



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 41, Folder 4, Oberammergau Passion Play, 1979.

TO: AREA DIRECTORS, JCRCS, Jewish Federations

FROM: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director

DATE: August 15, 1979

RE: Oberammergau Passion Play

There have been a number of newspaper stories in recent days reporting on the ~~alleged~~ revision of the 1980 Oberammergau Passion Play, allegedly resulting in the removal of anti-Semitic references of the Daisenberger text.

The reports are based on a recent analysis of the latest revised version of that script conducted by Dr. Leonard Swidler and the Rev. Gerard S. Sloyan, both of Temple University, and sponsored by the ADL. (Both Dr. Swidler and Father Sloyan are good friends of the Jewish community and have collaborated for many years in bettering Jewish-Christian relations both with AJC and ADL as well as with the Philadelphia Jewish community.)

A headline in the Philadelphia Inquirer of July 30th reads, "Passion Play 1980 Purged of Historical Anti-Semitism." That is representative of many similar headlines in other newspapers reporting on the ADL findings. Dr. Swidler is quoted in Newsday of July 25th as saying: "In my judgment, all of the serious problems have been solved."

Would that ~~xxxxxxx~~ that were so! The AJC's Interreligious Affairs Department has just completed a detailed, line-by-line analysis of the "revised" German text of Daisenberger which will be published and ~~xxx~~ distributed during the coming two weeks. Our study supports a different set of conclusions.

Suffice it for the purpose of this memorandum, our findings show the following:

"Many passages have been deleted or amended. Several scenes have been replaced. Dialogue has been altered...As it stands, the drama ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ retains an anti-Jewish impact despite the well-intentioned efforts of those who have revised it."

Thus, as a brief example, "despite changes in the wording of a number of passages in the 1970 text, the 'revised' 1980 text still asserts that God will pour out his anger on the Jewish people for the Crucifixion:

"O my people, O my people
Return thee to thy God.
Scorn not with evil mockery
The warning call of grace;
That not, people of God, on thee
In full measure one day be poured
The anger of our God most High!..."

On the allegation of collective Jewish responsibility for the death of Christ, the revised text for the 1980 performance has somewhat moderated the impression that the entire Jewish people turned

against Jesus, nevertheless, other imputations of collective Jewish guilt have been retained in the script. These range from subtle implications that the High Priest speaks for the whole of the Jewish people to outright accusations that the raging, bloodthirsty ~~Jewish~~ mob represents all Jews. Thus, in Act X, Scene 4, Pilate tells Jesus: "Thine own nation and the chief priest have delivered thee unto me." And in the Condemnation scene, Pilate condemns Jesus at the desire of the High Council and "the people of Jerusalem." Here again, a few ~~authorities~~ are assumed to represent an entire people.

Significantly, a leading Catholic priest in Germany, who is chairman of the Ecumenical Commission of the German Catholic Bishops Conference, has completed his own study of the "revised text" for 1980 and has just shared his study with AJC. The conclusions of Father Wilhelm Sanders of Hamburg coincide ~~exactly~~ with those of the AJC findings and are summarized in his words:

"The play for 1980 is certainly not the play for all of the future, nor has Oberammergau taken seriously its chance to share in the changed understanding of the relationship between Jews and Judaism to a large part of Christendom as our ecumenical study group formulated in 1970.

"With the abbreviations and the change of words alone, there is no positive message and this is, of course, the declared goal of those to whom the continued existence of the Passion Play is of heartfelt concern. You cannot do it with a single sentence in the prologue."

There is a very substantial group of the younger generation of Oberammergau villagers with whom we have met several times since 1977 who share these convictions and who continue to refuse to act in the revised 1980 Passion Play because of its fundamental anti-Jewish structure and themes. Their convictions are increasingly shared by thousands of the German next generation who made their views known during their reactions to the recent showing of "Holocaust" on German educational television.

AJC believes that the Jewish community has an obligation to support these progressive and democratic elements in Oberammergau and in German society generally, and not to contribute to undermining their struggle to combat the religious sources of anti-Semitism in German society. We are hopeful that our study, Oberammergau 1980 - Progress and Problems will constitute a vital contribution to that worthy objective.

NEWS

FROM THE

COMMITTEE

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE Institute of Human Relations, 165 E 56 St., New York, N.Y. 10022, (212) 751-4000

The American Jewish Committee, founded in 1906, is the pioneer human-relations agency in the United States. It protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people.

MORTON YARMON, Director of Public Relations

ANNUAL NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

October 25-28, 1979
Fairmont Hotel
San Francisco, CA 94106
415-772-5000

CONTACT: Natalie Flatow, Press
Frances Rosenberg, TV-Radio

FOR RELEASE AFTER 7 P.M.
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1979

PRESS ROOM: State Room

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 25...Despite a serious effort by Oberammergau town officials to cleanse the 350-year-old Passion Play of its anti-Jewish polemic and prejudice, the drama remains "structurally anti-Semitic." It continues to malign Jewish law, to depict the Judaism of Jesus' time as corrupt and punitive, and to dramatize those Gospel sources which cast the most negative light on Jewish motives and actions.

These conclusions emerge from the latest line-by-line analysis of the revised 1980 Oberammergau Passion Play published by the Inter-religious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee. The findings of the study, entitled "Oberammergau 1980-Progress and Problems," were made public here today at a meeting of the AJC's Interreligious Affairs Commission, whose national chairman is Robert S. Jacobs of Chicago. The Commission is meeting in connection with the AJC's National Executive Council sessions, continuing through Sunday at the Fairmont Hotel here.

In presenting the study's findings to Commission members from throughout the country, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, AJC's national interreligious affairs director, who met with Oberammergau officials on four successive occasions since 1977, declared:

"Our systematic study of the 1980 text finds that a number of significant passages, scenes, and languages changes have been made which correspond in detail to the findings of the German-language analysis which AJC delegations submitted to the Oberammergau Town Council and discussed with them during our four meetings in 1977, 1978, and 1979. The removal of these anti-Jewish passages are to be welcomed. Nevertheless, the overriding conclusion of our (more)

Richard Maass, President, Maynard I. Wishner, Chairman, Board of Governors, Morton K. Blaustein, Chairman, National Executive Council, Howard I. Friedman, Chairman, Board of Trustees

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latest study is: 'As it stands, the drama retains an anti-Jewish impact despite the well-intentioned efforts of those who have revised it.'

Conducted by Judith H. Banki, AJC assistant interreligious director, the study analyzes in detail major problem themes or areas in the 1980 text, and comes to these general conclusions:

"Faced with the formidable task of removing the anti-Semitism from a structurally anti-Semitic drama, those who revised the script for the 1980 performance of the Oberammergau Passion Play have tried to accomplish this end largely through judicious cutting. They have made a serious effort to cleanse the play of accusations of collective Jewish guilt and rejection, and of anti-Jewish polemic and prejudice. They have deleted the explicit allegations in the 1960 and 1970 text that God has rejected the Jewish people and ended His covenant with them. They have removed many of the most blatant expressions of sadism, vengefulness and greed on the part of the traders (in the Temple), the priests and 'the people.' They have added an introductory exhortation cautioning each spectator to 'recognize himself as guilty in what happened...'

"Unfortunately," the AJC study continues, "these well-meaning modifications are undermined by the drama itself, for the way in which the story unfolds and develops has not been basically altered. ... Thus, the Jewish religious leaders of the time are all lumped together as hateful enemies of Jesus who cynically manipulate the populace into a screaming mob, and who hound Jesus to the cross and derive joyful satisfaction from his condemnation and suffering. The merchants, though their importance has been diminished (in this text), still play their non-Biblical role.

"Pilate is still portrayed as a sympathetic weakling, forced into condemning Jesus by the cruel Jews against his will. Jewish law is still depicted falsely as harsh and punitive. The Jewish people still call down the blood curse upon themselves and their children. In short, revision of the Oberammergau drama has taken the form of substantial cutting, but not of essential rethinking. The traditional anti-Jewish polemic which shaped the original text has not been examined, nor have the insights of current Biblical and extra-Biblical scholarship been incorporated into the dynamics of the play.

"To provide a historical background based on contemporary Biblical scholarship would require far more profound structural changes in the

(more)

Oberammergau Passion Play than are found in the present revised text, despite its significant improvement over earlier versions. It would require a basically different orientation to the major characters in the drama and the way they interact....Whether or not the present format of the Passion Play can be adapted to accommodate these realities is an open question," the study concludes.

Rabbi Tanenbaum reported that "significantly, a leading Catholic priest-scholar in Germany, Father Wilm Sanders of Hamburg, who is a member of the Ecumenical Study Commission of the German Catholic Bishops Conference and German Coordinator for the Societies for Christian-Jewish Relations, has completed his own study of the 1980 revised text, and his conclusions coincide with those of the American Jewish Committee study. These are summarized in his words:

"The play for 1980 is certainly not the play for all of the future, nor has Oberammergau taken seriously its opportunity to share in the changed understanding of the relationship between Jews and Judaism to a large part of Christendom as our ecumenical study group formulated in 1970.

"With abbreviations and the change of words alone, there is no positive message and this is, of course, the declared goal of those to whom the continued existence of the Passion Play is of heartfelt concern. You cannot do it in a single sentence in the prologue."

Mr. Jacobs observed that "there is a very substantial group of the younger generation of Oberammergau villagers with whom AJC has met several times since 1977 who share our convictions and who continue to refuse to act in the revised 1980 Passion Play because of its fundamental anti-Jewish structure and themes. Their convictions are increasingly shared by thousands of German young people, 'the next generation,' who made their views known during their reactions to the recent showing of 'Holocaust' on German educational television. It is likely that in 1984, the 35th anniversary of the Oberammergau Passion Play, there will be a special performance. And it is the hope of the reformers that the younger Oberammergau actors will take that occasion to produce a significantly improved Rosner text. They informed the AJC of their hope that 1980 will be the last time that the anti-Jewish Daisenberger script will be performed."

Mr. Jacobs added, "AJC believes that the Jewish community, and all people of good will who oppose prejudice, have an obligation to support these progressive and democratic elements in Oberammergau and in German society generally, and not to contribute to undermining their struggle to combat the religious sources of anti-Semitism in German society by giving
(more)

our imprimatur to an essentially anti-Jewish play. We are hopeful that our study will constitute a vital contribution to that worthy objective."

Rabbi Tanenbaum announced that the AJC study was being published in German by the Bavarian Catholic Academy in Munich and would be distributed to the German and international press as well as to tourists who will be attending the 1980 performance.

"Through the wide dissemination of our Oberammergau study," he said, "it is our hope to raise the consciousness of the many people who will view the play and thereby hopefully immunize them against the bacillus of anti-Semitism which still lurks in this unfortunate production."

The AJC delegation to Oberammergau consisted of Miles Jaffe, then national chairman of the Interreligious Affairs Commission, Richard Weiss, chairman of the AJC Chapter in Los Angeles and a leader in interreligious affairs, William Trosten, director of AJC Development who is fluent in German and who spent years in Bavaria with the American Military Government; Zachariah Shuster, of Paris, consultant in interreligious affairs in Europe, and Rabbi Tanenbaum.

Founded in 1906, the American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. It combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews at home and abroad, and seeks improved human relations for all people everywhere.

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Changing the Oberammergau Script

By Alison Mitchell

Newsday
7-25-79

It began with a vow

In 1634, as plague swept through Bavaria, the elders of the small village of Oberammergau prayed for deliverance and pledged, as an act of penance, to present a passion play each decade. According to legend, the people of the alpine village were spared death, and faithfully, almost every decade since 1680, they have staged a lengthy spectacle about the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ.

But in recent decades the seven-hour spectacle, staged by close to 2,000 villagers, has been sharply criticized by both Jewish groups and Catholic theologians as anti-Semitic because it implied that all Jews of Jesus' time called for his death and that all Jewry has inherited their guilt. Despite changes in the 1970 produc-

tion, which was presented 100 times and drew about 500,000 visitors, Jewish groups such as the American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith felt the production was still seriously anti-Semitic.

But now, with rehearsals for the 1980 passion play set to begin in September, Oberammergau has once again made a number of changes in the 170-year-old text. According to Regina Lang, a spokeswoman for the play, most of the deletions were made because the play was too long, though others were made in response to the criticisms from the Jewish community. She said the length of the production has been cut by an hour.

In the fall, the Anti-Defamation League commissioned a Catholic theologian and a Catholic priest

Leonard Swidler and Gerard Sloyan, respectively—both professors at Temple University, to examine the text of the passion play and suggest changes. Their paper was sent to Oberammergau, and last month Swidler visited the West German village to speak with local officials and priests and look at the 1980 text.

"In my judgment, all of the serious problems have been solved," Swidler said yesterday. He said that many of the play's phrases that seemed to set up antagonism between Christians and Jews have been removed or changed.

For instance, several scenes that showed Jewish merchants going to Jewish leaders and plotting against Christ have been removed, Swidler said. There also have been changes in language. For example, in the 1960

version of the play, Jesus says, "If my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would have fought so I would not have fallen into the hands of the Jews." In the 1970 version "hands of the Jews" was replaced by "hands of the high council," and in 1980 it will read simply "hands of the enemy."

In the past, the passion play has begun with a greeting to those "united in the love of the savior" but in 1980 an additional word of welcome has been added. It says:

"Greetings also to you brothers and sisters of the people from whom the savior came. We here in no way wish to look for guilt in others, rather each person should recognize himself as guilty in this event. God has perceived everyone as united in disobedience."

religion/□□

Further reforms urged in Passion Play

United Press International

Despite efforts to rid the 350-year-old Oberammergau Passion Play of its anti-Jewish elements, the world-famous play remains "structurally anti-Semitic," according to the American Jewish Committee.

The committee, in its latest line-by-line analysis of the play, said it continues to "malign" Jewish law, to depict the Judaism of Jesus' time as corrupt and punitive and to dramatize those Gospel sources that cast the most negative light on Jewish motives and actions.

The play, which attracts millions of tourists to the West German town of Oberammergau, is presented once every 10 years. It is scheduled to be presented in 1980.

Many Christian churches in the United States organize congregational tours of Germany to coincide with the presentation of the Passion Play.

"Our systematic study of the 1980 text finds that a number of significant passages, scenes and language changes have been made" that correspond to suggestions made by the AJC, said Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, interreligious affairs director of the Jewish civil rights agency. "The removal of these anti-Jewish passages is to be welcomed."

"Nevertheless, the overriding conclusion of our latest study is: As it stands, the drama retains an anti-Jewish impact despite the well-intentioned efforts of those who have revised it."

The line-by-line study of the new text of the play, done by Judith H. Banki, assistant interreligious director, noted that a "serious effort" had been made to "cleanse the play of accusations of collective Jewish guilt" for Jesus' crucifixion and allegations that "God has rejected the Jewish people and ended his covenant with them."

