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WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

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Geneva, August 6, 1984

To: All members of IJCIC

From: Gerhart M. Riegner

I attended from July 31 through August 2 the World Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in Budapest.

I was invited to address the Assembly by General Secretary Dr. Carl Mau who wrote to me:

The joint work with you and the consultations held together with the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations have been important to us, and we want to express that by your presence among us. Further you can help raise our discussion of Jewish-Christian matters above the level of inter-Lutheran concerns.

It should be noted that it was the first time that a non-Christian was invited to address the Lutheran World Assembly and it was the first time that the whole question of Lutheran-Jewish relations was ever discussed in the plenary of the LWF. Several earlier attempts in this direction failed.

It was the intention of the organizers to have the Stockholm statement of the second official Lutheran-Jewish consultation on Luther, Lutherans and the Jews endorsed by the Assembly and to get a mandate for the continuation of this dialogue.

The conference was from our point of view very successful.

After my presentation which was very well received (see Annex I), the chairman of the working group on the Church and the Jewish people presented his report. The Stockholm statements were read in extenso before the Assembly. The texts were distributed (Annex II) as were the proceedings of the Stockholm consultation.

The discussion was very interesting. There was not one single intervention that criticized the forceful rejection of Luther's teachings on the Jews in the Stockholm statement. The main discussion centered on the problems of proselytism and the question of witness and mission in general.

We knew for a long time that Lutherans are divided on this issue and it was no surprise to me. As you will remember, the problem had come up repeatedly in Stockholm and we had envisaged already then that it should possibly be the subject of the next Lutheran-Jewish consultation. One speaker who expressly approved the Stockholm statement was critical of the format of the Lutheran-Jewish dialogue and wanted to extend it to other members of the oecumenical family. But his suggestion was rejected. In his intervention the inclusion of Arab Christians in the dialogue was mentioned. But it was remarkable that otherwise in the whole discussion there was no attempt to inject the Middle Eastern conflict into the discussion.

There was also some American Lutheran resistance not to the content of the document, but to procedures which would give the impression that the LWF can give instructions to the individual churches. This led to a slight weakening of the text of the report. But it did not put into question in any way the very forceful statement of the Stockholm consultation.

The continuation of the Lutheran-Jewish dialogue was approved. I am enclosing copy of the official Bulletin of the Assembly (Annex III).

There were many positive comments on my presentation and on the discussion. I was also invited to address a press conference and to speak in a filmed interview on dialogue.

The Budapest Chief Rabbi, Dr. Salgo, also brought greetings from the Hungarian Jewish community to the Assembly.

The Lutheran World Assembly twice paid tribute to the memory of Raoul Wallenberg. Both the General Secretary and the Swedish Bishop referred with respect to his work in Budapest during the Nazi persecution (Annex IV and V).

It should be noted that during the debate on human rights a Latvian exiled Lutheran referred to the persecution of some of his Christian countrymen and asked the Assembly to pray for them. It is certainly interesting that this could happen in a Communist country.

ADDRESS TO THE SEVENTH LUTHERAN WORLD ASSEMBLY

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to bring you the greetings of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, your Jewish partner in dialogue. My presence at this great Assembly is in itself a sign and symbol for the great changes which have occurred in our relationship in recent years, and I wish to give expression to my feelings of gratitude in citing at the beginning of these brief remarks the old Jewish blessing: *Baruch ata adonay elohenu melech haolam, shehecheyanu vekiyemanu vehiggianu laseman hase.*

Let me at the same time thank the General Secretary, Dr. Carl Mau, for his very kind words of introduction and the warm welcome he has extended to me. To have known him and to have worked with his colleagues, and particularly with my good friend Arne Søvik, during the last five years or so, has been for me one of the most rewarding human experiences in recent times.

