment of Jewish life to the present day. One can see the hand of God continuing to bless those

chosen as bearers of revelation in the work of Universal Salvation.

## VII. THE FUTURE

The past has all too often been a time of alienation, even bitterness. Happily today we have entered into a new stage of conversation. The present contains seeds of hope that under the same one revealing God, Jews and Christians will fulfill God's purpose of bringing justice, peace and holiness to the whole human family.

### ISRAEL STUDY GROUP

Dr. Claire Huchet-Bishop  
309 East 52nd Street  
New York, N. Y. 10022  
212-355-4886 (home)

Dr. Arthur C. Cochrane  
Wartburg Theological Seminary  
333 Wartburg Place  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001  
319-556-8151

Mrs. Alice L. Eckardt  
Lehigh University  
Bethlehem, Pa. 18015  
215-282-1921 (home)  
215-691-7000 (office)

Dr. A. Roy Eckardt  
326 Maginnes Hall 9  
Lehigh University  
Bethlehem, Pa. 18015  
215-691-7000 (office)  
215-282-1921 (home)

Rev. Edward H. Flannery  
Continuing Education of the Clergy  
Our Lady of Providence Seminary  
Warwick Neck Avenue  
Warwick, R. I. 02889  
401-739-6850 (home)  
401-738-1949 (office)

Professor Eva Fleischner  
Dept. of Philosophy & Religion  
Montclair State College  
Upper Montclair, N. J. 07043  
201-893-4435 (office)  
201-783-6041 (home)

Mr. Donald W. McEvoy  
National Program Director  
National Conference of Christians and Jews, I  
43 West 57th Street  
New York, N. Y. 10019  
212-688-7530

Dr. Ursula M. Niebuhr  
Yale Hill  
Stockbridge, Massachusetts 01262  
413-298-3192 (home)

Rt. Rev. John M. Oesterreicher  
Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies  
Seton Hall University  
South Orange, N. J. 07079  
201-762-9000, Ext. 361 (office)

Rev. John T. Pawlikowski, OSM  
Catholic Theological Union  
5401 South Cornell Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60615  
312-324-8000, Ext. 234 (office)  
312-456-2955 (home)

Rt. Rev. Leo Rudloff, OSB  
Weston Priory, Benedictine Monks  
Weston, Vermont 05161  
802-824-5409 (home)

Rev. John B. Sheerin, CSP  
Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations  
National Conference of Catholic Bishops  
1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20005  
202-659-6600 (office)  
202-832-6262 (home)



Dr. Walter Harrelson  
Vanderbilt U. Divinity School  
Nashville, Tenn. 37240  
615-322-2776 (office)

Rev. William H. Harter  
Orchard Street  
Margaretville, N. Y. 12455  
914-586-4567 (home)

Dr. Franklin H. Littell  
Humanities Building  
Dept. of Religion  
Temple University  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19122  
215-787-7807

Rev. Theodore Stylianopoulos  
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology  
50 Goddard Avenue  
Brookline, Massachusetts 02146  
617-731-3500 (office)  
617-862-6453 (home)

Sister Rose Thering, O.P.  
School of Education  
Seton Hall University  
South Orange, N. J. 07079  
201-762-9000, Ext. 322 (office)  
201-761-6154 (home)

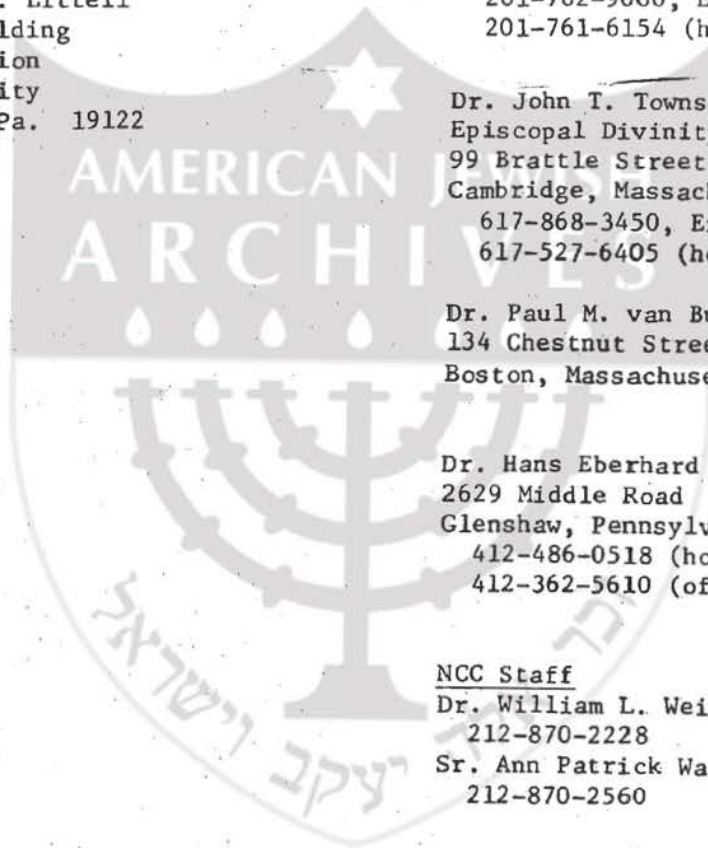
Dr. John T. Townsend  
Episcopal Divinity School  
99 Brattle Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138  
617-868-3450, Ext. 47 (office)  
617-527-6405 (home)

Dr. Paul M. van Buren  
134 Chestnut Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Dr. Hans Eberhard von Waldow  
2629 Middle Road  
Glenshaw, Pennsylvania 15116  
412-486-0518 (home)  
412-362-5610 (office)

NCC Staff

Dr. William L. Weiler  
212-870-2228  
Sr. Ann Patrick Ware, S.L.  
212-870-2560



THIRD REVISED TEXT OF BRITISH WORKING GROUP FOR WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
CONSULTATION ON THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE GUIDELINES/RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS

(May 1977)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Christian motivation of relating to Persons of Other Faiths

In the past when Christians have related to persons of Other Faiths and Ideologies, their tendency has been to emphasize their Christian stance from which they approach Other Faiths. This has changed, for in a shrunken world the very nearness and accessibility of one to the other has thrown into relief our common humanity. This situation should make us feel concerned about and involved with each other. Further, this makes us aware of primary human concerns such as Knowledge of God, a Way of Salvation and the Problem of Good and Evil, all of them approached in varied ways by world religions.

2. The Phenomenon of Antisemitism

Most Christians are aware that there has been a special relationship between the Jewish People and the Church and are conscious that something has gone radically wrong in that relationship. The fact that Judaism is the matrix of Christianity would be sufficient to explain some tension but is hardly able to account for the terrible relationship of two thousand years. It was the caricaturing of Jews and Judaism in what has come to be known as the 'Teaching of Contempt' which considered Judaism as both legalistic and an anachronism, at best a preparation for the Church, that explains the Church's involvement in theological anti-Judaism.

3. Resurgence of the Jewish People

Christians should be aware of the vibrant and continuing development of Judaism in post-Biblical times. Between the First century and the present day there was - and is - an enormous output of Jewish religious and philosophical literature and commentary. In modern times Jewish religious movements have made major contributions to European religious thought. European Jewry was virtually destroyed by the Nazis - and it is nothing short of a miracle that the destruction of six million Jews should have been followed by the reconstruction of Jewish life with its special centres in Israel, America and, to a certain extent, Britain. By centres we mean places and institutions of higher Jewish learning that act as a renewal of religious life the world over. The most remarkable of all such resurgence is the emergence of the State of Israel which by restoring the 'Land' to its relationship with 'People' and 'Religion' has made it possible for Judaism to regain its wholeness.

4. Moving Forward to Dialogue

Historical developments, as outlined above, would by themselves suggest the necessity for a review on the part of the Church of its traditional attitude of proselytism. Christians, however, have been facing the challenge and demands of religious pluralism by a new way of relating to Other Faiths epitomized by dialogue. Meeting in dialogue is more radical than renewing academic interest in comparative religions or merely updating traditional attitudes and approaches. It demands respect at a deeper level and acceptance of the integrity of the faith of the other. We allow others to define their religious identity in terms of their



own self-understanding and expect that our own Christian commitment and identity is similarly respected.

## II GUIDELINES OF THE NEW RELATIONSHIP

### 1. About the Bible

Jews, Christians and Muslims share some part of their Bible. A small part of the Old Testament and some traces of the story of Jesus are shared by Christians and Muslims but the most direct sharing is between Jews and Christians. Christians share the whole of the Jewish Bible, i.e., the Old Testament, with Jews but have interpreted it crucially by the New Testament. However, Judaism reads the text of the Hebrew Bible, and particularly the Five Books of Moses, through the dynamic interpretations of Jewish tradition contained in later Rabbinic literature (e.g., Midrash, Talmud, and commentaries). This tradition and exposition by Rabbis and teachers is, for Jews, part of a continual and authoritative revelation. Jesus' exposition of the Old Testament was largely within the framework of this Jewish tradition. At present, Christian scholars are rediscovering the Jewish background and roots of New Testament teaching, increasing our awareness of a common Biblical heritage.

### 2. The Israel of God

Although we talk of Jewish-Christian relationships as though both communities were monolithic, in fact those communities and the ways in which they define themselves are complex. Their self-definition and self-understanding are neither parallel to nor symmetrical with each other. The complex interrelationship of people, land, religion and nation has no similar or comparable pattern in Christian thought. Again, traditionally, Christianity has often defined itself over against the Judaism from which it sprang. The Jewish revelation, however, does not need Christianity at all for its self-definition.

It was because of the need to define itself against Judaism that Christianity ultimately began to affirm itself by totally negating Judaism. There is, nevertheless, nothing in the New Testament which describes the Jewish People as deprived of their election by God nor, for that matter, anything which affirms that the first covenant became invalid because of the newer one. Far from giving the impression that an 'Old Israel' had been superseded by a 'New Israel', substituted as the new People of God, the picture is that of a (gentile) Christian community being included within the People of God ("Once you were no people, now you are God's people." 1 Peter 2:10). The Jewish People, far from being repudiated, continues to be the People of God - 'populus secundum electionem carissimus'.

As long as Christians regard Judaism as a mere preparation for Christianity, as long as Christians can only affirm the validity of God's revelation to them by negating the validity of God's revelation to the Jewish People, then respect for Judaism as a revelation in its own right, acknowledgment of the continued election of the Jewish People, even stress upon the common hope and common ground of Christians and Jews are almost impossible because Judaism is denied its theological validity. Is it too much to hope that the people of the two covenants, the Church and Jewry - together the continuing People of God - may still stand in creative tension, enriching and encouraging each other, despite the appalling record of the relationship between the two communities over the centuries?



### 3. Jewish Self-understanding and Identity

Traditionally the Church has thought of other religions as not agreeing with the fundamental Christian assertion that 'Jesus is Lord'. Another Christian tradition has more positively reviewed the insight of other religions as partly revealing Jesus. Both these approaches hide the fact that other religions do not merely negate or support Christianity for they have a distinctive nature of their own, indeed, their own structure of identity. The emphasis in Judaism is on worship by action; observing the commandments of God in daily life, taking Biblical revelation as its authority. Judaism believes that there is a positive spiritual purpose in fulfilling as many of God's commandments as possible; the opportunity for this is at its highest in the Holy Land, where the commandments concerning the Holy Land and its produce may be observed, and where the sanctity to Judaism of worship in previous times is keenly felt. Thus the yearning of the Jewish People to be able to practise their religion in their land is, for them, a yearning of the highest degree of holiness and spirituality. In modern times, many Jews have therefore seen a strong, religious purpose in the strengthening of Jewish settlement in Israel. Understandably this is a point difficult for Christians to take. But the first stage must be that of understanding before a critical appraisal can be attempted.

### III CHRISTIAN TEACHING, PREACHING AND LITURGY

Much of the traditional Christian view of Jews and Judaism persists in the liturgy, hymns and services of the Church. Perhaps the most persistent of these is the conviction that Judaism has been superseded by Christianity. This needs to be reviewed to bring it into line with the contemporary understanding of Judaism. Most difficult of all are certain aspects of the New Testament, written at the time when the controversy between those Jews who had accepted Jesus and those who had not found sharp expression. This is particularly true of the frequent use of the particular designation of 'the Jews' in St John's Gospel. Another point of difficulty is the Passion narrative when all too easily the enemies of Jesus are identified with 'all Jews' and 'all Jews' are seen as the cause of the Crucifixion rather than the deeper strain of New Testament teaching that has always insisted on seeing the death of Jesus as being caused by our common sin. On this point we should like to draw special attention to the ICCJ's 'Ten Points of Seelisberg' (Appendix 'A')

### IV PRACTICAL PROGRAMMES

1. Correcting points of theology in the past Christian-Jewish relationships is important but it is no substitute for being a good neighbour to Jews. Apart from a good human relationship it is necessary to have some understanding of the Jewish religion not only as it is expressed in the Jewish Festivals and observance of, for example, the Sabbath ('Shabbat') and the Jewish food laws; but also other aspects of Jewish practice, the laws of charity, hospitality, study, parent-child relationships and so on.

2. In these days of discussion groups which are part of most Parishes and congregations, much profit can be derived from the formation of a joint Jewish-Christian discussion group at a parish and congregational level with a synagogue congregation.



3. A special opportunity at the present is Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Group Travel is able to bring this within the reach of most people. Such Pilgrimages today are not only an opportunity of revitalising the Christian faith by direct contact with the places associated with the ministry of Jesus, but are also opportunities for witnessing the unique Jewish presence in the Land of Israel, as well as Arab Christian communities which form a link with the historic Eastern Churches.

4. Further to discussion groups at the parish level, some special dialogue groups have been arranged at leadership level, both nationally and internationally. Perhaps the best known are the 'Rainbow Groups' of Jerusalem and London which consist of groups of 20 to 30 participants equally divided between Jews and Christians. At this level some of the more difficult aspects of theology are being discussed.

The World Council of Churches and the corresponding Jewish organisation (The International Jewish Committee for Inter-religious Consultations) have arranged several international colloquia in which scholars from both communities are invited to discuss specific themes. Although some of these official dialogues may seem far removed from the grass roots, they have a world significance both for the confidence they give to the dialogue movement as a whole and also by their providing a platform for the discussion of mutual concerns and anxieties. The contemporary movement of dialogue needs the stimulus and the interaction of local, national and global groups. - Members of Study Group:

Mr. Martin Conway,  
Phone: 01 730 9611

British Council of Churches,  
10 Eaton Gate, London, SW1W 9BT.

The Revd. Peter Jennings,  
Phone: 01 589 8854 and 8855

Council of Christians and Jews,  
48, Onslow Gardens, London, SW7 3PX

Sir John Lawrence Bt., OBE

24 St. Leonard's Terrace, London, SW3.

Mr. S.C. Leslie, BCE  
Phone: 01 340 1763

5a, View Road, London, N6 4DJ.

The Revd. Robert Richards,  
Phone: 01 455 7378

160, Hendon Way, London, NW2 2NE.

Canon Peter Schneider (Convenor)  
Phone: 01 928 8282

Archbishops' Consultants on Interfaith Relations  
at Lambeth Palace, London, SE1 7JU.

The Venerable C. Witton-Davies  
Archdeacon of Oxford,  
Phone: 0865 43847

Archdeacon's Lodging, Christ Church,  
Oxford,

R.C. Observer  
Dr. Charlotte Klein  
Phone: 01 727 3597  
Jewish Observers

Sisters of Sion,  
17 Chepstow Villas, London, W11 3DZ.

Mr. Paul Shaw, MA., B.Phil.  
Phone: 01 387 3952

The Board of Deputies of British Jews,  
4th Floor, Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place,  
London, WC1H 0EP

Mr. C.C. Aronsfeld  
Phone: 01 935 1436

Institute of Jewish Affairs,  
13-16, Jacob's Well Mews, George St.,  
London, W1H 5PD.



ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH FRATERNITY IN ISRAEL

P.O.B. 249, Jerusalem

Guideline Proposal

"Fundamental Issues in the Jewish-Christian Encounter". Topic I.-  
"The People of God"

On the basis of the discussions held in the plenary sessions of the seminar, a working group composed of Canon Edward Every, Dr. J. (Coos) Schoneveld, Fr. Joseph Stiassny and Prof. Laurenz Volken has proposed the following summary, to be submitted to the World Council of Churches' Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People, during its meeting in Jerusalem, 20-23 June 1977, as a contribution to the item on the Agenda: "Preparation of a Study Guide on Christian-Jewish Relations".

At the plenary sessions of the seminars, lectures were held on this topic by a Jewish guest speaker, Prof. Moshe Weinfeld, and by a Fraternity member (presently also its Chairman) Prof. Laurenz Volken. In some meetings of the working group Prof. Clarence Bauman and Prof. Gavin Munro also participated, but they were unable to attend those sessions in which this summary was drafted.

Summary

1. Jews and Christians have in common the conviction that God has elected a "people" to whom He proves His love and care and whom He charges with the obligation and responsibility of living according to His will. By establishing a particular people He manifests His saving purpose for humanity as a whole. This people is, according to the Jews, the Jewish People: according to the Christians this people is the Church. In relating these claims to each other different views are being held.
  - a) The claims are mutually exclusive and invalidate each other: the People of God is either the Jewish People or the Church.
  - b) There are two Peoples of God: the Jewish People and the Church, each having a role to play.
  - c) There is a deep rift within the People of God, due to a basic difference between Jews and Christians in their belief about the time in which they are living. Christians believe that the age which the prophets foretold, the Messianic Age, began to be present with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that, in this age they are called to be the Messianic People of the God of Israel, not taking the place of Israel, but in a different place in the scheme of God's dealings with humanity.

This third view seems to give best expression to the "very special relationship between Judaism and Christianity", referred to in the report "Seeking Community - The Common Search of People of Various Faiths, Cultures and Ideologies", submitted to the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Nairobi (23 November - 10 December 1975).

2. A result of this basic difference between Israel and the Church is the difference between Jewish views and Christian views of the characteristics of the People of God. The Jews understand the People of God as a national community, called to relate the totality of its life, economically, culturally and politically, to the will of God expressed in the Torah (the Divine Teaching given by Moses) and in its interpretation throughout all generations. They believe that in the future Messianic Age the whole of humanity and not only Israel will be united and live according to God's will. Christians believe that the gospel of the resurrection calls for the gathering of the Messianic people, made up of men and women of



various families, tribes, nations, races and cultures, in expectation of the full unity of humanity according to God's will. However, in relation to the future the Jewish hope and the Christian hope point in the same direction. The Jewish New Year prayer contains the words: "May all Thy works serve Thee and all creatures prostrate themselves before Thee and may they all form one community to do Thy will with a perfect heart". Paul expressed the same hope in the words: "God will be all in all", (I Cor. 15:28).

3. It should be kept in mind that in significant parts of the world the Church has an understanding of herself which is close to the Jewish understanding of the People of God. This is so where the local Church is seen as a true expression of the People of God. Where Churches have assumed political and judicial functions, (for example, within the "millet-system" in the Islamic world according to which a certain measure of autonomy was granted to the Churches), or where the Church has been identified with a particular nation or ethnic group, (for example, the Armenians, the Copts, or the Maronites, in the Lebanon or some Protestant Nation-Churches), the Christian conception of the People of God has significant similarities with the Jewish conception.

The way of entering the People of God is different for the Jews and for the Christians. The ethnic basis of the Jewish conception of the People of God makes birth a decisive criterion: according to traditional Jewish law, Halakhah, a Jew is anyone born of a Jewish mother. It is, however, possible to become a Jew by joining this religio-ethnic community through conversion which gives a status similar to that of a Jew by birth. According to a basic tenet of Christianity Baptism gives entry to the Church. But children of Christians, when not yet baptized, are often considered to belong in some way to the Church. The emphasis is then on the idea of the covenant which is intimately related to the conception of peoplehood.

4. An important issue is the relation between those belonging to a community that is considered as the People of God, and those who are outside that community, whether Jewish or Christian. The interpretation of the concepts of election and being the "Chosen People" is of crucial importance in this context. The biblical concept of election indicates: (a) the privileged status of the Chosen People; (b) their particular obligation towards God; (c) the particular way of life, which those belonging to the Chosen People have to follow; (d) the mission with which they are charged in relation to those who are outside; (e) their function as a "saving remnant" in relation to the whole of humanity. History gives ample evidence of the fact that the concept of election can lead to spiritual arrogance, isolation and lust for power over others. These are temptations which can be overcome only if the concept of election is seen as a corollary of belief in a Personal God.. If it is recognized that being chosen means being loved and charged with a particular kind of responsibility, then it ought to be and can be a cause of great humility.

The affirmation of a community that is the People of God has its proper place in prayer, in which she says to God: "We are Thy people", reminding Him of His acts of love and justice in the past, and asking Him to manifest His saving purpose in the present and the future.

"Fundamental Issues in the Jewish-Christian Encounter". Topic II. -  
"One God".

Parallel with discussions held in the plenary sessions of the seminar, a working group has proposed the following summary, to be submitted to the World Council of Churches' Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People, during its meeting in Jerusalem, 20-23 June 1977, as a contribution to the item on the Agenda: "Preparation of a Study Guide on Christian-Jewish Relations".



At a plenary session of the seminar a lecture on the topic "One God" was given by a Jewish speaker, Dr. Pinhas Hachohen Peli, which at the next session was followed by an internal Christian discussion.

### Summary

1. Jews and Christians worship the same God, the God of Israel, who is One. The first article of the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed: "I believe in One God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible" confirm the "Shema' Israel (Hear, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord (is) One" - Deut. 6:4). Only He is God and therefore distinct from anything else. His distinctness opens the possibility of His entering into relationship with that which He calls into existence. As far as human beings are concerned, He relates to them as Creator, Father, Teacher and Redeemer, in righteousness and love. His covenant with Israel is the blueprint of His design with the whole of humanity. To obey God's will as revealed in His Word, is the purpose and destiny of human life. Each human being is of equal worth in God's sight, irrespective of sex, family, nation or race. God's faithfulness to man is able to overcome man's unfaithfulness to God and is the source of hope for the complete redemption of the world. These are some of the beliefs common to Jews and Christians when they worship the One God. It should be remembered that it is incorrect to describe the religion of the Torah, as developed in Rabbinic Judaism, as the religion of fear, as opposed to the religion of the Gospel as the religion of love. Love is at the origin, and also at the goal of both the teaching of the Torah and of the Gospel.
2. In this belief in the One God Jews and Christians are divided on fundamental points, a number of which are set out below:

#### Jewish Faith

#### Christian Faith

##### a) The "channels" through which Revelation comes to us

The Jew received Revelation through the Torah, the Prophets, the Sacred Writings; and through Oral Tradition (Talmud).

The Christian receives Revelation through the Torah, Prophets, Sacred Writing and through the New Testament, which testifies to Jesus who fulfils what precedes.

##### b) The essence of Faith

The practical implementation of the Torah by the observance of the Commandments, for the sanctification of the Name of God, the fulfilment of his will and the sanctification of the People.

The confession of the Name of Jesus as Lord. And (for Catholics and Orthodox), dogmatic declarations and doctrinal assumptions.

##### c) Some essential articles of Faith

The encounter with God is mainly by the observance of the Commandments.

No authority or institution exists that can issue an official statement of belief.

Only one compulsory proclamation of faith: ONE GOD.

The Rabbi is a doctor, a teacher, but not a priest.

##### Trinity

##### Incarnation

The Sacraments, as a means for encounter with God.

(for Roman Catholics): the Pope, his "infallibility", his role.

(for Catholics and Orthodox): The Virginal Conception of Mary.

(for Catholic and Orthodox): Dogma.

(for Catholics and Orthodox): Priesthood.



d) The nature of the Messianic Kingdom

It cannot have come because nothing has changed the world. It has already come.

This dividing factor could be reduced to its real proportions if the Churches put more stress on the Christian expectation of the second Coming of the Messiah, towards which all believers are bound to direct their hope and their acts.

e) The nature of the Messiah

Never considered as a Divine Being. The Son of God, God Himself.  
God's anointed representative, to bring:

- a) political and spiritual redemption of the people of Israel, through the ingathering of the Jews in Eretz Yisrael, and the restoration of Jerusalem to its spiritual glory;
- b) an era marked by the moral perfection of all mankind, and the harmonious co-existence of all peoples, free of war, fear, hatred and intolerance.  
(cf. Donin; To be a Jew, p. 14)

f) Atonement

Human repentance (Teshuva) brings about One Man, Jesus, atoned for all men. atonement.

g) Human effort and grace

"We shall do and we shall listen", Primacy of grace.  
(Ex. 24:7).

3. This common, yet different affirmation on One God should impel Jews and Christians to engage in encounter and dialogue, in humility of mind and heart. Some guidelines for this encounter and dialogue between Jews and Christians may be suggested:
- a) Seek what is common to both;
  - b) Respect the differences and rule out syncretism;
  - c) Refrain from any effort to convince the other of the superiority of one's own religion, while each keeping faithful to what is truth to him..
  - d) Realize that in order to understand fully the other one's faith, it is necessary to live that faith, and that therefore the understanding of the other faith is always limited, however deep one's knowledge and empathy regarding that faith may be.
  - e) Appreciate the heavy burden of history in the relations between Jews and Christians.
  - f) Accept the other one as he sees himself without imposing one's own idea of how he ought to be. The Christian should, for example, recognize the fact that, for the Jew, the link with the Land of Israel is an essential element of his faith, while affirming that this link cannot be at the expense of legitimate rights of others to this land, among them other believers in the One God, who also consider this land as their Holy Land.
  - g) Be aware of a significant asymmetry in the Jewish-Christian encounter: for a Christian such an encounter is essential for his understanding of the roots of his faith, and may therefore enrich and deepen his faith, while for a Jew such an encounter is of much more marginal importance, and of a more practical interest, such as the avoidance of the causes of Anti-Judaism.
  - h) Define a common interest when becoming engaged in a concrete encounter: this may be in common reading of the Tanakh/Old Testament, accompanied by Jewish and Christian interpretations, in common action for social, economic or political causes based on the common calling to righteousness and love.

PROPOSAL FOR GUIDELINES OR STUDY GUIDES  
CONCERNING CHRISTIAN-JEWISH DIALOGUE IN THE FRAMEWORK FOR GUIDELINES  
OF CHRISTIANS WITH PEOPLE OF OTHER FAITHS AND IDEOLOGIES

-----  
(Dr. E. Flesseman-van Leer in cooperation with Dr. F. von Hammerstein)  
-----

- 1) Unique Basis for Mutual Understanding.
- 2) Dialogue between Christians and Jews.
- 3) Common Study of Christians and Jews.
- 4) Cooperation in a Pluralistic World.
- 5) Questions to be studied among the Churches:
  - a) Theological Relationship between the Church and the Jewish People?
  - b) The Jewish People in God's History of Salvation?
  - c) The Relationship of the "old" and the "new" covenant?
  - d) Theological Significance of the Land and State of Israel.

May 1977.



1) Unique Basis for Mutual Understanding

Dialogue between Christians and Jews is of a special character and of special urgency. For to no other people is the church so intimately bound. Jesus Christ was a Jew; he and his message cannot be properly understood apart from the pre-Christian foregoing history of the Jewish people. The first disciples were all Jews. The scriptures of the early church were the scriptures of the Jewish people. They are still today a part of its bible. It is true that the Church and the Jewish people have in part a different understanding of the Law and the prophets: still it is a fact of great importance that the Jewish bible and the old testament comprise the same writings. As a result we share together some very fundamental convictions which can offer a unique basis for our co-operation for the good of humanity, as well as for a mutual understanding and meaningful dialogue.

We both believe in the one God. Creator of all what is, who in his free grace has bound Himself to man, who loves man, has made his will for man known to him and who wants that all men should turn to Him, know Him and worship Him.

We both believe that He has created man in his image, as crown of creation, that as such man, called to be holy, is given stewardship in God's name over sub-human creation and that he is accountable to God for the way he exercises this stewardship.

Christians and Jews share for a great part a common ethics. Taught by their scriptures they know themselves responsible for their fellowmen, especially for those who are weak, poor, persecuted.

Christians and Jews have a common hope, looking forward to the fulfilment when this earth will be renewed, all suffering be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and respects. In this ultimate hope they work here for greater righteousness, trusting that all human work will in some way be a factor in the world to come.

2) Dialogue

The primary goal of dialogue is that we come to a better knowledge of each other. That means for us as Christians that we have to discard many preconceived ideas of what Judaism and Jews are, and have to begin to pay careful attention when they explain themselves to us in their own self understanding. For there is hardly a thing which is such a hindrance to mutual understanding as the caricatures we have made from each other. Actually, Judaism is a very complex phenomenon and religious Jewry comprises many different groups and denominations. The fact that there is an intricate interrelation between the Jewish religion, <sup>Jewish</sup> tradition and Jewish people- and nationhood makes it impossible to make a straightaway comparison between the Church and the Jews. Moreover, in the selfunderstanding of the great majority of Jews there is an unsoluble bond between the Jewish people and the land of Palestine. This bond is a major factor in the consciousness also of those Jews, be they religious or not secularised who are faithful citizens of states other than the State of Israel. In our dialogue with Jews, we must try imaginatively to enter into and respect this Jewish self-understanding (which is not the same as to accept it unquestionably ourselves).

Respect for the Jew in his Jewish identity implies that Christians defend, wherever possible, full religious liberty for them and preclude the possibility of proselytizing in the pejorative sense.

Because in the past this respect has so often been lacking when Jews were compelled by Christians to hold religious disputations it is understandable that still quite a few Jews mistrust the good faith of Christians who want a dialogue with them. We have also to respect this Jewish hesitancy to come to a more intimate discussion with us.

Probably the greatest obstacle to dialogue is the distrust which most Jews still feel in view of the terrible common history determined by guilt at the Christian side and suffering at the Jewish side. Before Christians have honestly faced this past guilt, meaningful encounter with Jews will not be possible. There are still too many Christians who do not fully realize how deeply the whole history of anti-semitism has entered Jewish consciousness and engendered a deep-rooted suspicion against Christianity. It is certainly true that this "Christian" anti-semitism has played no or only a very minor role in the oriental churches and the churches in Africa and Asia; the question is to be considered whether the Christians



of these churches are not called upon in solidarity to make themselves co-responsible with the guilt incurred by their brother- and sister-Christians. Digestion of past Christian guilt will open our eyes to the danger of present recurrent anti-semitism. Warned by the past we cannot easily speak of an oversensitivity of the Jews in that respect. In this respect attention should be given to the following points: the crucifixion of Jesus should not be presented so as to point to a special depravity of those who crucified him. On the contrary, the very witness of scripture points out that even those who were in their times the most religious of men became guilty in their rejection of the Son of God; in their guilt the guilt of all men has been made manifest. Neither are we allowed to speak of a particular hardening of the hearts of the Jews in that they still today do not accept Jesus. As was said at the Assembly of New Delhi. (\*)

Moreover, might not this non-acceptance of Jesus by the Jews be also an indictment of the quality of our Christian living? St. Paul at least pointed to the possibility that Christians by their faith should make Jews jealous and thus win them for Christ. In shame we have to confess that up till now we certainly did not give the Jews reason to be jealous of our Christian faith. Further, we should be careful that we do not use certain New Testament texts, biblicistically, in such a way as to make them into a condemnation of Jews in general and thus to further anti-semitism. In our interpretation of particular New Testament utterances we should never forget the particular context in which they are situated. Finally, in combatting Christian anti-semitism it is necessary to critically view all church teaching, catechisms and liturgies, and beware that they do not give any occasion to it (which not unfrequently still happens, rather from thoughtlessness than purposeful design).