"They have removed many of the most blatant expressions of sadism, vengefulness and greed on the part of the traders [in the Temple], the priests and 'the people,'" Ms. Banki's analysis said.

"Unfortunately," it added, "these well-meaning modifications are undermined by the drama itself, for the way in which the story unfolds and develops has not basically altered."

"Thus, the Jewish religious leaders of the time are all lumped together as hateful enemies of Jesus who cynically manipulate the populace into a screaming mob and who hound Jesus to the cross and derive joyful satisfaction from his condemnation and suffering," the study said.

American Jewish Committee officials said they had been told that a "very substantial group of the younger generation" of Oberammergau villagers share the Jewish group's concern about the anti-Jewish structure and that there was hope for continued reform of the play.

"They informed the AJC of their hope that 1980 will be the last time that the anti-Jewish script will be performed," the officials said. ■



A scene from the Passion Play

Volume XVII

Supplement: Change in the Church

NEW CATHOLIC
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Original documents
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differences which have emerged between the secular and ecclesial in health care delivery. In no other sphere of Church life are the Church's institutions so directly and deeply a part of the secular pluralistic society. Because of technological developments and altered societal values, Catholic health care leaders must confront direct challenges in such medical-moral questions as abortion, sterilization, and euthanasia. In view of such ominous issues, the study called for "stronger and more visible theological and hierarchical support" of the Church's health-care ministry.

As to specific recommendations, the Board of Trustees approved "as a working document" a new statement of mission, but turned down recommendations that the Association change its name to the "Catholic Health Association" and move its central office to Washington. The board also approved recommendations that CHA's primary ministries be advocacy and education; that its governmental-affairs office in Washington be strengthened; that it increase its services to the aged and its long-term care facilities; and that the organization develop guidelines to help Catholic health facilities evaluate their effectiveness. In addition, the Association is presently investigating other methods to assist its constituency and sponsoring groups to develop and strengthen a renewed sense of Catholic identity.

[S. MOIDAVER]

CATHOLIC-JEWISH RELATIONS, NCCB SECRETARIAT FOR

The Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations was established at the annual meeting of the American bishops in September 1967 within the framework of the "Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs." Its present moderator is Bishop Francis J. Mugavero of Brooklyn. Its function is to aid the dioceses in setting up secretariats or other agencies in accordance with Vatican Council II's Declaration on Non-Christians (*Nostra aetate* 4) and the Guidelines issued January 3, 1975 by the Pontifical Commission for "Religious Relations with Judaism."

Major objectives include: (1) aid to other organizations within the Church whose work (liturgy, education, justice and peace efforts) involves Catholic-Jewish relations; (2) liaison with the Jewish community, its major religious branches and agencies; (3) work with other Christian Churches and private organizations (National Council of Churches of Christ, National Conference of Christians and Jews) for the promotion of Jewish-Christian relations; (4) promotion of scholarly dialogue and joint social action between the Catholic and Jewish communities; (5) research and publication on major developments in the field; and (6) dialogue on both the national and international levels.

Under the leadership of its first full-time Executive Secretary, Rev. Edward Flannery, the Secretariat participated in many pioneering efforts which have greatly improved Catholic-Jewish relations, for example, in sponsoring the first national Jewish-Christian Workshops ever held in this country and in assisting the bishops in the preparation of their break-through "Statement on Catholic-Jewish Relations" promulgated on November 20, 1975.

See also JEWISH/CATHOLIC RELATIONS

[C. J. FISHER]

CATHOLIC LEAGUE FOR RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL RIGHTS

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, founded in 1973, is a civil rights and anti-defamation organization serving the Catholic community in the same manner as the American Civil Liberties Union and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith serve their respective communities. Independent of the hierarchy, the Catholic League is governed by a board of directors, consisting of lay and religious leaders. The work of the League falls into three primary categories: (1) education, promoting the rights and interests of Catholics through educational and informational programs; (2) negotiation and confrontation, challenging individuals who violate the rights and liberties of Catholics; and (3) litigation, establishing and defending the religious and civil rights of Catholics and others through legal action.

The League's first protest action was against a booklet entitled *Population Control: Whose Right to Live?* published by the Xerox Corporation and used in many high schools. The booklet classified Paul VI's teaching on birth control as a crime against humanity. After the League threatened Xerox with legal action, the publisher agreed to discontinue sale and distribution of the book and not to permit third parties to reprint it. The first lawsuit in which the League engaged was the defense of Dr. Frank Bolles, a Protestant physician active in the right-to-life movement in Colorado and convicted of violating state law by sending anti-abortion literature through the mail. With the help of the Catholic League, he was vindicated when the Colorado Supreme Court upheld his right to freedom of speech.

Among the League's other important legal cases were the following: *Wolfe v. Schroering* (388 F. Suppl. 631 W.D. Ky.) A Federal Circuit Court upheld the right of 28 doctors and nurses from Kentucky to refuse to participate in abortions; *Doe v. Irwin* (428 F. Suppl. 1198). The U.S. District Court, Southern District of N.Y., affirmed the right of parents to be notified before a state agency gives contraceptives to their minor children; *Lucido v. Cravath, Swain and Moore* (75 Civ. 6341). The League is assisting an attorney who alleges that he was fired from his Wall Street law firm because of his religion and national origin; *Erzinger et al v. University of California*. This is a case pending before the Superior Court, San Diego County, in which a group of students are protesting the collection of mandatory fees to pay for elective abortions through a university health insurance plan.

The League has helped to guarantee the right of senior citizens living in a federally-subsidized apartment complex in Cincinnati to conduct religious services on the premises, and it persuaded the Department of Housing and Urban Development to veto a prohibition against Church-related schools in Portchartrain-New Town, a federally subsidized subdivision of New Orleans, Louisiana. Among the League's successful anti-defamation activities was the protest against a birth control brochure distributed by the Federal government in Latin America that contained a picture irreverent toward the Blessed Virgin. The League protests against anti-religious satire in *National Lampoon* led six major advertisers to drop their advertising in that magazine and ultimately to an editorial policy decision to discontinue anti-religious satire.

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AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

JAEGER, LORENZ

German Cardinal archbishop and ecumenist, b. Halle Sept. 23, 1892; d. Paderborn Apr. 2, 1975. An ordinary soldier during World War I, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1922. After 19 years in teaching and other pastoral ministries, he was ordained bishop of Paderborn in 1941. In the consistory of Feb. 22, 1965, he became a cardinal. Especially interested in ecumenism, Cardinal Jaeger, along with Cardinal Bea, was influential in the establishment of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. He was also a member of the Preparatory Commission for Vatican Council II and a frequent intervener in conciliar discussions. Earlier (Jan. 14, 1957) in his own diocese, he founded the Johann-Adam Mohler Institut für Konfessionen und Diasporakunde (the Johann Adam Mohler Institute), one of the world's foremost centers for ecumenical study, research, and publication. Its quarterly journal *Catholica* is one of the most authoritative in the Roman Catholic-Protestant (especially Lutheran and Calvinist) theological dialogue.

The Institute's goals reflect Cardinal Jaeger's own interests and activities: scholarly research and description of the doctrine, worship, and life of those Christian Churches separated from Rome, especially the Reformation Confessional Churches; the presentation of the Catholic faith in its fullness as the response to the questions posed by the Reformation; and the sharing of the results of these scholarly investigations with those engaged in other pastoral activity.

In addition to his episcopal and ecumenical activities, he was also a general spokesman for the German hierarchy on a wide range of other subjects, especially on pastoral care, on the status of women in civil and ecclesial society, on students and intellectuals. He played a significant role in the reconstruction of the German Church and nation after World War II.

His ecumenical outlook and insight are well illustrated in his pre-Vatican II *The Ecumenical Council, the Church and Christendom* (tr. A. V. LITTELL, New York, 1961) and his commentary on Vatican II's Decree on Ecumenism, *A Stand on Ecumenism: The Council's Decree* (tr. H. GRAFF, New York, 1965).

[R. KRESS]

JEWISH/ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONS

When this issue was discussed in an earlier article in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, its author could point only to minimal progress (16-144). Recent years have seen dramatic improvement.

Dialogue and Initiatives. Nationally, the NCCB Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations has fostered successful Dialogue Workshops (Dayton, 1973; Memphis, 1975; Detroit, 1977; Los Angeles, 1978) that have explored our common heritage and established patterns for future work. Academic programs, such as Seton Hall's Institute for Judaeo-Christian Studies and Temple University's Holocaust Studies program, provide an ongoing forum for scholarly exchange. Increasing numbers now participate in local dialogue groups throughout the country.

The strong response of church leaders to the Yom Kippur War and to the bid attempt in the UN to identify Zionism with racism gave reassurance to the Jewish community of Christian commitment to the State of Israel's right to exist in security. Recent textbook studies show improvement in the treatment of Jews and Judaism in Catholic teaching, though problems persist in regard, e.g., to the New Testament portrayal of the Pharisees and of the Crucifixion.

Statements from episcopal conferences—the French (1973), the American (1967, 1975)—and the *Guidelines* of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism (issued Jan. 3, 1975) are among advances in understanding accomplished since Vatican Council II. These statements point to a 'permanent vocation' of Judaism in God's plan and call for Christians 'to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves. Deploring the de-Judaization process which began in the primitive Church, the American bishops have called for a positive theology of Judaism based on the teachings of Romans 9-11. Such moves toward a theological stance accommodated to the continuing religious vitality of the Jewish people have been reciprocated from the Jewish side in a renewed interest in Jesus and in positive rabbinic views of Christianity. The Talmudic teaching on the Noahide covenant between God and all humanity (Gen. Rabbah 34 b; Sanhedrin 56a) has been appealed to as a framework

for a new Jewish appreciation of Christianity's role in spreading the knowledge of the one God among the nations.

Issues. Catholic scholars are beginning to see the dialogue as a necessity for the Church's own self-understanding rather than merely as an exercise in good will. The 1975 Vatican Guidelines noted that it is 'when pondering her own mystery that the Church encounters the mystery of Israel. Even such potentially divisive topics as abortion and parochial school aid are now being surfaced and discussed in the dialogue. The International Catholic/Jewish Liaison Committee founded in Rome in 1970 holds annual meetings of increasing importance. Its members are chosen from the Jewish side by the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) and from the Catholic side by the pope after consulting with the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.

A paper presented to its Venice meeting (1977) has been considered an important breakthrough on the subject of 'The Mission and Witness of the Church.' Delivered by Prof. Tomaso Federici of the Pontifical Urban University, the paper clearly distinguishes witness and proselytism. While the former belongs to the essential nature of the Church following the command to make known the name of the one God among all peoples, the latter tainted as it is with such historical practices as forced baptism and cultural pressure should be excluded from present Christian practice. Dialogue between the Church and the Jewish people should be entered into 'without mental reservation' or underlying conversionary intent.

The modern State of Israel has proven to be an apt setting for dialogue. Here for the first time in centuries it is the Christian community that is the minority in a majority Jewish culture. While the situation involves many uncertainties, relations between appointed representatives of the various communities began as early as 1957 with the founding of the Interfaith Committee. Scholarly dialogue, as embodied in the Jerusalem Rainbow Group and the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity, has proven most helpful in analyzing areas both of commonality and of divergence between the two traditions. The special link between People and Land in Judaism, for example, has received profound study. A consistent though only partially successful effort has been made to include Moslem representatives.

While numerous challenges remain for the dialogue and while severe tests may be ahead, especially over the volatile Middle East situation (see MIDDLE EAST CHURCH AND), the prevailing mood should be judged on both sides as one of cautious optimism. Steady and measured progress, despite obstacles that a decade ago appeared insurmountable, are vindicating such hopes.

Bibliography. Major Catholic and Protestant statements are contained in H. Croner, ed., *Stepping Stones to Further Jewish-Christian Relations* (London-New York, 1977). Documentation service on the subject is provided by *Société internationale de documentation judéo-chrétienne* (SIDIC) *Journal* (No. 17) (Viale del Pichiseto 112 00186 Rome, Italy). Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism *Guidelines* Origins 4 (1974-75) 463-464. ActApS 67 (1975) 73-79.

[F. J. FISHER]

JOHN PAUL I, POPE

Pontificate Aug. 26-Sept. 28, 1978. b. Albino Luciani at Forno di Canale (Diocese of Belluno) Italy Oct. 17,

1912. He was born into a poor family, his father having been forced at one period to migrate to Switzerland for work. After studies in the minor seminary at Feltré and the major seminary at Belluno, and ordination on July 7, 1935, Fr. Luciani completed his doctorate in theology at the Gregorianum in Rome in 1937. He served briefly as a parish priest at Forno di Canale and Agerdo, then from 1937-47 was professor of theology, Canon Law, and history of sacred art at the Belluno Seminary, for a time serving also as vice-rector. While continuing to teach, he also became in 1947 pro-chancellor of the diocese, then vicar-general. On Dec. 15, 1958, he was named to the See of Vittorio Veneto and ordained bishop by John XXIII at St. Peter's Dec. 27, 1958. He participated in Vatican Council II and his commitment to its spirit of renewal was expressed in a pastoral letter to his diocese in 1967, 'Notes on the Council.'

Bp. Luciani was named patriarch of Venice by Pope Paul VI Dec. 15, 1969; he took possession of his see on Feb. 3, 1970. He was created cardinal by Paul VI at the consistory of March 5, 1973, with San Marco, Piazza Venezia, as his titular church. His election in the conclave after Paul VI's death was surprising because of its swiftness and was welcomed because of Pope John Paul I's warmth and simplicity. He did away with the traditional papal coronation and was installed as supreme pastor by receiving the archiepiscopal pallium on Sept. 3, 1978. The Pope referred to the ceremony simply as the inauguration of his pastoral ministry. The program Pope John Paul outlined the day after his election proposed the following to continue to put into effect the heritage of Vatican Council II: to preserve the integrity of church discipline in the lives of priests and faithful; to remind the entire Church that the first duty is evangelization; to continue the ecumenical thrust, without compromising doctrine but without hesitancy to pursue with patience but firmness the serene and constructive dialogue of Paul VI for pastoral action to support every laudable and worthy initiative for world peace.

The Pope did not live to carry out this program; the Church and the world were shocked by his sudden death. His September Papacy had brought fulfillment to the longing in peoples' hearts for a person and a leader who radiated joy, holiness, simple goodness. His passing left the hope that the response to his brief pontificate would be remembered by his successors and by every pastor in the Church.