Interreligious dialogue is a very delicate and complicated enterprise, particularly when it is heavily burdened by past history. It can only succeed if it is based on full trust and confidence, if the partners are prompted by faith, sincerity and courage, and if they understand the sensitivities of the other side. Arne Søvik has been an outstanding partner in this exercise. Let me thank him here for the immense contribution he has made to the Lutheran-Jewish dialogue.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You have before you the reports on the work of the Lutheran World Federation 1977-1984 which under Unit III contain a section on "The Church and the Jewish People". I am very impressed by this section, by the frankness and honesty with which the nature and development of our relationship are dealt with. You have devoted a special section to this mutual relationship, which is indeed a very special one. It differs considerably from those you have with other faith communities. We therefore greatly appreciate your decision to establish the desk on the Church and the Jewish People, separate from the Unit on "Other Faiths and Ideologies", which in our view reflects this very special relationship.

I do not think that this relationship is ambiguous. It is determined on the one hand by the fact that, not being Christians, we do not belong to the Christian oekumene. It is determined, on the other hand, by the fact that special links exist between our two traditions, which do not exist between the Christian churches and any other living faith community.

Our two traditions are both rooted in scripture, in what you call the Old Testament and what we call the Hebrew Bible. And whatever else links Christianity with Judaism in its own understanding of the "history of salvation", this is a very unique bond which unites us. But while we have this great book in common, we differ in our reading and in our interpretation of it. While we represent two communities which have a common basis, we live in traditions which develop in different directions.

These basic differences should be clearly recognized if we want to avoid confusion or illusions. It is obvious that we have to respect these fundamental differences which separate us and are there to remain. Only if we accept the other as he is in his own separate identity, can we hope to establish a meaningful relationship. The first need is therefore for authentic information about the other as he understands himself.

I consider it in this connection of great significance that, when your organization convened its fourth international consultation on the Church and the Jewish People in Bossey in 1982, it felt that it should invite three Jewish consultants to present papers and take part in the discussion.

We attach also great importance to the publication by the German Lutheran Churches' Commission of the excellent book *What Everybody Ought to Know About Judaism*, a publication that should serve as an example to Lutheran churches throughout the world.

The most important event in our mutual relationship during these recent years was the holding of two official international consultations between representatives of the LWF and representatives of the world Jewish community. These consultations grew out of similar regular consultations which we have had, since 1968, with the World Council of Churches, and since 1970, with the Roman Catholic Church. We established for this purpose a special representative Jewish structure, the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, composed of major Jewish organizations and on which all Jewish religious trends are represented.* We have learned from our meetings with the WCC that it was not sufficient to meet within the very large framework of the Council with its more than 300 member churches and that direct relations with the various confessional families were needed.

Thus, after a preliminary meeting in Berlin in 1979, the first official international Lutheran-Jewish consultation was held in Copenhagen in July 1981. Its major theme was "The concept of the human being in the Lutheran and Jewish traditions". All participants recognized the usefulness of the encounter and felt that one of the most positive features of the meeting was the frankness and sincerity which permeated the discussions. It was therefore recommended to hold such meetings in the future at regular intervals.

Our second official international consultation was held in Stockholm in 1983, the year that marked the 500th anniversary of the birth of Luther. Its major theme was accordingly chosen to be: "Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews".

The significance of the choice of this topic in the context of the Luther year hardly needs emphasizing. That it was possible to deal with a subject, so difficult, yet existential for our future relationship, was another sign of the spirit of openness and frankness which characterized our dialogue from the start. As one of our Lutheran colleagues formulated it, "there was a commitment under God to search for a way to a bridging of the historic gulf of injustice and enmity".

* The International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) is composed of the World Jewish Congress, the Synagogue Council of America, the American Jewish Committee, the B'nai B'rith - Anti-Defamation League, and the Jewish Council in Israel for Interreligious Consultations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The texts which were adopted at the Stockholm consultation are before you for your consideration. They speak for themselves and I shall not repeat them here.

Let me, however, make a few remarks from a general Jewish perspective.

The Jewish people - or at least the generation to which I belong - still lives under a great traumatic experience: It has gone through the greatest tragedy of its history: the annihilation of the major part of European Jewry. It still struggles with itself and with God to find the answers to its questions: Why has it happened? Why could it happen? What is its meaning?

In our lifetime, the Jewish people also witnessed one of the most significant positive events of its history: the rebirth of the State of Israel and its heroic struggle for survival in the face of all the forces that deny it its right of existence.