Whenever we enter into dialogue, we do it with the presupposition that we have something to learn from our partner. That attitude in no way compromises our conviction that Christ is "the way, the truth & the life" and that he has universal meaning for all mankind. But we are never allowed to forget that our apprehension

---

(\*) "In Christian teaching the historic events which led to the Crucifixion should not be so presented as to fasten upon the Jewish people of today responsibilities which belong to our corporate humanity and not to one race or community." (WCC Assembly New Delhi, 1961).

of God is always defective and that He is always greater than we have grasped. Therefore, there is always the hope that we will grow into a deeper understanding by opening us to the insights particularly of those who share with us the belief in Him whom Jesus Christ called his Father.

### 3) Common Study

Above, we have said that the first goal of the encounter of Jews and Christians is that they come to real mutual understanding. This real understanding in a very intimate sense might be furthered by common devotional meetings. By now in many places forms for such meetings are developed which do not compromise the convictions of either of the faith-communities (cf R.C. guidelines).

In addition to the enterprise of dialogue there is room for specialised common study of Jewish and Christian scholars. Much of it is already going on. Jewish and Christian biblical scholars use extensively each others findings. Christian scholars study the sources of the Jewish tradition and in a growing number of Christian theological schools rabbinica is being taught. Jewish scholars publish studies on the background and teaching of Jesus, from which Christian scholars in their turn can greatly profit. Also, there is room for joint study projects, particularly in the field of Old Testament studies, the Jewish background of the New Testament and liturgical studies. Also particular theological themes can be worked at jointly by Jewish and Christian theologians, e.g. the Old Testament concept law (Thora) of covenant, election, eschatology. The more central the themes are to the convictions of both religions, the greater will be the importance of these studies for the more general encounter of Jews and Christians. For though only a very limited number of specialised scholars will be involved in these joint study projects, the results of their studies will gradually through teaching and preaching trickle down to the rank and file of the believers and thus influence the general climate of Jewish-Christian relationship.



Another matter again are theological meetings between Jews and Christians in which the basic convictions and differences of their respective faiths are discussed not merely in the hope of a better understanding of the faith of our partners and an enrichment of our own faith, but also in the hope of reaching a common understanding of divine revelation and thus healing the breach which exists between the synagogue and the church. Many Christians view such a theological and religious discussion on this deeper and more existential level as the most essential aspect of the Jewish Christian encounter. We have however to realise that many Jews refuse to be drawn into a discussion with non-Jews on matters of intimate faith. It is a matter of course that Christians have to respect this refusal, and conduct the dialogue on those levels and about those subject matters which are agreeable to their partners, in the hope that perhaps in the future enough trust might be built up that Jews might be willing to discuss with Christians also those matters of faith which Christians give a very high priority on their agenda for dialogue.

4) Cooperation between Jews and Christians in a pluralistic world

Christians and Jews are united with all mankind by virtue of their humanity. Christians and Jews share with other believers the conviction that all people, regardless of race, religion or nationality are equally God's children and equally precious in His sight. This conviction is based on a concept of God as Creator of the universe, who continues to care for his creation, whose mercies are over all His creatures. Such common concept of God should unite believers in trying to understand each other and in caring for God creation, including nature and all creatures. This task has become most urgent, both through the threat of future wars, including world wars, and through the problems of ecology with all its implications.

Unfortunately, in spite of this common conviction and common task, Christian confessions sometimes have a hard time to cooperate and more so different religions, (including Judaism, Christianity and Islam). The traditions of absolute validity, of triumphalism, of exclusiveness are still strong in different confessions and faiths. We need a new effort to overcome them and to establish a better understanding, as well as cooperation for the common good of mankind between people of different faiths (and also perhaps of different ideologies).

We must learn to cooperate instead of fighting each other. We must learn to be together a factor of reconciliation instead of deepening the tensions. Christians and Jews have a profound common heritage and should therefore be in the front line of this new development. The dialogue with religions and ideologies has just started and therefore we must be careful to define the background of our common task. For the so-called monotheistic religions it is - as above mentioned - God as Creator, while for other religions at might be only some common understanding of men.

5) Questions to be studied among the Churches

- a) There are many differences of opinion among Christians and among the Churches relating to their thinking about the Jewish people. All questions in this realm are in some way related to the basic question whether our thinking and attitude towards the Jewish people are an important tenet of our Christian faith itself, so that they have a necessary place when we make a confession of our faith. Some believe that with the coming of Christ the special role which the Jews had as recipients of revelation and as instrument of God to prepare the coming of Jesus Christ has come to an end. In Old Testament times Israel was the elected covenant people of God but since Christ Judaism has become one of the living world religions to be treated by Christians with the same respect which is due to all people of other religions. In this view the dialogue with the Jews does not pose other questions than those posed by the dialogue in general such as the not yet fully clarified relation between dialogue, Christian witness and mission.



Many others, however, maintain that also after their non-acceptance of Jesus as the Christ, the Jewish people is still in a special way God's people and his instrument for the ultimate salvation of the world. To them there exists an intimate theological relation between the Church and the Jewish people, which makes their dialogue, theologically speaking a matter sui generis. Quite a few of them would be willing to speak of a dialogue as between estranged brothers and think in terms of a schism.

While the first described position is in itself more or less clear cut in the second position many questionmarks arise, e.g. Should we think of a double covenant with God, one with the Jewish people and one with the Church of Jesus Christ? And if so, should Christian theology accept the view brought forward by Jews, that Jews are faithful to God, exactly if they adhere to their own covenant? But, so others ask, was not Jesus sent by God in the very first place to his own Jewish people, so that their non-acceptance of him cannot be considered as faithfulness to God?

Even though at the same time one may maintain with Paul that the rejection of Jesus by the Jews was the way by which in God's design the Gospel of God's love and forgiveness came to the Gentiles.

Further, does not the Christian belief in the universality of Christ and his Lordship over all men make Christian witness to the Jews too imperative, in the hope that at least some of them may turn to him and accept him as their Messiah? Or is rather acceptance of Jesus as the Christ by the Jewish people as an entity an ultimate hope being realised not before the eschatological fulfilment?

- b) If it is maintained that the Jews are still God's people which has still a special place in His design for mankind's salvation, thought has to be given to the question what is meant by this 'special place'. Should it be said that the Jews in their very existence, notwithstanding pressures of assimilation and attempts of annihilation, are a sign of God's faithfulness? Or are they a sign that notwithstanding the coming of Christ we still live in an unredeemed world? Or are they in their existence and faith in some way - which has to be fuller clarified - exemplary for the situation and destiny of all men? Anyway, these and many similar questions are posed to those Christians, who attribute to the Jewish people an ongoing place of their own in God's history of salvation.
- c) Another cluster of questions concerns the relation of the 'old' and the 'new' covenant. Is the new covenant the continuation of the old, or should rather the discontinuity between them be stressed? Should one speak in terms of fulfilment, and if so what content should be given to this notion of fulfilment? Does it imply that the old has become obsolete and is done away with by the new, or has the old rather be validated and affirmed by the new? It will be clear that all these questions come equally to the fore in thinking about the books of the old and the new covenant, i.e. the Old and New Testament. In particular, the value which we attach to the Old Testament in relation to the New, and the exegetical rules we use in our reading of the Old Testament have an immediate repercussion on the place we attach to the Jewish people in our faith and theological thinking.
- d) Great difference of opinion among individual Christians and churches exists too about the return of many Jews to the land of Palestine and about the Jewish state of Israel. The right of the very existence of this state can no longer be a point of dissension among us. Time and again the WCC has explicitly affirmed this right. Certainly, there are still many unsolved questions about how a just and durable peace is to be reached in the Middle East and in what respect Christians and the



WCC can play a role of reconciliation, but it is not these problems which concern us in the context in which we are speaking here. Nor is in this context the Jewish selfunderstanding of their relatedness to the land and the value they attach to their state at stake; it is a matter of course that Christians in their dialogue with Jews have to take this selfunderstanding into account and that they have to realize that Jews will be no partner in any dialogue with those who question the right of existence of their state. But all pragmatic, political and human rights considerations aside, the question which Christians have to study and to clarify among themselves is whether the right to return and the right of existence of the state of Israel are to be based on theological considerations. There are Christians who believe that the relation between the Jews and the land is given by God. Some even speak of this relatedness as a sacramental sign of God's faithfulness to the Jewish people. Other Christians see in the return an eschatological sign of the nearness of the end of time. Others again reject categorically any theological significance of the land and the return. It should be noted that this last position is not only held by those Christians who after Christ do no longer consider the Jews as God's covenant-people, but also by many of those who believe that they still have a special place in God's design.

So, it is clear that in our thinking about Israel and the Jews very important tenets of our common Christian faith come in. Therefore, it is a matter which should be of concern to all churches of the WCC.

-----

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

DIALOGUE WITH PEOPLE OF LIVING FAITHS AND IDEOLOGIES  
CONSULTATION ON THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

CCJP Contribution to DFI Guidelines

(adopted by the Jerusalem Conference of CCJP, June 1977)

1. PREFACE

- 1.1 From June 20-23, 1977, the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People came together in Jerusalem. The fact of gathering in this city, especially associated with Jews, Christians and Muslims, and meeting-place of several religious and cultural identities, deeply influenced our deliberations. There were present CCJP members as well as guests from Africa and elsewhere who added new dimensions to the work and discussions of the CCJP. The papers given by and received from the African guests will form part of the record and will be used in the work on future guidelines. At the present stage of discussion, however, the contribution of the African group could not yet be integrated in this report. It is prepared and received by the members of the CCJP and can, therefore, only reflect the concerns of the present membership of the Consultation.
- 1.2 Within the present framework of the WCC, the CCJP, as a sub-unit of the DFI, took into consideration the official statement on "Dialogue in Community" adopted by the Theological Consultation held at Chiang Mai, Thailand, April 18-27, 1977. Of the several reports received by that Consultation one deals with Jewish-Christian relations. Paragraph A.2 of Group Report A raises a number of questions and issues to which we address ourselves.
- 1.3 Among the various dialogues between Christians and People of Other Faiths and Ideologies the dialogue with the Jews is of a special character because of the unique relationship which exists between the Church and the Jewish People (Faith & Order document, Bristol, 1967; Nairobi 1975; Chiang Mai, Group report A, 1977). To no other people is the Church historically and theologically so intimately bound. It is a fact of history that Christianity has its roots in the Jewish Community of the first century. Jesus was a Jew; he and his message cannot be properly understood apart from the early history of the Jewish People. Also the apostles and first disciples were all Jews. The scriptures of the Early Church were the scriptures of the Jewish People. Many of the most important concepts we as Christians use are received from the Hebrew Scriptures and Early Judaism - even though they may have received partially new connotations - as, for instance, sin, redemption, creation and covenant, grace and peace, righteousness and love,



repentance and atonement. In addition Christian liturgy owes much to Jewish liturgy.

- 1.4 Because of their common roots Jews and Christians share some very fundamental convictions. Both worship God, as the One, who is Creator of all that is, who makes his will known to human beings and relates to them as Father, Teacher and Redeemer. Both believe that God created men and women in his image; that they are called to be holy, are given stewardship under God over his creation and are accountable to God for the way they exercise this stewardship. Both share to a large extent a common ethic, holding themselves responsible for their fellows, especially for those who are weak, poor or persecuted. Both have a common hope, looking forward to a renewed creation, where all suffering will be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and in every respect; inspired by this ultimate hope they are called to work for greater righteousness.

- 1.5 It is, however, precisely in the divergent interpretations of that which is held in common that the differences between Christians and Jews often find their sharpest focus. In the course of history, these divergent interpretations have led to tension between the communities and hostile attitudes on the part of Christians, especially in the West.

## 2. ANTISEMITISM

- 2.1 The WCC, in the assembly at which it was constituted (Amsterdam 1948) condemned antisemitism: "We call upon all the churches we represent to denounce antisemitism, no matter what its origin, as absolutely irreconcilable with the profession and practice of the Christian faith. Antisemitism is sin against God and man." This appeal has been reiterated many times. The Chiang Mai Consultation, most recently, asked the churches to indicate what steps they were taking towards the eradication of antisemitism. In order to achieve this it is necessary that Christians face honestly their tragic history with regard to the Jews - a history which includes events like the Crusades, the Inquisition and the Holocaust. It is only by facing this history that Christians will come to understand the deep-rooted suspicion that many Jews up to today hold against Christians and Christianity. It is a lamentable fact that Christians in Europe and the Western World have been most guilty of antisemitic attitudes. We believe that Christians from other parts of the world, however, would do well to acquaint themselves with the history of antisemitism, in order that they be forewarned and do not fall into the same sin. Apart from its theological basis, antisemitism has also sociological and other roots. Christians are called upon to fight, with all the resources at their disposal, these prejudices especially in the light of increasing antisemitism in many countries, even under the guise of anti-zionism.

- 2.2 We should be especially attentive to those traditional convictions which have furthered antisemitic stances and attitudes on the part of Christians. Attention should therefore be given to the following points: Judaism should not be presented as a kind of anachronism after the coming of Christ; the Jews are a living people, very much alive in our present time as, for instance, the establishment of the State of Israel shows. Neither should the impression be given that the Church has superseded the Israel of old. The Jewish people continues to be the People of God, as regards divine election beloved by him, for God is not unfaithful to those whom he has chosen.

"In Christian teaching, the historic events which led to the Crucifixion should not be so presented as to impose upon the Jewish People of today responsibilities which must fall on all humanity, not on one race or community. Jews were the first to accept Jesus and Jews are not the only ones who do not yet recognise him." (WCC, New Delhi, 1961).

In our interpretation of New Testament passages, which reflect internal controversies within the Jewish community of the first century, have often been misused by Christians as weapons in later anti-Jewish polemics. Traditional stereotypes should be avoided, e.g., Judaism as a religion of law over against Christianity as a religion of love. Generalisations of this kind in no way do justice to what Judaism really is.

- 2.3 It will be clear that if the above misrepresentations and misunderstandings are to be counteracted, a constant critical review of all church teaching, preaching and liturgy is necessary. Efforts should also be made to present Judaism in a positive way in accordance with its self-understanding.
- 2.4 The correcting of dangerous trends in theology and biblical interpretation, important as this is for combating 'Christian' antisemitism, is no substitute for Christians meeting Jews and understanding them in their distinctiveness as Jews. Such knowledge and real understanding might well be the best safeguard that such terrible things as pogroms and holocaust never happen again.

### 3. AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN WITNESS

- 3.1 Proselytism, as distinct from Mission or Witness, is rejected in the strongest terms by the WCC: "Proselytism embraces whatever violates the right of the human person, Christian or non-Christian, to be free from external coercion in religious matters, or whatever, in the proclamation of the Gospel, does not conform to the ways God draws free men to himself in response to his calls to serve in spirit and in truth." (Ecumenical Review 1/1971, p. 11).



We now realise more than ever before that the world in which we live is a world of religious pluralism. This demands from us that we treat those who differ from us with respect and that we strongly support the religious liberty of all.

3.2 This rejection of proselytism and our advocacy of respect for the integrity and the identity of all peoples and faith-communities is the more urgent where Jews are concerned. For, as stated above, our relationship to the Jews is of a unique and very close character. Moreover, the history of 'Christian' antisemitism and forced baptisms of Jews in the past makes it understandable that Jews are rightly sensitive towards all religious pressures from outside and all attempts at proselytising.

3.3 We reject proselytism both in its gross and more refined forms. This implies that all triumphalism and every kind of manipulation are to be abrogated. We are called upon to minimise the power dimension in our encounter with the Jews and to speak at every level from equal to equal. We have to be conscious of the pain and the perception of the others and have to respect their right to define themselves.

3.4 We are called upon to witness to God's love for and claim upon the whole of humankind. Our witness to Christ as Lord and Saviour, however, is challenged in a special way where Jews are concerned. It has become discredited as a result of past behaviour on the part of Christians. We therefore are seeking authentic and proper forms of Christian witness in our relations with the Jews. Some of us believe that we have to bear witness also to the Jews; some among us are convinced, however, that Jews are faithful and obedient to God even though they do not accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Many maintain that as a separate and specific people the Jews are an instrument of God with a specific God-given task and, as such, a sign of God's faithfulness to all humankind on the way towards ultimate redemption.

#### 4. THE STATE OF ISRAEL

4.1 Repeatedly and on several occasions the WCC has explicitly affirmed the right to existence of the State of Israel. In particular, we recall the Canterbury statement of 1969, which says: "No lasting peace is possible.... without effective international guarantee for the political independence and territorial integrity of all nations in the area, including Israel." We affirm also the strong concern expressed by the General Secretary of the WCC when, in 1975, Zionism was equated with Racism. Our recognition of the State of Israel can be based on several considerations but for us it is especially motivated by our respect for the Jews in their identity and self-understanding: in the self-definition of the great majority of Jews there is an indissoluble bond between the people and the land. Jews look upon the establishment of the State of Israel as the realisation of a centuries-old longing for a return to the land.

4.2 Our acceptance of the State of Israel should not be misinterpreted as unqualified approval of all which this State does. We recognise that through the ages the Jews shared this land with others. Just as we respect the identity and the right of self-determination of the Jews, we respect also the identity and the right of the Palestinian Arabs to self-determination. There are still many questions about the ways and means by which a just and durable peace in the Middle East should be achieved and how Christians could possibly play a role of reconciliation.

4.3 We believe that under present conditions the State of Israel is the form in which the indissoluble bond between people and land can be realised. Some of us, however, want to be more explicit. On the basis of their understanding of the Bible they look upon the special relation of the Jewish People to this Land as a God-given relationship and see the State of Israel in this perspective. But in this respect much study and mutual clarification of views will be needed before a consensus on these issues may emerge.

## 5. FUTURE WORK

5.1 We are aware that the questions dealt with in this statement do not cover the whole area of Jewish-Christian encounter. We therefore recommend that attention be given to such issues as were suggested, for example, in the Chiang Mai papers. We express our hope that contributions to work in the future will also come from Christians in Africa and Asia. We are very much aware that the differences of opinion among us demand further study.

5.2 Our dealing with these issues will show that in our thinking about Israel and the Jews very important and vital tenets of our Christian faith are at stake. Is it too much to hope that Christians and Jews may live in creative tension, enriching and encouraging each other, despite the appalling record of the relationship between the two communities over the centuries?



A CCJP CONTRIBUTION TO DFI GUIDELINES

(drafted by the Rev.P.Jennings on  
the request of the CCJP Conference)

Preface: This document has to be seen against the background of the joint study of Faith and Order and the World Council of Churches Committee on the Church and the Jewish People (Bristol 1967), Nostra Aetate and the Roman Catholic Guidelines of 1965 and 1975 and most recently the statement on "Dialogue in Community" adopted by the Theological Consultation held at Chiang Mai, Thailand, 1977.

Some of the fruits of the patient growth in dialogue between Christians and Jews were to be seen in their appearance at Chiang Mai in the setting of models for dialogue between Christians and members of faith-communities other than Jews.

A Semantic Note: It is particularly difficult to come to an agreed terminology. Current conversations use words like Jews, Judaism, Jewry, Israel, Israelite, Hebrew, People of God, Covenant, Gentiles and many other terms with more than one meaning depending on the context and without adequate definition in most contexts. Even the New Testament is not wholly consistent. We cannot define in precise terms what it is that makes a Jew a Jew, though we recognise that both ethnic elements and religious traditions play a role.

The relationship: Among the various dialogues between Christians and People of Other Faiths and Ideologies the Dialogue with the Jews is of a special character because of the unique relationship which exists between the Church and the Jewish People (Faith and Order document, Bristol 1967; Nairobi, 1975, Chiang Mai, Group Report A, 1977.). To no other people is the Church historically and theologically so intimately bound. It is a fact of history that Christianity has its roots in the Jewish community of the first century. Jesus was a Jew; he and his message cannot be properly understood apart from the early history of the Jewish People. Many of the most important concepts we as Christians use are received from the Hebrew Scriptures and early Judaism - even though they have received partially new connotations - as, for instance, sin, redemption, creation and covenant, grace and peace, righteousness and love, repentance and atonement. In addition, Christian liturgy owes much to Jewish liturgy.

Shared Convictions: Because of their common roots Jews and Christians share some very fundamental convictions. Both worship God, as the One, who is Creator of all that is, who makes his will known to human beings and relates to them as Father, Teacher and Redeemer. Both believe that God created men and women in his image; that they are called

to be holy, are given stewardship under God over his creation and are accountable to God for the way they exercise this stewardship. Both share to a large extent a common ethic, holding themselves responsible for their fellows, especially for those who are weak, poor or persecuted. Both have a common hope, looking forward to a renewed creation, where all suffering will be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and in every respect; inspired by this ultimate hope they are called to work for greater righteousness.

Since the Church stands in this unique relationship to the Jews, every Christian shares in this special relationship. It is not a relationship which affects only the western Churches which have lived for centuries in close proximity to the Jewish people of Europe. It concerns every Christian of whatever race, cultural or religious background he may be. The majority of Christians in the world do not know Jews or Judaism by direct experience. For many, the Jews are the people of the Old Testament, the victims of antisemitism under the Nazis and the citizens of the modern State of Israel. Some African Christians, however, see close similarities between their own indigenous cultures and features of the various cultural patterns of the Old Testament. The importance of the dialogue between Jews and Christians is spreading wider than the traditional neogeographical area of influence and concern.

Divergences: In the divergent interpretations of those things which are held in common, the differences between Jews and Christians often find their sharpest focus. In the course of history these divergent interpretations have led to tensions between the communities and hostile attitudes on the part of Christians, especially in the west.

Antisemitism: Certainly not all Christians are equally guilty.

Antisemitism has played no particular role in the oriental and in the so-called younger churches. Christians from those parts of the world, nevertheless, would do well to acquaint themselves with the history of antisemitism, in order that they be forewarned and do not fall into the same sin. The persistence of theological traditions which are supersessionist and triumphalist, the persistence, despite a wealth of modern biblical scholarship, of New Testament interpretations inimical to Jews and the rise of hostility towards Jewish people and the State of Israel prompt concern for the future. Apart from its theological basis, antisemitism like other forms of discrimination has sociological, psychological and economic causes. Some of these are:

- a) the struggle for economic, social and political status by all



culture groups which encourages conflict and leads the dominant group to invent reasons for keeping the smaller groups 'in their place'.

- b) propagandists who spread prejudice to attain political and personal power and profit;
- c) insecurity and uncertainty which lead people to compensate by biased acts and attitudes towards those of other groups;
- d) the climate of prejudice into which we are born and which we absorb.

Christians are called upon to fight, with all the resources at their disposal, these prejudices especially in the light of spreading antisemitism, sometimes under the guise of anti-Zionism.

The WCC in the assembly in which it was constituted (Amsterdam 1948) condemned antisemitism: "We call upon all the churches we represent to denounce antisemitism, no matter what its origin, as absolutely irreconcilable with the profession and practice of the Christian faith. Antisemitism is sin against God and man." This appeal has been reiterated many times. The Chiang Mai consultation, most recently, asked the churches to indicate what steps they were taking towards the eradication of antisemitism. In order to achieve this it is necessary that Christians face honestly the tragic history with regard to the Jews - a history which includes events like the Crusades, the Inquisition and the Holocaust. It is only by facing this history that Christians will come to understand the deep-rooted suspicion that many Jews up to today hold against Christians and Christianity.

We should be especially attentive to those traditional convictions which have furthered antisemitic stances and attitudes on the part of Christians. Attention should therefore be given to the following points : Judaism should not be presented as a kind of anachronism after the coming of Christ; the Jews are a living people, very much alive in our present time as, for instance, the establishment of the State of Israel shows. Neither should the impression be given that the Church has superseded the Israel of old. The Jewish People continues to be the People of God, as regards divine election beloved by him, for God is not unfaithful to those whom he has chosen.

"In Christian teaching, the historic events which led to the crucifixion should not be so presented as to impose upon the Jewish People of today responsibilities which must fall on all humanity, not on one race or community. Jews were the first to accept Jesus and Jews are not the only ones who do not yet recognise him"(WCC, New Delhi, 1961).

New Testament passages, which reflect internal controversies within the Jewish community of the first century, have often been misused by Christians as weapons in later anti-Jewish polemics. Traditional stereotypes should be avoided, e.g., Judaism presented as a religion of law over against Christianity as a religion of love. Generalisations of this kind do justice to neither community.

As long as Christians regard Judaism as a mere preparation for Christianity, as long as Christians can only affirm the validity of God's revelation to them by negating the validity of God's revelation to the Jewish People, then respect for Judaism as a revelation in its own right, acknowledgment of the continued election of the Jewish People, even stress upon the common hope and common ground of Jews and Christians are impossible because Judaism is denied any theological validity.

It will be clear that if misrepresentations and misunderstandings are to be counteracted, a constant critical review of all church teaching, preaching and liturgy is necessary. Christians should be aware that the Holy Week liturgy has in time past been regarded by Jews as the stimulus for pogroms.

Understanding and Positive Presentation of Judaism: Efforts should be made to present Judaism in a positive way in accordance with its own self understanding. Distinctive Jewish life and tradition should be communicated to give a positive picture of Jewish history.

The correcting of dangerous trends in theology and biblical interpretation, important as this is for combating "Christian" antisemitism, is no substitute for Christians meeting Jews and understanding them in their distinctiveness as Jews. Such knowledge and understanding is the best safeguard that such terrible things as pogroms and holocaust never happen again. Dialogue is a programme for relationships. Christians have to listen to Jews defining themselves - listening as equal partners in a conversation from which the power dimension has been removed. The so-called dialogues of mediaeval times between Christian and Jewish theologians, which were organised from time to time, were never held on a footing of equality; the Jewish partners were not taken seriously.

The Continuity of the Jewish People: Christians should be aware of the vibrant and continuing development of Judaism in post-biblical times. Between the first century and today there has been



an enormous output of Jewish religious and philosophical literature and commentary. European Jewry was virtually destroyed by the Nazis; it is little short of miraculous that the destruction of six million Jews should have been followed by the reconstruction of Jewish life with its special points of focus in Israel, America and, to a certain extent, Britain. The most remarkable resurgence is in the emergence of the State of Israel which by restoring the "Land" to its relationship with "People" and "Religion" has made it possible for Judaism to regain its wholeness.

Many Jews believe that there is a positive spiritual purpose in fulfilling as many of God's commandments as possible; the opportunity for this is at its highest in the Holy Land, where the commandments concerning the Holy Land and its produce may be observed and where the sanctity to Jews of a continuity of worship through the centuries is keenly felt. Thus the yearning of the Jewish People to be able to practise their religion in their land is, for them, a yearning of the highest degree of holiness and spirituality. In modern times, many Jews have therefore seen a strong religious purpose in the strengthening of Jewish settlement in Israel.

Understandably this is a point difficult for Christians to take. Christians do not necessarily have to accept Zionism, but they do have to accept that Zionism is an integral part of Jewish self-understanding. This situation is another firm argument for the presence of Jews in the dialogue - otherwise the Christian Arab case may be the only one to be heard in the counsels of the churches.

The State of Israel: Repeatedly and on several occasions the WCC has explicitly affirmed the right to existence of the State of Israel. In particular, we recall the Canterbury statement of 1969, which says, "No lasting peace is possible.....without effective international guarantee for the political independence and territorial integrity of all nations in the area, including Israel." We affirm also the strong concern expressed by the General Secretary of the WCC when, in 1975, Zionism was equated with racism. Our recognition of the State of Israel can be based on several considerations but for us it is especially motivated by our respect for the Jews in their identity and self-understanding, in that indissoluble bond which is felt between the people and the land. Jews look upon the establishment of the State of Israel as the realisation of a centuries old longing for a return to and heightened establishment in that land which, since there have been Jews, has never lacked a Jewish presence.

Our acceptance of the State of Israel should not be misinterpreted as unqualified approval of all which this state does. We recognise that through the ages Jews shared this land with others. Just as we respect the right of self-determination and the identity of the Jews, we respect also the identity and right of self-determination of the Palestinian Arabs. There are still many questions about the ways and means by which a just and durable peace in the Middle East should be achieved and how - and whether - Christians could possibly play a role of reconciliation.

We believe that under present conditions the State of Israel is the form in which the indissoluble bond between the Jewish People and the Land can be realised. Some Christians, however, want to be more explicit. On the basis of their understanding of the Bible, they look upon the special relationship of the Jewish People to this Land as a God-given relationship and see the State of Israel in this perspective. But in this respect much study and mutual clarification will be needed before a consensus can emerge.

Authentic Christian Witness: Proselytism, as distinct from Mission or Witness, is rejected in the strongest terms by the WCC: "Proselytism embraces whatever violates the right of the human person, Christian or non-Christian, to be free from external coercion in religious matters, or whatever, in the proclamation of the Gospel, does not conform to the ways God draws free men to himself in response to his calls to serve in spirit and in truth." (Ecumenical Review, I/1971, p.11) We now realise more than ever before that the world in which we live is a world of religious pluralism. This demands from us that we treat those who differ from us with respect and that we strongly support the religious liberty of all.

Whenever two faith communities live in close proximity, there will be those who cross the faith boundaries. In each generation there have been those Jews, who for a variety of reasons have become Christians. Christians similarly have become Jews. Those who cross the line need skilful and tactful pastoral care but we should be wrong to read in too much theological significance into the change of allegiance.

This rejection of proselytism, our acceptance that in the nature of things there will be those who change faith allegiance and our advocacy of respect for the integrity and the identity of all peoples and faith-communities is the more urgent where Jews are concerned. For, as stated above, our relationship to the Jews is of a unique and very close character. Moreover, the



history of Christian antisemitism and forced baptisms of Jews in the past makes it understandable that Jews are rightly sensitive towards all religious pressures from outside and all attempts at proselytising.

We reject proselytism both in its gross and more refined forms. This implies that all triumphalism, religious imperialism and every kind of manipulation are to be abrogated. We are called upon to minimise the power dimension in our encounter with the Jews and to speak at every level from equal to equal. We have to be conscious of the pain and perception of the others and have to respect their right of self-definition.

We are called upon as Christians to witness to God's love for and claim upon the whole of humankind revealed to us in Jesus Christ. Our witness to Jesus as Lord and Saviour, however, is challenged in a special way where Jews are concerned. Its credibility suffers as a result of past behaviour on the part of Christians toward them. We therefore seek authentic and proper forms of Christian witness in our relations with Jews. We are convinced that Jews are faithful and obedient to God within the terms and conditions of their own covenant. We maintain that as a separate and specific people the Jews are an instrument of God with a particular divinely appointed task, and as such a sign of God's faithfulness to all people on the way toward ultimate redemption.

Future Work and Practical Programmes: We are aware that the agenda to which this paper is written does not exhaust the area of Jewish-Christian encounter. The experience gained from the years of dialogue has revealed the need for a place within the Church, specially charged with listening and providing good and accurate information so that we do not bear false witness against our neighbour. There is need of a "Court of Appeal" or of an "Ombudsman" for the checking of text-books and for the questioning of the inadvertent anti-Judaism which is still reflected in the liturgy and teaching of the churches.

There are proven alternatives. In many countries the bi-faith approach of working through organisations for Jewish/Christian Encounter has borne remarkable fruit. At the same time, many churches have adopted a "speciality desk" approach in which a specialist listener/spokesman is charged with the task of advising the church to which he belongs.

Our dealing with these specific issues from the Jewish-Christian encounter reveals that there are wider general implications for the future of the churches in their relationships with other faith-communities.

The relationship which has developed between Christians and Jews over recent years has raised searching questions about long held tenets of both traditions.

Is it too much to hope that Christians and Jews may continue to grow in creative tension, enriching and encouraging each other, despite the appalling record of the relationship between the two communities over the centuries ?





WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

DIALOGUE WITH PEOPLE OF LIVING FAITHS AND IDEOLOGIES

CONSULTATION ON THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

CCJP Contribution to DFI Guidelines

(Proposal by F. v. Hammerstein for meeting in Holland, February 1978)

1. PREFACE

1.1 From June 20-23, 1977, the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People came together in Jerusalem. The fact of gathering in this city, especially associated with Jews, Christians and Muslims, and meeting-place of several religious and cultural identities, deeply influenced our deliberations. There were present CCJP members as well as guests from Africa and elsewhere who added new dimensions to the work and discussions of the CCJP. The papers given by and received from the African guests will form part of the record and will be used in the work on future guidelines. At the present stage of discussion, however, the contribution of the African group could not yet be fully integrated in this report.

1.2 Within the present framework of the WCC, the CCJP, as a sub-unit of the DFI, took into consideration the official statement on "Dialogue in Community" adopted by the Theological Consultation held at Chiang Mai, Thailand, April 18-27, 1977. Of the several reports received by that Consultation one deals with Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations. Paragraph A.2 of Group Report A raises a number of questions and issues to which we address ourselves.

A Semantic Note: It is particularly difficult to come to an agreed terminology. Current conversations use words like Jew, Judaism, Jewry, Israel, Israelite, Hebrew, People of God, Covenant, Gentile and many other terms with more than one meaning depending on the context and without adequate definition in most contexts. Even the New Testament is not wholly consistent. We cannot define in precise terms what it is that makes a Jew a Jew, though we recognise that both ethnic elements and religious traditions play a role.

1.3 Among the various dialogues between Christians and People of Other Faiths and Ideologies the dialogue with the Jews is of a special character because of the unique relationship which exists between the Church and the Jewish People (Faith & Order document, Bristol, 1967; Nairobi 1975; Chiang Mai, Group Report A, 1977). To no other people is the Church historically and theologically so intimately bound. It is a fact of history that Christianity has its roots in the Jewish Community of the first century. Jesus was a Jew; he and his message cannot be properly understood apart from the early history of the Jewish People. Also the apostles and first disciples were all Jews. The scriptures of the Early Church were the scriptures of the Jewish People. Many of the most important concepts we as Christians use are received from the Hebrew Scriptures and Early Judaism - even though they

may have received partially new connotations - as, for instance, sin, redemption, creation and covenant, grace and peace, righteousness and love, repentance and atonement. In addition, Christian liturgy owes much to Jewish liturgy.

- 1.4 Because of their common roots Jews and Christians share some very fundamental convictions. Both worship God, as the One, who is Creator of all that is, who makes his will known to human beings and relates to them as Father, Teacher and Redeemer. Both believe that God created man and women in his image; that they are called to be holy, are given stewardship under God over his creation and are accountable to God for the way they exercise this stewardship. Both share to a large extent a common ethic, holding themselves responsible for their fellows, especially for those who are weak, poor or persecuted. Both have a common hope, looking forward to a renewed creation, where all suffering will be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and in every respect; inspired by this ultimate hope they are called to work for greater righteousness.
- 1.5 It is, however, precisely in the divergent interpretations of that which is held in common that the differences between Christians and Jews often find their sharpest focus. In the course of history, these divergent interpretations have led to tension between the communities and hostile attitudes on the part of Christians, especially in the West.
- 1.6 In the past when Christians have related to persons of Other Faiths and Ideologies, their tendency has been to emphasize their Christian stance from which they approach Other Faiths. This has changed, for in a shrunken world the very nearness and accessibility of one to the other has thrown into relief our common humanity. This situation should make us feel concerned about and involved with each other. Further, this makes us aware of primary human concerns such as Knowledge of God, Way of Salvation or the Problem of Good and Evil, all of them approached in varied ways by world religions.
- 1.7 Christians in Africa and Asia often realize how important the Old Testament, ancient and perhaps also modern Judaism, is for Christian faith and life. Often they do not make our Western historical and theological distinctions between ancient and modern Judaism, ancient and modern Israel. They reject to be burdened with all the weight of Western theology and history on this subject, but rather want to explore their own direct encounter and dialogue with Judaism especially in the Holy Land of ancient and modern Israel, the land of Jesus, of the early Christian church and of manifold present ecumenical relations. Their attitude towards the State of Israel is diverse according to a variety of political convictions.



## 2. ANTISEMITISM

- 2.1 The WCC, in the Assembly at which it was constituted (Amsterdam 1948) condemned antisemitism: "We call upon all the churches we represent to denounce antisemitism, no matter what its origin, as absolutely irreconcilable with the profession and practice of the Christian faith. Antisemitism is sin against God and man." This appeal has been reiterated many times. The Chiang Mai Consultation, most recently, asked the churches to indicate what steps they were taking towards the eradication of antisemitism. In order to achieve this it is necessary that Christians face honestly their tragic history with regard to the Jews - a history which includes events like the Crusades, the Inquisition and the Holocaust. It is only by facing this history that Christians will come to understand the deep-rooted suspicion that many Jews up to today hold against Christians and Christianity.

Eastern

It is a lamentable fact that the Western world including/ Europe has been most guilty of antisemitic attitudes. We believe that Christians from other parts of the world, however, would do well to acquaint themselves with the history of antisemitism and antijudaism, in order that they be forewarned and do not fall into the same sin. Apart from its theological basis, antisemitism has also sociological and other roots. Christians are called upon to fight, with all the resources at their disposal, these prejudices especially in the light of increasing antisemitism in many countries, even under the guise of antizionism.

- 2.2 We should be especially attentive to those traditional convictions which have furthered antisemitic stances and attitudes on the part of Christians. Attention should therefore be given to the following points: Judaism should not be presented as a kind of anachronism after the coming of Christ; the Jews are a living people, very much alive in our present time as, for instance, the establishment of the State of Israel shows. Neither should the impression be given that the Church has just superseded the Israel of old. The Jewish people continue to be a People of God, as regards divine election beloved by him, for God is not unfaithful to those whom he has chosen.

"In Christian teaching, the historic events which led to the Crucifixion should not be so presented as to impose upon the Jewish People of today responsibilities which must fall on all humanity, not on one race or community. Jews were the first to accept Jesus and Jews are not the only ones who do not yet recognise him." (WCC, New Delhi, 1961).

New Testament passages, which reflect internal controversies within the Jewish community of the first century, have often been misused by Christians as weapons in later anti-Jewish polemics. Traditional stereotypes should be avoided, e.g., Judaism as a religion of law over against Christianity as a religion of love. Generalisations of this kind in no way do justice to what Judaism really is.

As long as Christians regard Judaism as a mere preparation

for Christianity, as long as Christians affirm the validity of God's revelation to them by negating the validity of God's revelation to the Jewish People, acknowledgment of the continued election of the Jewish People, even stress upon the common hope and common ground of Jews and Christians are impossible because Judaism is denied any theological validity.

2.3 The Christian response to the Holocaust should be a resolve that it will never happen again. Christian teaching of contempt for the Jews and Jewish theology was the spawning-ground for the evils of the Nazi Holocaust. We must ask ourselves: In what specific ways can the lessons of the Holocaust be taken seriously by Christian churches and theologians? We must learn so to preach and teach the Gospel as to make sure that it will never again be used by the enemies of the Jewish people? The Christian response to the Holocaust should be a firm resolve that it must never happen again, and that the Christian churches should be in the forefront of any efforts to prevent the conditions which might lead to another slaughter of the people with whom God formed the covenant.

The Holocaust must lay to rest forever the Christian fable that the sufferings of the Jewish people are a judgment of God. The time has long since come for the Church to cease passing judgments on other faiths and people by holding an absolutist tradition or theology that in any way appears to sanction persecution of others. God's love and compassion do not permit us to attribute to him the wounds of body and mind that have been inflicted on the Jews.

The Holocaust is also a challenge to our traditional Christology, especially to our Christology of suffering. This is an issue which requires prayerful rethinking.

2.4 If the above misrepresentations and misunderstandings are to be counteracted, a constant critical review of all church teaching, preaching and liturgy is necessary. Some churches have done such reviewing, other not yet. They should in close contact with the World Council of Churches as soon as possible do so.



### 3. UNDERSTANDING AND POSITIVE PRESENTATION OF JUDAISM

- 3.1 Efforts should also be made to present Judaism in a positive way in accordance with its self-understanding.

The correcting of dangerous trends in theology and biblical interpretation, important as this is for combating "Christian" antisemitism, is no substitute for Christians meeting Jews and understanding them in their distinctiveness as Jews. Such knowledge and real understanding might well be the best safeguard that such terrible things as pogroms and holocaust never happen again.

- 3.2 Dialogue is a programme for relationships. Christians have to listen to Jews defining themselves - listening as equal partners in a conversation from which the power dimension has been removed. The disputations of mediaeval times between Christian and Jewish theologians, which were organised from time to time, were never held on a footing of equality; the Jewish partners were not taken seriously.

- 3.3 Christians should be aware of the vibrant and continuing development of Judaism in post-biblical times. Between the first century and today there has been an enormous output of Jewish religious and philosophical literature and commentary. European Jewry was virtually destroyed by the Nazis; it is little short of miraculous that the destruction of six million Jews should have been followed by the reconstruction of Jewish life with its special points of focus in Israel, America and, to a certain extent in Western Europe, not least in France that has now a population of more than 500.000 Jews.

- 3.4 The negative image of the Pharisees found in Christian preaching and writing is one of the gravest distortions of Judaism prevalent in Christianity. The correction of this injustice is absolutely necessary for honest dialogue with the Jews as well as for Christian self-renewal in itself. To disparage Pharisaism is in a real sense to disparage modern Judaism, for all modern forms of Judaism basically owe their existence to the Pharisaic-Rabbinic movement which produced such a far-reaching revolution in Second Temple Judaism.

Pharisaism was not the empty, legalistic system it is made out to be but rather a dynamic, creative religious movement that formed the context of the teachings of Jesus and the early Church in such areas as ethics, the concept of God, liturgy, ministry and church structure. Jesus basically followed rabbinic patterns in his own ministry, and affirmed the Pharisaic conceptions of the resurrection of the human person after death.

The rich body of worship, prayer and teaching that developed after the rise of Christianity in Judaism found its source and inspiration in the Pharisaic tradition. Christians have tragically ignored or rejected this rich development which is part of the continuing fulfillment of Jewish life to the present day. One can see the hand of God continuing to bless those chosen as bearers of revelation in the work of Universal Salvation.



- 3.5      Sensitivity and balance in use of New Testament texts.  
There are numerous NT texts which might be interpreted as reflecting negatively on Jews and Judaism. In reading and interpreting such texts we must constantly remember that Jesus was a Jew. His forebears were Jews. He lived and taught among the Jews. His dress, his manner of speaking, his mode of life, his teaching reflected the Judaism of the time. Therefore, conflict and controversies must be seen as taking place within a framework which he not only shared with fellow-Jews, but which he and God affirmed.
- 3.6      Preaching which portrays or refers to Jews, Judaism, and the OT in a positive light. Christian preaching employs negative as well as positive examples, images and experimental analogies. Preachers must guard against any tendency to portray Jews or Jewish groups as negative models. The truth and beauty of Christianity should not be enhanced by setting up Jews or Judaism as false and ugly. Likewise the OT witness should not be portrayed as less authoritative, less normative, or superseded. It is central to the tradition which our Lord accepted as his own and which he reaffirmed as He interpreted it in his life, work and thought. The Judgment and the redeeming love of God should be presented as existing from the beginning to the end of both Testaments. (cf. the new study paper of Faith and Order, The Significance of the Old Testament in its Relation to the New, 1978).
- 3.7      We both believe in the one God. Creator of all what is, who in his free grace has bound Himself to man, who loves man, has made his will for man known to him and who wants that all men should turn to Him, know Him and worship Him.  
and women  
We both believe that He has created men/in his image, as crown of creation, that as such man, called to be holy, is given stewardship in God's name over the creation and that he is accountable to God for the way he exercises this stewardship.  
Christians and Jews share for a great part a common ethics. Taught by their scriptures they know themselves responsible for their fellowmen, especially for those who are weak, poor, persecuted.  
Christians and Jews have a common hope, looking forward to the fulfilment when this earth will be renewed, all suffering be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and respects. In this ultimate hope they work here for greater righteousness, trusting that all human work will in some way be a factor in the world to come.
- 3.8      However, we are separated through a different interpretation of Jesus Christ. A growing number of Jews look at him as a member of their people, perhaps as a prophet, but not as their Messiah, while Christians look at him as their saviour and redeemer. The dialogue between Christians and Jews about this basic difference has scarcely began, but will be of increasing importance.  
As Christians we witness to God the creator, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel, who in and through Jesus Christ has called us to be a fellowship in the name of Jesus and in the Holy Spirit, to live in faith, hope and love. This messianic fellowship, the Church, is for the coming of God's Kingdom, for the redemption of the whole creation. Thus, as Christians, we glory in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.



#### 4. AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN WITNESS

- 4.1 Proselytism, as distinct from Mission or Witness, is rejected in the strongest terms by the WCC: "Proselytism embraces whatever violates the right of the human person, Christian or non-Christian, to be free from external coercion in religious matters, or whatever, in the proclamation of the Gospel, does not conform to the ways God draws free men to himself in response to his calls to serve in spirit and in truth." (Ecumenical Review 1/1971, a study document of the Joint Working Group between the R.C. Church and the WCC, p.11).

---

We now realise more than ever before that the world in which we live is a world of religious pluralism. This demands from us that we treat those who differ from us with respect and that we strongly support the religious liberty of all.

- 4.2 This rejection of proselytism and our advocacy of respect for the integrity and the identity of all peoples and faith-communities is the more urgent where Jews are concerned. For, as stated above, our relationship to the Jews is of a unique and very close character. Moreover, the history of "Christian" antisemitism and forced baptisms of Jews in the past makes it understandable that Jews are rightly sensitive towards all religious pressures from outside and all attempts at proselytising.
- 4.3 We reject proselytism both in its gross and more refined forms. This implies that all triumphalism and every kind of manipulation are to be abrogated. We are called upon to minimise the power dimension in our encounter with the Jews and to speak at every level from equal to equal. We have to be conscious of the pain and the perception of the others and have to respect their right to define themselves.
- 4.4 We are called upon to witness to God's love for and claim upon the whole of humankind. Our witness to Christ as Lord and Saviour, however, is challenged in a special way where Jews are concerned. It has become discredited as a result of past behaviour on the part of Christians. We therefore are seeking authentic and proper forms of Christian relations with Jews. Some of us believe that we have to bear witness also to the Jews; some among us are convinced, however, that Jews are faithful and obedient to God even though they do not accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Some maintain that as a separate and specific people the Jews are an instrument of God with a specific God-given task and, as such, a sign of God's faithfulness to all humankind on the way towards ultimate redemption.
- 4.5 Hebrew Christians are both a problem and a challenge to Judaism as well as to Christianity. They recently often claim to remain Jews, but are not accepted anymore by Judaism. They want to contribute a specific Jewish aspect to the life of the Church which often rejects such contribution. Therefore, many Hebrew Christians are organised ecumenically in the International Hebrew Christian Alliance and locally often in groups or even parishes. The Churches should take the problems and contributions of Hebrew Christians more seriously and keep close contact with Jewish partners in dialogue concerning their view of this group. Basically we believe with Paul that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek.



## 5. THE STATE OF ISRAEL

- 5.1 Repeatedly and on several occasions the WCC has explicitly affirmed the right to existence of the State of Israel. In particular, we recall the Canterbury statement of 1969, which says: "No lasting peace is possible ... without effective international guarantee for the political independence and territorial integrity of all nations in the area, including Israel." We affirm also the strong concern expressed by the General Secretary of the WCC when, in 1975, Zionism was equated with Racism. Our recognition of the State of Israel can be based on several considerations but it is especially motivated by our respect for the Jews in their identity and self-understanding: in the self-definition of the great majority of Jews there is an indissoluble bond between the people and the land. Jews look upon the establishment of the State of Israel as the realisation of a centuries-old longing for a return to the land.
- 5.2 Our acceptance of the State of Israel should not be misinterpreted as unqualified approval of all which this State does. We recognise that through the ages the Jews shared this land with others. Just as we respect the identity and the right of self-determination of the Jews, we respect also the identity and the right of the Palestinian Arabs to self-determination. There are still many questions about the ways and means by which a just and durable peace in the Middle East should be achieved and how Christians could possibly play a role of reconciliation.
- 5.3 Under present conditions the State of Israel is the form in which the indissoluble bond between people and land can be realised. Some of us, however, want to be more explicit. On the basis of their understanding of the Bible they look upon the special relation of the Jewish People to this Land as a God-given relationship and see the State of Israel in this perspective. But in this respect much study and mutual clarification of views will be needed before a consensus on these issues may emerge.
- 5.4 It is of equal importance that the Palestinians have a right to self-determination. We agree with the statements of the Nairobi Assembly (1975) on the Middle East conflict and Jerusalem. Christians and especially the WCC should be more concerned and more active in promoting reconciliation and peace in the Middle East.
- 5.5 A special opportunity is Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Group travel is able to bring this within the reach of most people. Such Pilgrimages today are not only an opportunity of revitalising the Christian faith by direct contact with the places associated with the ministry of Jesus, but are also opportunities for witnessing the unique Jewish presence in the Land of Israel, as well as Arab Christian communities which form a link with the historic Eastern Churches.



## 6. FUTURE WORK

- 6.1 We are aware that the questions dealt with in this statement do not cover the whole area of Jewish-Christian encounter. We therefore recommend that attention be given to such issues as were suggested, for example, in the Chiang Mai papers. We express our hope that contributions to work in the future will also come from Christians in Africa and Asia. We are very much aware that the differences of opinion among us demand further study.
- 6.2 Our dealing with these issues will show that in our thinking about Israel and the Jews very important and vital tenets of our Christian faith are at stake. Is it too much to hope that Christians and Jews may live in creative tension, enriching and encouraging each other, despite the appalling record of the relationship between the two communities over the centuries?
- 6.3 Theological consultations between Jews and Christians should be encouraged in which the basic convictions and differences of their respective faiths are discussed not merely in the hope of a better understanding of the faith of our partners and an enrichment of our own faith, but also in the hope of reaching a common understanding of divine revelation and thus healing the breach which exists between the synagogue and the church.
- 6.4 Christians and Jews share with other believers the conviction that all people, regardless of race, religion or nationality are equally God's children and equally precious in His sight. This conviction is based on a concept of God as Creator of the universe, who continues to care for his creation, whose mercies are over all His creatures. Such common concept of God should unite believers in trying to understand each other and in caring for God's creation, including nature and all creatures.
- 6.5 The past has all too often been a time of alienation, even bitterness. Happily today we have entered into a new stage of conversation. The present contains seeds of hope that under the same one revealing God, Jews and Christians will fulfill God's purpose of bringing justice, peace and holiness to the whole human family.
- 6.6 Specifically the three themes recommended in the group report of the Chiang Mai consultation should be taken seriously:
- a) In what sense are the Christian Old Testament and the Bible of the Jews "the same Scripture"?
  - b) Is there a mission and are there concerns that Jews and Christians have in common?
  - c) How can our two communities contribute to world-wide community through dialogue?
- The question of man's responsibility towards nature, science and technology on the basis of biblical teaching is certainly one of the most important to be worked on by Jews and Christians together because God entrusted us with stewardship over the earth.

DBF INTL FR

American Jewish Committee  
165 E. 56 St., N. Y., N.Y., 10022

*F. Nitzfieder*  
*ISCIC*  
*Spain*  
*Karlikow*

VIA I T T

March 3/27/78

KARLIKOW  
WISHCOM  
PARIS (FRANCE)

HAVE COMMITMENT TO ADDRESS NBC-TV NATIONWIDE PRESS CONFERENCE  
APRIL 9 & 10 ON HOLOCAUST PROGRAMS. REGRET EXCEEDINGLY CANNOT  
REMAIN FOR SPANISH CATHOLIC-JEWISH CONFERENCE. PLEASE CONVEY  
MY REGRETS.

RHT:RPR





# SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA



March 27, 1978

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56 Street  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Marc:

The International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) is the central Jewish body engaged in consultations with international religious bodies such as the Vatican and the World Council of Churches. The membership of IJCIC includes the American Jewish Committee, ADL, Synagogue Council of America, World Jewish Congress and the Jewish Interfaith Council of Israel.

Over the years, IJCIC has drawn on a number of Jewish scholars who have participated in the discussion of various issues in the field of Jewish-Christian relations. IJCIC has recently decided to form an Academic Resource Committee to be composed of scholars with particular competence in areas relevant to Jewish-Christian and related studies. Such a committee would be kept informed of the work of IJCIC and constitute a major source on which IJCIC could draw in its work. The Academic Resources Committee would also try to keep a file on ongoing research of interest to IJCIC.

I am writing to ask you for nominations to membership on this committee. Such nominees should include scholars whose work and interest you believe is in areas of potential use to IJCIC. The nominations will be reviewed by IJCIC.

Please submit your nominations by April 17th, 1978.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

Michael Wyschogrod  
Senior Consultant  
Interreligious Affairs

MW:hfe

Report on IJCIC/WCC Sponsored Working Group  
Cambridge, MA, April 10-12, 1978

On April 10-12, 1978, a small working session was held in Cambridge, Mass. (at the Deanery at Harvard Divinity School) for the purpose of making plans and sorting out options for a Jewish-Christian Dialogue as discussed and envisaged at the meetings of IJCIC and WCC/Liaison Planning Committee. We were also much assisted by the material from the Christian-Jewish Dialogue on Jewish and Christian Traditions concerning Nature, Science and Technology (Zurich, February 20-23, 1977) and the continuity with that Dialogue was assured by Prof. Manfred Vogel's presence and paper also at our meeting.

The participants were:

Prof. Manfred Vogel, Northwestern University  
(Evanston, Illinois)  
Dr. Michael Fishbein, Brandeis University  
(Waltham, Mass.)  
Dr. Paul Santmire, Wellesley College  
(Wellesley, Mass.)  
Prof. Bertold Klappert, (Wuppertal, West Germany)  
and Dean Krister Stendahl as convenor.

Presentations were given by the participants under the two headings "Man Living in Nature" and "Man Living with Neighbors".

Out of our deliberations emerged a consensus that the dialogue envisioned should be on a unified theme and that such a theme should have its center of gravity in attempts at "Theologies of Nature". We would hope for an opportunity for a Dialogue that transcended the spelling out of differences and aimed at areas of common language and concern.

We perceived new possibilities and untapped resources--not least from the liturgical traditions and experiences of our various communities (as underused source in religious thinking).

We further would like a special effort to be made at drawing a younger generation of scholars into this work. (I was personally struck by the invigorating perspectives of our younger participants.)

The basic pattern of this dialogue should not be one in which scientists made the primary contribution while "theologians" reflected on their contribution. We would rather recommend that the primary presentations be (Tentative) Models of Theologies of Nature in the light of new possibilities and perspectives and that such models be tested and critiqued by physicists, geneticists, etc.



We are not "against the second dimension of our mandate--i.e., "Man Living with Neighbors", but we tended to think that the chances for a significant and basic common understanding of nature (animate and inanimate) should not be programmatically diverted. We would rather think that the ramifications for social relations should emerge naturally. To be sure, the very word "ecology" raises questions which cannot be handled without our responsibilities to neighbors--both in space and time (i.e., the generations to come). A purely individualistic theology of nature may well be of the past.

2/08/79



Krister Stendahl  
Convenor

JEWISH LEADERS CRITICIZE ISRAELI CONVERSION LAW (550)

By John Muthig

ROME (NC) — Israel's new law on convert-making was criticized by some Jewish leaders at a meeting between Catholic Church officials and representatives of world Judaism April 5-7.

Sources attending the seventh annual meeting of the International Liaison Committee Between the Catholic Church and Judaism said that discussion of the law was both calm and friendly, but that some Jewish representatives expressed regret over passage of the law by the Knesset (Israel's Parliament).

The law says that anyone who uses money or other material advantages to convince another person to change his religion can be sentenced to five years in prison and a fine of about \$5,000.

"When a Catholic representative asked me about the law," said one Jewish member of the liaison committee, "I said that I could only condemn it in the strongest terms.

"The fact is, that we have our Holy Office too," said the Jewish official.

He was referring to Israel's chief rabbis who backed the law.

The Holy Office or Holy Inquisition are old titles of the Vatican's Doctrinal Congregation. Pope Paul III established the Holy Office in 1542, giving it broad powers to proceed against innovators and teachers of false doctrines.

According to a Jewish liaison committee member, the committee was told that Israel's attorney general has promised to review personally any cases citing the new law to guarantee judicial fairness.

He said that the liaison committee felt that any campaign to have the law repealed could have "counterproductive results."

The liaison committee met in Toledo and Madrid, Spain.

Jewish participants said that the meeting was perhaps the most important one between representatives of the two faiths held in Spain since it expelled the Jews in 1492.

Also discussed at the meeting was the rise of anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism in Europe, and especially in Germany.

Sources said that the committee discussed the growth of neo-Nazi groups and publications, the selling of Nazi badges, desecration of Jewish tombs and increased harassment of Jews.

The main topic of discussion was the way Judaism is presented in Catholic educational material and the image of Christianity given by Jewish teaching material.

Both sides felt that significant progress had been made in arriving at a more objective presentation of each faith.

The condition of Soviet Jewry and the human rights situation of Jews in other parts of the world were also discussed. But no resolutions were passed on this or other matters.

The meeting was attended by four Catholic committee members and five Catholic experts. The members included Msgr. Charles Moeller, vice president of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism, and Father Jorge Mejia, commission secretary.

Experts included two Americans, Msgr. George G. Higgins, secretary for research for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Eugene Fisher, secretary of the NCCB Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations.

The Jewish participants were led by Rabbi Ronald Sobel, chief rabbi at New York's Temple Emanu-El. Among Jewish members and experts were:

Rabbi Henry Slegman, executive vice president of the Synagogue Council of America; Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, director of the Department of Interreligious Affairs of the American Jewish Committee; Rabbi Balfour Brickner, director of the Department of Interreligious Relations of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; and Theodore Freedman, director of the national program division of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai-B'rith.



10C1C

April 18, 1978

Mr. Michael Wyschogrod  
Senior Consultant  
Interreligious Affairs  
Synagogue Council of America  
432 Park Avenue South  
New York, New York 10016

Dear Michael:

In response to your letter of March 27 I am suggesting the following persons to serve on an IJCIC Academic Resource Committee:

Rabbi Sidney Hoenig  
Dropsie College  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Rabbi Martin A. Cohen  
Professor of Jewish History  
HUC-JIR  
40 West 68th Street  
New York, New York 10023

Rabbi Leonard S. Kravitz  
Professor of Midrash and Homiletics  
HUC-JIR

I am assuming that the proposed committee is to be an informal ad hoc type arrangement rather than a formal structure requiring staff servicing and budget. If it is conceived to be more than an informal consultative process, we will need to define more carefully the scope and function of such a committee, and any projected budget required for the servicing of this committee and also how such funds would be secured.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

  
Theodore Freedman

TF/mj

cc: Rabbi Ronald Sobel  
Rabbi Henry Siegman  
Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum ✓

## WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

### Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies

Staff Report to DFI Working Group, Trinidad May 1978

#### Christian-Muslim Relations: Dr. John B. Taylor

##### 1. Meetings and travels since the Nairobi General Assembly

The first focus of staff activity after the Nairobi Assembly was to prepare, with the encouragement of the DFI Core Group which met in Chambésy in May 1976, for a planning meeting of 12 Muslims and 12 Christians who met in Cartigny, Geneva, in November 1976. Some were official representatives and others were individuals invited in their own right. Their recommendations under four main headings were shared with the DFI Core Group, which met in Glion in January 1977, and have been published in "Christians Meeting Muslims: WCC Papers on 10 Years of Christian-Muslim Dialogue".

Under the recommendations of "Preparation for Dialogue within both Communities" one may note the important contribution made by the Chiang Mai Theological Consultation in situating Christian-Muslim relationships in the overall context of relationships in community with people of all faiths, cultures and ideologies. The group report on Christian-Muslim relations from Chiang Mai, the reflection about their Muslim neighbours being currently encouraged by the Middle East Council of Churches and the All African Conference of Churches, and the continued success and increasing ecumenical breadth of the "Journées Romaines" are evidences of the felt need for more reflection among Christians about their presence and witness among Muslim neighbours. Some people are already advocating a Chiang Mai type meeting on Christian-Muslim relations bringing together Christians from many regions and backgrounds. It should be noted that the difficulty of reaching theological mutual respect let alone consensus among Christians working in the Islamic world was illustrated at the recent, February 1978, Conference of European Churches consultation on "The Church and the Muslim in Europe" which failed, after considerable discussion, to produce any theological group report.

Under the heading "Living in Dialogue" one may observe that various local churches ranging from Philippines to Kenya to England are making progress in preparing educational materials and courses for pastors and teachers. Concerns of family life have been addressed, for example by Christian and Muslim women meeting together in USA or by a church commission in France tackling issues such as mixed marriages. There are increasing signs of Christians and Muslims praying for each other, of exchanging greetings at each other's festivals, and even some occasions of shared meditation.



In the area of "Dialogue on Socio-Political Issues" Christians and Muslims continue to be exercised, on almost every continent, by the injustices and inequalities of economic development, by violations of human rights (including religious rights) and by open conflicts. Especially in the dramatic and tragic events of Lebanon the whole credibility of Christian-Muslim dialogue has been called into question by some - but others would say that such events argue for the urgency of increasing such dialogue (a Christian-Muslim study centre has recently been opened in Beirut). The WCC and its member churches may sometimes feel that little more than a symbolic act is possible, but even these can be appreciated.

The last recommendations at Cartigny were on "Theology and Dialogue". Theological issues have not been evaded in the recent months of Christian-Muslim dialogue. Meetings ranging from Hartford to Cordoba to Sénanque to New Delhi are bringing Muslims and Christians together to tackle some of the fundamental theological areas both of common ground and difference between each other on issues such as revelation and prophethood. Young Muslims and young Christians have met with young Jews under the auspices of the Standing Conference of Jews, Christians and Muslims in Europe to tackle central spiritual issues; sometimes the greatest polarities have appeared within one faith rather than between other faiths.

The most deliberate follow-up by WCC staff of the Cartigny recommendations in terms of dialogue on theological issues was the meeting organized in November 1977 between Christian and Muslim natural scientists. This falls within the series of meetings also being arranged with Jews, Buddhists and people from traditional cultures. It is to be hoped that the combination of spiritual, ethical and social concerns which are coming out of these various bilateral meetings may make an agenda for an eventual multilateral meeting. At Beirut the point of departure was the basic understanding of the responsibility ("dominion"/"caliphate") entrusted to all men by God; this quickly led to realization of abuse of nature by individuals and communities, of sometimes false contradictions between science and religion, of the need to humanize technology according to moral criteria. It was striking that the meeting did not draw back from very specific reference to our expectations of God's judgment, the significance for both Christians and Muslims of Jesus' readiness to suffer and of the Qur'an's confirmation of God's covenant with all humanity.

If the Cartigny planning meeting has helped to provide an agenda for some of our WCC initiatives and also for the initiatives of some of our fellow Christians or Muslims, there has also been ample evidence of many other initiatives in Christian-Muslim dialogue since the Nairobi General Assembly. The Vatican's co-sponsorship with the Libyan Government of a major meeting for dialogue in 1976 did much to publicize the claims of dialogue upon the churches and upon Muslim communities.

The period since Nairobi has been one of unusually intensive travel for me as the DFI staff person especially responsible for Christian-Muslim relations. I believe that this reflects the increasing seriousness with which Christian-Muslim dialogue is being taken around the world. I have had two visits to the USA and Canada and one visit to



the Caribbean, two to West Africa, one to Australia and the Pacific, four visits to the Middle East, two visits to North Africa and three to the Far East, as well as several visits within Europe; everywhere I go I have been heartened to find local churches engaged in conversation and cooperation with their Muslim neighbours, or at the very least actively planning for such involvement.