[I. C. O'BRIEN]

JOHN PAUL II, POPE

Elected pope Oct. 16, 1978. b. Karol Wojtyla May 18, 1920, in Wladawice, an industrial town in the Archdiocese of Krakow, Poland. For the first time since the Dutch pope, Adrian VI (1522-23), a non-Italian in the person of Cardinal Wojtyla was elected to the papacy, the decision coming on the second day of the conclave following the sudden death of Pope John Paul I. Karol Wojtyla knew poverty as a child and during high school went to work in order to help his family. In 1938 he entered the Jagiellonian University, Krakow, concentrating on poetry and drama. During the Nazi occupation he worked in a quarry, then in a chemical plant where he became a spokesman for better working conditions. Beginning in 1942 he decided that his vocation was to the priesthood and because the Nazis had

without sinners but it is without sin. See his *Il carattere teologico della Chiesa fonte di tensione permanente* in G. Barauna ed. *La Chiesa del Vaticano II* (Florence 1965) 361. Congar on the other hand correctly asserts that the Church itself is sinful thus avoiding awkward distinctions between sinful member and holy Church which end up making the Church not a real historical People of God but an imaginary construct.

Cardinal Journet will be justly remembered for his contributions to the theological model of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. His Thomistic background enabled him to maintain the balance between the Church's visible and invisible dimensions which had been so severely sundered in previous theology. Likewise his Thomistic sacramental insight enabled him to understand that the ecclesial institution and structure form the sacramentum of the more mystical inner life of grace of the Church. His ecclesiology was a significant contribution to the spirit and theology which matured at Vatican II.

Journet is perhaps found by the generation after his death to be too conceptualist, too 'scholastic', too beholden to abstract thought. His true spirit however is better indicated by the dedication of his masterwork not only to the Doctors Augustine and Thomas but also to the Virgin Catherine of Siena and especially by a quotation from the Persian Bisthami which concludes his *The Dark Knowledge of God* (122): 'For thirty years I travelled in search of God and when at the end of this time I opened my eyes I saw that it was He Who sought me. A voice cried to me: O Abu Yazid, what is it you desire? I replied: I desire to desire nothing for I am the desired and You are He Who desires!'

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[R. KRISSE]

JUDAISM AND THE EARLY CHURCH

Christianity was initially a movement of a few Jewish followers of Jesus, driven by the conviction that this recently crucified Jesus had been raised from the dead, that he would soon return as the agent of God's

Reign (the definitive gesture of mercy and judgment toward his people) now already beginning, and that the Good News—and warning—of this was to be spread immediately. As a result of a series of crises, this movement, originally completely Jewish (Jesus and his disciples all having been Palestinian Jews), became within a century largely Gentile, though of course preserving a massive Jewish heritage. The fact that in the course of this development the movement acquired in ambivalent and even a negative attitude toward the Judaism out of which it had grown is one of Christianity's questionable heritages, one on which a good deal of light has recently been shed, and to which serious attempts at rethinking have begun to be applied since Vatican Council II's Declaration on Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra aetate* 4).

"Hebrews" and "Hellenists." The initial crisis seems almost certainly to have been the execution of Jesus (at the hands of the Romans, with probable help from aristocratic Jewish collaborators), and the apparent failure of his cause. Some of those originally attracted to him, together with those who were opposed, were persuaded that the movement had failed, their expecta-

tions for the reign of God, or for the coming of his Messiah (such expectations among the Palestinian Jews of the time were many and quite varied) had not been fulfilled. Others, however, led by those to whom the risen Jesus had appeared, were convinced that the movement was to continue. In an attempt to make sense of and to account for the death of Jesus (the idea of his death as 'saving' event did not arise until later), his followers began to 'search the Scriptures' and were able to find biblical passages which appeared to them to have predicted or explained it, and led them eventually toward a conception of the blindness and sinfulness of those of their fellow Jews who had not accepted Jesus.

Within the ranks of the growing numbers of Jews in the Jesus movement who resolved to continue, there was no unanimity as to how to proceed. The fragmentary and late account in Acts 6-8, the essentials of which seem to be historically trustworthy, points to a fairly serious difference between Hellenists and Hebrews, at an early stage. The Hebrews seem to have been Jewish in roughly the same ways as most Jerusalem Jews (Temple worship, sabbath observance, etc.) and apparently saw no reason to abandon their Jewishness. They were of course conscious of themselves as a group apart in some sense, because of their allegiance to Jesus. The "Hellenists," on the other hand, appear to have been Jews who also spoke Greek, and whose life in the diaspora led to an ambivalent attitude toward the Temple (Stephen's speech in Acts 7) and somewhat later about the Law. Their activities apparently led to Stephen's death and their expulsion from Jerusalem. Their move to Antioch soon led to the Gentile mission there. But the Hebrews in the Jesus movement remained in Jerusalem. Thus there was an initial break, but only between some Jewish followers of Jesus ("Hellenists") and some other Jews.

The Issue of Gentile Converts. A more serious crisis—probably still within the first decade—revolved around the admission of Gentiles into the movement, and especially the question of the conditions under which they were to be admitted. Several positions soon developed: (1) Gentiles were to be admitted, but only on the condition of complete observance of the Law, including circumcision (Paul's opponents in Galatians, the "men from Judaea" in Acts 15:1); their stance seems to have been predicated on the belief that the Law was from God and that men had no right to change it. (2) Gentiles were to be admitted without circumcision, but were to abstain from what had been sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from unchastity (Acts 15:29, also 15:20 and 21:25); this is the position represented by the decision of the "Apostolic Council" of Jerusalem in Acts 15, and seems to have been the actual practice of the Gentile communities known to the author of Luke/Acts. The narrative in Acts is unclear as to whether this means that Gentile converts were to observe the Law, but in a form modified for them, or whether it means that Gentiles are admitted without the Law, but with a few concessions by way of compromise. (3) Gentiles are to be admitted freely, with absolutely no Law or no conditions imposed (this was the position of Paul, especially in Gal 2). All three positions were decisions worked out by Jewish members of the Jesus movement about the admission of Gentiles. None of the three suggests that the Law should not be observed by Jewish followers of Jesus.

Positions (1) and (2) seem agreed that the Law continues to bind in some sense; positions (2) and (3) are agreed that circumcision is not required of Gentile converts. Ultimately Christianity (the name is applied later in Antioch by outsiders—Acts 11:26) became predominantly Gentile and Paul's position became the standard, but it was initially a minority position and all three were "Christian" positions. One unfortunate consequence of the crisis was that Paul's polemic, especially in Galatians and Romans, came later to be accepted as 'the Christian position'. In this polemic, his position (which he associates with faith in Jesus, but which is read as though he is talking about "Christianity") is that of freedom, of maturity of life, the position of his opponents (the belief that the Law was required of all, but which is later read as "Judaism") is that of slavery, of immaturity and of death. It led Irenaeus in the late 2d century and most of the Christian writers who followed him to see Jewish Christianity (Christians who observed the Law) as heretical—a position Paul would not have shared. More tragically, it has led many Christians to think of Judaism as a 'slavish' observance of the Law and of value only as a preparation for Christianity.

The Jewish Revolts. The disastrous Jewish revolt against Rome (66–70 A.D.) together with elements in its aftermath constitutes an unparalleled turning point. The majority (or perhaps all) of the Jewish Christians seem not to have taken part in the war. But because they were still largely regarded as Jews both in their own estimation and in the view of many of their fellow Palestinians, their nonparticipation was resented by the more nationalistic and militant Zealots. At least the same thing happened again in the Jewish war (again against Rome) led by Bar Kochba in 132–135. On the other hand, there seems to have been some suspicion on the part of certain Roman officials that the Christians as a 'Messianic Jewish sect' were every bit as revolutionary as many other Jews. Whatever the cause and extent of the suspicion, it led many Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, to find ways to dissociate themselves from Judaism generally. Two subsequent Jewish revolts (115–117 in the provinces and the aforementioned Bar Kochba revolt in Palestine) only sharpened this motive for dissociation from 'de Judaizing'.

From the Jewish side, the most important effect of the war and of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 A.D. was the formation of the Pharisee/rabbinic academy at Jamnia (Yavneh). This assembly led initially by Yohanan ben Zakkai laid the foundations for the rabbinic and talmudic Judaism that has continued to the present time. It seems that shortly after the formation of the academy, an attempt was made (perhaps in the 80s) to arrest the centrifugal forces which presented the danger of tearing post-70 Judaism to pieces. 'Sadducees' (followers of Jesus who continued their synagogue affiliation) and others were expelled from the synagogue communities and traces of this are found in the Gospels of Matthew and John, each written shortly after this expulsion and it appears partly in heated response to it (cf. Mt 5:10–12, 10:16–33, 22:6, 23:29–39, John 9:22, 12:42, 16:2). Matthew's version of the parable of the wicked tenants (Mt 21:33–41) and the wedding feast (Mt 22:1–10) in which Jews being punished and even killed by God and replaced by (Gentile?) Christians. Matthew's Passion or trial narrative is kinder to

Pilate than Mark's and much more antagonistic to Jews ('And all the people answered, his blood be upon us and upon our children' Mt 27:25). John frequently describes Jesus' opponents as the Jews (instead of scribes or pharisees) and can draw a contrast between Jesus and Moses as a kind of 'theme' of the Gospel ('the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ' Jn 1:17). Jewish rejection of Jesus is deep, if not complete (his own people received him not Jn 1:11). For John the Law is responsible for Jesus' death ('We have a Law and by that Law he must die' Jn 1:17) and the Passion narrative is climaxed by the Jewish rejection of Jesus—and God—as king ('We have no king but Caesar' Jn 19:15). All of this is of course intelligible as the product of the heat of polemic, but at least the use to which such texts have been put is finally being re-examined.

Patristic Literature. By the end of the first century and despite the continuing existence of Jewish Christianity (until at least the 4th century, but now looked on as 'heretical'), Church and Synagogue were separated.

Competition with Judaism. Disputation and (rarely) dialogue continued and treatises were written against the Jews (by Justin, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian, John Chrysostom, Cyril and Augustine, to name only the more noteworthy). They usually took the form of grouping a series of biblical quotations (proof-texts or 'testimonies') around a set of themes which these texts were interpreted to prove (e.g. the Messiahship of Jesus, the appropriateness of Jesus' death, the perennial sinfulness and blindness of Jews, the replacement of Jews by Gentile Christians as God's people and heirs of the promises, the transcending of the Law and its provisions, circumcision, Temple-sacrifice, sabbath observance, and the like). The anti-Judaism manifest in these writings was ironically prevented from dying out precisely because Judaism did not, as many Christians expected, die; it remained a vital and serious competitor of Christianity until well after Constantine and the formation of the Christian empire in the 4th century.

The Christian Apologist. In addition to the actual competition with Judaism, two other issues developed early on and both kept the anti-Judaism alive and reinforced it. The first was the standard Roman objection to Christians that they had no status and no rights because they were such recent arrivals on the religious scene of the Mediterranean world. The typical Christian response to this objection (found in Justin, Tertullian, Origen and Eusebius) was that Christianity was the true (or sometimes 'new') Israel, that Jews had lost their right to their books (the Old Testament) and their history because of their sinfulness and their rejection of their Messiah (Christians pointed to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem as 'proof' of this) and that these books and this history were in reality *Christian* books and *Christian* history. Christians were not therefore new arrivals; Jewish roots were by right now theirs. Thus Christian roots in the Roman Empire were purchased at the expense of Jews.

The second issue was raised by Marcion, the 2d century (c. 140) writer who not only rejected the Law of Moses (as did most Gentile Christians) but thought it consistent with a Pauline conception of the 'newness' of Christianity to reject the 'Old Testament' (because

it continued the Law) and even the 'old' God (i.e. the God who had, according to the Bible, enacted the Law in the first place). Jesus, for Marcion, came completely unannounced and unprepared for, as the representative of (or the incarnation of) a 'new' previously unknown higher God, a God of love and mercy. The Christian response to Marcion (developed especially by Justin, Irenaeus and Tertullian) was to argue that (1) the inferiority of the Law does not prove the inferiority of the God who enacted it; it was rather the sinfulness of the Jews. God was then forced to deal with that accounts for the existence of the Law formerly and its rejection today (e.g. Jews who were 'prone to gluttony' needed food prohibitions; 'idolatrous' Jews needed sacrifices to remind them of the true God. Tertullian *Against Marcion* 2:18-22) and (2) the fact that the Jews of Jesus' time did not accept him does not mean that he came unannounced, or as representative of a new God, rather the 'blindness' of the Jews, their unwillingness to understand perfectly clear OT prophecies, accounts for Jesus' rejection. Here again the Christian teaching on the one God and on Jesus as his Messiah are defended at the expense of Jews and Judaism.

Conclusion. The anti-Judaism had a deleterious effect on Christianity and Christian theology (e.g. a triumphalistic willingness to see radical reform as something God may have wanted in 'Old Testament' times but not now, in the time of 'fulfillment'). But it had the even more tragic effect of maintaining and reinforcing throughout most of Christian history an attitude that since Judaism had by God's plan been replaced, it had no longer any right to exist. It is a short step, and one that has too often been taken, to the attitude that Jews have no right to exist. Because the seeds of such contempt can be found in Christian origins and in the New Testament literature that Christians treasure most deeply, the task of constructing a Christian theology that is not inherently (if subtly) anti-Jewish will be difficult. But it must be done.

See also JEWISH/ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONS

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[D. F. FROYMANSON]

JUDEAN SOCIETY

A lay ministry proclaimed in 1975 by Pope Paul VI as a true and just apostolate. The Judean Society is a self-help and mutual help program to ease the pain of divorce and to encourage the divorced Catholic woman to remain in harmony with the Church. The Steps to Effective Living program, authored by the foundress, F. A. Miller, serves as the format for groups meeting in private homes and has the imprimatur of Archbishop Joseph T. McGucken of San Francisco. This lay ministry offers personal growth and development through spiritual, emotional and social support. An intense self-discovery program aids members wishing an official marriage investigation. Divorce prevention,

enrichment of life after divorce, preparation for second marriage are services rendered through lectures, workshops, retreats and small group meetings. Founded in 1952, it incorporated in 1966 as a national non-profit organization depending on private contributions and is governed by a 13 member council. Groups and chapters form is needed and the Society is represented in various dioceses across the US and in two foreign countries.

[F. A. MILLER]

JUNGMAUN, JOSEF ANDREAS

Austrian Jesuit, inspirer of the liturgical and catechetical renewal in Sind near Taufers, South Tirol (pre World War I Austria). Nov. 16, 1889 d. Innsbruck Jan. 26, 1975. After theological studies in the diocesan seminary of Brixen, S. Tirol, he was ordained July 27, 1913. His work as assistant pastor in Niedervintl and Gossensitz before becoming a Jesuit Sept. 13, 1917, contributed substantially to the basically pastoral orientation of his later scientific work. From 1925 at the University of Innsbruck, he taught pastoral theology, catechetics and liturgy until 1963, with interruption 1938-45 when Hitler closed the theology faculty of the university. Jungmann was also editor 1926-63 of *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* (again with the interruption 1938-45). After having contributed through his writing to create the general theological and pastoral climate for Vatican Council II, he was chosen, Aug. 25, 1960, to be a member of the conciliar Preparatory Commission. He continued his intensive and dedicated work during the Council as a highly esteemed *peritus* of the Commission for Liturgy and after the Council as consultant of the Consilium (the commission entrusted with the implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy).