My friends, on both these occasions the Jewish people has felt a great loneliness. It felt particularly abandoned by those neighbours whose help and assistance it expected and with whom it believed it was linked by common spiritual bonds. It is these experiences that have marked my generation more than anything else.

To come to terms with our common unhappy history is, therefore, one of our foremost tasks if we want to overcome the past and to build the foundations for a happier future.

The texts which were adopted in Stockholm make a particularly important contribution in this direction. To have clearly identified and rejected that part of Luther's teachings that definitely belong to his medieval heritage, and to have frankly recognized and denounced the terrible use that has been made of his teaching in our time with the consequences that are known, is of the utmost importance for our future relationship. It is all the more important as there are other aspects of Luther's teachings which are very near to Jewish sources: the concept of the direct personal responsibility of man before God, and the respect for the Scriptures as the word of God, are certainly among those which are very familiar to us.

The endorsement of these statements by Lutherans all over the world would therefore be most meaningful and would contribute greatly to making them a real turning point in our relationship.

In our joint statement in Stockholm, we affirmed the integrity and dignity of our two faith communities and we repudiated any organized proselytizing of each other. This statement perhaps deserves a few comments.

I said before that our relationship is based on mutual respect and therefore on the recognition of the integrity of each faith community as it understands itself. It is not our aim to change the identity of the other

side or to determine what should be the content of the Christian faith. We expect the same respect for Judaism as a living reality and for our faith commitments from our partners. We know that witness is an essential trait of the Christian community. Our condemnation of proselytism deals with one part of this problem. It deals with immoral and indecent methods of persuading others to change their faith. There are, however, other aspects which need further clarification. The Jewish community is very sensitive in this respect and I therefore proposed at the meeting in Stockholm that we should devote our next consultation to this problem. Let me say today only that, while we do not question the right of anybody to witness, and while we have ourselves our own eschatological expectations, we believe that there should not be institutions which are especially directed at the Jewish community.

In our common statement, sharing in the common patrimony of the prophets of Israel and inspired by their vision, we pledge ourselves finally to work together for a world in which the threat of nuclear warfare will be ended, where poverty and hunger will be eradicated, in which violence and terrorism will be overcome and a just and lasting peace will be established.

This is certainly one of the most important parts of our statement. As the co-chairmen of the first official consultation in Copenhagen already emphasized, we "recognize that man gives meaning to the world through action, that ideas lead to deeds and that man is co-worker of God in creation. Man, therefore, is in charge of the universe".

In the midst of a world torn apart by conflicts, violence, poverty, exploitation and social injustice, only a concerted effort of all spiritual forces can give us hope to overcome the calamities and sufferings, the threats and dangers of the present. Such concerted effort should not exclude anybody.

My friends,

We are still at the beginning of our joint dialogue. We are at the beginning of our reflection on our mutual relationship, and we still have a long way to go. But there are two things that unite us: our common roots and our common hope.

It is in this spirit that I bring to this great assembly the greetings, the blessings and the prayers of the Jewish community.

Osseh shalom bimromav, hu yaasseh shalom alenu veal kol boe olam.
May he who establishes peace in his heaven bring peace to all mankind.

Budapest, 1st August 1984

Gerhart M. Riegner

AGENDA

LWF Seventh Assembly, Budapest, July 22-Aug. 5, 1984

Appendix to EXHIBIT 9.6

Original

IJCIC/LWF DIALOG, "LUTHER, LUTHERANISM AND THE JEWS",
II - 13 July 1983, Stockholm, Sweden

Introduction:

- (1) A more appropriate but more sensitive subject could scarcely have been chosen for the theme of Jewish-Lutheran conversations in 1983, the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformer's birth, than that of "Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews."
- (2) When the theme was chosen by the small committee that laid plans for a second international Jewish-Lutheran meeting, it was known that it would be difficult. It was not known, that in the many events celebrating Luther's birth, this subject would be one of the major points of interest.
- (3) The meeting was convened jointly by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF)* and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, the joint agency of five major Jewish organizations (The World Jewish Congress, The Synagogue Council of America, The American Jewish Committee, The B'nai B'rith - Antidefamation League and the Jewish Council in Israel for Interreligious Consultations). It was the second of what is expected to be a continuing series of occasions for conversations between representatives of the world Jewish community and the association of Lutheran churches. (The first meeting in Copenhagen in 1981 was devoted to Jewish and Christian teachings on the nature of humankind.)
- (4) The group of 12 Jewish and 15 Lutheran participants met in Stockholm 11 - 13 July 1983, under the joint chairmanship of Dr Gerhart Riegner, Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress, and Professor Magne Saebo of the Free Faculty of Theology, Oslo.
- (5) The aims of the meeting, which was scarcely three days long, could be nothing but simple: to explore the facts and their implications for Jewish-Lutheran relations, and to provide information and encouragement to our constituencies. The program could only be straightforward: two pairs of papers, followed by discussion and the drafting of conclusions. The speakers were: Professor Mark Edwards of Purdue University (USA), Dr. E.L. Ehrlich, Riehen, Switzerland, European Director of B'nai B'rith International, Dr Ingun Montgomery of Uppsala and Oslo Universities, and Professor Uriel Tal of Tel Aviv University.

- 6) That so complex and existential a topic could be dealt with usefully within so short a time could only happen because there were certain favorable conditions: a considerable body of up-to-date literature was available for preparatory study, many of the participants were specialists in the subject matter and had indeed participated in earlier events this year, and above all there was a commitment under God to search together for a way to a bridging of the historic gulf of injustice and enmity.
- 7) The meeting closed with a brief period of silent prayer for peace in the world and particularly for peace in the Middle East.
- 8) The statements that follow are submitted to their readers., Jewish and Christian, in the hope and prayer that they may serve the cause of peace, hope and love between these two communities of believers in one God, and among all humankind.
- 9) ----- *) The LWF delegation was authorized to speak to but not in behalf of the LWF and its constituency. The statements below will be submitted to appropriate authorities of the LWF for their consideration and action.

Statement by Lutheran participants

- (10) We Lutherans take our name and much of our understanding of Christianity from Martin Luther. But we cannot accept or condone the violent verbal attacks that the Reformer made against the Jews. Lutherans and Jews interpret the Hebrew Bible differently. But we believe that a christological reading of the Scriptures does not lead to anti-Judaism, let alone anti-Semitism.
- (11) We hold that an honest, historical treatment of Luther's attacks on the Jews takes away from modern anti-Semites the assumption that they may legitimately call on the authority of Luther's name to bless their anti-Semitism. We insist that Luther does not support racial anti-Semitism, nationalistic anti-Semitism or political anti-Semitism. Even the deplorable religious anti-Semitism of the 16th century, to which Luther's attacks made important contribution, is a horrible anachronism when translated to the conditions of the modern world. We recognize with deep regret however, that Luther has been used to justify such anti-Semitism in the period of national socialism and that his writings lent themselves to such abuse. Although

there remain conflicting assumptions, built into the beliefs of Judaism and Christianity, they need not and should not lead to the animosity and the violence of Luther's treatment of the Jews. Martin Luther opened up our eyes to a deeper understanding of the Old Testament and showed us the depth of our common inheritance and the roots of our faith.

- (12) Many of the anti-Jewish utterances of Luther have to be explained in the light of his polemic against what he regarded as misinterpretations of the Scriptures. He attacked these interpretations, since for him everything now depended on a right understanding of the Word of God.
- (13) The sins of Luther's anti-Jewish remarks, the violence of his attacks on the Jews, must be acknowledged with deep distress. And all occasions for similar sin in the present or the future must be removed from our churches.
- (14) A frank examination also forces Lutherans and other Christians to confront the anti-Jewish attitudes of their past and present. Hostility toward the Jews began long before Luther and has been a continuing evil after him. The history of the centuries following the Reformation saw in Europe the gradual acceptance of religious pluralism. The church was not always the first to accept this development; yet there have also been examples of leadership by the church in the movement to accept Jews as full fellow citizens and members of society.
- (15) Beginning in the last half of the 19th century anti-Semitism increased in Central Europe and at the same time Jewish people were being integrated in society. This brought to the churches, particularly in Germany, an unwanted challenge. Paradoxically the churches honored the people Israel of the Bible but rejected the descendants of those people, myths were perpetuated about the Jews and deprecatory references appeared in Lutheran liturgical and educational material. Luther's doctrine of the Two Kingdoms was used to justify passivity in the face of totalitarian claims. These and other less theological factors contributed to the failures which have been regretted and repeatedly confessed since 1945.
- (16) To their credit it is to be said that there were individuals and groups among Lutherans who in defiance of totalitarian power defended their Jewish neighbors, both in Germany and elsewhere.
- (17) Lutherans of today refuse to be bound by all of Luther's utterances on the Jews. We hope we have learned from the tragedies of the recent past. We are responsible for seeing that we do not now nor in the future leave any doubt about our position on racial and religious prejudice and that we afford to all the human dignity, freedom and friendship that are the right of all the Father's children.