I have already sent detailed travel diaries to some of you but I am always open to share such materials with any who ask to see them; I write both for my Muslim and Christian hosts. I should also add that I have had the privilege of representing the WCC at some important Christian-Muslim dialogues ranging from the meeting organized by the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians concerned with Muslims in Europe (Vienna, November 1976), to the Islamo-Christian Congress at Cordoba, Spain (March 1977). I should be happy to share reports of such meetings if you are interested, for I again emphasize that it is not only the WCC which is taking initiatives at international level.

### 3. Reflection on regional variations

The diversity and complexity of the Islamic world, as of the Christian world, make it impossible to make sweeping generalizations about the state of Christian-Muslim relations world-wide. Nevertheless our dialogue programme constantly encounters the way in which various regions are involved with each other. One of the specific functions of our WCC programme must be to encourage cross-regional contacts. Signs of hope as well as disappointments need to be shared.

In Asia, where one should never forget there live the greatest number of our Muslim neighbours, Christian-Muslim relations have continued to vary widely. The seminar arranged by the Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies, Hyderabad, India, in October 1977, in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation, brought Christians from Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, India and Pakistan to share their experiences. Reports were given of dialogues with young people and with scholars, with government patronage and with private Christian or Muslim initiatives; problems were shared where tensions arose from ignorance and prejudice, from political hostilities or from discriminatory legislation (which both Christians and Muslims suffer variously).

Despite efforts at decentralization and at introducing more programmes in the vernacular, a study centre like the Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies is not yet satisfied that its potential is fully realized; other centres like the Dansalan Research Centre, Marawi City, Philippines, and the Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, are also seeking to extend their ministries. It seems important that DFI should continue to keep in touch with such study centres as being among the most important and effective partners in our work, especially when member churches have no special commission or committee, let alone budget, for inter-faith relations. It would appear that Christian-Muslim initiatives in Malaysia, Singapore and Bangladesh are little organized; in Indonesia it would seem that the pace is more often set by the government than by the churches or the Muslim community.



A similar variety emerges in Africa across the many activities of the Islam in Africa Project. The overall climate of Christian-Muslim relations has suffered from the excesses in Uganda, from some self-conscious introduction of Islamic institutions in Nigeria and from political tensions between Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Kenya. Religion may no longer be as blatantly invoked by both sides as during the Biafra or Sudan wars, but tensions continue and there are too few signs of Christians and Muslims bringing reconciliation by virtue of their respective faiths. However, there are more promising signs where Christians and Muslims work together in nation-building as in Tanzania or in relief work as in the drought-stricken zone south of the Sahara. Youth camps in Senegal over the last four years have regularly brought Christian and Muslim students together to work and reflect on common spiritual and social concerns.

One particular feature of Christian-Muslim dialogue in Africa - notwithstanding analogies in Indonesia, the Philippines and elsewhere - is the context of increasingly self-conscious traditional/"primal" cultures. The recent All African Conference of Churches consultation on "Christian Involvement in Minority Situations in Africa" combined a concern for Christian-Muslim relations with cultural & ideological "contextualization". The proposed DFI consultation on "Religious Dimensions of Humanity's Relation to Nature with special reference to traditional/"primal" religions and cultures" may well point to the challenge jointly faced by Christians and Muslims in Africa to overcome cultural imperialism while avoiding romantic or expedient compromises and also to eschew mutual competition in polemic and proselytism over against caricatured "pagan idolaters".

This has been a period in which all of us have lived through continuing concern about tensions in Christian-Muslim relations particularly in the Middle East. I should like to allude to three differing situations. First, there has been the end of open conflict in the Lebanon and a serious effort is being made to prevent religious allegiances from being manipulated for political ends; in cooperation with the Middle East Council of Churches we were able to facilitate a meeting between 12 Christian Lebanese and 12 Muslim Lebanese in Geneva in June 1977. A further sign of re-established relationships between Christians and Muslims in Lebanon is that we were able to meet in November 1977 in Beirut for our DFI consultation between Christian and Muslim natural scientists who came there from various parts of the world.

A second point of concern in the Middle East has been to recognize the rapidly changing demography of the countries adjoining the Arabian Gulf where it is estimated that as many as  $\frac{3}{4}$  million Christians are now working, coming to this rapidly expanding area from other parts of the Arab world, from Europe and North America and in large numbers from Asia (the sub-continent, Philippines and Korea). In the Arabian Gulf organized church facilities are very scant and a crisis faces the Christian minorities there which is closely analogous to the crisis facing Muslim minorities in Europe and North America; one hopes that in both cases the host communities will be hospitable and scrupulous about the religious and human rights of migrants and new settlers. We have to consider the timeliness of a WCC visit to scattered Christian communities and to their Muslim neighbours in this region (notably in Saudi Arabia from where a delegation of Muslim leaders came in 1974 to visit the WCC).



A third instance of current concern arises in Egypt. In March 1977 a historic meeting took place between the President, the Shaykh of Al-Azhar University and Pope Shenouda III of the Coptic Orthodox Church; since then the Government of President Sadat has stood by the agreed principles of inter-religious cooperation and has given firm assurances that it rejects the much publicized legislation which was independently proposed during the summer with a view, among other things, to establishing the death penalty for converts from Islam. The ceremony on 12th October 1977 with President Sadat laying the foundation stone of the new Coptic hospital in Cairo and the appointment of a Copt as Foreign Minister have been regarded as a further demonstration of official support for the Christian minority.

Finally Europe and the Americas - but also Australia and the Pacific - provide an increasing number of instances where for the most part majority Christians are finding new patterns of neighbourhood with minority Muslims. Some churches have set up ecumenical or denominational commissions to encourage Christian-Muslim relations. Theological reflection among Christians and dialogues with Muslims are being sponsored. Patterns of inter-faith education and of hospitality in terms of sharing, lending or selling church properties to Muslims are being worked out. Human rights issues are being shared. And all this is not infrequently in the salutary context of a wider religious, cultural and ideological pluralism where Christians are living with other neighbours, too, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, traditionalists, secularists etc.

### 3. Possible directions for the future

This report of activities and these reflections upon regional variations have already hinted at various possible directions for the future work of DFI. In order to facilitate discussions these may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Possible dialogue with Muslims (and Jews?) to react to the Christian theologians' perspectives from Chiang Mai.
- (b) Possible consultation among Christians from a wide range of regional, confessional and theological backgrounds in order to explore together "Christians' attitudes to their Muslim neighbours".
- (c) Continued cooperation with study centres - how is the coordination of the fund-raising for study centres to be shared with CWME?
- (d) Encouragement of local and regional projects in Christian-Muslim cooperation - how should one handle financial appeals for such projects which are addressed to DFI, Youth Department, CICARWS, CCPD etc?
- (e) What further cooperation is possible with the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians, the "Journées Romaines" etc?
- (f) What further links or visits should be made with official, world-wide or regional Islamic organizations?



- (g) What relationships are possible with organizations such as the Spanish Association for Christian-Muslim Understanding, the Islam and the West Programme (under the auspices of the Institute on Man and Science International), the World Conference of Religions for Peace etc?
- (h) How far should member churches be encouraged to set up special commissions for inter-faith dialogue - or more specifically for Christian-Muslim relations? What financial approaches should be addressed to member churches or to other sources to support ecumenical initiatives in this area?
- (i) Has the ad hoc Cartigny planning meeting (October 1976) proved sufficient for liaison purposes with Muslim organizations and individuals? Should this type of planning meeting be repeated?
- (j) Should DFI envisage affording/sponsoring another major international Christian-Muslim dialogue? If so, what planning process should be envisaged for this?

---

WCC/DFI/WG/78/7



# SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA



## *memorandum*

to: Members of IJCIC  
from: Rabbi Henry Siegman  
subject: Several Items  
date: June 9, 1978

### I. ACADEMIC RESOURCE COMMITTEE

You may recall that Dr. Michael Wyschogrod was asked to contact the organizations affiliated with IJCIC and individuals active in the field of Christian-Jewish relations for suggestions of persons to be invited to serve on an Academic Resource Committee.

Enclosed is a list compiled by Dr. Wyschogrod containing the recommendations he received.

If you have any comments on this list, and wish to suggest either additions or deletions, please let me hear from you within the next several weeks.

### II. OCTOBER 1977 IJCIC CONSULTATION

Enclosed is an account of the IJCIC Consultation that took place in New York City in October of 1977, prepared by Rabbi Leon Klenicki.

May I ask you to review Rabbi Klenicki's draft, and to send on to me any corrections, changes, or additions that you may care to make.

Kindest regards.

HS:hfe  
Enclosures



# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

CASE POSTALE 191  
1211 GENÈVE 20 NEW-YORK N.Y. LONDON W.1 PARIS 8e TEL-AVIV  
1, RUE DE VAREMBE 15 EAST 84TH STREET 55, NEW CAVENDISH STREET 78, AV. CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES 123, YEHUDA HALEVI STR.  
TELEPH. 8415 26 TELEPH. 87-94.500 TELEPH. 935-03.35 TELEPH. 369.94.63 TELEPH. 22.91.39  
TELEX 28 98 76 TELEX 23 61 29 TELEX 21 63 3 TELEX 65 03 20

MJK/ak

Geneva, July 3, 1978

Memo to: Rabbi B. Brickner  
Dr. E.L. Ehrlich  
Mr. Th. Freedman  
Dr. J. Lichten  
Dr. G.M. Riegner  
Mr. Z. Shuster  
Rabbi H. Siegman  
Rabbi R. Sobel  
Prof. S. Talmon  
Rabbi M.H. Tanenbaum  
Dr. D. Thursz

From: Michael J. Klein

Dear Friends,

Further to my last memo, the following developments have taken place:

1. Dr. Stanley Samarth, on behalf of Dr. Philip Potter, has officially informed Dr. Riegner that Professor Maas Boertien has accepted the position vacated by Dr. Franz von Hammerstein, and that the World Council of Churches would now begin to consult those members of its Executive, who are usually consulted in such matters for their approval. This announcement usually is another way of calling for Jewish objections, if there are any.
2. Dr. Samarth also told Dr. Riegner that Dr. Potter has put him (Dr. Samarth) in charge of the Jewish desk in the interim period.
3. Although Professor Boertien will not take up his duties before January 1, 1979, he will attend the next Liaison Planning Committee meeting, the dates of which we have yet to decide.
4. As most of you already know, we have consulted with friends in Israel and in Holland about the candidacy of Professor Boertien. Everyone seems to agree that his general theological attitude toward Judaism and his attitude toward Israel are quite positive. Dr. Riegner recently had the opportunity to discuss the matter with Dr. Visser'T Hoof, the Honorary President of the World Council of Churches, and an old and trusted friend of ours. Dr. Visser'T Hoof has an extremely positive opinion of Professor Boertien.
5. Dr. Riegner also discussed with Dr. Samarth the possibilities for a date of the next large consultation to be held in Canada. Dr. Riegner pointed

out that this was dependent on the results of the report of the Boston experts meeting, which we do not have as yet, and whether there is a necessity for a further meeting of those experts. Dr. Riegner pointed out that before IJCIC could participate in the next LPC meeting, it would be necessary for IJCIC to meet to discuss the proposed guidelines which were mentioned in his memo of June 16, 1978. It is obviously impossible, because of the Summer vacation, to hold an IJCIC meeting before September. Dr. Riegner intends to be in New York in the second half of September and at that time, such a meeting could be envisaged. It was therefore agreed that the next meeting of the LPC could not take place before the end of October, and Dr. Samarth arrived at the tentative date of November 6-7 \* for LPC meeting in Geneva. I would appreciate your indicating your ability to be available in November.

6. If the experts do need another meeting, then the next large consultation will have to be postponed. If they do not, then it should be able to take place in the Spring of 1979.
7. It was agreed that the LPC meeting in November would decide finally on the dates of the next large consultation, but Dr. Riegner insisted that proposals on the date of the large consultation be submitted by both sides well in advance to the LPC meeting, as otherwise the meeting would not be able to arrive at a decision.

With best regards.

\* There seems to be some difficulty at the World Council of Churches in arriving at exact dates for the LPC. As soon as we have clarification of their position on this date or another proposal, I shall inform you. At this point end of November or early December is a likely alternative.



*Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz*

*Congregation Agudath Sholom*

*301 Strawberry Hill Avenue  
Stamford, Connecticut 06902  
203-325-3501*

July 10, 1978

American Jewish Committee  
165 E 56th Street  
New York, N.Y.

Att: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum

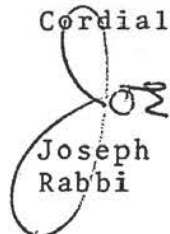
Dear Marc:

I can't tell you how excited I was when I received your letter confirming my appointment to represent the American Jewish Committee to IJCIC. Since that time I have tried on more than a few occasions, to reach you to determine when I should be prepared as per instructions in your letter, to travel on behalf of my new representation. I have not been able to gain any information from your secretary nor have I been able to receive any information from your office or elsewhere.

I would appreciate it, if when you get a moment, you would drop me a note and explain to me what my obligations would be, what opportunities are presented, and where and when I will be travelling.

Best wishes for continued success in your every undertaking.

Cordially,

  
Joseph H. Ehrenkranz,  
Rabbi

JHE:rb

*Rabbi Joseph H. Ehrenkranz*

*Congregation Agudath Sholom*

*301 Strawberry Hill Avenue  
Stamford, Connecticut 06902  
203-325-3501*

May 30, 1978

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
American Jewish Committee  
165 E 56th Street  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Marc:

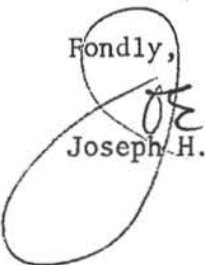
I find it rather difficult to reach you at the office and on this personal matter don't have the 'chutzpa' to try you at home.

I would like to draw your attention to the letter I received from you appointing me to the committee on IJCIC which would require attendance at meetings in Rome and Geneva. I subsequently have had a difficult time in finding when such meetings would take place and at your suggestion called Henry Siegman at the Synagogue Council. According to Henry's information, no meetings are ever held in Rome or Geneva and that a meeting was just recently held in Spain and that the next meeting will be probably in February of 1979 in Toronto. The only meetings that are held in Rome would allow the American Jewish Committee only one representative and Rabbi Seigman is under the impression that you are the only representative of the American Jewish Committee to such meetings. If you could further clarify this for me it would be greatly appreciated. Clearing calendar for a Parish Rabbi is of great concern. I would also appreciate a greater clarification of my role on that committee.

I thought that the annual meeting was nothing short of sensational. The Vice President was great and the entire program ran smoothly and efficiently. Congratulations!

Best wishes for continued success in all your endeavors.

Fondly,

  
Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, Rabbi



# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

CASE POSTALE 191

1211 GENÈVE 20

1, RUE DE VAREMBÉ

TELEPH. 3413 25

TELEX 28 98 76

GMR/ra

NEW-YORK N.Y.

15 EAST 84TH STREET

TELEPH. 87-94.500

TELEX 23 61 29

LONDON W.1

85, NEW CAVENDISH STREET

TELEPH. 935-03.35

TELEX 21 63 3

PARIS 8.

78, AV. CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES

TELEPH. 359.94.83

TELEX 65 03 20

TEL-AVIV

123, YEHUDA HALEVI STR.

TELEPH. 22.91.39

Geneva, July 11, 1978

To: Rabbi Balfour Brickner  
Dr. E.L. Ehrlich  
Mr. Theodore Freedman  
Dr. Joseph Lichten  
Mr. Zachariah Shuster  
Rabbi Dr. Henry Siegman  
Rabbi Ronald Sobel  
Prof. Shemaryahu Talmon  
Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
Dr. Daniel Thursz

From: Gerhart M. Riegner

Dear Friends,

I am referring to Michael Klein's memo to you of July 3, and I am sending you enclosed a letter which I have received from Dr. Samartha, dated July 3.

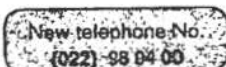
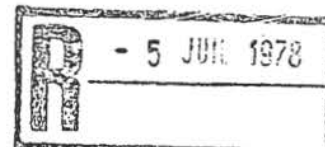
I am sure you will be interested in reading this letter not only because it contains a good number of details on the prospective successor of Dr. von Hammerstein, but also because of the assurances contained in its last paragraph.

I have not yet been able to agree with Dr. Samartha on another date for the meeting of the LPC in November. I shall keep you informed as soon as I can.

The possible agenda items for this meeting are as follows: report on developments since we met last, report on the Boston preparatory meeting, details of next larger LPC meeting in Canada and next steps in the preparation of "guidelines" for Christian-Jewish relations. Of course, this agenda is tentative and may be modified later on.

Kind regards.

*Gerhart M. Riegner*



BOX No. 66 • 150, ROUTE DE FERNEY • 1211 GENEVA 20 • TELEPHONE: (022) 33 34 00 • TELEX: 23423 OIK CH • CABLE: OIKOUMENE GENEVA

## WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

### PROGRAMME UNIT ON FAITH AND WITNESS

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies

CCJP  
July 3, 1978  
SJS/LM

Dr. G. RIEGNER  
World Jewish Congress  
P.O.Box 191  
1211 GENEVA 20

Dear Dr. Riegner,

I was glad to have the opportunity to talk to you on Thursday 29th. Dr. Potter was away, but wanted me to keep you informed of the developments in finding a successor to Dr. Franz von Hammerstein. Prof. Maas Boertien of Amsterdam has now accepted the position. According to our rules, the WCC officers have to make the appointment. Dr. Potter has already written to them and it is presumed that they will agree. Before the appointment is made public, I thought it would be better to keep you informed of it personally. I have written to Dr. K. Stendahl also.

I give below a brief note on Dr. Maas Boertien for your information which you may share with your colleagues:

" Dr. Maas Boertien (born 1923) is an ordained minister of the Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands. At present he is Professor of Hebrew and Aramaic language and literature in the Faculty of Arts, Amsterdam University. In addition to his studies in Amsterdam he has also studied at the University of Hamburg, Swedish Theological Institute, Jerusalem, and the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He is fluent in Dutch, English, German and modern Hebrew. In addition, he has working knowledge of Arabic, Aramaic and Syriac. He has worked as pastor of the "Jerusalem Kirche" at Hamburg, West Germany (1954-59), Executive Secretary of the United Christian Council in Jerusalem, Israel (1960-1967). While in Jerusalem he was active in the work of the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity, the Rainbow Group and the Ecumenical Student Forum. During this time he was in fraternal relationship with Arab Christians in Israel. In the Netherlands he was a member of the Inter-Church Committee on the Church and Israel. His publications include his Ph.D. thesis on the Mishnah - Tractate Nazir (Berlin/New York 1972) Introduction to Midrash (Netherlands) 1974, and several articles".

Dr. Maas Boertien will take charge only in January 1979 and in the meantime I will be responsible to continue the work on Christian-Jewish relations with the help of my colleagues. With this appointment I trust

./...



that our commitment to the Jewish people is affirmed and that our joint work in the area of Christian-Jewish relations will go on with informed understanding, critical appreciation and balanced judgment.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Dr. S.J. Samartha  
Director

c.c. K. Stendahl  
M. Boertien  
D.C. Mulder  
Ph. Potter



# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

CASE POSTALE 191  
1211 GENÈVE 20  
1, RUE DE VAREMBE  
TELEPH. 3413 25  
TELEX 26 98 76

NEW-YORK N.Y.  
15 EAST 84th STREET  
TELEPH. 87-94.500  
TELEX 23 61 29

LONDON W.1  
55, NEW CAVENDISH STREET  
TELEPH. 935-03.35  
TELEX 21 63 3

PARIS 86  
78, AV. CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES  
TELEPH. 359.94.63  
TELEX 68 03 20

TEL-AVIV  
123, YEHUDA HALEVI STR.  
TELEPH. 22.91.39

MJK/ak

Geneva, July 31, 1978

Memo to: Rabbi Balfour Brickner  
Dr. Ernst L. Ehrlich  
Mr. Theodore Freedman  
Dr. Joseph Lichten  
Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner  
Mr. Zachariah Shuster  
Rabbi Henry Siegman  
Rabbi Ronald Sobel  
Prof. Shemaryahu Talmon  
Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
Dr. Daniel Thursz

From: Michael J. Klein

In his absence Dr. Riegner has asked me to inform you that the newly proposed dates for the next LPC meeting with the World Council of Churches are October 31 to November 1, 1978. Our group should meet already on the evening of Monday, October 30, and therefore it is suggested that you plan your arrival in Geneva for October 30. By that time, IJCIC will already have met in New York on Thursday, September 21, as outlined in Rabbi Sobel's memo of July 26.

It was Dr. Riegner's feeling, in reaction to Ted Freedman's memo of July 18, that it would be difficult to refuse to discuss a date for the next LPC meeting with the World Council of Churches. It is true that we have to be well prepared for that meeting, however, this should be done at the September meeting in New York.

With best regards.



+ IJCIC  
Spain

August 1, 1978

Hon. Samuel Toledano, Chairman  
Jewish Community of Madrid  
Generalissimo 16  
Madrid 16, Spain

Dear Mr. Toledano,

It gave me very genuine personal pleasure to have the opportunity finally to meet you in person. I had heard so much in glowing terms from my colleague, Zachariah Shuster, about your leadership and your personal qualities that I had looked forward with much expectation to come to know you. Your leadership during our recent meeting with the Vatican abundantly confirmed all of the positive tributes that Mr. Shuster had paid to you.

During our conversation you had asked me for some background material from Jewish sources about the concept of intellectual freedom in Jewish tradition and history. I am pleased to enclose an essay which I believe addresses itself precisely to that subject.

I was not sure as to what the date of your presentation was to be. I hope this does not reach you too late.

I do hope we have opportunities to be in touch with each other in the near future.

With warmest personal good wishes for a pleasant and restful summer, I am,

Cordially yours,

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
National Director  
Interreligious Affairs

MHT:RPR

cc: Nives Fox  
Zachariah Shuster

Enclosures -- Simon Greenberg: Intellectual Freedom in the Jewish Tradition (also to himes)  
Newsletter, Vol 2 #1  
HRR package.

IJCIC

August 17, 1978

Bert Gold

Marc Tanenbaum

The enclosed memorandum from the World Jewish Congress proposes a meeting of the IJCIC Steering Committee in Geneva from Oct. 30th to Nov. 1st.

I would like to discuss this with you at the first meeting that we can set up following your return.

MHT:RPR

Enclosure





FO/78:11  
September 1978

World Council of Churches  
COMMISSION ON FAITH AND ORDER

Plenary Commission  
Bangalore, India  
30 August, 1978

A COMMON ACCOUNT OF HOPE

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
(Bangalore 1978)

I. THANKSGIVING

Blessed be God! The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Christ is our hope: the power of love stronger than the world. He lived on the earth: God's Yes for the world's salvation. He was crucified and is risen: the first fruit of the new humanity.

He is present in his Church; He is present in those who suffer;

- He is with us.

He will appear again in glory: our judgment and our hope,

- Unveiling this Yes of salvation.

We have this gift from the living God.

- His Spirit poured into our hearts.

Let us give thanks with rejoicing!

II. VOICES OF HOPE

In many places all over the world people are participating in this "yes". Even among the cries of despair we hear voices of hope.

A Latin American song:

Since He came into the world and into history;  
broke down silence and suffering;  
filled the world with His glory;  
was the light in the coldness of our night;  
was born in a dark manger;  
in His life sowed love and light;  
broke hardened hearts  
but lifted up dejected souls;  
So today we have hope;  
today we persevere in our struggle;  
today we face our future with confidence,  
in this land which is ours.

Everywhere songs of hope and longing are being sung. We have been able to listen to many of them in the accounts of hope which we have studied - a bewildering variety: from those who hunger for bread, justice and peace; those who long for freedom from religious or political persecution; those who hope for deliverance from infirmities of body and mind; those seeking a new community of women and men; those who search for cultural authenticity; those who hope for a responsible use of science and technology; those who evangelize and work for the spread of the Gospel; those who labour for the visible unity of the Churches. We have even become aware of intimations of hope from those who are silenced. In their silence itself is a word for those who can hear it.

### III. HOPES ENCOUNTER HOPES

We have been listening to these voices because we ourselves are called to give an account of our hope (I Pet. 3:15). We are a group of 160 Christians gathered in India from many churches in every continent as the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. Our mandate from the churches is to further the cause of visible church unity. Central to that task is the growth of an ability among the churches to bear common witness to their faith.

As a preliminary step the Commission has been working since 1971 to formulate a common account of hope. Today we want to speak of our common future to Church members everywhere and to any others who may be willing to listen. The problems have been formidable: confessional and cultural diversity, sharply divided political and social situations, the threat to relevance in a rapidly changing world, the need to draw upon new voices which have been marginal to the discussion of theology thus far. Yet, the common attempt itself has become a source of hope. We have discovered afresh the force of the Gospel to inspire common witness. We have been drawn together; and new ways of communication have been established among those who hope.



The common account is based on the encounter among various accounts of hope. This encounter has proved significant. It has helped us distinguish between one level where specific things are hoped for - for example, to have enough to eat - and another level where the question emerges, "Why do you hope at all for what you cannot see?" (cf Rom. 8:25).

The encounter has been humbling because of the provocation to become more self-critical. It is necessary to distinguish hopes from desires or wishes. Some of our expectations are little more than unexamined desires and wishes, or expressions of fears and anxieties. And these often contradict one another. A desire for an expanding economy in one country can cause poverty in another. A necessary struggle for power in one country may appear to contradict the responsible use of power in another. Some even say: "One's hopes become another's despair".

But we refuse to believe that the hopes of humankind are ultimately contradictory: God-given hopes are many-faceted and complementary. But human hearts are sinful, and their desires can be false. They need to be judged and purified. Christ is the judge of human hopes. He weighs our desires.

The encounter of human hopes is also encouraging to us, for in it we become aware of the power and direction of the Holy Spirit. Through that Spirit the hopes of others speak to us, often unintentionally, sometimes unexpectedly. The encounter of hopes points to a wider communion of hope with each other and with God's Spirit. Beyond that it can point to a wider communion between those who believe in Christ and those who do not. "One's hope becomes another's hope!"

#### IV. OUR HOPE IN GOD

The Church is a fellowship of those who hope in God, and therefore a real encounter among our hopes is possible.

We are not the first to express such faith and hope. Many have gone before us. A cloud of witness surrounds us who gave their testimony even at the cost of their lives. The faithful witness of the human hope in God is Jesus Christ. And every time we celebrate the remembrance of Him, we receive grace and power to give our testimony.

Jesus Christ is our hope. In his life he was completely obedient to God the Father. He identified himself with those who were despised by society. He preached a message of God's coming kingdom which sustains us with its vision of a tomorrow that cannot be denied. He was arrested, tortured and killed. In His cross and resurrection God dethroned the forces of sin, guilt, death and evil. God reconciled the world to himself. God defended his image in all - children, women and men - and opened to them a new dignity as the children of God. That is why we hope that everything which threatens human dignity, including death itself, will ultimately be destroyed: ultimately, for in this world those threatening forces, though overcome, are not yet destroyed; our present hope is anchored in God's actions in history and in the eternal life of the age to come. But we know that we are accepted by God as forgiven sinners and therefore we are certain that

we can here and now be co-workers with God in pointing to his rule. In Christ as in a mirror we see the will of God. Christ will come as the revelation of truth and righteousness. The ultimate judgment of the world is his, our assurance that the murderer will never ultimately triumph over the victim. This ultimate hope in the lordship of Christ and the coming kingdom of God cannot be divorced from, or identified with, our historical hopes for freedom, justice, equality and peace. Our struggles for human well-being are judged and transfigured in a life with God marked by the free gifts of forgiveness, new life and salvation. In anticipation we dare to hope that human longings and struggles are justified and that their ultimate outcome is in God's hands.

In giving his Son not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through him (John 3:17), God the Father affirmed the world as his creation and manifested his faithfulness to it. We too will be faithful to the world. He loved the work of his hands and called it good. Therefore we hope for a society which does not violate the goodness of nature. In trust that he has willed the creative powers of the human creature as well, we have hope that human reason can be used responsibly in shaping the future. The Creator is righteous; his law and his justice will restore the right of those who are oppressed. Therefore we have hope in our striving for justice and human rights. This world is full of suffering and injustice, but as God's world it is the place of our obedience in the confidence that he will not let it fall out of his hand. When, following Christ, we fight against evil, we do so not only in the hope for more human happiness; we do it also in the hope that oppressors will repent and be oppressors no longer, and that all will turn to God in faith and together receive the blessing that He wills for them.

The living God becomes accessible to us by the Holy Spirit who confirms God's presence in our lives and makes us members of Christ's body, the Church. By the Holy Spirit we have hope that already our lives can show signs of the new creation. By the Spirit, God gives us his power and guidance. The Spirit sets us free from the powers of darkness, stirs up our spirits, rekindles our energies, gives us visions and dreams, presses us to work for real communion, overcoming the barriers which sin has erected. Through the Holy Spirit, God's love is poured into our hearts. There can be no real hope without love. Acting in hope is possible for all: for those who can work openly and visibly, and also for those whose love and action are expressed in suffering and prayer. Since God's promises concern the whole of humanity, we hope and pray that the Spirit will empower us to proclaim the good news of salvation and to strive for its realization in life. That is the one mission of the individual and of the Church as such.

#### V. THE CHURCH: A COMMUNION OF HOPE

"The Lord is risen!" He is present and powerful in the midst of his people, making them members of one another and of his Body, the Church. He is the Master; they are the disciples. He is the vine; they are the branches. To those who put their faith in him, he gives a communion of hope, and he sends them as a sign of hope for all humanity.



They share his own divine life, the communion of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God whose own being is mirrored in all creaturely love. In the Christian community of faith, sharing in the confession of the apostles, gathered around God's word and partaking of the sacraments, we are given the power to share with each other. We can rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. We can bear one another's burdens. It is in this communion that we also learn to share one another's hopes. This encounter of hope in itself has been made by God to be a sign in every situation and place: Christ our hope, the power of love!

Because this is the spiritual reality of the Church, we are ashamed of how we in our churches actually look. The communion of hope is so obscured that it is almost unrecognizable. The common witness is wounded by divisions. Too often and too transparently, our churches reflect the sins of society, and are found on the side of the privileged and the powerful. Women are often denied their rightful places of leadership in church life. Members and ministers do not fully recognize each other. More scandalous still, our churches do not yet worship God together around the Common Table. Many of our contemporaries think it a travesty to call this people a sign of hope. Hope for the renewal and unity of our churches is often our most difficult spiritual task.

Nevertheless, we do hope for the Church of Christ to become more manifest in our churches. We hope for the recovery and fruitfulness of their mission. The communion, though obscured, is not lost; it is grounded not in its members, but in God. The Word has been given to it and the Word endures. The Spirit which has been at work throughout the ages is present in our times to re-establish a credible communion. Built on such foundations, this community will become a community of repentance!

Of this power among the churches we are witnesses. We do have hope for this communion. And we believe that this communion, incomplete as it is, can become a sign of hope for others. Communion in Christ provides the possibility of encounter across the human barriers. It re-establishes relations in mutual respect without sacrificing convictions. It can be a testing ground for the witness which each church bears. Without being pressed into conformity, churches can become accountable to each other. It is also a source of hope because as they live by God's forgiveness, they can extend forgiveness to other churches as well, and find in the witness and commitment of others an enrichment of their own. Finally, communion in Christ is a source of hope when it anticipates the reign of God and does not acquiesce in things as they are.

So the Church thanks God for a foretaste, here and now, of what it hopes for. Long since, it has anticipated its hope in its prayer: Your Kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us our daily bread. Forgive us our sins. Deliver us from evil.