Superb mastery of his subject, penetrating well-balanced and impartial judgment, in exceptional gift of inspiration for sound and timely developments within the Church, especially in the fields of liturgy and preaching, deep respect for the achievements of others who engaged in the same field of studies and his proverbial modesty—all won Jungmann many friends and enthusiastic admirers. *Festschriften* of his colleagues, friends and former students on his 60th, 70th and 80th birthday, as well as honors conferred by his country, manifested the great and general appreciation of him and his work. Jungmann's special talent consisted in letting the past teach an understanding and right evaluation of the present and point to right solutions for the future. Although outstanding in historical research, he was never lost in its details nor ever pursued history for its own sake. Solid historical research was for him the indispensable tool for a right assessment of the present condition of the Christian community and its need of genuine, penetrating renewal. His deep faith and his imperturbable adherence to the Church did not prevent him from seeing clearly and presenting with respectful objectivity unhealthy and harmful trends and developments of the past in Christian worship and preaching. The mere fact that e.g. the leaders of the Church authorized and contributed to an ever-decreasing active participation of the people in the official worship of the Church does not prove that the development was healthy and guided by the Holy Spirit. It is the special merit of Jungmann that with his

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DRAFT PRESS RELEASE ON OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

SAN FRANCISCO - Oct. 25, 1979 - Despite a serious effort made by Oberammergau Town Officials to cleanse the ³⁵⁰⁻~~300~~-year-old Passion Play of its anti-Jewish polemic and prejudice, the drama remains "structurally anti-Semitic" and continues to accuse the entire Jewish people of collective responsibility for the death of Jesus in whose crucifixion they derive some kind of sadistic pleasure.

That conclusion emerges from the latest line-by-line analysis of the "revised" ¹⁹⁸⁰ Oberammergau Passion Play published by the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee. The findings of the study, entitled "Oberammergau 1980-Progress and Problems," were made public here today at a meeting of the AJC's Interreligious Affairs Commission, whose national chairman is Robert S. Jacobs of Chicago. The commission is meeting here at the Fairmount Hotel in connection with the ~~Natx~~ AJC's National Executive Council sessions.

In presenting the study's findings to commission members from throughout the country, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, AJC's national interreligious affairs director who met with Oberammergau officials on four successive occasions since 1977, declared:

"Our systematic study of the 1980 text finds that a number of significant passages, scenes, and language changes have been made which correspond in detail to the findings of the German-language analysis which ~~xxx~~AJC delegations submitted to the Oberammergau Town Council and discussed with them during our four meetings in 1977, 1978, and 1979. The removal of these anti-Jewish passages are to be welcomed. Nevertheless, the overriding conclusion of our latest study is: 'As it stands, the drama retains an anti-Jewish impact despite the well-intentioned efforts of those who have revised it.' "

AJC

Conducted by Ms. Judith H. Banki, ~~assistant~~ interreligious director, the study analyzes in detail twelve problem themes or areas in the 1980 text and comes to these general conclusions:

"Faced with the formidable task of removing the anti-Semitism from a structurally anti-Semitic drama, those who revised the script for the 1980 performance of the Oberammergau Passion Play have gried to accomplish this end largely through judicious cutting. They have made a serious effort to cleanse the play of accusations of collective Jewish guilt and ~~rejection~~ rejection, and of anti-Jewish polemic and prejudice. They have deleted the explicit allegations in the 1960 and 1970 text that God has rejected the Jewish people and ended His covenant with them. They have removed many of the most blatant expressions of sadism, vengefulness and greed on the part of the traders (in the Temple), the priests and 'the people.' They have added an introductory exhortation cautioning each spectator to 'recognize himself as guilty in what happened...'

"Unfortunately," the AJC study continues, "these well-meaning modifications are undermined by the drama itself, for the way in which the story unfolds and develops has not been basically altered. Thus, the Jewish religious leaders of the time are all lumped together as hateful enemies of Jesus who cynically manipulate the populace into a screaming mob, and who hound Jesus to the cross and derive joyful satisfaction from his condemnation and suffering. The merchants, though their importance has been diminished (in this text), still play their non-Biblical role.

"Pilate is still portrayed as a sympathetic weakling, forced into condemning Jesus by the cruel Jews against his will. Jewish law is still depicted falsely as harsh and punitive. The Jewish people still call down the blood curse upon themselves and their children. In short, revision of the Oberammergau drama has taken the form of substantial cutting, but not of essential rethinking. The traditional anti-Jewish polemic which shaped the

original text has not been examined, nor have the insights of current Biblical and extra-Biblical scholarship been incorporated into the dynamics of the play.

"To provide a historical background based on contemporary Biblical scholarship would require far more profound structural changes in the Oberammergau Passion Play than are found in the present revised text, despite its significant improvement over earlier versions. It would require a basically different orientation to the major characters ⁱⁿ of the drama and the way they interact....Whether or not the present format of the Passion Play can be adapted to accommodate these realities is an open question," the study concludes.

Rabbi Tanenbaum reported that "significantly, a leading Catholic priest-scholar in Germany, Father Wilm Sanders of Hamburg, who is a member of the Ecumenical Study Commission of the German Catholic Bishops Conference and German Coordinator for the Societies for Christian-Jewish Relations, has completed his own study of the 1980 revised text, and his conclusions coincide with those of the American Jewish Committee study. These are summarized in his words:

"The play for 1980 is certainly not the play for all of the future, nor has Oberammergau taken seriously its opportunity to share in the changed understanding of the relationship between Jews and Judaism to a large part of Christendom as our ecumenical study group formulated in 1970.

"With abbreviations and the change of words ~~of~~ alone, there is no positive message and this is, of course, the declared goal of those to whom the continued existence of the Passion Play is of heartfelt concern. You cannot do it in a single sentence in the prologue."

Mr. Jacobs observed that "there is a very substantial group of the younger generation of Oberammergau villagers with whom AJC has met several times since 1977 who share our convictions and who continue to refuse to act in the revised 1980 Passion Play because of its fundamental anti-Jewish structure and themes. Their convictions are

are increasingly shared by thousands of German young people, 'the next generation', who made their views known during their reactions to the recent showing of 'Holocaust' on German educational television. The younger Oberammergau actors are planning to produce a significantly improved Rosner text in 1984. They informed AJC of their hope that 1980 will be the last time that the anti-Jewish Daisenberger script will be performed.

Mr. Jacobs added, "AJC believes that the Jewish community, and all people of good will who oppose prejudice, has an obligation to support these progressive and democratic elements in Oberammergau and in German society generally, and not to contribute to undermining their struggle to combat the religious sources of anti-Semitism in German society by giving our imprimatur to an essentially anti-Jewish play. We are hopeful that our study will constitute a vital contribution to that worthy objective."

Rabbi Tanenbaum announced that copies of the AJC study is being published in German by the Bavarian Catholic Academy in Munich and will be distributed to the German and international press as well as to tourists who will be attending the 1980 performance. "Through the wide dissemination of our Oberammergau study," he said, "it is our hope to raise the consciousness of the many people who will view the play and thereby hopefully immunize them against the bacillus of this antisemitism which still lurks in ~~the~~ unfortunate production."

Among the twelve themes which are analyzed in the study are:

Oberammergau

November 26, 1979

Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Kermit Johnson
Chief of Chaplains, United States Army
Washington, D.C. 20310

My dear Kermit,

It gave me real pleasure to speak with you again this morning.

I am very grateful for your interest in the problems that the revised 1980 Oberammergau Passion Play poses for all of us, both theologically as well as in terms of its potential negative effect on Jewish-Christian relationships.

As agreed I am sending you the English text of the 1980 script. Also enclosed please find copies of the American Jewish Committee's line-by-line analysis of the 1980 text, as well as copies of the press release that contains some additional information.

By all means, feel free to share this with your colleagues in the European Theatre. I would be grateful if you could send me copies of any of the statements or documents that you and your associates issue in connection with this problem.

And I do hope that you will be able to share a copy of your address before the Chaplains' Conference in Louisville. It was a genuine masterpiece of thought and language and I would like to share it with some of my key colleagues.

With warmest personal good wishes, I am,

Cordially, as ever,

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
National Director
Interreligious Affairs

MHT:RPR

Enclosures *des Monies Chy*

bc: Bert Gold
Bob Jacobs
Miles Jaffe
Bill Trosten
Zach Shuster

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date August 15, 1979

to Area Directors, JCRCs, Jewish Federations

from Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, National Interreligious Affairs Director

subject 1980 OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

There have been a number of newspaper stories in recent days reporting on the revision of the 1980 Oberammergau Passion Play, allegedly resulting in the removal of anti-Semitic references of the Daisenberger text.

The reports are based on a recent analysis of the latest revised version of that script conducted by Dr. Leonard Swidler and the Rev Gerard S. Sloyan, both of Temple University, and sponsored by the ADL. (Both Dr. Swidler and Father Sloyan are good friends of the Jewish community and have collaborated for many years in bettering Jewish-Christian relations both with AJC and ADL as well as with the Philadelphia Jewish community.)

A headline in the Philadelphia Inquirer of July 30th reads, "Passion Play 1980 Purged of Historical Anti-Semitism." That is representative of many similar headlines in other newspapers reporting on those findings. Dr. Swidler is quoted in Newsday of July 25th as saying: "In my judgment, all of the serious problems have been solved."

The AJC's Interreligious Affairs Department has just completed a detailed, line-by-line analysis of the "revised" German text of Daisenberger which will be published and distributed during the coming two weeks. Our study finds that a number of significant passages, scenes, and language changes have been made which correspond in detail to the findings of the German-language analysis which an AJC delegation submitted to the Oberammergau Town Council and discussed with them during our four meetings in 1977, 1978, and 1979. The removal of anti-Jewish passages are to be welcomed. Nevertheless, the overriding conclusion of our latest study, entitled Oberammergau 1980 - Progress and Problems, is: "As it stands, the drama retains an anti-Jewish impact despite the well-intentioned efforts of those who have revised it."

Thus, as a brief example, "despite changes in the wording of a number of passages in the 1970 text, the 'revised' 1980 text still asserts that God will pour out his anger on the Jewish people for the Crucifixion:

"O my people, O my people
Return thee to thy God,
Scorn not with evil mockery
The warning call of grace;
That not, people of God, on thee
In full measure one day be poured
The anger of our God most High!..."

On the allegation of collective Jewish responsibility for the death of Christ, the revised text for the 1980 performance has somewhat moderated the impression that the entire Jewish people turned against Jesus. Nevertheless, other imputations of collective Jewish guilt have been retained in the script. These range from subtle implications that the High Priest speaks for the whole of the Jewish people to outright accusation that the raging, bloodthirsty mob represents all Jews. Thus, in Act X, Scene 4, Pilate tells Jesus "Thine own nation and the chief priest have delivered thee unto me." And in the Condemnation scene, Pilate condemns Jesus at the desire of the High Council and "the people of Jerusalem." Here again, a few authorities are assumed to represent an entire people.

Significantly, a leading Catholic priest in Germany, who is a member of the Ecumenical Study Commission of the German Catholic Bishops Conference, and German Coordinator for the Societies for Christian-Jewish Relations, has completed his own study of the 'revised text' for 1980 and has just shared his study with AJC. The conclusions of Father Wilm Sanders of Hamburg coincide with those of the AJC findings and are summarized in his words:

"The play for 1980 is certainly not the play for all of the future, nor has Oberammergau taken seriously its chance to share in the changed understanding of the relationship between Jews and Judaism to a large part of Christendom as our ecumenical study group formulated in 1970."

"With abbreviations and the change of words alone, there is no positive message and this is, of course, the declared goal of those to whom the continued existence of the Passion Play is of heartfelt concern. You cannot do it with a single sentence in the prologue."

There is a very substantial group of the younger generation of Oberammergau villagers with whom we have met several times since 1977 who share these convictions and who continue to refuse to act in the revised 1980 Passion Play because of its fundamental anti-Jewish structure and themes. Their convictions are increasingly shared by thousands of the German "next generation" who made their views known during their reactions to the recent showing of "Holocaust" on German educational television. The younger Oberammergau actors are planning to produce a significantly improved Rosner text in 1984. They informed AJC of their hope that 1980 will be the last time that the anti-Jewish Daisenberger script will be performed.

AJC believes that the Jewish community has an obligation to support these progressive and democratic elements in Oberammergau and in German society generally, and not to contribute to undermining their struggle to combat the religious sources of anti-Semitism in German society. We are hopeful that our study, Oberammergau 1980 - Progress and Problems, will constitute a vital contribution to that worthy objective.

MHT.RPR

79-700-63



MARC H. TANENBAUM
and JUDITH H. BANKI

Oberammergau Update

Passion plays constitute a troubling problem for Jews and Christians who seek to uproot anti-Jewish images in Christian tradition. Focusing on Jesus' agony on the cross and the events leading up to it, these pageants carry a highly emotional impact which frequently produces bitterness and resentment toward those depicted as 'enemies' of Jesus—the Jewish people.

Of all the pageants dramatizing the Crucifixion, the most famous is

a third—530,000 from 113 countries—viewed the 1970 production.

Adolf Hitler, one of the play's strongest admirers, declared at the height of World War II: "It is vital that the Passion Play be continued at Oberammergau, for never has the menace of Jewry been so convincingly portrayed. The Nazis classified it as a racially important cultural document. On the occasion of the pageant's tercentennial in 1934, a year after Hitler came to power, Je-

Adolf Hitler, one of the play's strongest admirers, declared at the height of World War II: "It is vital that the Passion Play be continued at Oberammergau, for never has the menace of Jewry been so convincingly portrayed."

the Oberammergau Passion Play performed every ten years by townsfolk of that village in Upper Bavaria, West Germany. It was first performed in 1634 in fulfillment of a vow made during a plague the year before. Over the centuries, it has been performed in at least five different versions. In modern times, the play and the picturesque mountain setting in which it is presented have become a major tourist attraction. About 1,500,000 people have seen it since World War II, more than

Jesus and his disciples were represented as Aryan heroes.

The performances in 1950 and 1960 returned to the prewar text, written originally by a priest, Joseph Alois Daisenberger, for the 1860 season. Though free from Nazi-type racism, the Daisenberger text abounds in anti-Jewish religious prejudices and distortions about Jews in general.

For nearly a century the Daisenberger text did not appear to trouble Christian consciences. But following the adoption by Vatican Council II in

1965 of the so-called 'Jewish Declaration'—which repudiated the notion of collective Jewish guilt for the Crucifixion—Christian as well as Jewish voices began to be raised against it.