Statement by the Jewish participants

- (18) On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, representatives of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) have met for three days in Stockholm with representatives of the Lutheran World Federation to examine the theme: "Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews."
- (19) During this year, members of the world Lutheran family have been reviewing the teachings and actions of Luther and their religious, social and political implications. The teachings of Luther have profoundly affected the course of Jewish history, especially in Europe. We are aware of the exploitation of Luther's anti-Judaism by the Nazis to sanction their genocidal campaign against the Jewish people.
- (20) In recent years, Lutheran leaders in Germany, Scandinavia, the USA and elsewhere, have made significant efforts to uproot these teachings of contempt that emerged in the writings of Luther in the 16th century. We are heartened by the affirmative direction of the Lutheran-Jewish relationship as manifested in our dialogue in Stockholm.
- (21) The Jewish participants welcome the commitment of the Lutheran partners in dialogue to respect the living reality of Judaism from the perspective of Jewish self-understanding and their undertaking that Lutheran writings will never again serve as a source for the teaching of hatred for Judaism and the denigration of the Jewish people. This heralds a new chapter in the relationship between Jews and Lutherans which should find practical expression in teaching, preaching and worship as well as joint activities for social justice, human rights and the cause of peace.
- (22) We pledge ourselves to collaborate with our Lutheran colleagues in facing these common challenges. We trust that this year of Martin Luther observances will thus prove a turning point leading to a constructive future between Lutherans and Jews throughout the world.

Joint statement:

- (23) On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of Luther's birth, representatives of the world Jewish community and world Lutheran community have met in Stockholm, July 11-13, 1983, for their second official dialogue.
- (24) Meeting in Stockholm, we are mindful of the compassionate response of Scandinavian Christians to the plight of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution forty years ago. This spirit renews our faith in the human capacity to confront evil with courage and determination.

- (25) The deliberations on the theme of "Luther, Lutheranism, and the Jews" were informed by an openness of views and a spirit of mutual respect for the integrity and dignity of our faith communities. The discussions revealed a depth of mutual understanding and trust.
- (26) 1. We affirm the integrity and dignity of our two faith communities and repudiate any organized proselytizing of each other.
- (27) 2. We pledge to combat all forms of radical and religious prejudice and express our solidarity with all who suffer the denial of full religious freedom.
- (28) 3. Sharing in the common patrimony of the Prophets of Israel and inspired by their vision, we commit ourselves to strive for a world in which the threat of nuclear warfare will be ended, where poverty and hunger will be eradicated, in which violence and terrorism will be overcome, and a just and lasting peace will be established.
- (29) We welcome this historic encounter, which we prayerfully hope will mark a new chapter, with trust replacing suspicion and with reciprocal respect replacing prejudice. To this end, we commit ourselves to periodic consultations and joint activities that will strengthen our common bonds in service to humanity.

* On "Organized Proselytizing"
(Comment on the text of the Joint Statement)

A speaker noted that "the term proselytizing is often misunderstood; it is important that we all understand the word the same way, and it is not equated with what in the Christian church is called evangelizing. In the World Council of Churches and in ecumenical groups in general proselytizing is understood to mean the use of pressures, sociological, economic, institutional, that may induce people to change institutional allegiance without a real change of mind."