## VI. SHARED HOPES IN THE FACE OF THE COMMON FUTURE

"Christ is risen!" What does it mean to have common hope in a world where we face common threats? There are common Christian commitments; concerted action is possible, although the emphases are different in different parts of the world.

Our common hope is threatened by increasing and already excessive concentrations of power with their threats of exploitation and poverty. They are responsible for the ever-widening gap between rich and poor, not only between nations but within individual nations. Political exploitation and dependency, hunger and malnutrition are the price paid by the poor for the superabundance of goods and power enjoyed by the rich. Concentration of power also leads to the preservation of the existing and the formation of new class distinctions. Nevertheless, we share a common hope; for we believe that God has taken sides in this struggle (Ps. 103:6).

Our common future is dominated by our increasing capacity to shape the physical world. Science and technology have bettered the human lot. Wisely used, they can help to feed the hungry, heal the sick, develop communication, strengthen community. The refusal to use these powers responsibly on the part of all people everywhere, and especially the ability of the affluent to appropriate these benefits for themselves, threatens us with environmental collapse, biological catastrophes and nuclear destruction. Nevertheless, we hope in the continual action of the Creator Spirit who will not abandon his creatures and who can prompt us to act responsibly as stewards of creation.

The most alarming concentration of power in our time is the seemingly uncontrollable growth of armaments. The present arsenal of nuclear warheads held by the superpowers numbers well above 10,000 - more than a million times the annihilating power which devastated Hiroshima. Even the so-called Third World has increased its commitment to armament from eight billion dollars in 1957 to forty billion in 1977. It is important not to overstate our hopes, but God's Spirit opens doors beyond human expectations. Evil is not necessary. The Spirit can plant the leaven of peace in unexpected surroundings, and create hope that it is possible to establish justice without recurring to war.

There are pressures and forces everywhere which threaten to disintegrate the human community. Races, classes, sexes, even religions are set against each other. In all places inherited patterns of society are dissolving and weakening the sense of belonging which community provides. At the same time new forms of community are emerging which in their newness can also create anxieties. Nevertheless, the Spirit works with a surprising freedom, preserving that which sustains life and bringing to birth something genuinely new. Therefore, we can have courage to experiment with new forms of association, new structures and institutions, new forms of human relationships.

Our common hope is threatened by assaults on human dignity. Statistics for programmes, stereotypes for discrimination, slaves, victims, or simply the forgotten - human persons and human possibilities are everywhere threatened today. Individual human rights are violated by arbitrary arrest and



"disappearances". We are appalled at the growing numbers of "prisoners of conscience" and at the increasingly systematic use of torture as an ordinary method of exercising power. But social human rights are likewise violated by denial of food, housing, jobs, education and health care, compounded by racism and sexism. There is no part of the world where some of these violations are not present. Those who dehumanize others thereby dehumanize themselves. Nevertheless, we have hope because God affirms the dignity of "the very last".

Commitment to the common future and life itself are eroded by meaninglessness and absurdity. In situation of affluence, this may result from "playing by the rules of the game" in a success-oriented culture. In situations of rapid cultural or social change, it may arise in the confusion of being called to fill previously undefined roles. In situations of exploitation, dependency and "marginalization" it may be imposed by the sense of impotence and frustration which comes from the inability to act for oneself or one's class. Nevertheless, we share a common hope, for the Son of God himself withstood the threat of meaninglessness and absurdity. God's healing word will come with different accents: to the affluent it is the challenge to renounce false gods; to the confused it offers the light of Jesus' life to clarify perplexity; to the dispossessed it comes as a challenge and empowerment to take up the struggle. To all it promises that life makes sense.

The problems seem overwhelming. The cry for realism is deep in each one of us, and it expresses a kind of ultimate question about Christian hope. But we believe that each rightful action counts because God blesses it. With the five loaves and two fishes which the young man brought to him, Jesus fed the multitude. Hope lives with special power in small actions.

Above all, we dare to hope in the face of death, the ultimate threat to our aspirations and actions. As sinners under the judgment of God we are bound to die. Therefore death is the "last enemy" of our hopes. It penetrates life with paralyzing power, especially where it takes away people before they have had a chance to live. Yet hope in Christ focuses precisely on this enemy. The triumph of God's grace is the resurrection - Christ's victory over death and sin with all their allies. The Apostle says: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (I Cor. 15:19). We rejoice that his crucial "if" is answered unequivocally: not only in this life. It is this "not only" that gives life its hopeful horizon. Fate is broken. There is a tomorrow for us today - and in the day of our death.

The Christian hope is a resistance movement against fatalism.

## X VII. HOPE AS THE INVITATION TO RISK

"Christ is risen!" But the risen one is the Crucified. This means that our life in hope is not a guarantee of safety, but an invitation to risk. To live in hope is never to have reached our goal, but always to be on a risk-laden journey.

To live in hope is to risk struggle. We are denied the privilege of being "neither hot nor cold", of adopting a pseudo-neutrality that covertly supports those in power. To struggle is to take sides openly, saying "yes" to some at the cost of saying "no" to others. If patient endurance is all that is possible, that too can be a form of protest. We can afford to fail, since God can use our failures in the fulfilment of his purposes. Hope embraces the risk of struggle.

To live in hope is to risk the use of power. Some have too much power to be trusted; most have too little to be effective. It is not right that a few should impose their decisions on the many. We must seek identification with the powerless and help them escape a life of dependency on others. But we must also minister to those in power, asking them to listen to "the wretched of the earth", to use power justly and share it with those who stand outside. Hope embraces the risk of the responsible use of power.

To live in hope is to risk affirming the new and re-affirming the old. To affirm the new is to acknowledge that Christ goes before us; to re-affirm the old is to acknowledge that he did not come to destroy but to fulfill, for he is the same yesterday, today and forever. Hope sends us on untried ways and calls us to discover the new whether it is represented by the challenge of new cultural contexts, the call for new life-styles or previously unheeded cries for liberation. When we lock ourselves to the past we may become deaf to the groanings and pleadings of the Spirit. Yet, the Spirit will always re-affirm the truth of Christ. Therefore, hope embraces the risk both of new departures and of faithfulness to the past against the temptation of passing fashions.

To live in hope is to risk self-criticism as the channel of renewal. Within culture and within the Church, renewal comes through challenge to what is established, so that it can be revitalized or cast aside. But renewal in the true sense of the word is not within our power. It arises as we are judged by God and driven to repent and bear fruits worthy of repentance. This can also include, however, a certain light-heartedness, a willingness not to take ourselves too seriously. Only those who can smile at themselves can be ultimately serious about other selves. Hope embraces the risk of self-criticism as the way to renewal.

To live in hope is to risk dialogue. Genuine encounter with others can challenge us to vacate positions of special privilege and render ourselves vulnerable. To enter dialogue with people of other faiths and ideologies is to risk having one's own faith shaken and to discover that there are other ways to state the truth than we have yet learned ourselves. The dialogue with Jews holds special promise and difficulties; promise of enrichment, because with no other people are our common roots so deep; difficulties, because the theological and political questions which arise threaten to divide us from one another as well as from them. Because in dialogue we can receive a fuller understanding of our own faith and a deeper understanding of our neighbour, hope is not afraid of dialogue.



To live in hope is to risk cooperation with those from whom we differ. When we join with others in immediate human tasks we risk being used and absorbed. But when we find those who, not acknowledging the name of Christ, are serving humanity, we can side with them, both for the sake of all God's children and, if occasion permits, to give account of our own hope. Hope is willing to risk cooperation with those who are different.

To live in hope is to risk new forms of community between women and men. This calls for a grace and understanding that can take past structures, stereotypes and resentments and transmute them into new forms of living together, both inside and outside the Church. We are challenged to discover on the basis of scripture and tradition contemporary ways to express mutuality and equality, and especially to understand anew what it means to be created in the image of God.

To live in hope is to risk scorn. To most of our contemporaries our hope appears vain; it is at best irrelevant, at worst malevolent. To live in hope is nevertheless to continue to witness to the saving power of Jesus Christ, whether we are ignored or attacked. Because to spread the Gospel is not only our mission but also our privilege and joy, we can run the risk of ridicule.

To live in hope is to risk death for the sake of that hope. No Christian may decide that someone else should be a martyr. But each of us confronts the likelihood that faithful witness can be costly witness. The Christian hope is not that death can be avoided, but that death can be overcome. Those who truly live in hope have come to terms with death and can risk dying with Christ. For some that is rhetoric; for others it is the bedrock assurance from which they face each new day. To live in hope is to embrace the risk of death for the sake of that hope.

"The saying is sure  
if we have died with him, we shall also live with him;  
if we suffer, we shall also reign with him;  
if we deny him, he also will deny us;  
if we are faithless, he remains faithful -  
for he cannot deny himself."

(II Tim. 2:11-13)

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, N. Y. 10022

- 13C1C -

TO: ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT

PAYMENT AUTHORIZATION

Date September 22, 1978

Pay to: WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS  
CASE POSTALE 191  
Address: 1211 Geneve 20  
1, Rue de Varembe  
Switzerland

\$ 441.30

Amount In Words: FOUR HUNDRED FORTY ONE DOLLARS AND THIRTY CENTS.

EXPLANATION OUR SHARE FOR INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING OF  
CATHOLICS AND JEWS IN MADRID, SPAIN APRIL 5-7, 1978

SEE ATTACHED STATEMENT.....

PLEASE SEND CHECK TO RABBI TANENBAUM BEFORE Sept. 28th.....

Accounting Charges

Department INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Division \_\_\_\_\_

Budget Item 1-4-6

Payment and charge authorized by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature



STATEMENT OF EXPENSES

INTERNATIONAL LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING OF CATHOLICS AND JEWS

Madrid, Spain 5-7 April 1978

a.	IJCIC share in the closing banquet at the Community	Ptas 44,000
b.	Refreshments	6,000
c.	Tape recording	40,000
d.	Secretarial help	10,000
e.	Photographs	11,000
f.	Photocopies of documents	7,790
g.	Distribution of Press release (taxis)	1,895
h.	Bus to Toledo	6,750
i.	Miscellaneous Community expenses	7,825

TOTAL EXPENSES TO BE SHARED

Ptas 135,920

BETWEEN THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:

=====

1.	American Jewish Committee	- 25%	Ptas 33,980	= US\$ 441.30
2.	B B. - A.D.L.	- 25%	33,980	= 441.30
3.	Synagogue Council of America	- 25%	33,980	= 441.30
4.	World Jewish Congress	- 25%	33,980	= 441.30

Ptas 135,920 =US\$1,765.20

=====

Rate: \$1 = Ptas 77



EUROPEAN OFFICE • 41, Rue Paul Doumer, 75016 Paris, France • Tel. 503-0156, 520-0660 • Cable: Wishcom, Paris

*offices. Wishcom, Paris*

SEP 20 1978

September 15, 1978.

Memorandum

To: Bertram H. Gold  
From: Zachariah Shuster  
Subject: Bill for Catholic - Jewish Meeting in Madrid.

I am sending herewith the statement of the expenditures of the World Jewish Congress on behalf of the IJCIC participants in the International Liason Committee of Catholics and Jews which held its meeting in Madrid on April 5-7.

As you see our share amounts to the sum of \$441.30. I am confident that you will take care of this bill at the first opportunity.

I wish to extend to Sylvia and yourself my best wishes for a healthy and Happy New Year.

*ZS*

*more amount  
ref payment*

RICHARD MAASS, President ■ MAYNARD I. WISHNER, Chairman, Board of Governors ■ MORTON K. BLAUSTEIN, Chairman, National Executive Council ■ HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, Chairman, Board of Trustees ■ GERARD WEINSTOCK, Treasurer ■ LEONARD C. YASEEN, Secretary ■ ROBERT L. HOROWITZ, Associate Treasurer ■ THEODORE ELLENOFF, Chairman, Executive Committee ■ Honorary Presidents: MORRIS B. ABRAM, LOUIS CAPLAN, IRVING M. ENGEL, ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG, PHILIP E. HOFFMAN, ELMER L. WINTER ■ Honorary Vice-Presidents: NATHAN APPLEMAN, RUTH R. GODDARD, JACK A. GOLDFARB, ANDREW GOODMAN, EMERY E. KLINEMAN, JAMES MARSHALL, WILLIAM ROSENWALD ■ MAX M. FISHER, Honorary Chairman, National Executive Council ■ MAURICE GLINERT, Honorary Treasurer ■ JOHN SLAWSON, Executive Vice-President Emeritus ■ Vice-Presidents: STANFORD M. ACELSTEIN, Harle City, S.D.; JORDAN C. BAND, Cleveland; EDITH S. COLIVER, San Francisco; DAVID HIRSCHHORN, Baltimore; RAYMOND F. KRAVIS, Tulsa; ALFRED H. MOSES, Washington, D.C.; ELAINE PETSCHKE, Westchester; MERVIN H. RISEMAN, New York; RICHARD E. SHERWOOD, Los Angeles; SHERMAN H. STARR, Boston; ELISE D. WATERMAN, New York ■



IJCIC

44-28



## SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA

## memorandum

to: Members of IJCIC  
from: Michael Wyschogrod  
subject: Next Meeting  
date: October 26, 1978

*For Rabbi  
& Joseph Eliezer  
met attend*

There will be a meeting of IJCIC

DATE: Wednesday, Nov. 22, 1978

TIME: 12:30 P.M. (Luncheon will be served)

PLACE: Conference Room - Synagogue Council of America  
432 Park Avenue South, New York City  
(near 30th Street)

to hear a report from Dr. Joseph Lichten on recent developments  
in Rome.

Please return the enclosed card promptly in order to facilitate  
our arrangements.

Kindest regards.

MW:hfe  
Enclosure



Central Office  
P.O. Box No. 66  
150, route de Ferney  
1211 Geneva 20 - Switzerland  
Tel. (022) 98 94 00  
Telex: 23 423 OIK CH  
Cable: OIKOUMENE GENEVA

## COMMISSION OF THE CHURCHES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

of The World Council of Churches

Moderator: Olo Dahlén

Director: Leopoldo J. Nillus

November 1978

To: Member churches of the WCC  
National Councils affiliated to the WCC  
WCC Central Committee members

Dear Friends,

I. The WCC Executive Committee meeting in Helsinki, Finland, September 18-22, 1978, requested

"in view of the crucial developments in the Middle East which cause great anxiety and concern expressed at this meeting ... about issues related to the life and witness of Christian churches in the region",

that:

"the General Secretary and the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs share with member churches of the WCC and national councils affiliated to it, before the Central Committee meeting in January 1979, stated positions of the WCC regarding the Middle East, information on recent developments and involvements of the WCC in the region".

II. The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the WCC, therefore, requested by the General Secretary of the WCC, on the basis of the Executive Committee mandate earlier referred to, is herewith sending to you documents, reports and information with regard to:

- stated positions of the WCC regarding the Middle East,
- information on recent developments, and
- involvements of the WCC in the region.

III. The documents and information are as follows:

1. WCC stated positions regarding the Middle East

1.1. Statements by the WCC Fifth Assembly, Nairobi 1975, on The Middle East and Jerusalem,

./.



1.2. Statement by the WCC Executive Committee, March 1976,  
on Lebanon,

1.3. Statement by the WCC Central Committee, August 1976,  
on Lebanon,

1.4. Statement by the WCC Central Committee, August 1976,  
on Cyprus, and

1.4.1. Statement by the WCC Executive Committee, April 1975,  
on Cyprus.

## 2. Information on recent developments in the Middle East

2.1. A report on recent developments and trends in the Middle East, by the General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), Mr. Gabriel Habib.

2.2. Observations stemming from staff travel to Israel and Occupied Territories, May 1978.

2.3. Summary of the Camp David Agreements, related documents and the current stage of negotiations.

## 3. Humanitarian and material aid involvements of the WCC in the region

## IV. Some general observations

1) The unresolved conflicts in the Middle East have escalated in the immediate past and pose serious threat to peace in the region and globally. The escalation in military terms has been accompanied by an extension in the geographical areas involved. In addition to the traditional trouble spots of Israel, Palestine, Lebanon and Cyprus, attention should be paid to Iran.

2) Any successful peace negotiations in the Middle East need to include the parties directly concerned, namely Israel and Palestinians. The core of the conflict remains the Israeli-Palestinian one. In the absence of concrete processes towards a solution of this basic issue, there seems to be scarce prospects of lasting peace in the area.

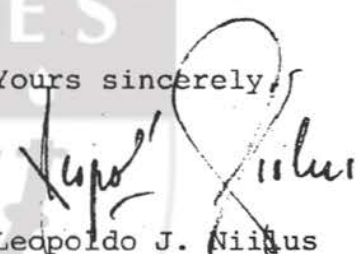
3) Lebanon is still the clearest expression and epicentre of many trends in the area. On Lebanon the WCC emphasis continues to be on political solutions that would safeguard the unity and territorial integrity of Lebanon and maintain it as a country where people of various faiths and cultures live together in peace and harmony.

4) Opportunities available for churches inside and outside the area for peace efforts should be further explored. However, the concern for peace in the Middle East must be based on the realities as they present themselves. It must be based on a universal concern for human beings in a difficult and complex position. Often Christians outside the area have based their opinions on their own theological view of the future of the area. The historical Christian churches in the area complain that Western Christians, who visit the Holy Land in large numbers, do not take up sufficient contact with them or learn from them about their life and work.

This is a challenge to both Christian-Jewish as well as Christian-Muslim dialogue.

It is finally a challenge to Christian peace efforts, which must take into account the fact that peace, in the Judaeo-Christian conception of SHALOM, is not only the absence of war, but the fulfillment of justice.

Yours sincerely,

  
Leopoldo J. Nilus  
Director

P.S. The French or German translations of this letter and enclosures will reach those of you concerned at the soonest. Please excuse the delay due to the heavy pressure on the WCC Language Service prior to the Central Committee meeting in Jamaica, January 1979.

12



THE MIDDLE EAST

1. The World Council of Churches has expressed concern regarding the situation in the Middle East on previous occasions. Events which have occurred in the area during the meeting of the Fifth Assembly in Nairobi have demonstrated anew that tensions persist there unabated.

2. We are concerned at the continued escalation of military power in the area which can only aggravate the threat to world peace from the unresolved conflict and stress the necessity for the great world powers to cease furnishing the arms which maintain and aggravate the tension.

3. We recognize that an international consensus has emerged as the basis for peaceful settlement on the following:

- a) Withdrawal by Israel from territories occupied in 1967.
- b) The right of all states including Israel and the Arab states to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.
- c) The implementation of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

We are encouraged that the parties to the conflict seem to be progressively willing to accept these principles.

4. We recognize the Second Sinai Disengagement Agreement as a means of reducing tension between Egypt and Israel. However, since it is not addressed to the fears and distrust among Israel, other neighbouring states, and the Palestinian people, this Agreement must be followed soon by resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference for reaching a total settlement on the basis of the principles mentioned above. The Geneva Conference should necessarily involve all parties concerned, including the Palestinians.

5. We note that some Arab States have recently declared their readiness, with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, to seek agreement with Israel based upon these principles.

6. Although the parties have not trusted one another sufficiently until now to engage in dialogue, full mutual recognition by the parties must be seen not as a precondition to, but rather as a product of the negotiation. We call upon all parties to take those steps essential to negotiations with hope for success. Among these steps, we emphasize the cessation of all military activity, both regular and irregular, including terrorism.

7. Peace in the Middle East must be based upon justice and security for all concerned. The well-being of each party depends upon the well-being of all other parties. We urge the churches to help their constituencies to have more accurate information on and more sensitive awareness of the various dimensions of the Middle East conflict. The churches could thus help to promote mutual trust among the parties and to develop a responsible involvement in peaceful solution on the part of their members and the government of their countries. This opportunity is open to churches within the area and the churches outside the area as well.



## JERUSALEM

1. For many millions of Christians throughout the world, as well as for the adherents of the two great sister monotheistic religions, namely Judaism and Islam, Jerusalem continues to be a focus of deepest religious inspiration and attachment. It is therefore their responsibility to cooperate in the creation of conditions that will ensure that Jerusalem is a city open to the adherents of all three religions; where they can meet and live together. The tendency to minimize Jerusalem's importance for any of these three religions should be avoided.
2. The special legislation regulating the relationship of the Christian communities and the authorities, guaranteed by international treaties (Paris 1856 and Berlin 1878) and the League of Nations and known as the Status Quo of the Holy Places must be fully safeguarded and confirmed in any agreement concerning Jerusalem. Christian Holy Places in Jerusalem and neighbouring areas belong to the greatest extent to member churches of the WCC. On the basis of the Status Quo none of the church authorities of a given denomination could represent unilaterally and on behalf of all Christians the Christian point of view, each church authority of a given denomination representing only its own point of view.
3. Many member churches of the WCC are deeply concerned about the Christian Holy Places. However, the question of Jerusalem is not only a matter of protection of the Holy Places, it is organically linked with living faiths and communities of people in the Holy City. Therefore the General Assembly deems it essential that the Holy Shrines should not become mere monuments of visitation, but should serve as living places of worship integrated and responsive to Christian communities who continue to maintain their life and roots within the Holy City and for those who out of religious attachments want to visit them.
4. While recognizing the complexity and emotional implications of the issues surrounding the future status of Jerusalem, the General Assembly believes that such status has to be determined within the general context of the settlement of the Middle East conflict in its totality.
5. However, the Assembly thinks that apart from any politics, the whole settlement of the inter-religious problem of the Holy Places should take place under an international aegis and guarantee which ought to be respected by the parties concerned as well as the ruling authorities.
6. The General Assembly recommends that the above should be worked out with the most directly concerned member churches, as well as with the Roman Catholic Church. These issues should also become subjects for dialogue with Jewish and Muslim counter-parts.
7. The Assembly expresses its profound hope and fervent prayers for the peace and welfare of the Holy City and all its inhabitants.



In deep compassion and sympathy with the people of Lebanon, inflicted with further suffering as a result of the eruption of renewed fighting, the Executive Committee of the WCC:

- appeals to the people and all parties involved in Lebanon to renounce violence, and to spare human lives through a renewed commitment to finding negotiated solutions;
- prays that God will help them, in this peaceful way, to restore the harmonious community life which made Lebanon a symbol of hospitality, unit and peace, and to establish a society with justice and dignity for all;
- realizing that the conflict in Lebanon is essentially political, not religious, renews the repeated appeals of the WCC to its member churches and to governments concerned to do their utmost in supporting efforts to bring a just peace to Lebanon and the whole Middle East;
- expresses its gratitude to the member churches for the support they have given to the humanitarian assistance programmes of the WCC, in collaboration with the MECC, to bring relief to the victims of this conflict, regardless of their religious, ethnic or political affiliation;
- appeals to the member churches to continue and intensify this support.

1.3. RESOLUTION ON LEBANON

The WCC Central Committee, meeting in Geneva, August 1976, endorses the statement of the Executive Committee of the WCC made in March 1976 declaring that "the conflict in Lebanon is essentially political, not "religious" and appealing to "the people and all parties involved in Lebanon to renounce violence, and to spare human lives through a renewed commitment to finding negotiated solutions". The Central Committee commends the pastoral letter of the officers of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) sent in June 1976 to member churches in Lebanon where they affirmed that "our Christian faith compels us to create a spirit of unity, understanding and cooperation towards the well-being of all people in Lebanon regardless to their religious and political affiliation". The Central Committee further appeals to the mass media to avoid describing the Lebanon crisis as a religious conflict.

The Central Committee recognizes that urgently needed short-term relief and long-term reconciliation, for which the MECC and member churches, among others, are working and praying, are still imperilled by indiscriminate but also by calculated killing and destruction. Civilian populations have often been the first to suffer, for example in Damour, Koura and Tel Al-Zaatar, and they need immediate humanitarian relief. But such outrages can only be avoided in the future if the spirit of reconciliation in terms of forgiveness, understanding and reconstruction is revived. The people and the leadership of Lebanon, together with all their neighbours, need to recreate the unity of Lebanon as a unique challenge of hospitality and peace between people of different faiths and ideologies.

The Central Committee expresses gratitude to the churches for their willing assistance to people affected by the conflict in spite of almost unsurmountable difficulties. It urges them to continue and expand participation in relief and rehabilitation efforts as the tragedy continues and new avenues of assistance become open.

The Central Committee is convinced that any work for the establishment of a just and unified society in Lebanon would contribute significantly to implementation of the national rights of the Palestinians to self-determination. Conversely any solutions to the wider problems of the Middle East need to be related to resolution of the Lebanon crisis. The Central Committee reiterates the conviction of the WCC Fifth Assembly that "the well-being of each party in the Middle East depends upon the well-being of all other parties".

#### 1.4. RESOLUTION ON CYPRUS

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches meeting in Geneva, 10 to 18 August 1976, reiterates its deep concern about the situation in Cyprus and the plight of 200.000 refugees and is alarmed by the continuing failure to implement successive UN General Assembly, Security Council and Commission on Human Rights Resolutions on Cyprus. It is gravely concerned by the continuing expulsion of Greek Cypriots from their homeland in the North, the changing of the demographic pattern of Cyprus and the desecration of religious and sacred places.

The Central Committee therefore:

- calls for the immediate implementation of all relevant UN Resolutions on Cyprus,
- urges the Turkish government to put an immediate end to the expulsion of Greek Cypriots and to the organized immigration of Turks to the island and that the return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in safety be facilitated,
- calls for due respect for religious and sacred places,
- calls for immediate resumption in a meaningful and constructive manner of the negotiations between the representatives of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities under the auspices of the Secretary General of the UN, to be conducted freely and on the basis of equality with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable agreement based on their fundamental and legitimate rights.



1.4.1. STATEMENT ON CYPRUS

The Executive Committee of the WCC meeting in Geneva (14-18 April 1975) welcomes the announcement by the United Nations of the resumption of direct talks between the representatives of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, on the initiative and with the participation of the Secretary General of the United Nations in Vienna, on 28 April. The resumption of these talks is an urgently needed step towards solving the complex problems in Cyprus with their tragic and dangerous dimensions. The Executive Committee expresses the hope that these talks will lead to mutual respect and cooperation between the two communities.

The Executive Committee urges especially in the context of the plans for talks between the two communities that all parties directly or indirectly involved strictly refrain from seeking to impose any solution which does not take full account of the real will and desire of the Cypriot people themselves.

Notwithstanding the hoped for long-term benefits of the Vienna talks, the Executive Committee, reiterating the substance of the statements made by the WCC Central Committee (Berlin, August 1974), strongly urges the implementation of the UN General Assembly's resolution No. 3212 requesting the speedy withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from the Republic of Cyprus, in the framework of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Executive Committee notes with deep regret that, though five months have elapsed since the unanimous adoption of the resolution by the UN, no effort has been made towards its implementation.

The Executive Committee strongly urges all parties concerned to undertake the necessary steps which would effectively enable the early and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes. The Executive Committee affirms that refugees and uprooted people should not be used as pawns in negotiations or become the object of political exploitation.

## 2.1. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Issues of ethnic and religious groups, nationalisms and territorial integrity of countries in the Middle East are unfortunately today intertwined with expressions of interests of many countries in the neighbourhood and outside the region.

Within the states of the region, internal contradictions - economic, political, social, cultural, religious - have been exacerbated by the ongoing conflict as well. Some of these contradictions even tend to become essential parts of it.

These negative interlinkages from within and from without have the clearest expression and epicenter in Lebanon even though they are increasingly noticeable elsewhere in the region.

They all have urgent and important bearing on the life and witness of the Christian churches in the Middle East.

Some of the new trends and tendencies are highlighted in the report by Mr. Gabriel Habib, General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC).

The contents of this report are excerpts from a memorandum of August 1977 written to the Middle East Committee of the NCCCUSA. However, the substance of the memo still holds as a most relevant background for the understanding of political, social and religious issues in the Middle East.



led with other factors to the two years war, from which that country is still recovering. Such a situation only serves the purpose of those forces, which are designing an ethno-religious structure for the future Middle Eastern societies.

- c) There seem to be serious efforts being made to replace secular ideologies with religious ideologies. This is why one is witnessing the emergence of conservative Muslim political groups and the emergence of extremist right-wing religious leadership in Israel with Begin coming to power with the Talmud in hand, as well as the appearance of tendencies among some Christians towards establishing Christian political entities. The defenders of such policies consider secular ideologies dangerous as by aiming at the separation of state from religion they create a favorable atmosphere for Marxism and Communism, or at least conducive to a sort of Western cultural ethos infavorable to Islam and Israeli Judaism.

President Carter, with his emphasis on the biblical tradition and his efforts to give the United States a new image in the area of political ethics, may indirectly be encouraging fundamentalist teachings stimulates not only conservative Christian tendencies, but also conservative reactions on the part of Muslims and Jews toward the Christian community in the area. This is the reason that I think a close, ecumenical presence directed at President Carter and the administration is very important. There would be opportunity to bring the necessary corrective to bear on conservative advocates and the religious implications of U.S. policy affected by this point of view.

## II. MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS

It is very legitimate to promote Muslim-Christian dialogue and relations within the NCC. There are enough positive theological and historical arguments to encourage such developments. However, I would like to share with you the following concerns and questions that you might need to take into consideration:

- a) I hope that you will avoid making the same mistake in your relation to Islam that was made with Judaism. Because of past Christian persecution of the Jews, you were misled by an understandable guilt complex in developing a certain type of Christian-Jewish (more particularly zionist) dialogue in favor of Israel. Western Christianity has had a war relationship during the Crusades with Muslim Arabs. As Islam is now in a position of power, you may

be tempted for economic and political reasons to take an overzealous approach to a type of Western Christian-Muslim dialogue, which may be carried without taking into account the concerns and dilemmas of the Christian communities in the Arab world. It is therefore imperative to take seriously the reality of these Christian communities, before setting the bases and strategy of your dialogue at the expense of their presence and witness in the predominantly Moslem society.

- b) Theological discussions with the Muslims are important, but in the Western world they tend to become an intellectual exercise, which sometimes serves the political needs of the Western Christians. This is the case with Christian-Marxist discussions in the West, whereas, in Marxist-dominated countries, the dialogue is non-existent or is experienced completely differently. What is called dialogue in the West is called existential living or witness in the Middle East.
- c) On the other hand, we have the duty to help Muslims understand that the Church is not a super-international power, but is what they see at home in their own countries. Therefore, when churches in the United States relate to Saudi Arabia, Libya, or another Islamic country, they must do it in close collaboration with the local Christians. We need you to help Muslims recognize that the Christian communities in the Middle East are a part of the universal Church, but you need us to give Muslims the right understanding of the nature of the local church. The Muslims should rediscover that the Christian power is not the Western political and economic power, but is that of the Holy Spirit, who could be manifested in the local politically and economically powerless Christian communities.
- d) My last remark on this subject is more complicated, and might appear strange to you. We all know that there is a pre-history involved in relationships between Islam and Christianity. There has been a history of war and colonialism in which Muslims have always considered themselves an oppressed majority, needing independence and liberty from Western powers which, to them, were the expression of Christian culture and religion. Now that Muslims have economic power in their hands, they are seizing the occasion to take their rightful place in the world community. This is a legitimate aspiration. But unfortunately this aspiration is not helped by the world juncture to be fulfilled in a normal way.



1. The American/Saudi Arabian alliance, expressed in technology and petro-dollar exchange, is making those two powers willing to do anything to protect the region from Soviet influence. One of the measures taken is the encouragement of religious ideologies which then become a bulwark of the national security. A stronger Muslim religion in the Middle East is, for the powers concerned a bastion against atheism and Marxism and thus a strengthening of the national security. The temptation for the leaders who are creating such an atmosphere is to overlook the fate of the Christian Community set in the midst of conservative and assertive Moslem groups which are taking the opportunity to gain more power.