In 1970 a revised version of the Daisenberger text was presented. The municipal authorities of Oberammergau, who exercised control over the production, claimed that the new text was free of anti-Jewish elements. Many people did not agree.

AJC's concern with the anti-Semitic character of Oberammergau goes back to the 1950s. An AJC content analysis of the 1960 and 1970 scripts, *Oberammergau 1960 and 1970: A Study in Religious Anti-Semitism*, documented its distortions and misrepresentations on a line-by-line basis and found that, despite excisions and revisions, the play reflects an ingrained negative attitude toward Judaism and Jewry. In correspondence with Oberammergau officials thereafter, AJC argued that the Daisenberger text was structurally anti-Semitic and should be abandoned.

A number of Oberammergau town officials agreed and decided to replace the Daisenberger text in February 1978 with an earlier passion play (the Rosner script, a medieval morality play) in which the role of the Sanhedrin and the Jews is less central to the drama. But that decision was reversed a month later when ultra-conservative factions committed to the Daisenberger text were voted into office.

In August of last year, an AJC delegation met with key religious, academic and cultural leaders in Germany to urge a serious, systematic examination by German scholars of the Catholic Church's present understanding of Jews and Judaism and ways in which passion plays do or do not advance that understanding. Responding enthusiastically, Professor Franz Henrich, director of the prestigious Bavarian Catholic Academy, arranged a day-long symposium titled "The Pas-

Marc H. Tanenbaum is AJC's national interreligious affairs director. Judith H. Banki is assistant interreligious affairs director.

17-7-26-79

OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY REVISIONS ARE DISPUTED (620)

By Jo-ann Price

NEW YORK (NC) — Scholars representing two Jewish human rights agencies — the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the American Jewish Committee — appear to be at odds over whether script changes for the 1980 Oberammergau Passion Play have gone far enough in eliminating anti-Semitism from the text

According to Leonard Swidler, professor of Catholic thought and interreligious dialogue at Temple University, Philadelphia, "All of the essential problems" and "trouble spots" have been eliminated in recent revisions of the 1860 Weis-Daisenberger text, which will be used next year

He declared that all of the essential problems, as well as many lesser ones, have been taken care of and even a few positive steps have been ventured, only a few secondary problems have not yet been completely resolved

Swidler's detailed findings, made with Father Gerard S. Sloyan, English editor of the New American Bible, at the request of the Anti-Defamation League were disputed by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum of the AJC. He asserted that "while we welcome the changes made, they still remain cosmetic

"The problem remains," Rabbi Tanenbaum stated, "that the basic construct of the text portrays the Jews collectively guilty for the death of Christ. It also portrays the Jews as being ferocious in their determination to bring about the death of Christ.

"It shows Pontius Pilate as a compassionate weakling who makes a decision for the crucifixion only because he is forced to do so by the Jewish leaders and the Jewish mob.

Swidler, who made his report in New York to ADL leaders, said the changes in next year's text included most of the specific recommendations he and Father Sloyan had made to persons responsible at Oberammergau as well as to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Munich, in a 20-page commentary last year.

Several hundred townspeople have dramatic roles in the production which is staged every 10 years from May through October.

Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is the AJC interreligious affairs director, said his organization has supported a script written originally by Ferdinand Rosner, an 18th century Benedictine monk. He said in this script, the role of the Sanhedrin and the Jews is less central to the drama than in the script to be used next year. Pro-Rosner townspeople, he noted, plan to stage their own production in 1984.

"We have had a different approach than the AJC to the question," commented Theodore Freedman, director of the national program division of the ADL. "We felt we should seek to change the text, but the selection of the text was a local Oberammergau decision. To get into a controversy which text would be used was to defeat the main purpose of the study."

Swidler said that the final written script was made available in June. Rabbi Tanenbaum said his organization will release a line-by-line analysis in September. Its finding will differ "substantially" from the conclusions reached by Swidler.

Anti-Jewish reference to the "Old Covenant" has been struck. Offensive references to "the synagogue" as a symbol of Judaism have been cut. Textual negative references to "the Jews" and "people" as referring to Jews have been dropped. Dramatic repetitive lines based on St. Matthew have been eliminated, as has a long anti-Semitic poem based on the Book of Esther.

Swidler said the authors sought actively to make extra changes, for instance, by cutting out two scenes depicting temple merchants conniving in the betrayal of Jesus, and substituting synonyms for the proper name of God. They were keenly interested in eliminating any anti-Semitic words and promoting positive Catholic-Jewish relationships.

While further changes are desired, such as depicting Pilate as "the treacherous tyrant he was" these are on the whole of less importance than the "major changes" already made, he concluded.

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OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY REVISIONS
EVOKE A CONFLICTING JEWISH RESPONSE

By Religious News Service (8-14-79)

NEW YORK (RNS) -- Executives of two prominent Jewish agencies are in disagreement over whether recent revisions to the Oberammergau Passion Play have lessened its anti-Semitic content.

Nat Kameny, chairman of the national program committee of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith, recently expressed the view that the latest changes "have significantly reduced the anti-Semitic potential" from the 1980 Passion Play.

But Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, national director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, asserts that "the basic problems remain. The basic structure of the play is that the Jews killed Christ."

At a recent luncheon of the ADL program committee, a report of the latest changes in the Oberammergau script was presented by Dr. Leonard Swidler, professor of Catholic thought and interreligious dialogue at Temple University and editor of the Journal of Ecumenical Studies.

Dr. Swidler said he was "satisfied that the great bulk of the problems had been adequately solved." He reported that scenes stereotyping Jews as "conniving merchants" have been excised, and that the production will begin with a special greeting to Jewish viewers as "brothers and sisters of the people from whom the Savior came."

But Rabbi Tanenbaum said that although he welcomes the changes that have been made, much more still needs to be done. "Pontius Pilate continues to be portrayed as a compassionate weakling," and "the ancient canard for the collective Jewish responsibility for the death of Jesus remains," he told Religious News Service.

"I was startled, if not amazed, by the general impression that the ADL report has led to," the American Jewish Committee official said. "It's being interpreted as an imprimatur of the revised version at Oberammergau."

Rabbi Tanenbaum said the Committee will soon be issuing its own line-by-line analysis of the revised text indicating where anti-Semitic elements remain. He said that a similar analysis has recently been submitted to the West German Catholic bishops by a priest in Hamburg who has been involved in interreligious dialogues.

At the ADL luncheon, Mr. Kameny praised Oberammergau officials and villagers "for their willingness to listen to Jewish criticisms of the traditional pageant and to make changes in accordance with the spirit, principles and guidelines of Vatican II."

But Rabbi Tanenbaum said, "I think the water has been muddied, and we are going to have to try to clarify this in the coming weeks."



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 59TH ORDNANCE BRIGADE
APO NEW YORK 09189

OPP
US ARMED FORCES

AEUSA-OC

27 November 1979

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56 Street
New York, N Y. 10022

Dear Marc,

Coincidentally, the United States Army, Europe, announced the acquisition of 5,000 tickets to the Oberammergau Passion Play for resale to American troops on the same day that the Stars and Stripes carried a UPI story in which you are quoted as holding that the play remained "structurally anti-Semitic."

I happened to be with Kermit Johnson, the Army Chief of Chaplains that day, and brought the article to his attention. He was as concerned as I was about the possibility of the Army promoting an anti-Semitic program. Kermit expressed the highest personal regard for you, and said that he would get in touch with you about the matter when he returned to the United States.

While I have my doubts that the Army would back out of the deal at this late date, there is yet a great educational opportunity open here. The Army's plan is to make those 5,000 tickets available only under a package plan, which would include admission to the performance, overnight accommodations at the Army's recreation center in Garmisch, transportation to and from the performance and an orientation by the Garmisch Army Chaplain the night before. The Garmisch Army Chaplain is also very much concerned about the anti-Semitic aspects of the performance and would be most willing to include background material dealing with that in his orientations.

If you could provide such material, I would be glad to see that it reached our Garmisch Chaplain, where it would be certain to be put to good use.

Fraternally,

Dick

RICHARD E. DRYER
Chaplain (COL), USA
USAREUR Jewish Program Coordinator

religion/□□

Further reforms urged in Passion Play

United Press International

Despite efforts to rid the 350-year-old Oberammergau Passion Play of its anti-Jewish elements, the world-famous play remains "structurally anti-Semitic," according to the American Jewish Committee.

The committee, in its latest line-by-line analysis of the play, said it continues to "malign" Jewish law, to depict the Judaism of Jesus' time as corrupt and punitive and to dramatize those Gospel sources that cast the most negative light on Jewish motives and actions.

The play, which attracts millions of tourists to the West German town of Oberammergau, is presented once every 10 years. It is scheduled to be presented in 1980.

Many Christian churches in the United States organize congregational tours of Germany to coincide with the presentation of the Passion Play.

"Our systematic study of the 1980 text finds that a number of significant passages, scenes and language changes have been made" that correspond to suggestions made by the AJC, said Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, interreligious affairs director of the Jewish civil rights agency. "The removal of these anti-Jewish passages is to be welcomed."

"Nevertheless, the overriding conclusion of our latest study is: As it stands, the drama retains an anti-Jewish impact despite the well-intentioned efforts of those who have revised it."

The line-by-line study of the new text of the play, done by Judith H. Banki, assistant interreligious director, noted that a "serious effort" had been made to "cleanse the play of accusations of collective Jewish guilt" for Jesus' crucifixion and allegations that "God has rejected the Jewish people and ended his covenant with them."

"They have removed many of the most blatant expressions of sadism, vengefulness and greed on the part of the traders [in the Temple], the priests and 'the people,'" Ms. Banki's analysis said.

"Unfortunately," it added, "these well-meaning modifications are undermined by the drama itself, for the way in which the story unfolds and develops has not basically altered."

"Thus, the Jewish religious leaders of the time are all lumped together as hateful enemies of Jesus who cynically manipulate the populace into a screaming mob and who hound Jesus to the cross and derive joyful satisfaction from his condemnation and suffering," the study said.

American Jewish Committee officials said they had been told that a "very substantial group of the younger generation" of Oberammergau villagers share the Jewish group's concern about the anti-Jewish structure and that there was hope for continued reform of the play.

"They informed the AJC of their hope that 1980 will be the last time that the anti-Jewish script will be performed," the officials said. □□



A scene from the Passion Play

Cherammbergan

The American



Jewish Committee

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

November 26, 1979

Dear Marc,

The Suddeutsche Zeitung featured an article on the latest development in the Oberammergau conflict, in which it makes known the different and opposing views of the AJC and Bna'i Brith on the present text. A full translation of this article is enclosed herewith, together with the original.

I should appreciate getting from you information about further recent actions that you have been taking with regard to this matter.

I should also like to get a copy of your report of the meeting in Regensburg.

Sincerely yours,

Zach
Zachariah Shuster

Marc Tanenbaum
AJCommittee
165 E 56 Street
New York, N.Y. 10022

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→ Oberammergau
PP

7 December 1979

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
National Director
Interreligious Affairs
The American Jewish Committee
165 East 56 Street
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Marc,

Thank you so very much for sending me the English translation of the Oberammergau Passion Play. I promptly sent a copy to Chaplain (COL) Jack Ettershank in Europe and his office will be assessing it together with the U.S. Army Europe staff. I cannot tell you which way they will move but I relayed to them the contents of our conversation. We also will take a look at the text here.

If Europe comes out with any kind of public announcement or correspondence we will transmit this to you. On the other hand, they may prefer to work behind the scenes. I have no idea which way this will go.

Thank you for your prompt reply and help and I hope it is possible for us to renew fellowship some time, either in New York City or Washington. With every good wish, I remain

Cordially,

KERMIT D. JOHNSON
Chaplain (Major General), USA
Chief of Chaplains

EVALUATION,TEXT FOR THE 1980 PERFORMANCETHE OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

AJC's analysis of the 1960 and 1970 versions of the Oberammergau Passion Play raised, among others, the following objections:

- The chief enemies of Jesus, the Jewish priests and high priests, are portrayed as vicious, bloodthirsty and sadistic;
- The mob or "the people" behaves like a sadistic lynch mob;
- The money changers, whom the Gospels mention briefly as having been driven from the Temple by Jesus, are transmuted into a gang of traders and usurers who play a major role in Jesus' arrest. Bent on both reimbursement and revenge for the losses they sustained when Jesus drove them from the Temple, they serve as intermediaries who induce Judas to betray Jesus. (There is no Scriptural basis for any of this beyond the Temple episode.)
- Jewish law is misrepresented as legalistic, punitive, harsh and vindictive;
- According to the play, the Jews are rejected by God, and the so-called "blood curse" ("His blood be upon us and upon our children!") which has been the source of so much persecution of Jews, yet which appears in only one of the four Gospels, is invoked by "the priests and the people."

In terms of dramatic structure, we pointed out that the Passion Play pitted the Jewish people against Jesus, downplayed the role of Roman power, and made a near hero of Pontius Pilate, who was portrayed as a compassionate weakling, cajoled and blackmailed into condemning Jesus against his will and desire. Moreover, the political background of the time: a brutal Roman occupation; an intermittent guerilla war fought by Jewish insurgents; widespread Messianic expressions among the Jews; fear among the Roman rulers of a large scale uprising; repressive measures by the Romans, including frequent executions on the cross, was almost totally ignored.

We also noted that the anti-Jewish impact of the dramatic structure was heightened by bloodthirsty, ferocious and arrogant language attributed to the Jewish priests and the mob, which depicted them as having sadistic pleasure in Jesus' death and suffering.

What changes have been made in the text for the 1980 performance of the Oberammergau Passion Play?

The frequent assertions that the Jews have been rejected by God have been deleted from the script. For example: *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and be given to a nation bringing forth better fruits. (Attributed to Jesus, p. 17)*; But blind remains the city of Jerusalem, thrusting away the loving hand held out to her. Therefore, the Highest from her His face hath turned, and leaves her to sink down to her destruction... See! Vashti! The proud one is cast out. Showing God's purpose for the synagogue... (sung by soloist or chorus, p. 32); The Old Covenant which my Father made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has reached its end. (Attributed to Jesus, p. 42), do not appear in the 1980 script. Yet the implication is still drawn that God will pour out his anger on the Jewish people for the Crucifixion. For example:*

1970 text

1980 text

Prologue

*People of God, behold, thy Saviour
is near at hand!
The Long-promised One is come at last
to thee.
O hear Him, follow His leading,
Blessing and life unto you He is
bringing...*

*People of God, behold, thy Saviour
is near at hand!
The Long-promised One is come at last
to thee.
O hear Him, follow His leading,
Blessing and life unto you He is
bringing...*

Chorus

*Jerusalem, Jerusalem!
Return thee to thy God!
Scorn not with evil mockery
The warning call of grace;
That not, unhappy one, on thee
In full measure one day be poured
The anger of our God most High!...*

*O my people, O my people
Return thee to thy God!
Scorn not with evil mockery
The warning call of grace;
That not, people of God, on thee
In full measure one day be poured
The anger of our God most High!...*

Chorus

*Ye sinners, hear the word of God:
Even still would ye find grace.
Destroy from out your inmost hearts
The leaven of your sins.*

*Ye humans, hear the word of God:
Even still would ye find grace.
Destroy from out your inmost hearts
The leaven of your sins.*

The substitution of "humans" for "sinners" is clearly an attempt to universalize the call to repentance. It is likely that the revisers of the script intended the terms "O my people" and "People of God" to be understood by Christians as referring to themselves. However, given the context and historical setting of the drama, it seems inevitable that these terms will be understood as referring to the Jewish people.