Attention was called to a definition in a document prepared by a joint WCC/Roman Catholic commission:

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. "Common Witness and Proselytism: A Study Document" in Ecumenical Review, XXIII (1971), p.9; see also pp. 15-17.

A Jewish speaker agreed that this definition was "altogether acceptable," as defining the distinctions between mission and witness and proselytism, "which presupposes coercion of psychological or other kind."

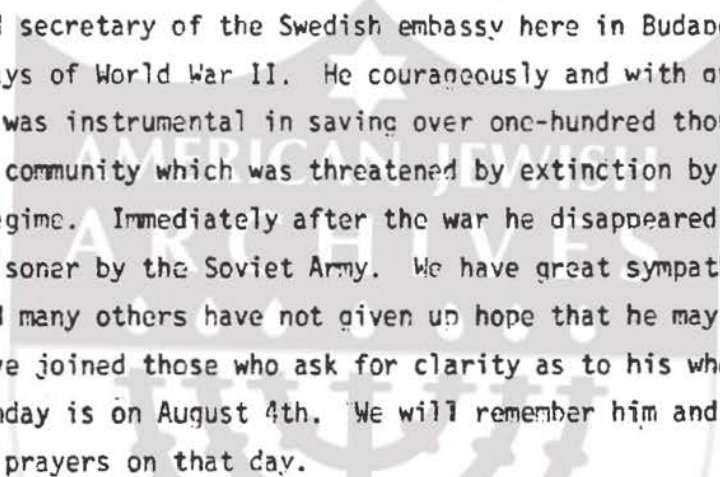
He added, in response to a question, that "many of us in the Jewish delegation feel the need to specify the word 'organized' in this case. The activity of organized groups that set out consciously to undermine the faith commitment of Jews is offensive to us. "Another speaker added that, "the offense from our point of view is the organized activity."



July 26, 1964

LWF STATEMENT ON RAOUL WALLENBERG

We are meeting in a community where also a distinguished Lutheran made an important contribution, and is also honored by the Hungarian community and the whole world. We are speaking of Raoul WALLENBERG, who was second secretary of the Swedish embassy here in Budapest in the closing days of World War II. He courageously and with great determination was instrumental in saving over one-hundred thousand of the Jewish community which was threatened by extinction by action of the Nazi regime. Immediately after the war he disappeared, having been taken prisoner by the Soviet Army. We have great sympathy for his family and many others have not given up hope that he may still be alive. We have joined those who ask for clarity as to his whereabouts. His 72nd birthday is on August 4th. We will remember him and his family in our prayers on that day.



August 1, 1984



SVENSKA KYRKAN

CHURCH OF SWEDEN DELEGATION
STATEMENT ON RAOUL WALLENBERG

In the centre of Budapest under the sign saying "Raoul Wallenberg-Street" a memorial plaque with bullet holes all around reads as follows:

"Raoul Wallenberg was secretary to the Swedish Embassy in Budapest. Through his dedication and brave acts during the days of the take-over by Hungarian fascists he saved the lives of tens of thousands."

Raoul Wallenberg was brought up in a tradition founded on sound Biblical and Lutheran principles of witness and service, martyrism and diakonia. Today his rescuing of thousands of people, predominantly members of the Jewish community in Budapest, stands forth as an example of a commitment founded on love and responsibility.

During Wallenberg's years in Budapest his sense of involvement in the front lines of a warfare between ideologies and his always standing up for those in danger and need led him into close contact with, among others, Pastor Gabor Szteblo, a Lutheran pastor working among disabled children as well as with Dr. Lajos Ordass, later bishop of the Lutheran church in Hungary. Here he also carried on deliberations with leading personalities as well as with governments in his struggle to help and save the lives of men, women and children who had been deprived of their human dignity.

Even before the turmoil Wallenberg was well-known in Budapest for his assistance to the Jewish community. His was a service to humanity regardless of creed or race. A few days before his 72nd birthday, August 4th, Wallenberg stands forth as a witness to humanitarian values.

Raoul Wallenberg disappeared. Whether dead or alive his service is, however, still remembered, a challenge to a world in which sinful selfishness prevents peoples from worshipping together, from travelling to each other, from living in freedom and peace.