2. Libya and Saudi Arabia are both aiming to preserve the region from materialist-secular ideologies, with Libya taking the way of Islamic Socialism, and Saudi Arabia the way of Islamic Capitalism. Both are proposing, however, that Islam becomes the inspiration of the future society, whether within a capitalist or a socialist program.

3. The Israeli concept of existence on one hand, and recent expressions of conservative Islam on the other are both opposed to a concept of Christian community which in the post-Constantinian era became open to various secular forms of society. Arabism was a secular ideology originating in Western rationalism and promoted by the Arab Christians in view of separating Arabs from Turks, and thus forming a society based on modern "Western" nationalist ideologies instead of Islam. Therefore, if Christians continue to call today for the separation of state from religion, they could be viewed in the eyes of Israel and conservative Islam as a dangerous "missionary" or "revolutionary" group trying to desintegrate Islamic and Israeli theocracies.

4. Consequently, currently there seems to be a coincidental theological correlation between conservative Islamic and Israeli Jewish objectives as far as the future of society in the Middle East is concerned. I am asking you to be open and positive in witnessing to our faith, but you should be careful not to be led to compromise against the Christian vision of man and society and thus affect the life and destiny of the Christian community in the Middle East.

There are two theological assumptions that have been reflected in the Israeli concept of existence. One is the concept of power, which has been discussed through the World Council of Churches Christian-Jewish dialogue. The Jewish partner is trying to convince us that spiritual power cannot be separated from political power. That is why some Christians, influenced by this thinking, are conceiving a political existence for the Christian communities in the Middle East.

Secondly there is the concept of the community of communities which also has been discussed in the World Council of Churches in Christian-Jewish dialogue. According to Jewish sources, the world is not moving toward the goal Christians have always perceived, one world community, a vision based on their vision of the cosmic Christ, in whom there is no Arab, nor Greek, nor Jew etc. The world is rather a community of communities, each one having its own source of inspiration, philosophy of existence, and self-understanding

The concepts of power and community of communities, which are subject to theoretical discussions in the West are now being violently implemented in the Middle East. On the other hand, when I watch television here in New York, especially when I listen to Sunday worship services, as I did last Sunday just for my own education, I feel as if the era of the "main line ecumenical churches" is over. A new era of fundamentalist Christianity is beginning and becoming a world phenomenon. Religious alliances seem to be developing against atheism as a political security. In the Middle East Christians are also called to convert their mission to Judaism and Islam into a dialogue based on the concept of self-understanding and into relations based on a political balance of power between the three religious communities.

### III. MISSION THEOLOGY

My last point is related to the issue of Western Christian mission in the Middle East. Here also I am glad to notice through Mr. Butler's report the serious attempts you are making in promoting better understanding of the vocation of the churches in the Middle East, as well as the imperatives of their Christian witness in the region. However, a great deal remains to be done towards a deeper ecumenical approach to relations with those churches and to Christian mission in general. A serious change of policy and strategy must be considered on the official level as soon as possible. The Middle East Council of Churches has expressed its views on this subject at the Consultation on "Dialogue and Witness" held in Broummana in 1975. A MECC delegation came to New York and discussed with you the need for a new approach to mission and witness. It is your turn to take concrete action in this respect on denominational and interdenominational levels. In my humble opinion a change of policy should include the following objectives:

- A. The main aim of missions in the Middle East today should be the fulfillment of Christian unity.

The divisions of the Christian in the early centuries have led to the emergence of Islam as a substitute religion. The divisions of the Christians in the twentieth century contributed to the emergence of modern Israel, which is in some Western theology, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. Facing the conservative and



assertive Islamic and Israeli theocracies, Christianity in the Middle East cannot afford to be any longer divided. If compromise with the new religious ideologies or political existence cannot be a genuine Christian way of life, then our only witness is to reflect sacramentally the one body of Jesus Christ so that we may be one as He and His Father are one and that the world would see that He has sent us and thus believe. Consequently,

- B. The missionary movement should be transformed from a divisive factor through proselytism and competition into a movement of Christian unity.

Despite its authentic inspiration and zeal to witness to Jesus Christ, and despite its positive results, the missionary movement could not avoid being objectively affected by Western cultural, political, and economic colonialist interests and thus become a cultural and to a certain extent a divisive political factor in the "mission field". In the Middle East in particular, the ongoing negligence by the missionary movement of the ecclesial value and vocation of the local churches - Orthodox in the beginning and Protestant later - has made the missionary movement to a serious extent a divisive ecclesiastical factor in the life of the churches in the region. It is now of historic importance that the churches in the West contribute to foster a new era of genuine vicarious ecumenicity in the Middle East, where the Christian faith and existence are greatly challenged.

- C. Theological understanding should be reestablished in order to help reintegrate mission with its motivation and goals into the process of building the one body of Christ

In certain American circles, the prevailing concept of the Church being mission has to a great extent reduced the nature of the Church to its missionary dimensions. And as mission is traditionally conceived as an activity abroad, the result is that Church vitality at home is measured by the number of projects this or that Church is undertaking in a foreign land or mission field. Thus the institutional system that developed among some American Churches through the years seems to necessitate a perpetration of activity abroad through funds and personnel to satisfy the need at home to do mission disregarding the dynamics, the socio-political situation and the imperatives of church unity and witness at the receiving end. This means that the taken for granted ecclesiology and interdenominationalism in the USA becomes problematic to unity and witness abroad. Therefore a serious theological review will shift relationships with the Middle East region from institutional and financial cooperation or comprehension into an experience of love, unity and common witness.

## 2.2. OBSERVATIONS STEMMING FROM STAFF TRAVEL TO ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

In May this year two CCIA staff members, Leopoldo J. Niilus and Erich Weingärtner, spent ten days in the Holy Land - Tel Aviv, Nazareth (Israel), West Bank, Jerusalem - on an informal fact finding tour, undertaken in full cooperation with WCC member churches in the area. Besides visiting the latter, they had meetings with a number of Jewish, Christian and Muslim personalities in order to be able better to assess the internal situation in the area. A wealth of information was collected including some insights which have not been widely publicized in the media and are also little known among the world Christian community. Two aspects which can be deemed to be relevant for the life and witness of the Christians in the area as well as potentially significant for peace, justice and reconciliation in the Middle East at large, are mentioned below.

### I. Concern about the diminishing presence of Christians

Growing concern was registered among our member churches about what they view as a systematic "de-christianization". This is due to a cluster of reasons.

1. There is a rapid decline in the population of Christians, not only in Israel proper but also in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza strip. This decline is felt especially in East Jerusalem, where according to Jerusalem Post the 1967 Christian population was at about 24.000, whereas today it is reduced to 9.000. Measured by the current population growth, the number should presently be around 45.000. Although some spoke of a "de-christianization", this is not entirely accurate, since the decline affects all Palestinians, Christians and Muslims alike. A number of reasons were cited for this decrease:

1.1 The continuing expropriation, legal or administrative, of Palestinian land and property thereon has forced thousands to settle elsewhere, many disillusioned people leaving the area entirely. In the Old Town of Jerusalem, where 80% of the property is owned by Christians, it is clear that Christians are affected more than others. The Jewish quarters of Old Jerusalem are being renovated and expanded with no apparent limit. To counteract this encroachment, the Christian churches of Jerusalem have launched renovation and building projects of their own, but cannot finance this exclusively with their own resources. Surrounding East Jerusalem, the Israeli government has built immense high-rise complexes, including the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. These buildings are termed by the local people as "the second wall of Jerusalem". The expropriation of Palestinian properties - or legal, administrative and fiscal measures leading to it - is a phenomenon which affects not only



the occupied territories (e.g. by "absentee laws"), but also Israel proper. A similar "surrounding" of (Old) Nazareth (the largest concentration of Palestinian citizens of Israel) by the buildings and industrial plants of "Upper Nazareth" ("Nazareth Elite"), the new Jewish city, has resulted in expropriation on a massive scale. A new organization, the Committee for the Defence of Arab Lands, which has many Christians in leadership positions, has listed at least 31 administrative and legal loopholes which have been used to appropriate Palestinian lands.

1.2 Consequent problems of housing has created conditions of overcrowding for the Palestinian (and therefore also Christian) population. It is clear that the vast building projects initiated and subventioned by the Israeli Government are not meant for non-Jews. There are no outwardly discriminatory laws which prevent Arabs from living in them, but again administrative measures and rent structures make it impossible for most Arabs to afford such housing. A number of housing projects have been initiated by Christian churches in the area to provide low-rent possibilities and even free housing, especially for young people, to encourage them to stay. Church leaders have pointed to the urgency of new housing projects which should be planned and financed on an ecumenical basis, with outside help for additional security.

1.3 Severely limited educational opportunities cause many young people to leave the area. A number of Christian primary schools in the occupied territories serve the entire Palestinian population. The schools in Israel proper which are meant for Palestinian children, are highly overcrowded and have primitive facilities and no possibilities of expansion. An even greater problem is higher education. Although the Palestinian population (citizens of Israel) is approximately 15%, the number of Palestinian young people attending universities in Israel is less than 2%. In the occupied territories, there are only two very small universities, the Protestant University at Bir Zeit, and the Catholic University at Bethlehem, both in the West Bank. Measures taken by the occupation military authorities against staff and students are plentiful and frequent. Recently there have been problems of work permits for expatriate professors of these universities. The teaching possibilities are limited to the humanities, with the result that graduates cannot find employment within the area. A projected Palestinian University in Nablus and a Polytechnical College in Ramallah have been fully planned and financed, but permission to begin construction has not been forthcoming for a number of years. This situation forces many young people to study abroad. To retain their citizenship, however, it is necessary for them to return to the area every year. This is too great an

economic strain for many. Only 20% of those who study outside the area ever return.

1.4 The above factors, as well as the endless military conflicts in the Middle East in general, the repeated Jewish settlements in occupied territories, the exclusion of Palestinians from recent peace negotiations and the apparently increasing factionalism among religious communities in the surrounding areas, leave especially Christians with a large-scale feeling of pessimism about the future. In this connection, the new law regarding "enticement to change religion" enacted by the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) in December 1977 has caused wide-spread disenchantment even among formerly pro-Israeli Christians. Although the law itself may be a minor episode (it has been described as a non-confessional anti-bribery law and the Attorney General, in response to international pressures which included Jewish representations, has directed that no case may be prosecuted without his prior approval), the debate within the Knesset showed a clear attitude not only against the evangelistic fringe groups of Christians, but against the mainstream and historic Christian churches in the area, which for church leaders without exception bodes ill for the future Christian presence.

## II. Present demographic factors in the State of Israel

1. One of the first laws enacted by the Israeli Knesset after 1948, the proclamation of the State of Israel, was the "Law of Return", which made it possible for every Jew world over to become citizen of Israel upon arrival. When Ben-Gurion made his impassioned pleas for immigrants to people the new-born State of Israel, he was addressing "European" Jews (from both the New and the Old Worlds) in particular. Apart from other historical reasons, it was the main source of high-quality manpower, armed with the technical skills, and the social and cultural attitudes which Israel needed. However, once the remnants of a Jewish population, which had been almost totally annihilated by the Nazi Third Reich had arrived or settled elsewhere, it was decided that "Oriental" Jews must be "ingathered" as well.

The result has been that the majority of the population presently residing in Israel are first and second-generation Israelis.

What is less known, however, is the demographic make-up of today's Israel. The majority of Israel's citizens do not originate from Europe but from a variety of Arab countries. Obviously, the background, type of education, cultural characteristics and even language and religious expression of these different groups of



immigrants vary as widely as do the countries from which they came. One of the most challenging task of the leaders of Israel is to mould these various peoples into one coherent nation.

2. Thus the population of today's Israel can be divided roughly into three broad ethnic categories:

- a) The largest group, roughly 65% of the population, are Oriental Jews, i.e. Jews who have been living for generations in Arab countries.
- b) The second largest group - 20% of the population - are the Jews originating from Europe (East and West) and North America.
- c) The third large group in Israel - about 15% - are Palestinians, Christians and Muslims, citizens of the State of Israel.

3. In spite of their numbers, the Oriental Jews are however today severely under-represented in all sectors of public and cultural life. Large sectors of them inhabit huge slum-areas, e.g. the Hatikva quarters surrounding Tel Aviv (also known as the "black belt"). They make up the bulk of common labourers and educational advancement is minimal. Less than 10% of university undergraduates in Israel are of Oriental Jewish origin. Although they make up the bulk of the footsoldiers of the armed forces of Israel, very few of them are officers. The Knesset seats almost 100% of Western Jews (also known as Ashkenazim).

4. From these facts it can be seen that the vast majority of Israeli citizens whose cultural background is Arab or has been shaped by centuries of Arab influence, have been marginalized from virtually all decision making processes, or positions, while a minority of some 20% of Israeli citizens whose culture has been most strongly influenced by Central and Eastern Europe, have virtually complete control of the political, economic, military, educational and cultural future of the country.

These demographic factors obviously have serious implications both for the internal politics of Israel and for peace and cooperation in the whole area.

## 2.3. SUMMARY OF THE CAMP DAVID AGREEMENTS, RELATED DOCUMENTS AND THE CURRENT STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS

Among the more significant events in the period have been President Anwar Sadat's dramatic peace initiative, which eventually led to the Camp David Summit, the immediate results of which have been the Camp David Agreements.

I. THE CAMP DAVID AGREEMENTS: What exactly are the Camp David Agreements?

1. On 17 September 1978, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel signed two documents:

A framework for peace in the Middle East (covering the future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, areas at present occupied by Israel).

A framework for the conclusion of a peace-treaty between Egypt and Israel.

2. The first document's main points, as agreed by the two statesmen are:

- 1) A five-year transitional period of civil self-rule for the Palestinians of these two areas;
- 2) Withdrawal of Israeli military forces in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to garrisons in specific locations;
- 3) Negotiations involving Egypt, Israel, elected representatives of the Palestinians, and of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, if it will join - in order to determine the final status of the area.
- 4) Israel will undertake not to establish new settlements in these areas, during the negotiations;
- 5) Security arrangements which may involve U.N. forces, special security zones, demilitarized zones and early warning stations be negotiated.

3. The second document's main points, as agreed by the two statesmen are:

- A. An Egyptian-Israeli peace-treaty is to be signed within three months;
- B. The Israeli forces will carry out a phased withdrawal from all the Sinai peninsula, beginning within three to nine months after the signing of the peace-treaty. The withdrawal is to be finalized within three years;
- C. The Israeli-controlled airfields, in the Sinai peninsula, are to be returned to Egyptian civilian control;
- D. Security zones of various kinds are to be established in the Sinai peninsula;
- E. Normal relations between Israel and Egypt will be established at the completion of the first major Israeli withdrawal.



4. The Camp David Agreements could lead, minimally, for the first time: a) to the formal recognition of the state of Israel by an Arab country; b) to the establishment of peace as opposed to non-belligerence between Israel and an Arab state.

5. However, some basic and immediately apparent shortcomings in these agreements have been pointed out by many knowledgeable observers.

Three fundamental issues have been indicated along these lines:

- a) The two signatories represent only a partial section of the parties involved in the Middle East conflict.
- b) The whole Palestinian question is left vague in extreme, both in regard to the future of the territories and about who is to represent the Palestinians, when and in what manner. Even though the text of the corresponding "framework" introduces some new and positive verbal elements, the exchange of letters accompanying the summit agreements virtually nullifies those elements, as we shall see later on.
- c) The whole issue of the status of Jerusalem has been omitted in the text of the Agreements and is only referred to in the accompanying letters. But there it is done again in a manner which clearly indicates that the two signatories have no common mind on this issue at all.

6. In regard to the Palestinian question the text of the Agreements does have some implications which should be noticed:

- For the first time, Israel co-signs a document mentioning the "Palestinian People";

- For the first time, Israel signs a document acknowledging that the Palestinian People has "legitimate rights", and that these legitimate rights must be "satisfied";

- "Other Palestinians", i.e. some Palestinians who do not come from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, are to participate, according to the document, in the projected Jordanian delegation to the desired peace-talks.

- "Swift, just and permanent solution of the refugee problem" is also talked of in the document.

## II. EXCHANGE OF LETTERS ACCOMPANYING THE SUMMIT AGREEMENTS

An exchange of letters between Messrs. Sadat, Begin and Carter accompanied the Camp David Agreements. They dealt with:

a) The status of Jerusalem; b) A definition of the terms "West Bank", "Palestinians" and "Palestinian People"; c) A statement of willingness by President Sadat to speak for the Arab side, if necessary, in the early stages of establishing a Palestinian self-government.

These letters can be deemed to have a special weight and relevance as their texts were released by the White House on September 22, 1978. Especially the following should merit our attention.

### On the status of Jerusalem

#### 1. Sadat to Carter, September 17, 1978

I am writing you to reaffirm the position of the Arab Republic of Egypt with respect to Jerusalem:

1) Arab Jerusalem is an integral part of the West Bank. Legal and historical Arab rights in the city must be respected and restored.

2) Arab Jerusalem should be under Arab sovereignty.

3) The Palestinian inhabitants of Arab Jerusalem are entitled to exercise their legitimate national rights, being part of the Palestinian people in the West Bank.

4) Relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 242 and 261, (garbles) with regard to Jerusalem. All the measures taken by Israel to alter the status of the city are null and void and should be rescinded.

5) All peoples must have free access to the city and enjoy the free exercise of worship and the right to visit and transit to the holy places without distinction or discrimination.

6) The holy places of each faith may be placed under the administration and control of their representatives.

7) Essential functions in the city should be undivided and a joint municipal council composed of an equal number of Arab and Israeli members can supervise the carrying out of these functions. In this way, the city shall be undivided.

Sincerely

(Signed) Mohamed Anwar E. Sadat."



2. Begin to Carter, September 17, 1978

"Dear Mr. President,

I have the honor to inform you, Mr. President, that on 28 June 1967 Israel's parliament (the Knesset) promulgated and adopted a law to the effect: "The government is empowered by a decree to apply the law, the jurisdiction and administration of the state to any part of Eretz Israel (Land of Israel-Palestine), as stated in that decree".

On the basis of this law, the government of Israel decreed in July 1967 that Jerusalem is one city indivisible, the capital of the state of Israel.

Sincerely  
(Signed) Menachem Begin."

3. Carter to Sadat, September 22, 1978 (\*)

"Dear Mr. President,

I have received your letter of September 17, 1978, setting forth the Egyptian position on Jerusalem. I am transmitting a copy of that letter to Prime Minister Begin for his information.

The position of the United States on Jerusalem remains as stated by Ambassador Goldberg in the United Nations General Assembly in June 1967, and subsequently by Ambassador Yost in the United Nations Security Council on July 1, 1969.

Sincerely  
(Signed) Jimmy Carter."

(\*) In regard to the positions stated by Ambassador Goldberg in the U.N. General Assembly in June 1967, and by Ambassador Yost in the U.N. Security Council on July 1, 1969, the following should be noted:

1) On 14 July 1967 the U.N. General Assembly adopted Resolution No. 2254 (ES-V), "Deploing Measures Taken by Israel to Change the Status of Jerusalem".

In favor: 99. Against: None. Abstained: 18, including USA.

2) On 3 July 1969 the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 267 (1969), "Calling Once More on Israel to Rescind All Measures to Change the Status of Jerusalem".

In substance both resolutions reiterate the call to Israel to rescind all measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking any action which would alter the status of Jerusalem.

The Security Council resolution referred to above also: a) reaffirms "the established principle that acquisition of territory by military conquest is inadmissible; b) confirms "that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel which purport to alter the status of Jerusalem, including expropriation of land and properties thereon, are invalid and cannot change that status".

On the terms: "West Bank", "Palestinians"  
and "Palestinian People"

4. Carter to Begin, September 22, 1978

"Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I hereby acknowledge that you have informed me as follows:

A. In each paragraph of the agreed framework document the expressions "Palestinians" or "Palestinian People" are being and will be construed and understood by you as "Palestinian Arabs".

B. In each paragraph in which the expression "West Bank" appears, it is being, and will be, understood by the government of Israel as Judea and Samaria.

Sincerely yours  
(Signed) Jimmy Carter."

III. PRESENT STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

1. At the moment of this writing two conflicting interpretations are blocking the first step of implementation namely the signing of the peace-treaty between Egypt and Israel. Are the two Agreements integral part of one overall package or does each of them stand on its own? While Israel claims that each of the two documents stands on its own, having lately admitted some minimal relationship, Egypt forwards the doctrine of full linkage, with precise timings to commence the implementation of the future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

2. Therefore, growing concern is being expressed that not only necessary additional substantial steps to complement and broaden the Agreements are very remote, but that the implementation of the most immediate steps foreseen by the Agreements themselves are in serious danger.

3. It is also held that the danger of a twofold modus operandi which has traditionally characterized the Middle East negotiation policies up to now has not been overcome this time either. One of the policies of this double concept is the "empty framework" approach, filled in by what one (or the other) party would make it to mean, neither more nor less. The other has been the "concept of stages", which is not meant to promote changes leading to genuine peace processes but to implement unchanged and preconceived policies.



4. Thence the fear that the Camp David Agreements at their best might produce the prolongation of "no war, no peace situation", and at their worst lead to more open conflagrations, especially in or over Lebanon.

The Lebanese situation has again proved to be the barometer of Middle East affairs, having become even more precarious after the Camp David Summit.

### 3. HUMANITARIAN AND MATERIAL AID INVOLVEMENTS OF THE WCC IN THE AREA

The Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) of the WCC, in addition to its regular projects' work in the area (involving some 90 ICA and development projects, totalling approximately \$ 4.5 mil.) has continued its special ministry towards Palestinian Refugees, by enabling the Middle East Council of Churches to implement its Palestine Refugee Programme. This is a yearly programme totalling \$ 1.5 mil. and it includes educational, vocational training, village development and rehabilitation projects in West Bank, Gaza, East Bank, Israel, Lebanon and Egypt.

In addition, CICARWS has launched an appeal and extended considerable material aid (totalling \$ 350.000) to Cypriot Refugees. Actually, in cooperation with the Orthodox church at Cyprus, CICARWS operates a Service Programme for Cypriot refugees in the field of rehabilitation and small business loans (\$ 60.000 per year).

During the period under review, almost all other emergency and aid actions in the Middle East arose out of situations in Lebanon.

In response to an MECC request, a limited appeal for \$ 33.000 was launched on 13 August 1975. In September, the MECC formed an Ad Hoc Committee for Relief and Reconstruction, based in Beirut, consisting of the Executive Committee of the Ecumenical Committee for Justice and Peace, Lebanon, and MECC Executive Committee members of Lebanon Churches. The declared aim was "to exercise the ministry of service to all those who are victims of the present crisis, irrespective of religious or confessional backgrounds".

In December a second CICARWS' emergency appeal for \$ 100.000 was launched, citing the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon. At this time, it was judged essential to use any available channel for aid and many CICARWS related agencies provided material aid and funds through their own links.

In February 1976, the first MECC Ad Hoc Committee activity report was received, and food, medicines and other material aid amounting to \$ 500.000 were requested.

By 17 April, the 29th ceasefire was proclaimed but there were escalations of the conflict with Syria becoming increasingly involved in the fighting, initially through Saiqa, a Syria-based Palestine armed force, and later through its own undisguised troops. During this month considerable material aid was received by MECC, but renewed fighting made it difficult to transport and distribute.

In May 1976, Syria entered Lebanon in force and Metropolitans Hazim, Khodr and Kurban formed a second Ad Hoc Committee coordinated in the Latakia Diocese of Hazim. They found this necessary because of the communication difficulties with Beirut. CICARWS channelled funds to Hazim and later Kurban, this being the only viable way of sending assistance to northern Lebanon and Syria.

By June 1976 MECC officers decided their only option was to operate from Cyprus and Cairo. The International Red Cross assisted in the shipment of medicines from Cyprus to Lebanon through ICRC channels. \$ 25.000 were given to them for this purpose.

By July, Metropolitan Kurban cited huge material damage and many dead and wounded in the Tripoli area and funds were advanced to him. The third CICARWS appeal for \$ 500.000 was launched on 14 July 1976, stressing that more than one channel for both money and material aid must be used because of the lack of communications within Lebanon, especially between Tripoli and Beirut. Metropolitan Hazim indicated a new wave of refugees in Syria and his request for financial help was met by CICARWS. During this month we heard from MECC concerning the receipt and distribution of food and clothing. The PLO representative in Geneva, together with the Ambassadors of the U.N. Missions of Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, Libya, Jordan and Algeria, were informed of WCC concern over the mounting loss of life among Lebanese civilians and Palestinian refugees and of the CICARWS' actions. MECC made further requests for food and medicines, but Beirut port was blockaded and Tripoli, with 40.000 displaced persons, especially affected. Metropolitan Hazim and Gaby Habib, MECC, met and recommended to the MECC General Secretariat that the Ad Hoc Relief Committee needed re-organizing.



By the end of August, the Ad Hoc Committee reported receipt and distribution of material aid and cited some losses en route. Distribution was extremely difficult and even the ICRC had great difficulties in this area. Normal banking facilities being non-operative, fund transfers via the diplomatic pouch of a friendly Embassy were arranged. Channels used for distribution of blankets, clothing, medicines, food and cash included Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Maronite, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Evangelical and Muslim. Meanwhile, MECC continued discussions on its relief structure, it being recognized that civil war had paralyzed all internal communication and the MECC as an institution had not been equipped to face an emergency situation.

In October 1976, the MECC made further requests for material aid, but investigation showed that ICRC was the only organization then able to operate, as all borders and crossing points were sealed. It was decided to await the findings of the Cairo meeting of MECC officers who were studying a new MECC relief policy. This meeting took place in October 1976. It was agreed all relief operations would be conducted from Lebanon, the Ad Hoc Committee dissolved and a new Relief and Rehabilitation Committee formed. That particular civil war was over, after more than 50 ceasefires, 19 months of bloodshed and 60,000 deaths. An estimated \$ 20 billion was needed to rebuild the country. The newly formed MECC Committee for Relief and Reconstruction Work in Lebanon, with a full-time director, began work.

During a 20-month period, the most complicated and difficult situation ever dealt with by the CICARWS Emergency Desk, a total of at least \$ 800,000 in cash and material aid supplied by CICARWS and related agencies was handled and distributed by nine different church groups over a series of geographical regions, many of whom were out of contact with each other for long periods of time.

During the period of uneasy peace lasting from February 1977 until March 1978, the CICARWS Middle East Desk, in close cooperation with the Emergencies and Material Aid Desks and the MECC, carried the Lebanon Relief and Reconstruction Programme. The August 1977 appeal asked for \$ 2 million covering repair and reconstruction short and medium-term rehabilitation and long-term development. Over \$ 2 million have already been pledged and half of this sum already spent on repairs and short-term rehabilitation. The current hostilities have necessarily suspended this programme and the responsibility for Lebanon has reverted to the Emergencies Desk.

In March 1978, it was necessary to appeal for \$ 200.000 plus material aid to deal with the South Lebanon displaced persons' problem as a result of the Israeli invasion. This problem became even more complicated in August 1978 with new outbreaks of fighting in Beirut.

During this period the MECC's Relief and Reconstruction Committee distributed material aid to the value of approximately \$ 300.000 through some 47 different channels: government, Christian, Muslim. At the end of October 1976, CICARWS responded to an urgent MECC request by airshipping food to the value of approximately \$ 89.000 and advanced \$ 30.000 to MECC. Supplies had to be sent to Cyprus and onshipped from there. The emergency continues.

It should be worth mentioning that CICARWS, after consultation with the MECC, has sent to Lebanon an ecumenical team as a visible expression of ecumenical solidarity with the people and churches of Lebanon. The team was put under the direct authority of the MECC and it was instrumental in helping to implement and interpret the various relief and rehabilitation programmes undertaken by the Lebanese churches.







Central Office  
P.O. Box No. 66  
150, route de Ferney  
1211 Geneva 20 - Switzerland  
Tel. (022) 88 94 00  
Telex: 23 423 OIK CH  
Cable: OIKOUMENE GENEVA

## COMMISSION OF THE CHURCHES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

of The World Council of Churches

Moderator: Olo Dahlén

Director: Leopoldo J. Nilus

November 1978

To: Member churches of the WCC  
National Councils affiliated to the WCC  
WCC Central Committee members

Dear Friends,

I. The WCC Executive Committee meeting in Helsinki, Finland, September 18-22, 1978, requested

"in view of the crucial developments in the Middle East which cause great anxiety and concern expressed at this meeting ... about issues related to the life and witness of Christian churches in the region",

that:

"the General Secretary and the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs share with member churches of the WCC and national councils affiliated to it, before the Central Committee meeting in January 1979, stated positions of the WCC regarding the Middle East, information on recent developments and involvements of the WCC in the region".

II. The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the WCC, therefore, requested by the General Secretary of the WCC, on the basis of the Executive Committee mandate earlier referred to, is herewith sending to you documents, reports and information with regard to:

- stated positions of the WCC regarding the Middle East,
- information on recent developments, and
- involvements of the WCC in the region.

III. The documents and information are as follows:

1. WCC stated positions regarding the Middle East

1.1. Statements by the WCC Fifth Assembly, Nairobi 1975, on The Middle East and Jerusalem,

./.

- 1.2. Statement by the WCC Executive Committee, March 1976,  
on Lebanon,
- 1.3. Statement by the WCC Central Committee, August 1976,  
on Lebanon,
- 1.4. Statement by the WCC Central Committee, August 1976,  
on Cyprus, and
- 1.4.1. Statement by the WCC Executive Committee, April 1975,  
on Cyprus.

## 2. Information on recent developments in the Middle East

- 2.1. A report on recent developments and trends in the Middle East, by the General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), Mr. Gabriel Habib.
- 2.2. Observations stemming from staff travel to Israel and Occupied Territories, May 1978.
- 2.3. Summary of the Camp David Agreements, related documents and the current stage of negotiations.

## 3. Humanitarian and material aid involvements of the WCC in the region

## IV. Some general observations

1) The unresolved conflicts in the Middle East have escalated in the immediate past and pose serious threat to peace in the region and globally. The escalation in military terms has been accompanied by an extension in the geographical areas involved. In addition to the traditional trouble spots of Israel, Palestine, Lebanon and Cyprus, attention should be paid to Iran.

2) Any successful peace negotiations in the Middle East need to include the parties directly concerned, namely Israel and Palestinians. The core of the conflict remains the Israeli-Palestinian one. In the absence of concrete processes towards a solution of this basic issue, there seems to be scarce prospects of lasting peace in the area.

3) Lebanon is still the clearest expression and epicentre of many trends in the area. On Lebanon the WCC emphasis continues to be on political solutions that would safeguard the unity and territorial integrity of Lebanon and maintain it as a country where people of various faiths and cultures live together in peace and harmony.

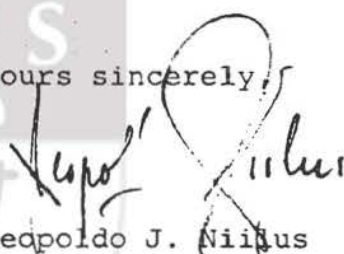


4) Opportunities available for churches inside and outside the area for peace efforts should be further explored. However, the concern for peace in the Middle East must be based on the realities as they present themselves. It must be based on a universal concern for human beings in a difficult and complex position. Often Christians outside the area have based their opinions on their own theological view of the future of the area. The historical Christian churches in the area complain that Western Christians, who visit the Holy Land in large numbers, do not take up sufficient contact with them or learn from them about their life and work.

This is a challenge to both Christian-Jewish as well as Christian-Muslim dialogue.

It is finally a challenge to Christian peace efforts, which must take into account the fact that peace, in the Judaeo-Christian conception of SHALOM, is not only the absence of war, but the fulfillment of justice.