The bloodthirsty language attributed to the Jewish priesthood, traders and the mob has been much toned down, as have some of the expressions of joyful gloating at Jesus' condemnation and suffering. This is perhaps the most noticeable change in the text. Nevertheless, some of this bloodthirstiness remains.

* All page references are to the English version of the 1970 text.

For example, Annas (after Jesus is reluctantly condemned by Pilate): *We and our children will mark this day and with thankful joy speak the name of Pontius Pilate.* (p. 104); People: *Up and away! Away to Golgotha! Oh, joyful day! Happiest day! It is finished with the Galilean!* (p. 106); Priests and People: *Do not let him rest. On, drive him with blows!* (p. 109); Rabbi: *Is his arrogance not yet gone from him, even when he hangs helpless upon the cross?* (p. 118); (There are numerous similar instances, but about ten times this much has been excised.)

As for the dramatic structure of the play, there have been some modifications, but it is essentially the same. The dramatic conflict begins with Jesus driving the traders from the Temple, and this partly lays the ground for the ensuing hostility of the Jewish authorities toward Jesus.

A shocking scene in which the traders scream for revenge has been deleted, but even in the 1980 script, a trader named Dathan volunteers to seek out Judas so that the Jewish authorities can apprehend him. Dathan notes: *Of course, I must be in a position to offer this man an appropriate reward.* Thus, contrary to the Gospels, according to which Judas approached the priests with his offer of betrayal, this version of the Oberammergau Passion Play still has the chief trader playing an important role and the motif of greed, reiterated elsewhere in the play, is taken up early. Other instances of this depiction of Jews as being preoccupied with money occur in several places. In discussing the price to be given to Judas, one of the priests remarks: *We are directed by the Law of Moses. A slave is valued at thirty pieces of silver.* (The reference appears to be Exodus 21:32, which sets thirty shekels as the compensation to be paid to a slave owner for a slave gored by an ox. But the sole New Testament passage mentioning the amount paid to Judas Matthew 26:15 does not refer in any way to this or any other Jewish law. It is hard to see why this remark should have been introduced except for its insidious anti-Jewish impact. It suggests that the priests thought of Jesus as no better than a slave; it depicts them as arrogant and contemptuous, and it links that attitude to Jewish law.)

In the 1980 version, as in previous versions, the Jewish priests, the Sadducees and the Pharisees, are all lumped together as hating enemies of Jesus who conspire in his death. (Interestingly, both according to the Gospels and in the play itself, there are Pharisees who befriend and support Jesus. Two of them have roles in the Oberammergau Passion Play, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus; but in the play they are not identified as Pharisees.) Once again, Pilate is shown as a compassionate weakling who reluctantly succumbs to Jewish pressure. This is not the portrait of a man who was recalled to Rome for his excesses of brutality!

Similarly, Judas' betrayal of Jesus evokes a tableau of Joseph sold into slavery by his brothers. While it is clear from the Hebrew Scriptures that Joseph's brothers were motivated by jealousy because he was their father's favorite, the Oberammergau drama stresses greed as the motivation:

*The same spirit hardened the sons of Jacob,
That they, without mercy, sold their own brother;
For a wretched price, him into foreign traders
Hands they delivered.
When the heart pays homage to the idol of lucre,
Then all the nobler feelings are deadened.
Honor is venal, and therewith a man's word,
And love and friendship, too. (p. 45)*

Some of the changes made in the 1980 script, while they may have been well intended, appear to me to make matters worse. In several instances in the earlier versions, Jesus is addressed as "Rabbi" by his followers and disciples. These instances have been eliminated, and "Rabbi" replaced by "Master" or "Dear Master." Thus, "Rabbi" stands in the script only as a term of opprobrium. Anyone identified as a rabbi is negatively portrayed as an enemy of Jesus. (Curiously enough, there is a character in the play whose name /not title/ is "Rabbi.")

Another instance occurs on p. 26. In the 1970 version, Jesus says: *The son of man shall be delivered unto the Gentiles and he shall be spat upon and mocked at. They will crucify him...* In the 1980 version, this reads: *But now the son of man will be delivered up to the high priests and scribes, who will condemn him and turn him over to the Gentiles...* The revision has more of an anti-Jewish impact than the earlier version.

CONCLUSIONS

One has the impression that those who revised the script for 1980 really wanted to cleanse it of anti-Jewish polemic and prejudice. They have removed many of the most blatant examples of cruelty, sadism and vengefulness found in earlier versions. However, I think that they have been defeated by the dramatic structure of the play itself. There are many additional opportunities for correction that could have been undertaken by the revisers. For example:

1. It should be made clear that the high priest is a Roman appointee and that the Sadducean party which supported the priesthood was at the time closely allied with the interests of the Roman rulers. As such, they were neither elected nor representative leaders of the Jewish community. They had a vested interest in maintaining civic peace and stability, and were fearful that any kind of popular uprising would bring the might of Rome down on them, and on the helpless people.
2. It should be made clear that the Pharisees, as the leaders of a popular movement seeking to observe the Covenant in the spirit of the prophets, bitterly opposed the Sadducees and disagreed with them on almost every significant point of doctrine, from the manner of interpretation of the Bible to the belief in the resurrection of the body after death. "In spirit and belief...the teaching of Jesus and the early Church was remarkably similar to that of the Pharisees." (Eugene Fisher, Faith Without Prejudice, New York, Paulist Press, 1977, p. 80)

3. Palestine in the time of Jesus was seething with revolutionary movements. Indeed, a few decades after his death they erupted into a full-scale rebellion against Rome. Roman fear of a potential political uprising was and remains the most ignored factor in the depiction of the events of that time. It is touched on once or twice by the high priest, but should be lifted up as a major theme.

4. To depict Barabbas as simply a "murderer" makes the call for his release by some people in the crowd humanly incomprehensible. Barabbas is described by both Mark and Luke as an insurrectionist who had committed sedition against Rome (the same crime for which Jesus was officially condemned by Pilate). He may have been the leader of one of the many guerilla bands, and those who called for his release, his followers. This, instead of the scheming of the priests, would provide an understandable human motivation for those in the crowd who would see Barabbas as a hero, not as a criminal.

5. It should be clear that Jesus had friends and supporters among the Pharisees. Those who are listed as his friends in the cast of characters should be identified as Pharisees.

I suspect that even these changes would not salvage the Oberammergau Passion Play, for the present dramatic structure requires a kind of sub-human villainy from those who opposed Jesus, but any attempt to describe the realities of that time would have to incorporate them.

For whatever it is worth, I also found two anachronisms. On page 30, Mary refers to the "Temple of Jehovah." The word "Jehovah" (itself an inaccuracy) did not come into usage for another millenium. On page 34, Jesus instructs Peter and John to prepare the "Easter lamb." I suspect this is a mistranslation into English of the Pascal or Passover lamb. Obviously, Jesus would not have used the word "Easter."

Prepared by: Judith H. Banki
Assistant Director
Interreligious Affairs

JB/es

3/21/79

79-700-20

The American



Jewish Committee

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Zachariah Shuster, Consultant

December 10, 1979

MEMORANDUM

To: Marc Tanenbaum
From: Zachariah Shuster
Subj: Oberammergau

A strong critical reaction to Cardinal Ratzinger's statements with regard to the revised text of the Oberammergau Passion Play was published in the Suddeutsche Zeitung of Munich of November 30.

This reaction came from Prof. Dr. Josef Blank. According to my information, prof. Blank is a well-known personality, and it is believed that his observations will add weight to objections to the Passion Play.

I suggest that you send a letter to prof. Blank, congratulating him on the statement. His address is:

Karlstrasse 179
D-6601 Saarbruecken-Klarenthal
R.F.A.

Enclosed is a translation of the full text of this statement.

/.....

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, ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG, PHILIP E. HOFFMAN, ELMER L. WINTER ■ Honorary Vice-Presidents: NATHAN APPLEMAN, RUTH R. GODDARD, ANDREW GOODMAN, 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. ADELSTEIN, Rapid City, S.D.; DAVID HIRSCHHORN, Baltimore; MILES JAFFE, Detroit; ALFRED H. MOSES, Washington, D.C.; ELAINE PETSCHKE, Westchester; MERVIN H. RISEMAN, New York; RICHARD E. SHERWOOD, Los Angeles; SHERMAN H. STARR, Boston; EMILY W. SUNSTEIN, Philadelphia; GEORGE M. SZABAD, Westchester; ELISE D. WATERMAN, New York ■

One must read twice to be convinced of the accuracy of the observation that "in his opinion, with all good will, the Jews cannot be entirely cleared", and this is reinforced by the director with the saying of St Paul that "Christianity is for the Pagans a folly, and for the Jews a nuisance". Unfortunately, it is not clear from the context whether this expression has been made by Cardinal Ratzinger or by the Oberammergau's director Maier. At any rate, it is an outrage which demonstrates how much theological antisemitism there still prevails in our society, and in some sections of the Catholic Church after Vatican Council II.

The same applies to the instruction of Cardinal Ratzinger to reinsert in the text of the Passion Play the exclamation "his blood will fall upon us and our children" (Mt. 27-25). Cardinal Ratzinger should have learnt from the many exegetic publications during the last few years, and particularly from the recent book Tract concerning the Jews by Franz Mussner, that this exclamation is not historical and played no role during the proceedings before Pilate. This exclamation, as well as the entire scene during which Pilate is washing his hands in innocence, was a later insertion in the first Gospel. One could therefore on historical grounds eliminate this exclamation.

It is also not necessary to accept this text dogmatically as the word of God, because today one cannot consider anymore this text purely dogmatically as a quotation from the Bible without taking into consideration the miserable history of Christian antisemitism, which was stimulated by this text.

When it is done today, after Auschwitz, a place which has been visited by Cardinal Ratzinger last year, then it is either thoughtlessness or an insult to the Jewish people and its dead. Even a cardinal, being a German, cannot face indifferently our history, and act as though Christianity and theology had no part in the development of modern antisemitism. I myself, as a German and a Christian, can consider the developments in connection with Oberammergau only with a feeling of shame.

Prof. Dr. Josef Blank

The American



Jewish Committee

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

Zachariah Shuster, Consultant

December 12, 1979

MEMORANDUM

To: Marc Tanenbaum
From: Zachariah Shuster
Subj: Cardinal Ratzinger replies to criticism

A fatal core of pseudo-Christian antisemitism must disappear

The Süddeutsche Zeitung of December 8 published an extensive statement by Cardinal Ratzinger, Archbishop of Munich, in connection with the public discussion of the revised text of the Passion Play.

The statement represents a reply to the strong criticism of the Cardinal's action in approving this text in spite of the antisemitic passages in it.

Here is a translation of the full text of the Cardinal's statement.

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RICHARD MAASS, President ■ MAYNARD I. WISHNER, Chairman, Board of Governors ■ MORTON K. BLAUSTEIN, Chairman, National Executive Council ■ HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, Chairman, Board of Trustees ■
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Washington, D.C.; ELAINE PETSCHKE, Westchester; MERVIN H. RISEMAN, New York; RICHARD E. SHERWOOD, Los Angeles; SHERMAN H. STARR, Boston; EMILY W. SUNSTEIN, Philadelphia;
GEORGE M. SZABAD, Westchester; ELISE D. WATERMAN, New York ■

...../

"free from antisemitic tendencies", which does not exclude that, unfortunately, some single words can be misinterpreted. With regard to the substance of the matter, I am fully in accordance with Blank.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger

Note

It is clear that the Cardinal is rather apologetic about the new text, and about his own role in giving approval to the passages in question. The only excuse he is able to make is that the Oberammergau suggestions were worse than his own.

He gives no explanation, however, why it was absolutely necessary to reinsert the passage which, according to his own admission, represents the Christian core of antisemitism, which he describes as "pseudo".

I cannot understand how Swidler could give his approval, and how the A.D.L. could accept it.

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Prof. Blank, of Saarbrücken took position with regard to a misleading statement by the director of the Oberammergau Play on the new text of the Passion Play. I am grateful that this gives me an opportunity for a rectification. What happened is the following:

The new text attempted to purge the dialogue between Pilate and the Jews in Matthew 23-24 from antisemitic allusions: instead of Pilate's words "Look here", Pilate was made to say "You alone bear the responsibility". Afterwards, instead of the Biblical verse "His blood will fall upon us and our children", the entire crowd says "Yes, we are taking over for us and our children".

This seemed to me a fatal misaggravation, because instead of the non-unequivocal Biblical image, a factual statement was inserted, which can be interpreted only in the sense of the theory of the collective guilt of the Jewish people for the death of Jesus. This being a fatal core of the (pseudo)-Christian antisemitism, must at any rate disappear.

I therefore proposed to the Oberammergau delegation to accept the solution suggested by the Oberammergau specialist Prof. L. Swidler in his major expertize on the text of 1970, namely to quote the Biblical text but clarify it by appropriate comments made by the chorus, and thus delimit its sense.

In view of the fact that the entire delegation stated that it cannot be realized under the Oberammergauer conditions, I said that in this case it seems to me that a literal reproduction of the Biblical text is preferable to an arbitrarily invented text which practically states collective guilt; the Biblical expression belongs to the entire context of the Bible, and is therefore to be interpreted from a general perspective of the Bible, as it is done by F. Mussner in his Tract upon the Jews, which is rightly referred to by Blank.

The Tract had not yet appeared at that time, but I knew the major features of it, and I have insisted that every single Biblical word should be viewed from the entire context of the Bible, and that we, here, should finally have before us an interpretation which will cut the roads towards antisemitism. Furthermore, I was gratified that one of the severest critic of the text of 1970, the above mentioned prof. Swidler, after a thorough examination of the new version (as well as a five-hour conversation with the chief-editor in Ettal), has fully agreed with this procedure and characterized the new text as

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"free from antisemitic tendencies", which does not exclude that, unfortunately, some single words can be misinterpreted. With regard to the substance of the matter, I am fully in accordance with Blank.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger

Note

It is clear that the Cardinal is rather apologetic about the new text, and about his own role in giving approval to the passages in question. The only excuse he is able to make is that the Oberammergau suggestions were worse than his own.