Today the delegation of the Church of Sweden, a neutral country of the North, wish to honour our fellow citizen in the city of Budapest. We thank God for men like Raoul Wallenberg, known and unknown, who have taken and still take a stand for human dignity and righteousness. His love for his fellow human beings inspires us to renew our commitment to our sisters and brothers of the Jewish community.

Raoul Wallenberg risked his life to save the persecuted. God help us take risks to save a humankind in despair. God help us all in our mission of witness and service.

LWF votes suspension of 2 churches

Hope voiced for changes in practice

BY MINGUSA KOSORO

The LWF Assembly, by a 222-23 vote, Wednesday suspended from membership two white southern Africa churches. The decision was made by secret ballot. There were 29 abstentions.

The two churches suspended are the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (Cape Church) and the German Evangelical Lutheran Church in South-West Africa (Namibia).

The decision follows a "status confessionis" resolution adopted by the 1977 Dar es Salaam Assembly, declaring opposition to South Africa's racial policies a matter of faith.

The Dar es Salaam resolution urged the white churches to publicly and unequivocally reject apartheid and to end the division of the church on racial grounds. At Harare, Zimbabwe, the all-Africa pre-Assembly meeting urged the LWF to suspend the two churches for failing to comply with the Dar es Salaam resolution.

The suspension resolution "regretfully concludes that no satisfactory fulfillment of this goal has as yet been achieved and finds that those churches have in fact withdrawn from the confessional community which forms the basis of membership in the LWF.

"Therefore, the Assembly is constrained to



Southern Africa church leaders faced reporters during a news conference Wednesday noon.

Photo by Peter Williams

suspend the membership of the churches, intending that such action serve as a help for those churches to come to clear witness against the policy of apartheid and to move to

visible unity of the Lutheran churches in southern Africa."

The resolution said the suspension means that those churches are not entitled to send

voting delegates to an LWF Assembly or other official meetings, nor to have members on a governing body of the federation.

It instructed the Executive Committee to lift the suspension if satisfactory actions are taken by the churches involved to establish the legal and practical conditions for abolishing the practice of apartheid in the life of the churches and their congregations.

Before the vote was taken, Dr. Eckhart Weiss of East Germany said the southern African churches have asked to be "dormant" members of the LWF and wondered if their wish could be respected. Dean T. Simon Farisani of the Lutheran Church in southern Africa spoke emotionally about the sufferings of the black people in south Africa. Farisani, who has been jailed and tortured by the white South African government, said apartheid is a political and socio-economic crime. Apartheid means detention without trial, he said, adding that the Assembly should address itself to the uprooted blacks and the poor in that country.

"Since the LWF is the United Nations of Christ, we hope justice will be done," he said, asking that German delegates not block the resolution at the expense of suffering blacks.

Farisani said the black churches in southern Africa are not condemning the whites because of their color, but because they support apartheid.

New WCC head

The World Council of Churches has chosen Emilio Castro, 57, as its new general secretary. The Uruguayan Methodist pastor for 11 years headed the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism.

Youth urge vigil, fast

Youth participants have challenged LWF Assembly participants and visitors to "fast and pray" on Friday.

A statement read yesterday said that the Youth Initiative Group, formed last week to promote youth concerns at the Assembly, invited participants to join youth in praying during Friday's two major meal breaks and in a vigil that will last from evening prayers Friday to a eucharist at 07:00 Saturday.

The statement spoke of the youth participants' belief that "worship and plenary... ought to be intrinsically related" and that the fast and vigil aimed to "hold up for prayer and reflection both the anguish of a suffering world and the signs of hope we experience."

LWF Associate General Secretary Anza Lema told the Assembly that the idea, which was supported by the business committee, meant that the LWF could reclaim the costs of uneaten meals and donate the money to alleviate hunger in Africa.

The prayer and vigil will take place in the youth room, on the fourth floor of the Sports Hall.

Stockholm statement gets approval

BY RICK MUELLER

"A real turning point in our relationship" is anticipated by a leading Jewish spokesman in inter-religious relations, as the LWF Assembly sends to its member churches a major international statement on Jewish-Lutheran relations.