Yours sincerely,

  
Leopoldo J. Nijus  
Director

P.S. The French or German translations of this letter and enclosures will reach those of you concerned at the soonest. Please excuse the delay due to the heavy pressure on the WCC Language Service prior to the Central Committee meeting in Jamaica, January 1979.

18

THE MIDDLE EAST

1. The World Council of Churches has expressed concern regarding the situation in the Middle East on previous occasions. Events which have occurred in the area during the meeting of the Fifth Assembly in Nairobi have demonstrated anew that tensions persist there unabated.

2. We are concerned at the continued escalation of military power in the area which can only aggravate the threat to world peace from the unresolved conflict and stress the necessity for the great world powers to cease furnishing the arms which maintain and aggravate the tension.

3. We recognize that an international consensus has emerged as the basis for peaceful settlement on the following:

- ? a) Withdrawal by Israel from territories occupied in 1967.
- b) The right of all states including Israel and the Arab states to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.
- c) The implementation of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

We are encouraged that the parties to the conflict seem to be progressively willing to accept these principles.

4. We recognize the Second Sinai Disengagement Agreement as a means of reducing tension between Egypt and Israel. However, since it is not addressed to the fears and distrust among Israel, other neighbouring states, and the Palestinian people, this Agreement must be followed soon by resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference for reaching a total settlement on the basis of the principles mentioned above. The Geneva Conference should necessarily involve all parties concerned, including the Palestinians.

5. We note that some Arab States have recently declared their readiness, with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, to seek agreement with Israel based upon these principles.

6. Although the parties have not trusted one another sufficiently until now to engage in dialogue, full mutual recognition by the parties must be seen not as a precondition to, but rather as a product of the negotiation. We call upon all parties to take those steps essential to negotiations with hope for success. Among these steps, we emphasize the cessation of all military activity, both regular and irregular, including terrorism.

7. Peace in the Middle East must be based upon justice and security for all concerned. The well-being of each party depends upon the well-being of all other parties. We urge the churches to help their constituencies to have more accurate information on and more sensitive awareness of the various dimensions of the Middle East conflict. The churches could thus help to promote mutual trust among the parties and to develop a responsible involvement in peaceful solution on the part of their members and the government of their countries. This opportunity is open to churches within the area and the churches outside the area as well.



## JERUSALEM

1. For many millions of Christians throughout the world, as well as for the adherents of the two great sister monotheistic religions, namely Judaism and Islam, Jerusalem continues to be a focus of deepest religious inspiration and attachment. It is therefore their responsibility to cooperate in the creation of conditions that will ensure that Jerusalem is a city open to the adherents of all three religions; where they can meet and live together. The tendency to minimize Jerusalem's importance for any of these three religions should be avoided.
2. The special legislation regulating the relationship of the Christian communities and the authorities, guaranteed by international treaties (Paris 1856 and Berlin 1878) and the League of Nations and known as the Status Quo of the Holy Places must be fully safeguarded and confirmed in any agreement concerning Jerusalem. Christian Holy Places in Jerusalem and neighbouring areas belong to the greatest extent to member churches of the WCC. On the basis of the Status Quo none of the church authorities of a given denomination could represent unilaterally and on behalf of all Christians the Christian point of view, each church authority of a given denomination representing only its own point of view.
3. Many member churches of the WCC are deeply concerned about the Christian Holy Places. However, the question of Jerusalem is not only a matter of protection of the Holy Places, it is organically linked with living faiths and communities of people in the Holy City. Therefore the General Assembly deems it essential that the Holy Shrines should not become mere monuments of visitation, but should serve as living places of worship integrated and responsive to Christian communities who continue to maintain their life and roots within the Holy City and for those who out of religious attachments want to visit them.
4. While recognizing the complexity and emotional implications of the issues surrounding the future status of Jerusalem, the General Assembly believes that such status has to be determined within the general context of the settlement of the Middle East conflict in its totality.
5. However, the Assembly thinks that apart from any politics, the whole settlement of the inter-religious problem of the Holy Places should take place under an international aegis and guarantee which ought to be respected by the parties concerned as well as the ruling authorities.
6. The General Assembly recommends that the above should be worked out with the most directly concerned member churches, as well as with the Roman Catholic Church. These issues should also become subjects for dialogue with Jewish and Muslim counter-parts.
7. The Assembly expresses its profound hope and fervent prayers for the peace and welfare of the Holy City and all its inhabitants.



In deep compassion and sympathy with the people of Lebanon, inflicted with further suffering as a result of the eruption of renewed fighting, the Executive Committee of the WCC:

- appeals to the people and all parties involved in Lebanon to renounce violence, and to spare human lives through a renewed commitment to finding negotiated solutions;
- prays that God will help them, in this peaceful way, to restore the harmonious community life which made Lebanon a symbol of hospitality, unit and peace, and to establish a society with justice and dignity for all;
- realizing that the conflict in Lebanon is essentially political, not religious, renews the repeated appeals of the WCC to its member churches and to governments concerned to do their utmost in supporting efforts to bring a just peace to Lebanon and the whole Middle East;
- expresses its gratitude to the member churches for the support they have given to the humanitarian assistance programmes of the WCC, in collaboration with the MECC, to bring relief to the victims of this conflict, regardless of their religious, ethnic or political affiliation;
- appeals to the member churches to continue and intensify this support.

1.3. RESOLUTION ON LEBANON

The WCC Central Committee, meeting in Geneva, August 1976, endorses the statement of the Executive Committee of the WCC made in March 1976 declaring that "the conflict in Lebanon is essentially political, not "religious" and appealing to "the people and all parties involved in Lebanon to renounce violence, and to spare human lives through a renewed commitment to finding negotiated solutions". The Central Committee commends the pastoral letter of the officers of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) sent in June 1976 to member churches in Lebanon where they affirmed that "our Christian faith compels us to create a spirit of unity, understanding and cooperation towards the well-being of all people in Lebanon regardless to their religious and political affiliation". The Central Committee further appeals to the mass media to avoid describing the Lebanon crisis as a religious conflict.

The Central Committee recognizes that urgently needed short-term relief and long-term reconciliation, for which the MECC and member churches, among others, are working and praying, are still imperilled by indiscriminate but also by calculated killing and destruction. Civilian populations have often been the first to suffer, for example in Damour, Koura and Tel Al-Zaatar, and they need immediate humanitarian relief. But such outrages can only be avoided in the future if the spirit of reconciliation in terms of forgiveness, understanding and reconstruction is revived. The people and the leadership of Lebanon, together with all their neighbours, need to recreate the unity of Lebanon as a unique challenge of hospitality and peace between people of different faiths and ideologies.



The Central Committee expresses gratitude to the churches for their willing assistance to people affected by the conflict in spite of almost unsurmountable difficulties. It urges them to continue and expand participation in relief and rehabilitation efforts as the tragedy continues and new avenues of assistance become open.

The Central Committee is convinced that any work for the establishment of a just and unified society in Lebanon would contribute significantly to implementation of the national rights of the Palestinians to self-determination. Conversely any solutions to the wider problems of the Middle East need to be related to resolution of the Lebanon crisis. The Central Committee reiterates the conviction of the WCC Fifth Assembly that "the well-being of each party in the Middle East depends upon the well-being of all other parties".

#### 1.4. RESOLUTION ON CYPRUS

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches meeting in Geneva, 10 to 18 August 1976, reiterates its deep concern about the situation in Cyprus and the plight of 200.000 refugees and is alarmed by the continuing failure to implement successive UN General Assembly, Security Council and Commission on Human Rights Resolutions on Cyprus. It is gravely concerned by the continuing expulsion of Greek Cypriots from their homeland in the North, the changing of the demographic pattern of Cyprus and the desecration of religious and sacred places.

The Central Committee therefore:

- calls for the immediate implementation of all relevant UN Resolutions on Cyprus,
- urges the Turkish government to put an immediate end to the expulsion of Greek Cypriots and to the organized immigration of Turks to the island and that the return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes in safety be facilitated,
- calls for due respect for religious and sacred places,
- calls for immediate resumption in a meaningful and constructive manner of the negotiations between the representatives of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities under the auspices of the Secretary General of the UN, to be conducted freely and on the basis of equality with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable agreement based on their fundamental and legitimate rights.

1.4.1. STATEMENT ON CYPRUS

The Executive Committee of the WCC meeting in Geneva (14-18 April 1975) welcomes the announcement by the United Nations of the resumption of direct talks between the representatives of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, on the initiative and with the participation of the Secretary General of the United Nations in Vienna, on 28 April. The resumption of these talks is an urgently needed step towards solving the complex problems in Cyprus with their tragic and dangerous dimensions. The Executive Committee expresses the hope that these talks will lead to mutual respect and cooperation between the two communities.

The Executive Committee urges especially in the context of the plans for talks between the two communities that all parties directly or indirectly involved strictly refrain from seeking to impose any solution which does not take full account of the real will and desire of the Cypriot people themselves.

Notwithstanding the hoped for long-term benefits of the Vienna talks, the Executive Committee, reiterating the substance of the statements made by the WCC Central Committee (Berlin, August 1974), strongly urges the implementation of the UN General Assembly's resolution No. 3212 requesting the speedy withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from the Republic of Cyprus, in the framework of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Executive Committee notes with deep regret that, though five months have elapsed since the unanimous adoption of the resolution by the UN, no effort has been made towards its implementation.

The Executive Committee strongly urges all parties concerned to undertake the necessary steps which would effectively enable the early and safe return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes. The Executive Committee affirms that refugees and uprooted people should not be used as pawns in negotiations or become the object of political exploitation.



## 2.1. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Issues of ethnic and religious groups, nationalisms and territorial integrity of countries in the Middle East are unfortunately today intertwined with expressions of interests of many countries in the neighbourhood and outside the region.

Within the states of the region, internal contradictions - economic, political, social, cultural, religious - have been exacerbated by the ongoing conflict as well. Some of these contradictions even tend to become essential parts of it.

These negative interlinkages from within and from without have the clearest expression and epicenter in Lebanon even though they are increasingly noticeable elsewhere in the region.

They all have urgent and important bearing on the life and witness of the Christian churches in the Middle East.

Some of the new trends and tendencies are highlighted in the report by Mr. Gabriel Habib, General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC).

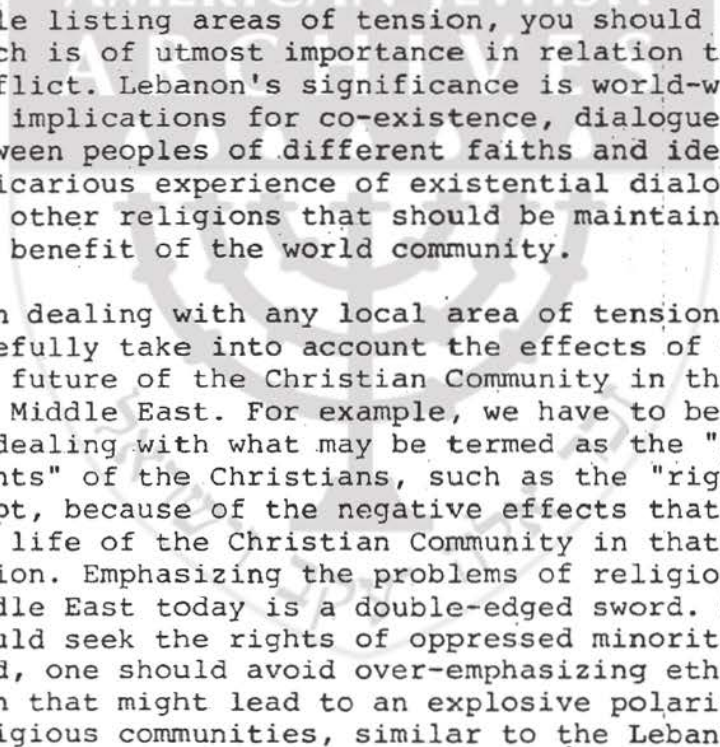
The contents of this report are excerpts from a memorandum of August 1977 written to the Middle East Committee of the NCCCUSA. However, the substance of the memo still holds as a most relevant background for the understanding of political, social and religious issues in the Middle East.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION. FOR INTERNAL INFORMATION.

THE MIDDLE EAST \*

by Gabriel Habib

I. THE POLITICAL SITUATION

- 
- a) While listing areas of tension, you should include Lebanon, which is of utmost importance in relation to the Middle East conflict. Lebanon's significance is world-wide also because of its implications for co-existence, dialogue, and relationships between peoples of different faiths and ideologies. Lebanon is a vicarious experience of existential dialogue between Christian and other religions that should be maintained and supported for the benefit of the world community.
  - b) When dealing with any local area of tension, one should carefully take into account the effects of such tensions on the future of the Christian Community in the whole region of the Middle East. For example, we have to be extremely careful in dealing with what may be termed as the "human or religious rights" of the Christians, such as the "rights of the Copts" in Egypt, because of the negative effects that this might have on the life of the Christian Community in that country and in the region. Emphasizing the problems of religious minorities in the Middle East today is a double-edged sword. On one hand, one should seek the rights of oppressed minorities, but on the other hand, one should avoid over-emphasizing ethno-religious centrism when that might lead to an explosive polarisation between the religious communities, similar to the Lebanese situation, which

---

\* The contents of this report are excerpts from a memorandum of August 1977 written to the Middle East Committee of the NCCCUSA. However, Mr. Habib feels that the substance of that memo still holds as a general background for the understanding of political issues in the Middle East.



led with other factors to the two years war, from which that country is still recovering. Such a situation only serves the purpose of those forces, which are designing an ethno-religious structure for the future Middle Eastern societies.

- c) There seem to be serious efforts being made to replace secular ideologies with religious ideologies. This is why one is witnessing the emergence of conservative Muslim political groups and the emergence of extremist right-wing religious leadership in Israel with Begin coming to power with the Talmud in hand, as well as the appearance of tendencies among some Christians towards establishing Christian political entities. The defenders of such policies consider secular ideologies dangerous as by aiming at the separation of state from religion they create a favorable atmosphere for Marxism and Communism, or at least conducive to a sort of Western cultural ethos unfavorable to Islam and Israeli Judaism.

President Carter, with his emphasis on the biblical tradition and his efforts to give the United States a new image in the area of political ethics, may indirectly be encouraging fundamentalist teachings stimulates not only conservative Christian tendencies, but also conservative reactions on the part of Muslims and Jews toward the Christian community in the area. This is the reason that I think a close, ecumenical presence directed at President Carter and the administration is very important. There would be opportunity to bring the necessary corrective to bear on conservative advocates and the religious implications of U.S. policy affected by this point of view.

## II. MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS

It is very legitimate to promote Muslim-Christian dialogue and relations within the NCC. There are enough positive theological and historical arguments to encourage such developments. However, I would like to share with you the following concerns and questions that you might need to take into consideration:

- a) I hope that you will avoid making the same mistake in your relation to Islam that was made with Judaism. Because of past Christian persecution of the Jews, you were misled by an understandable guilt complex in developing a certain type of Christian-Jewish (more particularly Zionist) dialogue in favor of Israel. Western Christianity has had a war relationship during the Crusades with Muslim Arabs. As Islam is now in a position of power, you may

be tempted for economic and political reasons to take an overzealous approach to a type of Western Christian-Muslim dialogue, which may be carried without taking into account the concerns and dilemmas of the Christian communities in the Arab world. It is therefore imperative to take seriously the reality of these Christian communities, before setting the bases and strategy of your dialogue at the expense of their presence and witness in the predominantly Moslem society.

- b) Theological discussions with the Muslims are important, but in the Western world they tend to become an intellectual exercise, which sometimes serves the political needs of the Western Christians. This is the case with Christian-Marxist discussions in the West, whereas, in Marxist-dominated countries, the dialogue is non-existent or is experienced completely differently. What is called dialogue in the West is called existential living or witness in the Middle East.
- c) On the other hand, we have the duty to help Muslims understand that the Church is not a super-international power, but is what they see at home in their own countries. Therefore, when churches in the United States relate to Saudi Arabia, Libya, or another Islamic country, they must do it in close collaboration with the local Christians. We need you to help Muslims recognize that the Christian communities in the Middle East are a part of the universal Church, but you need us to give Muslims the right understanding of the nature of the local church. The Muslims should rediscover that the Christian power is not the Western political and economic power, but is that of the Holy Spirit, who could be manifested in the local politically and economically powerless Christian communities.
- d) My last remark on this subject is more complicated, and might appear strange to you. We all know that there is a pre-history involved in relationships between Islam and Christianity. There has been a history of war and colonialism in which Muslims have always considered themselves an oppressed majority, needing independence and liberty from Western powers which, to them, were the expression of Christian culture and religion. Now that Muslims have economic power in their hands, they are seizing the occasion to take their rightful place in the world community. This is a legitimate aspiration. But unfortunately this aspiration is not helped by the world juncture to be fulfilled in a normal way.



1. The American/Saudi Arabian alliance, expressed in technology and petro-dollar exchange, is making those two powers willing to do anything to protect the region from Soviet influence. One of the measures taken is the encouragement of religious ideologies which then become a bulwark of the national security. A stronger Muslim religion in the Middle East is, for the powers concerned a bastion against atheism and Marxism and thus a strengthening of the national security. The temptation for the leaders who are creating such an atmosphere is to overlook the fate of the Christian Community set in the midst of conservative and assertive Moslem groups which are taking the opportunity to gain more power.

2. Libya and Saudi Arabia are both aiming to preserve the region from materialist-secular ideologies, with Libya taking the way of Islamic Socialism, and Saudi Arabia the way of Islamic Capitalism. Both are proposing, however, that Islam becomes the inspiration of the future society, whether within a capitalist or a socialist program.

3. The Israeli concept of existence on one hand, and recent expressions of conservative Islam on the other are both opposed to a concept of Christian community which in the post-Constantinian era became open to various secular forms of society. Arabism was a secular ideology originating in Western rationalism and promoted by the Arab Christians in view of separating Arabs from Turks, and thus forming a society based on modern "Western" nationalist ideologies instead of Islam. Therefore, if Christians continue to call today for the separation of state from religion, they could be viewed in the eyes of Israel and conservative Islam as a dangerous "missionary" or "revolutionary" group trying to desintegrate Islamic and Israeli theocracies.

4. Consequently, currently there seems to be a coincidental theological correlation between conservative Islamic and Israeli Jewish objectives as far as the future of society in the Middle East is concerned. I am asking you to be open and positive in witnessing to our faith, but you should be careful not to be led to compromise against the Christian vision of man and society and thus affect the life and destiny of the Christian community in the Middle East.

There are two theological assumptions that have been reflected in the Israeli concept of existence. One is the concept of power, which has been discussed through the World Council of Churches Christian-Jewish dialogue. The Jewish partner is trying to convince us that spiritual power cannot be separated from political power. That is why some Christians, influenced by this thinking, are conceiving a political existence for the Christian communities in the Middle East.

Secondly there is the concept of the community of communities which also has been discussed in the World Council of Churches in Christian-Jewish dialogue. According to Jewish sources, the world is not moving toward the goal Christians have always perceived, one world community, a vision based on their vision of the cosmic Christ, in whom there is no Arab, nor Greek, nor Jew etc. The world is rather a community of communities, each one having its own source of inspiration, philosophy of existence, and self-understanding

The concepts of power and community of communities, which are subject to theoretical discussions in the West are now being violently implemented in the Middle East. On the other hand, when I watch television here in New York, especially when I listen to Sunday worship services, as I did last Sunday just for my own education, I feel as if the era of the "main line ecumenical churches" is over. A new era of fundamentalist Christianity is beginning and becoming a world phenomenon. Religious alliances seem to be developing against atheism as a political security. In the Middle East Christians are also called to convert their mission to Judaism and Islam into a dialogue based on the concept of self-understanding and into relations based on a political balance of power between the three religious communities.

### III. MISSION THEOLOGY

My last point is related to the issue of Western Christian mission in the Middle East. Here also I am glad to notice through Mr. Butler's report the serious attempts you are making in promoting better understanding of the vocation of the churches in the Middle East, as well as the imperatives of their Christian witness in the region. However, a great deal remains to be done towards a deeper ecumenical approach to relations with those churches and to Christian mission in general. A serious change of policy and strategy must be considered on the official level as soon as possible. The Middle East Council of Churches has expressed its views on this subject at the Consultation on "Dialogue and Witness" held in Broummana in 1975. A MECC delegation came to New York and discussed with you the need for a new approach to mission and witness. It is your turn to take concrete action in this respect on denominational and interdenominational levels. In my humble opinion a change of policy should include the following objectives:

- A. The main aim of missions in the Middle East today should be the fulfillment of Christian unity.

The divisions of the Christian in the early centuries have led to the emergence of Islam as a substitute religion. The divisions of the Christians in the twentieth century contributed to the emergence of modern Israel, which is in some Western theology, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. Facing the conservative and



assertive Islamic and Israeli theocracies, Christianity in the Middle East cannot afford to be any longer divided. If compromise with the new religious ideologies or political existence cannot be a genuine Christian way of life, then our only witness is to reflect sacramentally the one body of Jesus Christ so that we may be one as He and His Father are one and that the world would see that He has sent us and thus believe. Consequently,

- B. The missionary movement should be transformed from a divisive factor through proselytism and competition into a movement of Christian unity.

Despite its authentic inspiration and zeal to witness to Jesus Christ, and despite its positive results, the missionary movement could not avoid being objectively affected by Western cultural, political, and economic colonialist interests and thus become a cultural and to a certain extent a divisive political factor in the "mission field". In the Middle East in particular, the ongoing negligence by the missionary movement of the ecclesial value and vocation of the local churches - Orthodox in the beginning and Protestant later - has made the missionary movement to a serious extent a divisive ecclesiastical factor in the life of the churches in the region. It is now of historic importance that the churches in the West contribute to foster a new era of genuine vicarious ecumenicity in the Middle East, where the Christian faith and existence are greatly challenged.

- C. Theological understanding should be reestablished in order to help reintegrate mission with its motivation and goals into the process of building the one body of Christ

In certain American circles, the prevailing concept of the Church being mission has to a great extent reduced the nature of the Church to its missionary dimensions. And as mission is traditionally conceived as an activity abroad, the result is that Church vitality at home is measured by the number of projects this or that Church is undertaking in a foreign land or mission field. Thus the institutional system that developed among some American Churches through the years seems to necessitate a perpetration of activity abroad through funds and personnel to satisfy the need at home to do mission disregarding the dynamics, the socio-political situation and the imperatives of church unity and witness at the receiving end. This means that the taken for granted ecclesiology and interdenominationalism in the USA becomes problematic to unity and witness abroad. Therefore a serious theological review will shift relationships with the Middle East region from institutional and financial cooperation or comprehension into an experience of love, unity and common witness.

## 2.2. OBSERVATIONS STEMMING FROM STAFF TRAVEL TO ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

In May this year two CCIA staff members, Leopoldo J. Niilus and Erich Weingärtner, spent ten days in the Holy Land - Tel Aviv, Nazareth (Israel), West Bank, Jerusalem - on an informal fact finding tour, undertaken in full cooperation with WCC member churches in the area. Besides visiting the latter, they had meetings with a number of Jewish, Christian and Muslim personalities in order to be able better to assess the internal situation in the area. A wealth of information was collected including some insights which have not been widely publicized in the media and are also little known among the world Christian community. Two aspects which can be deemed to be relevant for the life and witness of the Christians in the area as well as potentially significant for peace, justice and reconciliation in the Middle East at large, are mentioned below.

### I. Concern about the diminishing presence of Christians

Growing concern was registered among our member churches about what they view as a systematic "de-christianization". This is due to a cluster of reasons.

1. There is a rapid decline in the population of Christians, not only in Israel proper but also in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza strip. This decline is felt especially in East Jerusalem, where according to Jerusalem Post the 1967 Christian population was at about 24.000, whereas today it is reduced to 9.000. Measured by the current population growth, the number should presently be around 45.000. Although some spoke of a "de-christianization", this is not entirely accurate, since the decline affects all Palestinians, Christians and Muslims alike. A number of reasons were cited for this decrease:

1.1 The continuing expropriation, legal or administrative, of Palestinian land and property thereon has forced thousands to settle elsewhere, many disillusioned people leaving the area entirely. In the Old Town of Jerusalem, where 80% of the property is owned by Christians, it is clear that Christians are affected more than others. The Jewish quarters of Old Jerusalem are being renovated and expanded with no apparent limit. To counteract this encroachment, the Christian churches of Jerusalem have launched renovation and building projects of their own, but cannot finance this exclusively with their own resources. Surrounding East Jerusalem, the Israeli government has built immense high-rise complexes, including the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. These buildings are termed by the local people as "the second wall of Jerusalem". The expropriation of Palestinian properties - or legal, administrative and fiscal measures leading to it - is a phenomenon which affects not only



the occupied territories (e.g. by "absentee laws"), but also Israel proper. A similar "surrounding" of (Old) Nazareth (the largest concentration of Palestinian citizens of Israel) by the buildings and industrial plants of "Upper Nazareth" ("Nazareth Elite"), the new Jewish city, has resulted in expropriation on a massive scale. A new organization, the Committee for the Defence of Arab Lands, which has many Christians in leadership positions, has listed at least 31 administrative and legal loopholes which have been used to appropriate Palestinian lands.

1.2 Consequent problems of housing has created conditions of overcrowding for the Palestinian (and therefore also Christian) population. It is clear that the vast building projects initiated and subventioned by the Israeli Government are not meant for non-Jews. There are no outwardly discriminatory laws which prevent Arabs from living in them, but again administrative measures and rent structures make it impossible for most Arabs to afford such housing. A number of housing projects have been initiated by Christian churches in the area to provide low-rent possibilities and even free housing, especially for young people, to encourage them to stay. Church leaders have pointed to the urgency of new housing projects which should be planned and financed on an ecumenical basis, with outside help for additional security.

1.3 Severely limited educational opportunities cause many young people to leave the area. A number of Christian primary schools in the occupied territories serve the entire Palestinian population. The schools in Israel proper which are meant for Palestinian children, are highly overcrowded and have primitive facilities and no possibilities of expansion. An even greater problem is higher education. Although the Palestinian population (citizens of Israel) is approximately 15%, the number of Palestinian young people attending universities in Israel is less than 2%. In the occupied territories, there are only two very small universities, the Protestant University at Bir Zeit, and the Catholic University at Bethlehem, both in the West Bank. Measures taken by the occupation military authorities against staff and students are plentiful and frequent. Recently there have been problems of work permits for expatriate professors of these universities. The teaching possibilities are limited to the humanities, with the result that graduates cannot find employment within the area. A projected Palestinian University in Nablus and a Polytechnical College in Ramallah have been fully planned and financed, but permission to begin construction has not been forthcoming for a number of years. This situation forces many young people to study abroad. To retain their citizenship, however, it is necessary for them to return to the area every year. This is too great an

economic strain for many. Only 20% of those who study outside the area ever return.

1.4 The above factors, as well as the endless military conflicts in the Middle East in general, the repeated Jewish settlements in occupied territories, the exclusion of Palestinians from recent peace negotiations and the apparently increasing factionalism among religious communities in the surrounding areas, leave especially Christians with a large-scale feeling of pessimism about the future. In this connection, the new law regarding "enticement to change religion" enacted by the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) in December 1977 has caused wide-spread disenchantment even among formerly pro-Israeli Christians. Although the law itself may be a minor episode (it has been described as a non-confessional anti-bribery law and the Attorney General, in response to international pressures which included Jewish representations, has directed that no case may be prosecuted without his prior approval), the debate within the Knesset showed a clear attitude not only against the evangelistic fringe groups of Christians, but against the mainstream and historic Christian churches in the area, which for church leaders without exception bodes ill for the future Christian presence.

## II. Present demographic factors in the State of Israel

1. One of the first laws enacted by the Israeli Knesset after 1948, the proclamation of the State of Israel, was the "Law of Return", which made it possible for every Jew world over to become citizen of Israel upon arrival. When Ben-Gurion made his impassioned pleas for immigrants to people the new-born State of Israel, he was addressing "European" Jews (from both the New and the Old Worlds) in particular. Apart from other historical reasons, it was the main source of high-quality manpower, armed with the technical skills, and the social and cultural attitudes which Israel needed. However, once the remnants of a Jewish population, which had been almost totally annihilated by the Nazi Third Reich had arrived or settled elsewhere, it was decided that "Oriental" Jews must be "ingathered" as well.

The result has been that the majority of the population presently residing in Israel are first and second-generation Israelis.

What is less known, however, is the demographic make-up of today's Israel. The majority of Israel's citizens do not originate from Europe but from a variety of Arab countries. Obviously, the background, type of education, cultural characteristics and even language and religious expression of these different groups of



immigrants vary as widely as do the countries from which they came. One of the most challenging task of the leaders of Israel is to mould these various peoples into one coherent nation.

2. Thus the population of today's Israel can be divided roughly into three broad ethnic categories:

- a) The largest group, roughly 65% of the population, are Oriental Jews, i.e. Jews who have been living for generations in Arab countries.
- b) The second largest group - 20% of the population - are the Jews originating from Europe (East and West) and North America.
- c) The third large group in Israel - about 15% - are Palestinians, Christians and Muslims, citizens of the State of Israel.

3. In spite of their numbers, the Oriental Jews are however today severely under-represented in all sectors of public and cultural life. Large sectors of them inhabit huge slum-areas, e.g. the Hatikva quarters surrounding Tel Aviv (also known as the "black belt"). They make up the bulk of common labourers and educational advancement is minimal. Less than 10% of university undergraduates in Israel are of Oriental Jewish origin. Although they make up the bulk of the footsoldiers of the armed forces of Israel, very few of them are officers. The Knesset seats almost 100% of Western Jews (also known as Ashkenazim).

4. From these facts it can be seen that the vast majority of Israeli citizens whose cultural background is Arab or has been shaped by centuries of Arab influence, have been marginalized from virtually all decision making processes, or positions, while a minority of some 20% of Israeli citizens whose culture has been most strongly influenced by Central and Eastern Europe, have virtually complete control of the political, economic, military, educational and cultural future of the country.

These demographic factors obviously have serious implications both for the internal politics of Israel and for peace and cooperation in the whole area.

### 2.3. SUMMARY OF THE CAMP DAVID AGREEMENTS, RELATED DOCUMENTS AND THE CURRENT STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS

Among the more significant events in the period have been President Anwar Sadat's dramatic peace initiative, which eventually led to the Camp David Summit, the immediate results of which have been the Camp David Agreements.

I. THE CAMP DAVID AGREEMENTS: What exactly are the Camp David Agreements?

1. On 17 September 1978, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel signed two documents:

A framework for peace in the Middle East (covering the future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, areas at present occupied by Israel).

A framework for the conclusion of a peace-treaty between Egypt and Israel.

2. The first document's main points, as agreed by the two statesmen are:

- 1) A five-year transitional period of civil self-rule for the Palestinians of these two areas;
- 2) Withdrawal of Israeli military forces in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to garrisons in specific locations;
- 3) Negotiations involving Egypt, Israel, elected representatives of the Palestinians, and of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, if it will join - in order to determine the final status of the area.
- 4) Israel will undertake not to establish new settlements in these areas, during the negotiations;
- 5) Security arrangements which may involve U.N. forces, special security zones, demilitarized zones and early warning stations be negotiated.

3. The second document's main points, as agreed by the two statesmen are:

- A. An Egyptian-Israeli peace-treaty is to be signed within three months;
- B. The Israeli forces will carry out a phased withdrawal from all the Sinai peninsula, beginning within three to nine months after the signing of the peace-treaty. The withdrawal is to be finalized within three years;
- C. The Israeli-controlled airfields, in the Sinai peninsula, are to be returned to Egyptian civilian control;
- D. Security zones of various kinds are to be established in the Sinai peninsula;
- E. Normal relations between Israel and Egypt will be established at the completion of the first major Israeli withdrawal.