He gives no explanation, however, why it was absolutely necessary to reinsert the passage which, according to his own admission, represents the Christian core of antisemitism, which he describes as "pseudo".

I cannot understand how Swidler could give his approval, and how the A.D.L. could accept it.

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Fataler Kern des pseudochristlichen Antisemitismus muß verschwinden

Professor Blank von Saarbrücken hat in der SZ vom 30.11.1979 mit großem Engagement zu einer in der Tat irreführenden Äußerung des Oberammergauer Spielers über die Neugestaltung des Textes der dortigen Passionsspiele Stellung genommen. Ich bin dankbar, daß mir dies die Gelegenheit zu einer Richtigstellung gibt. Der Vorgang war folgender:

Im Dialog zwischen Pilatus und den Juden im Matthäus 23,24 f. hätte die Neufassung folgendermaßen von antisemitischen Anklängen zu befreien versucht. Statt des Pilatuswortes „Seht ihr zu“ ließ man Pilatus sagen: „Ihr allein trägt die Verantwortung“. Darauf sollte statt des biblischen „Sein Blut komme über uns und unsere Kinder“ das ganze Volk (so die Regie-Anweisung) sagen: „Ja! Wir übernehmen sie für uns und unsere Kinder.“

Dies schien mir eine fatale Verschlechterung, weil an Stelle des durchaus nicht eindeutigen biblischen Bildwortes eine Sachaussage getreten ist, die man kaum anders als im Sinn der Theorie der Kollektivschuld des jüdischen Volkes am

Tode Jesu hätte deuten können, die als der fatale Kern eines (pseudo-)christlichen Antisemitismus auf jeden Fall verschwinden muß. Ich legte daraufhin der Oberammergauer Delegation nahe, den Ausweg zu wählen, den der amerikanische Oberammergau-Spezialist L. Swidler in seinem großen Gutachten zum Text von 1970 vorgeschlagen hatte: den biblischen Text wörtlich zu zitieren, aber ihn durch entsprechende Chorstimmen kommentieren und damit in seiner Sinngrenze klären zu lassen.

Da mir von der ganzen Delegation übereinstimmend gesagt wurde, dies sei dramaturgisch schlechthin unter den Oberammergauer Verhältnissen nicht realisierbar, habe ich gesagt, in diesem Fall scheine mir die wörtliche Wiedergabe des Bibeltextes immer noch besser zu sein als ein selbsterfundener Text, der praktisch nur die Kollektivschuld aussagen kann, während das biblische Wort eben zum Ganzen der Bibel gehört und daher von der Gesamtsicht der Bibel her auszulegen ist, wie sie etwa F. Müßner in seinem von Blank mit Recht angeführten Traktat über die Juden gibt.

Der Traktat war zwar damals noch nicht erschienen, mir aber in den Grundzügen bekannt und ich habe gerade darauf gesetzt, daß jedes einzelne biblische Wort vom Ganzen der Bibel her verstanden werden muß und daß wir hier nun endlich eine Auslegung vor uns haben, die dem Antisemitismus den Weg abschneidet. Im übrigen hat es mich mit Genugtuung erfüllt, daß einer der schärfsten Kritiker des Textes von 1970, der schon genannte Professor L. Swidler, nach gründlicher Untersuchung der Neufassung (unter anderem auch einem fünfständigen Gespräch mit dem Hauptredaktor in Ettal) sich mit dieser voll einverstanden erklärt und sie als frei von antisemitischer Tendenz bezeichnet hat, was leider nie wird ausschließen können, daß Einzelworte mißdeutbar sind. In dem Anliegen als solches gehe ich mit Blank völlig eins.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger

Erzbischof von München und Freising

Kardinal-Faulhaber-Straße 7

8000 München 2

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Briefe an die Süddeutsche Zeitung

Freitag, 30. November 1979

Die unheilvolle Geschichte des christlichen Antisemitismus

Zum Artikel in der SZ Nr. 261 „Kardinal belehrt die Oberammergauer“

Man muß schon zweimal hinschauen, um sich von der Richtigkeit des Satzes zu überzeugen: „Seine Ansicht, daß man es bei allem guten Willen den Juden nie ganz recht machen könne, bekräftigt der bibelfeste Spielleiter mit dem Paulus-Wort, wonach das Christentum den Heiden eine Torheit und den Juden ein Ärgernis sei.“ Leider geht aus dem Kontext nicht eindeutig hervor, ob diese Äußerung von Kardinal Ratzinger oder vom Oberammergauer Spielleiter Maier stammt. In jedem Fall ist sie eine Ungeheuerlichkeit, die deutlich macht, wieviel an nicht aufgearbeitetem theologischen Antisemitismus in unserer Gesellschaft und in manchen Teilen der katholischen Kirche auch nach dem 2. Vatikanum noch immer vorhanden ist.

Darüber hinaus geht auch die Anordnung von Kardinal Ratzinger, den Judenausruß „Sein Blut komme über uns und unsere Kinder“ (Mt 27,25) wieder in den Passionstext aufzunehmen, in die gleiche Richtung. Denn der Kardinal könnte eigentlich aus vielen exegetischen Publikationen der letzten Jahre, wie aus dem kürzlich erschienenen „Traktat über die Juden“ von Franz Müßner, wissen, daß dieses Matthäus-Wort nicht historisch ist und in der tatsächlichen Verhandlung vor Pilatus keine Rolle gespielt hat. Vielmehr handelt es sich, wie bei der ganzen Szene, wo Pilatus in Unschuld seine Hände wäscht, um eine nachträgliche Bildung des 1. Evangelisten. Man könnte also aus historischen Gründen auf das Wort ohne weiteres verzichten. Es ist auch nicht notwendig, diesen Text dogmatisch heute noch

als Wort Gottes zu akzeptieren. Denn es geht heute nicht mehr an, diesen Text rein dogmatisch als Bibelzitat zu nehmen, ohne die unheilvolle Geschichte des christlichen Antisemitismus mit zu bedenken, die gerade durch diesen Text ausgelöst worden ist. Wenn man dies heute trotzdem tut, nach Auschwitz, das Kardinal Ratzinger erst kürzlich im vergangenen Mai besucht hat, dann ist dies entweder eine große Gedankenlosigkeit oder eine Beleidigung des jüdischen Volkes und seiner Toten. Auch ein Kardinal kann als Deut-

scher unserer Geschichte nicht gleichgültig gegenüberstehen und nicht so tun, als hätten Christentum und Theologie an der Entstehung des modernen Antisemitismus überhaupt keinen Anteil gehabt. Ich selber kann als Deutscher und als Christ diese Vorgänge im Hinblick auf Oberammergau nur mit größter Beschämung zur Kenntnis nehmen.

Prof. Dr. Josef Blank
Karlsruhe 179
6601 Saarbrücken-Klarenthal

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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date December 5, 1979
to Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
from William S. Trosten
subject



I think you will be interested in the translation of the attached article which I just received from Hans Schwaighofer. In my view, it confirms both our initial position and our subsequent analysis.

Regards.

Bill

WST/bjb
 atts.

OBERAMMERGAU'S TEXT FOR 1980

BLOODTHIRSTINESS AND CRIES OF "MURDERERS" ARE NOW SILENCED

Oberammergau -- Pontius Pilate scenes, Herodotus intermezzo and the famous "rage" (Empoerung) have always been the dramatic highlights of the Passion Play and are responsible to a large degree of its worldwide theatrical success. How do they appear in the text of 1980? That is the subject of our final report on the revised text.

In Daisenberger's text Pontius Pilate is the noble, just Roman who wants to have nothing to do with the death of Christ because "he sees no guilt in him." Because of this and their "bloodthirsty hatred," the Jewish complainants are so hopelessly misrepresented that even Jews in our own century must feel offended.

According to our present understanding of history, Pilate was a devious favorite involved in all kinds of dirt who later fell out of favor with the emperor and was subsequently executed. In the corrected text he appears paler and less sanctimonious -- passages such as "your hateful accusations" or "your personal revenge" or "the blind rage of his enemies" etc. have been removed and serve to soften the contrast. In the same vein, the reference in the Daisenberger prologue to a "maddened, blinded people" who cry for "the martyrdom and the death of the Savior" has been replaced by a softer formulation. Also, the demand for "the blood of our enemy" has disappeared and been replaced with the "sentencing of the Galilean." In the previous text, Pontius Pilate even defended

Christ as the 'model of a wise teacher whom you have long revered.'
This appeal for mercy has also been dropped.

The new version has a passage designed especially to deal with the 'reconciliation' with Jewish sensibilities. A few people from the crowd call out "free him -- he is without guilt" before the cries of "crucify him, crucify him" begin. Also, the curse of Pilate "his blood is upon you and your children" has disappeared. The reaction of the "people" to the sentencing -- always a scene of rejoicing in the Daisenberger play has been considerably softened.

The carrying of the cross and the crucifixion are essentially unaltered. Nevertheless, in the Golgatha prologue the "revenge of the godless" has been changed to "merciless" and the "murderers of Christ" has been changed to "enemies." A few peripheral characters and passages have been removed, and in the final scene of the glorification of Christ -- instead of "you savior of sinners who died on Golgatha" it now reads for 1980 "you redeemer of all sinners victorious on Golgatha."

If one takes a balance of the corrections it must be recognized that the assignment and mandate of the Text Committee was very clearly to keep the Daisenberger text and that therefore they could make only cosmetic changes. In making these revisions special attention was given to "defusing" Jewish objections. Therefore, one sees the result of this effort in the form of the shortening and tightening up of the play. And, also, in the attempt to replace unusable and unintelligible idioms without destroying the poetic quality.

Above all, one must never forget that no attempt was made to substantially "reform" the Passion Play. This was neither the assignment nor the intent of the committee.



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date July 19, 1979
 to Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
 from Rabbi A. James Rudin
 subject

Jonathan Levine, our Pittsburgh Director, called and said that the AJC people in his community were very upset with the New York Times piece on the Oberammergau Passion Play that appeared in the July 8th travel section.

As you know, the University of Pittsburgh has planned a trip to Oberammergau in 1980, and Jonathan has been working with University officials on this matter. Jonathan said the trip would either be cancelled or the group would go but would hold some kind of public seminar in Germany on anti-Semitism, Christian-Jewish relations, etc.

Jonathan hopes, of course, that the trip will be cancelled but he noted that the New York Times piece made no mention of any anti-Semitism or any problems about the Play. He wants to know if we are planning an answer or rebuttal to the Times article. If we do not, he said our position with the University will be weakened.

AJR:FM

cc: Judith Banki
 Inge Gibel
 William Trosten



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date 8-7-79
to Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
from Neil Kramer **cc:** Neil Sandberg
subject Oberammergau

I spoke with John Dart regarding the forthcoming AJC analysis of the recent script revisions in the Passion Play. He is eager to receive it and requested an alert by telephone when that report was on its way. Would it be possible for us to learn of the report's completion by phone, so that we can get to Dart before the mail does?

Dart asked two questions of import: Would the AJC analysis be favorable? and would there be another boycott as in 1970? I answered the first on the basis of our discussion today; on the boycott question, I indicated that AJC had not made a policy decision at this time to my knowledge.

Neil J. Kramer

Greenhouse Design and Management

November 14, 1979

Mr. Robert Jacob
American Jewish Committee
163 East 56th Street
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Bob:

As I discussed with you at the NEC, I believe our efforts in connection with Oberammergau must be continued, albeit in a different direction.

As I told you, I have been in touch with a Catholic woman who expressed concern over the inherent danger and negative effect the play will have on Catholic-Jewish relations.

As you know, the play and tour are already being heavily promoted by Catholic agencies and travel agents and the response is overwhelming.

I have not seen Judi Banki's paper describing what I assume to be a summary of AJC's efforts and attitudes toward the play as it will be presented. I would like to suggest that a short simplified statement be prepared from that material and be as widely distributed as possible. It could be sent to travel agents, Catholic agencies and institutions and even the travelers themselves. I believe that with some preliminary work we could get the cooperation of the local archdioceses.

I'm sure you have thought of this yourself but I'd like to encourage this possibility for action. We may not stop any Americans from going to the play, but we might educate and neutralize some of their feelings.

I look forward to hearing from you.

cc: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
Sherwood Sandweiss
Miles Jaffe

Sincerely,

Marge
Marge Alpern

Marge Alpern, Horticulturist

*5363 Brookdale Road
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48013
313 642-2024
313 642-8888*

The American



Jewish Committee

PITTSBURGH CHAPTER • 6315 Forbes Avenue • Pittsburgh, Pa 15217 • (412) 421-3327

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
128 NORTH CRAIG STREET, SUITE 215
PITTSBURGH, PA- 15213

19 June 1979

To: Ernie Weiner/Linda Birnbaum
Brant Coopersmith
Murray Friedman
Marc Tanenbaum
Harold Applebaum

From: Jonathan Levine

Re: University of Pittsburgh trip to Oberammergau

I have now met with officials at the University of Pittsburgh on two occasions. A committee has been formed to study the matter and will reach a conclusion in the next week or two. Dr. Carl Beck, Director of the University's Center for International Studies and Dr. Paul Masoner, Director of the Office of Special Programs, had been aware of some controversy about the play in 1960 and 1970 but thought that the revised Daisenberger text had resolved the issue. I discussed the problems we have with the revised Daisenberger text and brought them up to date on AJC's discussions with officials of the German Catholic Church and with the German government.

They noted that the trip was designed to study the passion play as a particular art form but both commented (before I could do so) that it is difficult if not impossible to separate form from substance. I emphasized that the substance of the play was bound to have a significant impact on visitors if only because so much has been made of the Oberammergau production.

We talked also about a seminar discussing the anti-Semitic elements of the play. I tried to stress our concern that our position that the play is still anti-Semitic not be presented to participants merely as "one side of the issue." Structuring a seminar in this manner would give credence to the view that we are being "over-sensitive" and that there is nothing really wrong with the text.

I did not pressure them to cancel the tour but rather discussed the implications of Pitt's sponsorship of the trip. Cancellation is being seriously considered, though, and I've learned from others at the University that they are thinking of pulling out now to avoid being put on the spot later, when cancellation might be interpreted as giving in to community pressure. Should they not cancel, they will certainly hold a seminar for the participants and will want to use AJC material.

Thus far they have not had any pressure from the Catholic diocese here not to cancel, though there is some concern about this. I am having lunch next week with a diocesan official with whom I have a good relationship and may ask him about Oberammergau if the opportunity arises.