The statement, developed at a July 1983 inter-religious consultation in Stockholm, Wednesday was endorsed and forwarded to member LWF churches for their "study and consideration."

It was approved after delegates heard the first address before an LWF Assembly from a person "of other than the Christian faith," Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner, retired general secretary of the World Jewish Congress and co-chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Inter-Religious Consultations.

Describing the joint Jewish-Lutheran statement produced at Stockholm, Riegner said, "we affirmed the dignity and integrity of our two faith communities and repudiated any organized proselytizing of each other." The con-

cept of proselytizing received careful consideration at Stockholm and was debated here following Riegner's address. The tension comes between the fact that witness (i.e., evangelism) is an "essential trait of the Christian community," as Riegner described, and the need for Lutherans to show "respect for Judaism as a living reality and for our faith."

In condemning proselytism, the Stockholm group had dealt with "immoral and indecent methods of persuading others to change their faith," Riegner said.

A separate statement by Lutherans at Stockholm specifically repudiated Martin Luther's anti-Jewish remarks and the uses to which they have been put by later antisemites, particularly, during the Holocaust. While noting that Luther's polemic against the Jews was similar to his polemic against any who, he felt, were misinterpreting Scripture, the document said, "the violence of his attacks on the Jews must be acknowledged with deep distress. And all occasions for similar sin in the present or in the future must be removed from our churches."

This separate statement also was endorsed by the Assembly and sent to member churches. The original proposal from an Assembly committee dealing with Jewish-Lutheran relations was to transmit the statement for "guidance," but the wording was changed by a floor amendment to "study and consideration," on grounds that the LWF cannot instruct its members. Disappointment on the amendment was registered by committee member Kaete Mahn of West Germany who found it "rather regretful that the LWF cannot use forceful terminology" in such an important matter.

Other action on committee proposals called for further work by the LWF Department of Studies and for further Jewish-Lutheran consultations considering the issue of witness and proselytism. Delegates, however, accepted the committee argument that Lutherans and Jews have special issues to resolve and, therefore, defeated a second amendment that would



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Executive Committee includes seven women; no surprises

Elections were completed for the 29-member LWF Executive Committee Wednesday with few surprises. Only one run-off election was required, necessitated by the election Tuesday of Hungarian Lutheran Bishop Zoltán Káldy to the LWF presidency.

With only one of two seats remaining for committee members from Eastern Europe, two candidates from the Assembly's nominating committee found themselves in a run-off. The winner was Wolfgang Hermann Rehner of Romania, who defeated Janis Matulis of Latvia, 143-139, with eight spoiled ballots.

The new Executive Committee includes seven women and 22 men, seven lay persons (the constitutional minimum) and 22 clergy. Six members are both female and lay.

On the first ballot, Rehner had 129, Matulis 122, and floor nominee Dusan Ondrejovic of Czechoslovakia 47.

In other first ballot contests: — Thomas Batong of the Philippines bested Andrew Hsiao of Hong Kong, 184-114, for an Asian seat. Both were floor nominees. The nominating committee nominee, Sophia Tung of Taiwan, and two floor nominees, Chee-Pang Choong of Singapore and Stephen Tsui of Hong Kong, declined to stand for election. — Lois Leffler, a floor nominee, topped Elizabeth Eaton, 167-132, for a U.S. seat in the North American allotment. Eaton, 29, had been the youngest nominee on the slate.

(Continued on Page 4)

have placed these bi-lateral talks in a secondary position to the broader Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Concern over "proselytizing" occupied much of the floor discussion, especially the specific rejection of "organized" efforts to win Jews to the Christian gospel. Speakers noted Lutheran ministries operating in Israel and elsewhere, and asked whether the LWF is becoming "hesitant" about evangelism. They were pointed to a jointly accepted definition of proselytizing that condemns the use of coercion to get people to change affiliations. Georg Kretschmar of Bavaria said this would be the topic for the next round of consultations and added, "We cannot here thoroughly clear up this matter."

In his address, Riegner said that relations between Christians and Jews are different than relations between Christians and "other faiths and ideologies"; he expressed appreciation that the LWF has not confused the two,