4. The Camp David Agreements could lead, minimally, for the first time: a) to the formal recognition of the state of Israel by an Arab country; b) to the establishment of peace as opposed to non-belligerence between Israel and an Arab state.

5. However, some basic and immediately apparent shortcomings in these agreements have been pointed out by many knowledgeable observers.

Three fundamental issues have been indicated along these lines:

- a) The two signatories represent only a partial section of the parties involved in the Middle East conflict.
- b) The whole Palestinian question is left vague in extreme, both in regard to the future of the territories and about who is to represent the Palestinians, when and in what manner. Even though the text of the corresponding "framework" introduces some new and positive verbal elements, the exchange of letters accompanying the summit agreements virtually nullifies those elements, as we shall see later on.
- c) The whole issue of the status of Jerusalem has been omitted in the text of the Agreements and is only referred to in the accompanying letters. But there it is done again in a manner which clearly indicates that the two signatories have no common mind on this issue at all.

6. In regard to the Palestinian question the text of the Agreements does have some implications which should be noticed:

- For the first time, Israel co-signs a document mentioning the "Palestinian People";

- For the first time, Israel signs a document acknowledging that the Palestinian People has "legitimate rights", and that these legitimate rights must be "satisfied";

- "Other Palestinians", i.e. some Palestinians who do not come from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, are to participate, according to the document, in the projected Jordanian delegation to the desired peace-talks.

- "Swift, just and permanent solution of the refugee problem" is also talked of in the document.

## II. EXCHANGE OF LETTERS ACCOMPANYING THE SUMMIT AGREEMENTS

An exchange of letters between Messrs. Sadat, Begin and Carter accompanied the Camp David Agreements. They dealt with:

a) The status of Jerusalem; b) A definition of the terms "West Bank", "Palestinians" and "Palestinian People"; c) A statement of willingness by President Sadat to speak for the Arab side, if necessary, in the early stages of establishing a Palestinian self-government.

These letters can be deemed to have a special weight and relevance as their texts were released by the White House on September 22, 1978. Especially the following should merit our attention.

### On the status of Jerusalem

#### 1. Sadat to Carter, September 17, 1978

I am writing you to reaffirm the position of the Arab Republic of Egypt with respect to Jerusalem:

- 1) Arab Jerusalem is an integral part of the West Bank. Legal and historical Arab rights in the city must be respected and restored.
- 2) Arab Jerusalem should be under Arab sovereignty.
- 3) The Palestinian inhabitants of Arab Jerusalem are entitled to exercise their legitimate national rights, being part of the Palestinian people in the West Bank.
- 4) Relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 242 and 261, (garbles) with regard to Jerusalem. All the measures taken by Israel to alter the status of the city are null and void and should be rescinded.
- 5) All peoples must have free access to the city and enjoy the free exercise of worship and the right to visit and transit to the holy places without distinction or discrimination.
- 6) The holy places of each faith may be placed under the administration and control of their representatives.
- 7) Essential functions in the city should be undivided and a joint municipal council composed of an equal number of Arab and Israeli members can supervise the carrying out of these functions. In this way, the city shall be undivided.

Sincerely

(Signed) Mohamed Anwar E. Sadat."



2. Begin to Carter, September 17, 1978

"Dear Mr. President,

I have the honor to inform you, Mr. President, that on 28 June 1967 Israel's parliament (the Knesset) promulgated and adopted a law to the effect: "The government is empowered by a decree to apply the law, the jurisdiction and administration of the state to any part of Eretz Israel (Land of Israel-Palestine), as stated in that decree".

On the basis of this law, the government of Israel decreed in July 1967 that Jerusalem is one city indivisible, the capital of the state of Israel.

Sincerely  
(Signed) Menachem Begin."

3. Carter to Sadat, September 22, 1978 (\*)

"Dear Mr. President,

I have received your letter of September 17, 1978, setting forth the Egyptian position on Jerusalem. I am transmitting a copy of that letter to Prime Minister Begin for his information.

The position of the United States on Jerusalem remains as stated by Ambassador Goldberg in the United Nations General Assembly in June 1967, and subsequently by Ambassador Yost in the United Nations Security Council on July 1, 1969.

Sincerely  
(Signed) Jimmy Carter."

(\*) In regard to the positions stated by Ambassador Goldberg in the U.N. General Assembly in June 1967, and by Ambassador Yost in the U.N. Security Council on July 1, 1969, the following should be noted:

1) On 14 July 1967 the U.N. General Assembly adopted Resolution No. 2254 (ES-V), "Deploing Measures Taken by Israel to Change the Status of Jerusalem".

In favor: 99. Against: None. Abstained: 18, including USA.

2) On 3 July 1969 the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 267 (1969), "Calling Once More on Israel to Rescind All Measures to Change the Status of Jerusalem".

In substance both resolutions reiterate the call to Israel to rescind all measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking any action which would alter the status of Jerusalem.

The Security Council resolution referred to above also: a) reaffirms "the established principle that acquisition of territory by military conquest is inadmissible; b) confirms "that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel which purport to alter the status of Jerusalem, including expropriation of land and properties thereon, are invalid and cannot change that status".

On the terms: "West Bank", "Palestinians"  
and "Palestinian People"

4. Carter to Begin, September 22, 1978

"Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I hereby acknowledge that you have informed me as follows:

A. In each paragraph of the agreed framework document the expressions "Palestinians" or "Palestinian People" are being and will be construed and understood by you as "Palestinian Arabs".

B. In each paragraph in which the expression "West Bank" appears, it is being, and will be, understood by the government of Israel as Judea and Samaria.

Sincerely yours  
(Signed) Jimmy Carter."

III. PRESENT STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

1. At the moment of this writing two conflicting interpretations are blocking the first step of implementation namely the signing of the peace-treaty between Egypt and Israel. Are the two Agreements integral part of one overall package or does each of them stand on its own? While Israel claims that each of the two documents stands on its own, having lately admitted some minimal relationship, Egypt forwards the doctrine of full linkage, with precise timings to commence the implementation of the future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

2. Therefore, growing concern is being expressed that not only necessary additional substantial steps to complement and broaden the Agreements are very remote, but that the implementation of the most immediate steps foreseen by the Agreements themselves are in serious danger.

3. It is also held that the danger of a twofold modus operandi which has traditionally characterized the Middle East negotiation policies up to now has not been overcome this time either. One of the policies of this double concept is the "empty framework" approach, filled in by what one (or the other) party would make it to mean, neither more nor less. The other has been the "concept of stages", which is not meant to promote changes leading to genuine peace processes but to implement unchanged and preconceived policies.



4. Thence the fear that the Camp David Agreements at their best might produce the prolongation of "no war, no peace situation", and at their worst lead to more open conflagrations, especially in or over Lebanon.

The Lebanese situation has again proved to be the barometer of Middle East affairs, having become even more precarious after the Camp David Summit.

### 3. HUMANITARIAN AND MATERIAL AID INVOLVEMENTS OF THE WCC IN THE AREA

The Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) of the WCC, in addition to its regular projects' work in the area (involving some 90 ICA and development projects, totalling approximately \$ 4.5 mil.) has continued its special ministry towards Palestinian Refugees, by enabling the Middle East Council of Churches to implement its Palestine Refugee Programme. This is a yearly programme totalling \$ 1.5 mil. and it includes educational, vocational training, village development and rehabilitation projects in West Bank, Gaza, East Bank, Israel, Lebanon and Egypt.

In addition, CICARWS has launched an appeal and extended considerable material aid (totalling \$ 350.000) to Cypriot Refugees. Actually, in cooperation with the orthodox church at Cyprus, CICARWS operates a Service Programme for Cypriot refugees in the field of rehabilitation and small business loans (\$ 60.000 per year).

During the period under review, almost all other emergency and aid actions in the Middle East arose out of situations in Lebanon.

In response to an MECC request, a limited appeal for \$ 33.000 was launched on 13 August 1975. In September, the MECC formed an Ad Hoc Committee for Relief and Reconstruction, based in Beirut, consisting of the Executive Committee of the Ecumenical Committee for Justice and Peace, Lebanon, and MECC Executive Committee members of Lebanon Churches. The declared aim was "to exercise the ministry of service to all those who are victims of the present crisis, irrespective of religious or confessional backgrounds".

In December a second CICARWS' emergency appeal for \$ 100.000 was launched, citing the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon. At this time, it was judged essential to use any available channel for aid and many CICARWS related agencies provided material aid and funds through their own links.

In February 1976, the first MECC Ad Hoc Committee activity report was received, and food, medicines and other material aid amounting to \$ 500.000 were requested.

By 17 April, the 29th ceasefire was proclaimed but there were escalations of the conflict with Syria becoming increasingly involved in the fighting, initially through Saiqa, a Syria-based Palestine armed force, and later through its own undisguised troops. During this month considerable material aid was received by MECC, but renewed fighting made it difficult to transport and distribute.

In May 1976, Syria entered Lebanon in force and Metropolitans Hazim, Khodr and Kurban formed a second Ad Hoc Committee coordinated in the Latakia Diocese of Hazim. They found this necessary because of the communication difficulties with Beirut. CICARWS channelled funds to Hazim and later Kurban, this being the only viable way of sending assistance to northern Lebanon and Syria.

By June 1976 MECC officers decided their only option was to operate from Cyprus and Cairo. The International Red Cross assisted in the shipment of medicines from Cyprus to Lebanon through ICRC channels. \$ 25.000 were given to them for this purpose.

By July, Metropolitan Kurban cited huge material damage and many dead and wounded in the Tripoli area and funds were advanced to him. The third CICARWS appeal for \$ 500.000 was launched on 14 July 1976, stressing that more than one channel for both money and material aid must be used because of the lack of communications within Lebanon, especially between Tripoli and Beirut. Metropolitan Hazim indicated a new wave of refugees in Syria and his request for financial help was met by CICARWS. During this month we heard from MECC concerning the receipt and distribution of food and clothing. The PLO representative in Geneva, together with the Ambassadors of the U.N. Missions of Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, Libya, Jordan and Algeria, were informed of WCC concern over the mounting loss of life among Lebanese civilians and Palestinian refugees and of the CICARWS' actions. MECC made further requests for food and medicines, but Beirut port was blockaded and Tripoli, with 40.000 displaced persons, especially affected. Metropolitan Hazim and Gaby Habib, MECC, met and recommended to the MECC General Secretariat that the Ad Hoc Relief Committee needed re-organizing.



By the end of August, the Ad Hoc Committee reported receipt and distribution of material aid and cited some losses en route. Distribution was extremely difficult and even the ICRC had great difficulties in this area. Normal banking facilities being non-operative, fund transfers via the diplomatic pouch of a friendly Embassy were arranged. Channels used for distribution of blankets, clothing, medicines, food and cash included Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Maronite, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Evangelical and Muslim. Meanwhile, MECC continued discussions on its relief structure, it being recognized that civil war had paralyzed all internal communication and the MECC as an institution had not been equipped to face an emergency situation.

In October 1976, the MECC made further requests for material aid, but investigation showed that ICRC was the only organization then able to operate, as all borders and crossing points were sealed. It was decided to await the findings of the Cairo meeting of MECC officers who were studying a new MECC relief policy. This meeting took place in October 1976. It was agreed all relief operations would be conducted from Lebanon, the Ad Hoc Committee dissolved and a new Relief and Rehabilitation Committee formed. That particular civil war was over, after more than 50 ceasefires, 19 months of bloodshed and 60,000 deaths. An estimated \$ 20 billion was needed to rebuild the country. The newly formed MECC Committee for Relief and Reconstruction Work in Lebanon, with a full-time director, began work.

During a 20-month period, the most complicated and difficult situation ever dealt with by the CICARWS Emergency Desk, a total of at least \$ 800,000 in cash and material aid supplied by CICARWS and related agencies was handled and distributed by nine different church groups over a series of geographical regions, many of whom were out of contact with each other for long periods of time.

During the period of uneasy peace lasting from February 1977 until March 1978, the CICARWS Middle East Desk, in close cooperation with the Emergencies and Material Aid Desks and the MECC, carried the Lebanon Relief and Reconstruction Programme. The August 1977 appeal asked for \$ 2 million covering repair and reconstruction short and medium-term rehabilitation and long-term development. Over \$ 2 million have already been pledged and half of this sum already spent on repairs and short-term rehabilitation. The current hostilities have necessarily suspended this programme and the responsibility for Lebanon has reverted to the Emergencies Desk.

In March 1978, it was necessary to appeal for \$ 200.000 plus material aid to deal with the South Lebanon displaced persons' problem as a result of the Israeli invasion. This problem became even more complicated in August 1978 with new outbreaks of fighting in Beirut.

During this period the MECC's Relief and Reconstruction Committee distributed material aid to the value of approximately \$ 300.000 through some 47 different channels: government, Christian, Muslim. At the end of October 1976, CICARWS responded to an urgent MECC request by airshipping food to the value of approximately \$ 89.000 and advanced \$ 30.000 to MECC. Supplies had to be sent to Cyprus and onshipped from there. The emergency continues.

It should be worth mentioning that CICARWS, after consultation with the MECC, has sent to Lebanon an ecumenical team as a visible expression of ecumenical solidarity with the people and churches of Lebanon. The team was put under the direct authority of the MECC and it was instrumental in helping to implement and interpret the various relief and rehabilitation programmes undertaken by the Lebanese churches.





P. O. Box 1276, Mount Zion  
Jerusalem, Israel  
Telephone : 718628  
Cable : Amerin Jerusalem, Israel



7

הר ציון, ירושלים  
המכון האמריקאי  
לחקר ארץ הצבי  
ט, 718628 תד. 1276

President G. Douglas Young, Ph.D. :ש"א]

November 29, 1978

Miss Rita P. Reznik  
Secretary to Rabbi Tanenbaum  
The American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56 Street  
New York City, New York 10022

Dear Miss Reznik:

This is to acknowledge, with many thanks, your letter of November 20 and the news release which was enclosed. These will be brought to the personal attention of Dr. Young at the time of his return to Israel, as he left early in November for the Ministry of Tourism to be in Canada for more than two weeks prior to his trip to the States.

Should his itinerary remain as originally planned, Dr. Young will be happy to again have the opportunity of being in contact with Rabbi Tanenbaum while in New York.

With greetings from Jerusalem,

Cordially,

*Nina Tronstein*  
Nina Tronstein  
Secretary to G. D. Young

nt

*Congregation Emanu-El  
of the City of New York  
Fifth Avenue at 65<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, N.Y. 10021*

*F- IJCIC*

*Study of*  
RABBI RONALD B. SOBEL

November 29, 1978

Mr. Philip M. Klutznick  
World Jewish Congress  
One Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10016

Dear Phil:

Your letter of November 21, addressed to me, was placed on the agenda at the most recent IJCIC meeting held here in New York.

The point that you made, in your communication, seemed to meet with general agreement. However, two members present felt it necessary to discuss the matter further with their own agency officials.

Hopefully, we will be able to work out the appropriate modalities of such a meeting with Pope John Paul II, and that the audience can be arranged for within the next several months.

At our meeting, it was clearly evident, by unanimous consensus, that such an audience should be more than a ceremonial formality. It ought, instead, be an occasion for substantive discussion. Thus, it would be of highest importance that IJCIC be fully represented through its working members.

We thank you for your communication. As we continue the initiative, we shall, of course, be in further communication.

With warmest best wishes, I am

Cordially yours,

Ronald B. Sobel

cc: Members of IJCIC  
Those present at the meeting on November 22.



IJCIC

12/20 - YPM



# SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA

## memorandum

to: Members of IJCIC  
from: Dr. Michael Wyschogrod  
subject: Next Meeting  
date: December 5, 1978

*oh*

There will be a meeting of IJCIC on  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1978, at 2:00 P.M.  
in the Conference Room of the SCA.

We will discuss the withdrawal of Maas Boertin from his WCC position, and related matters.

We expect Dr. Gerhart Riegner to be present at this meeting.

Please be good enough to return the enclosed response card promptly so that we may know whether or not to count on you.

Kind regards.

MW:hfe  
Enclosure

IJCIC

December 8, 1978

Mr. Philip M. Klutznick  
World Jewish Congress  
One Park Avenue  
New York, New York 10016

Dear Phil:

It was good seeing you the other day and I do hope that we can get together sometime on one of your trips to New York.

F As I told you Richie Maass, Marc Tanenbaum and I have discussed your letter of November 21st to Richie in which you suggest that IJCIC seek a formal meeting of the Presidents of the IJCIC member organizations with John Paul II. We believe this should be done with the understanding, however, that this does not preclude any subsequent meetings with the Pope by representatives of the organizations which comprise IJCIC.

Best regards.

Cordially,

Bertram H. Gold

BHG/aw

bcc: Marc. Tanenbaum  
Richie Maass  
Jim Rudin  
Ron Sobel



JCIC

# WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

CASE POSTALE 101

1211 GENÈVE 20

1, RUE DE VAREMBÉ

TELEPH. 3413 28

TELEX 28 98 76

NEW-YORK N.Y.

15 EAST 84th STREET

TELEPH. 87-94.500

TELEX 23 61 29

LONDON W.1

55, NEW CAVENDISH STREET

TELEPH. 935-03.35

TELEX 21 63 3

PARIS 8e

78, AV. CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES

TELEPH. 359.94.63

TELEX 65 03 20

TEL-AVIV

123, YEHUDA HALEVI STR.

TELEPH. 22.91.39

JC:fl/11546

Geneva, December 8, 1978

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
The American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56 Street  
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Rabbi:

In the absence of Dr. Riegner, I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated December 1, 1978, with the enclosed check in the amount of \$441.30, covering the contribution of the American Jewish Committee to the cost of sponsoring the recent IJCIC-Vatican meeting in Spain.

Thank you so much for your cooperation.

Truly yours,



Jacques Chamach  
Comptroller

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1978

Rabbi Ronald B. Sobel, Presiding

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
A G E N D A

1. Proposed Audience with the Pope
2. Relations with WCC
3. Vatican-IJCIC Liaison Meeting



Comments of IJCIC on "CCJP Contribution to DFI Guidelines" adopted  
By the Jerusalem Conference of CCJP, June 1977

## 1. Preface

1.1 and 1.2 of this section explain the origins of the document and refer to the statement "Dialogue in Community" adopted by the Theological Consultation held at Chiang Mai, Thailand, April 18-27, 1977, Group Report A, which deals with "Christian-Jewish Relations." The document before us deals with questions raised in section 3 of Group Report A.

1.3 Details the unique relationship between the Church and the Jewish people. Christianity developed out of Judaism and its early history cannot be understood except through an understanding of Judaism.

1.4 summarizes beliefs Jews and Christians hold in common. Such a summary is important lest differences obscure areas of profound agreement. The summary is unobjectionable from the Jewish point of view.

1.5 asserts that differences between the two faiths have, in the past, led to tensions and hostile attitudes.

## 2. Antisemitism

2.1 This section is very clear in condemning antisemitism in all its forms. It does not hesitate to mention "the Crusades, the Inquisition and the Holocaust" as lamentable manifestations of European antisemitism. Non-Western Christians are urged to study the history of Western antisemitism so as not to fall victim to the same disease. It is also pointed out that in many countries antisemitism appears in the guise of anti-Zionism.

2.2 devotes itself to rejecting a number of theological propositions which have served as the foundation of Christian antisemitism. Among these are the view that the Jewish people is collectively guilty of the death of Jesus, that Judaism has been superseded by Christianity and that the Jewish people is rejected by God. "The Jewish people," the statement asserts, "continues to be the [emphasis not in the original] People of God, as regards divine election beloved by him, for God is not unfaithful to those whom he has chosen."

2.3 and 2.4 call for an ongoing review of Christian teachings hostile to Judaism and for meetings between Christians and Jews so that understanding can be based on personal contact.

### 3. Authentic Christian Witness

The four paragraphs of this section distinguish between proselytism and witness. Proselytism, whether gross or refined, is the application of some form of coercion to the human person and is therefore rejected. The statement emphasizes that with respect to Jews proselytism is particularly objectionable because of the unique relationship between Christianity and Judaism and of the history of forced baptism from which Jews have suffered.

3.4 takes up the question of witness. Unlike proselytism, the document seems to reserve the word "witness" for non-coercive ways of ~~of~~ spreading the gospel. Here the document reports a disagreement within the Christian community. Some believe that Christians must also bear witness to Jews while others believe that Jews are faithful to God even if they do not accept Jesus as their saviour.

The Jewish reader welcomes with gratitude the abjuration of coercive forms of proselytism. He furthermore realizes that an abjuration of all preaching of the gospel to Jews is not a decision that Christianity can lightly take. He is therefore filled with wonder



and gratitude that some Christians find it possible to take this step. In so doing, such Christians demonstrate their understanding of the seriousness of the continuing election of Israel and of God's desire that this people remain a participant in redemptive history. With respect to those Christians who find it necessary to continue Christian witness to Jews, a number of questions come to mind with some of which a revised version of the document might wish to deal:

1. In view of the social, political and economic realities of the Western world, is any form of mission to Jews possible without some element of coercion?

2. Is not the proper form of mission the living of such an exemplary Christian life that the name of God is sanctified in the world (kiddush hashem)? Since the sanctification of God's name in the world is Israel's mission and comes about when men are drawn to the God of Israel by the loving, holy and faithful conduct of Israel, a return to kiddush hashem as the proper task of the people of God might help deepen the ties between the Church and Israel rather than further divide them.

#### 4. The State of Israel

4.1 affirms Israel's right to existence and to international guarantees for the territorial integrity of all nations in the area, including Israel. While not affirming the Jewish right to the land on Biblical grounds, this paragraph speaks of an "indissoluble bond between the people and the land" in the self-definition of the great majority of Jews.

Since the WCC and the framers of the document under discussion seem dedicated to the continuing survival of Israel, one wonders why they choose an "international guarantee" as the method of choice to insure that survival. In view of the very mixed record with respect

to success of such international guarantees, language referring to secure and defensible borders would be preferable .

4.2 asserts that acceptance of Israel is not to be interpreted as "unqualified approval of all which the State does" and adds: "Just as we respect the identity and the right of self-determination of the Jews, we respect also the identity and the right of the Palestinian Arabs to self-determination."

One wonders why it is necessary to assert that acceptance of Israel's right to exist does not imply "unqualified approval of all which the State does" when only a person with very defective logical processes would assert that the former implies the latter. Behind this formulation there seems to lurk a specific or several specific disapprovals. If there are such, they should be revealed. In any case, the present formulation is not satisfactory.

As to the matter of self-determination, several comments are in order. Self-determination is a rather tricky issue. Under what circumstances is a segment of a state entitled to self-determination? Is the Ukraine entitled to self-determination? Latvia? the State of New York? the Italian speaking part of Switzerland? Etc. Applied mechanically, self-determination would lead to the dissolution of most states and to almost limitless blood-letting.

More specifically, does the quoted statement in the document call for self-determination of Arabs living in pre-1967 Israel?

Finally, 4.2 takes a totally a-historical view of the situation. The 1947 UN partition resolution envisaged the creation of an Arab and a Jewish state. While the Jews accepted this decision, it was the Arabs who rejected it and proceeded to attack Israel. In the period between 1948 and 1967 a Palestinian Arab state could have been created without Israeli agreement. If this was not done, it is reasonable to



that the Arab

assume aim was not the creation of a Palestinian Arab state but the destruction of the State of Israel in its pre-1967 form. To speak of the right of Palestinian Arab self-determination while ignoring the danger of destruction which continues to loom over Israel is unacceptable.

4.3 once again records a Christian disagreement. Some of the document's writers wish to affirm a Biblical, God-given relationship between Israel and the land while others are apparently not prepared to do so. In view of the sheer mass of Hebrew Biblical reiteration of this bonds, the Jewish reader finds it difficult to refrain from speculating why, <sup>according to some Christians,</sup> all these hundreds of passages are no longer operative? Is it because, having rejected Jesus as its saviour, the Jewish people of today is no longer the Israel to whom the promises were made? Is it because these promises are to be interpreted spiritually so that Zion is properly understood as a spiritual condition rather than a geographic location? Or is there some other reason? In any case, some further clarification is needed.

#### 5. Future Work

The section as a whole is rather weak in that it does not convey the depth of the hope in which both Jews and Christians live. It is to be commended for recognizing the need for dialogue with African and Asian Christians and that in the Jewish-Christian dialogue "vital tenets of our Christian faith are at stake."

MEMORANDUM

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

**date** December 21, 1978  
**to** Bert Gold, Zach Shuster  
**from** Marc Tanenbaum  
**subject** IJCIC Meeting of 12/20/78 at SCA

I attended a meeting of IJCIC member agencies yesterday at the SCA for the purpose of discussing forthcoming meetings and projects with the World Council of Churches and the Vatican. Among others in attendance, there were Dr. Gerhard Riegner, Henry Siegman, Ronald Sobel, Balfour Brickner, Rabbi Walter Wurzberger, Israel Singer of WJC, David Polish of SCA, and Mordecai Waxman of the Rabbinical Assembly.

Following is a brief summary of the conclusions:

1) The IJCIC proposal to go ahead with a meeting with the WCC in February to be held in Geneva: The agenda will include a detailed discussion of the proposed WCC Guidelines on Christian-Jewish Relations.

In addition, IJCIC will seek to arrange an exploratory conversation with the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva about the same time that we will be meeting with the WCC.

Among other questions to be explored with the WCC are the possibility of a meeting with African Christians and also with the Greek Orthodox Church in Europe.

There will be a Fall 1979 meeting of the full plenum with WCC, possibly in Toronto.

2) Proposed meeting with the Pope: It was agreed that an effort would be made to set up the first meeting between Pope John Paul II and the Jewish community through an IJCIC delegation hopefully for early March.

With the exception of the ADL, each group agreed that there would be no efforts to set up a meeting with the Pope prior to the IJCIC meeting. It was also understood that the Phil Klutznick letter would provide the basis for representation of the Jewish delegation with the Pope. It was agreed, too, that competent members of IJCIC would be invited to be part of the audience with the Pope in order to assure that continuity as well as substantive issues are properly handled.



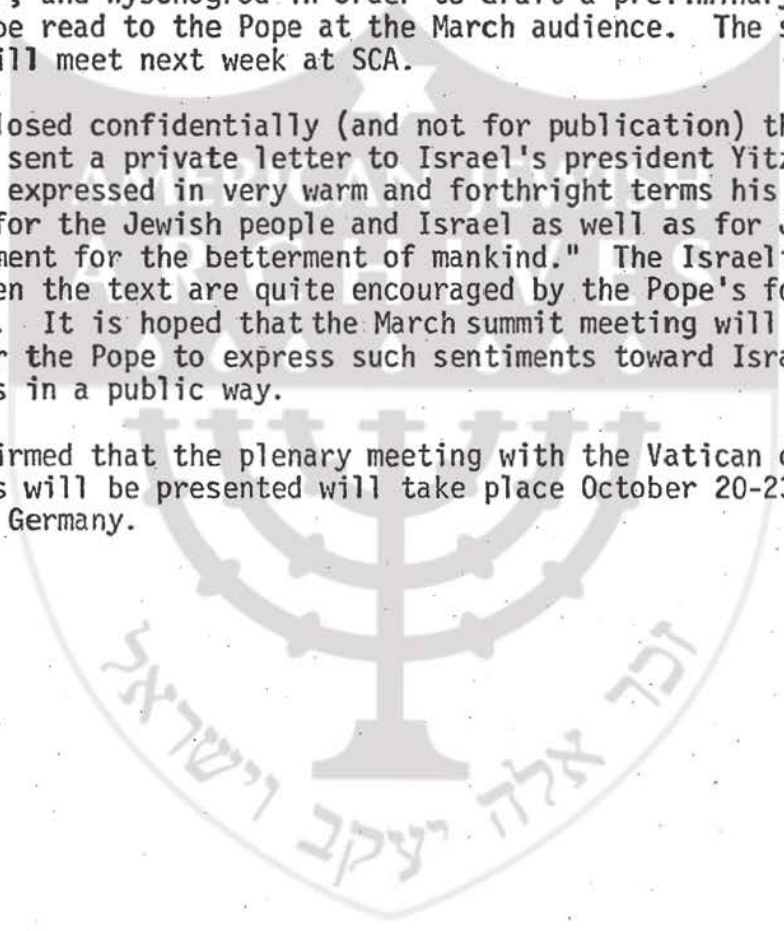
It was also agreed that efforts would be made to set up a working meeting between IJCIC and the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations prior to the audience with the Pope with the expectation that the Pope may meet separately with the working group in order to give his blessings to the Vatican Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations. The "Klutznick" meeting would be considered as a separate summit meeting.

It was agreed that a committee consisting of Riegner, Shuster, and Lichten would meet together in Rome shortly with Fr. Mejia and Bishop Torella in order to lay the foundations for the March meeting with the Pope. It was also agreed that a sub-committee would be set up consisting of Tanenbaum, Singer, and Wyschogrod in order to draft a preliminary statement that would be read to the Pope at the March audience. The statement committee will meet next week at SCA.

It was disclosed confidentially (and not for publication) that Pope John Paul II has sent a private letter to Israel's president Yitzchak Navon in which he expressed in very warm and forthright terms his "respect and admiration for the Jewish people and Israel as well as for Jewish culture and achievement for the betterment of mankind." The Israeli officials who have seen the text are quite encouraged by the Pope's forthright and warm spirit. It is hoped that the March summit meeting will provide an occasion for the Pope to express such sentiments toward Israel, Judaism, and the Jews in a public way.

It was confirmed that the plenary meeting with the Vatican delegation at which papers will be presented will take place October 20-23, 1979, in Regensburg, Germany.

MHT:RPR



# SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA



## memorandum

to: Members of IJCIC

from: Dr. Michael Wyschogrod

subject: Summary of December 20, 1979 IJCIC Meeting

date: December 27, 1978

Present were: Rabbi Ronald B. Sobel, presiding (ADL); Rabbi Balfour Brickner (SCA); Ted Freedman (ADL); Rabbi Daniel Polish (SCA); Dr. Gerhart Riegner (WJC); Rabbi Sol Roth (SCA); Rabbi Henry Siegman (WJC); Israel Singer (WJC); Prof. Shmaryahu Talmon (IIC); Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum (AJC); Rabbi Mordecai Waxman (SCA); and Dr. Michael Wyschogrod (SCA).

### I. RELATIONS WITH NCC

There was a discussion of Maas Boertien's decision to withdraw as Director of Jewish-Christian Relations at the WCC. Rabbi Sobel reported that Krister Stendahl had suggested a postponement of the February 20th and 21st meeting scheduled with the WCC in Geneva in view of the Boertien withdrawal. After considerable discussion, it was decided to go ahead with that meeting. The agenda should consist of the presentation of IJCIC comments on the proposed WCC Guidelines and a discussion of the Fall 1979 Consultation. It was also agreed that, if possible, a meeting with another Protestant world organization (perhaps Lutheran) should be held just before or after the WCC meeting.

### II. MEETING WITH POPE

Rabbi Sobel reported that the American Jewish Committee had responded to the Klutznick suggestion that IJCIC initiate a meeting with Pope John Paul II by agreeing to participate while reserving the right to seek a separate meeting in the future. ADL is willing to participate in the common effort without any commitment as to separate meetings. Mr. Singer, Rabbi Tanenbaum, and Dr. Wyschogrod were asked to write a draft of a Jewish presentation at such a meeting.

### III. RELATIONS WITH VATICAN

It was decided that a meeting with the Vatican would be necessary, probably in March, at which the Papal audience might occur. In any case, the Regensburg Consultation to be held in October 1979 has to be planned with the Vatican.

###

MW:hfe