The American



Jewish Committee

PITTSBURGH CHAPTER • ~~6315 Forbes Avenue~~ ~~Pittsburgh, Pa 15217~~ ~~(412) 421-3327~~
128 N. Craig St., Suite 215, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

14 June 1979

To: Ernie Wiener, Linda Birnbaum, Brant Coopersmith,
Harold Applebaum, Marc Tanenbaum

From: Jonathan Levine *Jon*

Re: Oberammergau

Here is the relevant part of the brochure prepared at the University of Pittsburgh for distribution through Nevada, San Jose State, NEA, and AACTE. (My apologies to Brant: American University was apparently in on some early discussions but is not one of the sponsors.)

My calls to people at the University of Pittsburgh have led them to reconsider their involvement in the trip. Since there is the strong possibility that they will pull out, I am gently urging them to do just that but will use the "preliminary seminar" as a fall-back position. My objection to the idea of persuading each institution to offer a critical seminar outlining the problems with the Daisenberger text is that they're apt to offer our position as one of two legitimate approaches (the other being that the text is not anti-Semitic).

I will be meeting with the director of Pitt's International Studies Center next week to discuss this with him and will get back to you at that point. Perhaps if we could register objections with all of the sponsoring institutions they'll withdraw without much fuss.

c. Murray Friedman

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Festival 80

The University Center for International Studies/University of Pittsburgh in cooperation with Pitt's Informal Programs, the National Education Association's and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's International Teacher Education Program and the Universities of Nevada and San Jose State announce

Moscow to Siberia THE SUMMER OLYMPIC GAMES

19 July—9 August, 1980

London and Stratford SHAKESPEARE IN PERFORMANCE

1 July—13 July, 1980

Oberammergau-Austria-Switzerland THE PASSION PLAY

14 July—29 July, 1980

London CONTEMPORARY BRITISH DRAMA

14 July—26 July, 1980

London-Amsterdam-Salzburg EUROPEAN MUSIC FESTIVAL

14 July—26 July, 1980

FESTIVAL 80 is designed to take advantage of five spectacular events to be conducted in England and Europe during the summer of 1980. Outstanding, internationally recognized individuals, such as members of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Olympic coaches, scholars, and musicians, will staff each and arrange special cultural and social experiences that are generally not available to the public. Charges for each offering have

been kept at economical levels, and considerable flexibility for participation will be maintained. With the exception of the Olympics (air transportation included in the charge), participants may select their own transatlantic services and dates, and information and reservation services will be available. There will be recommendations options and assistance offered to those individuals who wish to arrange further travel in Europe.

TOTAL CHARGE	\$825 00
Due with Enrollment	\$100 00
Due 30 September 1979	\$200 00
Due 30 January 1980	\$200 00
Due 30 May 1980	\$325 00

In the event of withdrawal through 30 January 1980, an administrative fee of \$75 00 will be charged. Withdrawals between 31 January and 30 May will be charged at the rate of \$100 00.

After that date, the sum to be returned will relate to the amount that can be retrieved from the agents and institutions involved in the program.

Reservations for this event are restricted by agreements with the Royal Shakespeare Company members and Stratford ticket availability. Early reservations are encouraged.

ested in foregoing the London section of the program and for those who wish to obtain their own London accommodations, there will be a reduction in the charges.

TOTAL CHARGE	\$1,090 00
Due with Enrollment	\$100 00
Due 30 September 1979	\$100 00
Due 30 January 1980	\$400 00
Due 30 May 1980	\$490 00

In the event of a withdrawal through 30 January 1980, an administrative fee of \$75 00 will be charged. Withdrawals between 31 January and 30 May will be charged at the rate of \$100 00. After that date, the sum to be returned will relate to the amount that can be retrieved from the agents and institutions involved in the program.

OBERAMMERGAU - The Passion Play

The Program Commences in London: 14 JULY 1980

The Program Concludes in London: 29 JULY 1980

The program includes five days in London plus a tour encompassing Germany, Belgium, Austria, France, and Switzerland.

The performance of "The Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ" is repeated once every ten years and has become a major aspect of the cultural life of Europe. Since its conception in 1634 as an entreaty to God to spare the remaining villagers from the plague that swept Europe following the Thirty Years War, it has maintained its religious character and its regional origins. Beyond the performance, Oberammergau offers visitors one of the most picturesque centers in the Bavarian Alps.

The program commences in London where there will be orientation lectures and sessions on the development of theatre. During this period there will be a reception sponsored by a leading performing arts group and theatre visits. The following schedule will thereafter be followed (London 14, 18 Jul.)

Brussels, Belgium	19 July
Roskilde, Denmark	22 July

Bregenz, Switzerland	21 July
Oberammergau, Germany	22-23 July
Innsbruck, Austria	24 July
Lugano, Switzerland	25 July
Interlaken, Switzerland	26 July
Mont Cenis, France	27 July
Paris, France	28 July
Return to London	29 July

The program includes, while in London, private room at Imperial College, (Kensington Area, Central London), breakfast each day, reception, two theatre tickets, instruction. While on tour, all transport via private modern coach, gratuities and taxes, breakfast and dinner each day with lunches in Oberammergau, first class ticket to the Passion Play, sightseeing tours along the way, hotels, double accommodations. Hotel arrangements will vary from city to city with some having private bath and owners with bath available. Throughout the tour, participants will have the service of trained guides/escorts as well as an instructor.

Transatlantic air information will be sent to participants. For more information

CONTEMPORARY DRAMA IN LONDON

The Program Commences on 14 JULY 1980

The Program Concludes on 26 JULY 1980

The program is under the direction of John Allen, former director of the Central London School of Speech and Drama.

For two weeks participants will be involved in a program organized by a distinguished theatre personage and conducted by London-based actors, dramatists, directors, designers, and theatre historians/critics. Sessions will take place at various theatre and studio facilities, and visits have been scheduled to locations where participants can familiarize themselves with a range of technical and design problems. Many of the sessions will involve demonstration performances. The program is designed to consider fringe/alternative theatre, repertoire companies, West End productions as well as productions such as music hall that come under the rubric of "The Illegitimate Arts." The program includes tickets to eight performances. The program charges cover private room and breakfast at Imperial College, (Central London,

Kensington), all instruction, eight performances, opening reception, Thames River Boat dinner, and materials (Hotel accommodations can be substituted by payment of a supplement). The program can also be attended with advantage of accommodation if this is elected, the charge will be reduced by \$200 00.

TOTAL CHARGE
Due with Enrollment
Due 30 September 1979
Due 30 January 1980
Due 30 May 1980

In the event of a withdrawal through 30 January 1980, an administrative fee of \$75 00 will be charged. Withdrawals between 31 January and 30 May will be charged at the rate of \$100 00. After that date, the sum to be returned will relate to the amount that can be retrieved from the agents and institutions involved in the program.

FESTIVAL 80 is being announced well in advance to insure that necessary space and tickets can be reserved. There is little doubt that scarcity will develop very early because of restrictions mandated by the sponsors of each event and we therefore advise early enrollment.

This announcement contains information on each event, along with charges and services/activities included. Event packets that include further description, schedules, options, touring materials, and deposit receipts will be mailed to each enrollee.

Graduate and Undergraduate Instruction for Credit

Special arrangements are available to those enrollees who wish to pursue graduate and undergraduate work leading to the awarding of credit. Instruction will include pre-departure

readings, specialized lecture discussions and seminars, tutorials, and field trips. Instruction will be conducted by faculty members from European and American institutions, and the University of Pittsburgh will make grants available to materially reduce regular tuition charges.

The University Center for International Studies conducts a number of workshops and sabbaticals in the arts, education, and humanities at institutions throughout the world. For information on FESTIVAL 80 or other credit programs please contact

Office of Special Programs
University Center for
International Studies
University of Pittsburgh
Forbes Quadrangle, Room 4G12
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Tel (412) 624-3364

THE SUMMER OLYMPIC GAMES

The Soviet Union

Departure from U.S. (est) 19 JULY 1980

Return to the U.S. (est) 9 AUGUST 1980

Leningrad
Moscow for the Olympics (7 days)
Irkutsk, Siberia
Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Alma Ata, Kazakh
Tbilisi, Georgia—Leningrad

The Olympic program offers an excellent opportunity to combine attendance at the summer Olympics in Moscow with a breathtaking tour of the Soviet Union. The republics to be visited, from the Baltic to Siberia, are distinct, rich in culture, and provide varied examples of the diversity of life in the USSR. Of the twenty-two days, seven or eight will be spent in Moscow where there will be a minimum of one

ticket per day to selected Olympic events. After arrival and a few days in Leningrad, during which time there will be orientation sessions as well as special visits, the program will transfer to Moscow. Events scheduled during the period include basketball, boxing, football, gymnastics, volleyball, wrestling, weightlifting, field hockey, and several other games. The remaining part of the tour should prove to be a bit less hectic and will allow for varied explorations in the regions to be visited. The directors of the program include experienced Olympic coaches who will team with Soviet experts.

[end]

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JOURNAL OF ECUMENICAL STUDIES

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19122

August 7, 1979

Herrn Bürgermeister Ernst Zwink
Das Rathaus
Oberammergau/Oben
WEST GERMANY

Lieber Herr Bürgermeister!

Ich schicke hiermit noch ein paar Zeitung Artikeln über das Oberammergau Passionsspiel. Der eine ist etwas gemischt, aber der andere ist sehr positiv. Ich glaube dass wir froh darüber sein können.

Als wir am Anfang Juni zusammengesprochen haben, haben Sie gemerkt dass das gedruckte 1980 Text noch kleine Änderungen untergehen könnte--zum Beispiel, aus dramatischen Gründe. Darf ich vorschlagen dass einige von den Desiderata in meinen Report in Kenntnis genommen werden wenn Sie diese allerletzte Änderungen machen.

Das wichtigste handelt sich um das Wort "Rabbi". Es wäre wichtig, glaube ich, dass das Charakter "Rabbi" ein andere Titel hätte. Genau so hilfreich wäre es dass verschiedene Nachfolgern Jesu ihn einigemal als "Rabbi" adressieren--gemäss dem Evangelium. In dem Spiel Jesus und sein Nachfolgern sollen so jüdisch wie möglich hergestellt werden--weil das ist genau was die waren. Dann wäre es unmöglich dass die Audienz fehlerhaft die Feinde Jesu und die Juden als solche identifiziere. Das dramatische Konflikt soll als ein inner-jüdisches Konflikt aussehen--wie es in Wirklichkeit war. Dann wird alle Antisemitismus ganz bestimmt verschwinden.

Eine letzte Bemerkung. Sie und Ihre Kollegen, besonders Pater Gregor, sind die Vorschläge von Prof. Sloyan und mir sehr entgegengekommen. Die letzte Schritte um diese Geist der Freundschaft für das Volk Jesu zu verwirklichen ist natürlich die Produktion des Spiels selbst. Es wäre höchst wichtig dass dieses Geist der Freundschaft auch in diesem letzten Moment sich realisiert. Ich persönlich bin sicher dass Sie dazu sehen werden. Aber es wäre auch gut wenn Sie dieses Weiterfahren des Geistes der Freundschaft gegenüber dem jüdischen Volk zu dem breiteren Welt kommunizieren könnten. Vielleicht ein Interview mit dem Regisseur (die Übertragen in dem englischen Sprachwelt durch Herrn Theodore Freedman der Anti-Defamation League)? Aber Sie würden wissen wie das am besten zu machen.

Wenn ich noch weiter helfen kann bitte rufen Sie mich ruhig an

Ihr ergebener,



Leonard Swidler, Editor
Prof of Catholic Thought
and Interreligious Dialogue

Enclosures

cc Kardinal Ratzinger
Pater Gregor
Herr Freedman

LS/dt



17-7-26-79

OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY REVISIONS ARE DISPUTED (620)

By Jo-ann Price

NEW YORK (NC) — Scholars representing two Jewish human rights agencies — the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the American Jewish Committee — appear to be at odds over whether script changes for the 1980 Oberammergau Passion Play have gone far enough in eliminating anti-Semitism from the text

According to Leonard Swidler, professor of Catholic thought and interreligious dialogue at Temple University, Philadelphia, "All of the essential problems" and "trouble spots" have been eliminated in recent revisions of the 1860 Weis-Daisenberger text, which will be used next year

He declared that all of the essential problems, as well as many lesser ones, have been taken care of and even a few positive steps have been ventured, only a few secondary problems have not yet been completely resolved

Swidler's detailed findings, made with Father Gerard S. Sloyan, English editor of the New American Bible, at the request of the Anti-Defamation League were disputed by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum of the AJC. He asserted that "while we welcome the changes made, they still remain cosmetic

"The problem remains," Rabbi Tanenbaum stated, "that the basic construct of the text portrays the Jews collectively guilty for the death of Christ. It also portrays the Jews as being ferocious in their determination to bring about the death of Christ

"It shows Pontius Pilate as a compassionate weakling who makes a decision for the crucifixion only because he is forced to do so by the Jewish leaders and the Jewish mob

Swidler, who made his report in New York to ADL leaders, said the changes in next year's text included most of the specific recommendations he and Father Sloyan had made to persons responsible at Oberammergau as well as to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Munich, in a 20-page commentary last year

Several hundred townspeople have dramatic roles in the production which is staged every 10 years from May through October

Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is the AJC interreligious affairs director, said his organization has supported a script written originally by Ferdinand Rosner, an 18th century Benedictine monk. He said in this script, the role of the Sanhedrin and the Jews is less central to the drama than in the script to be used next year. Pro-Rosner townspeople, he noted, plan to stage their own production in 1984

"We have had a different approach than the AJC to the question," commented Theodore Freedman, director of the national program division of the ADL. "We felt we should seek to change the text, but the selection of the text was a local Oberammergau decision. To get into a controversy which text would be used was to defeat the main purpose of the study."

Swidler said that the final written script was made available in June. Rabbi Tanenbaum said his organization will release a line-by-line analysis in September. Its finding will differ "substantially" from the conclusions reached by Swidler

Anti-Jewish reference to the "Old Covenant" has been struck. Offensive references to "the synagogue" as a symbol of Judaism have been cut. Textual negative references to "the Jews" and "people" as referring to Jews have been dropped. Dramatic repetitive lines based on St. Matthew have been eliminated, as has a long anti-Semitic poem based on the Book of Esther

Swidler said the authors sought actively to make extra changes, for instance, by cutting out two scenes depicting temple merchants conniving in the betrayal of Jesus, and substituting synonyms for the proper name of God. They were keenly interested in eliminating any anti-Semitic words and promoting positive Catholic-Jewish relationships

While further changes are desired, such as depicting Pilate as "the treacherous tyrant he was" these are on the whole of less importance than the "major changes" already made, he concluded

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General Manager

EUGENE L. ROBERTS JR.
Executive Editor

EDWIN GUTHMAN
Editor

Sunday, August 5, 1979

Page 6-C

A small step for humankind

Sometimes the progress of civilization can be measured in small steps that have an importance beyond the acts themselves. Such is the case with the 1980 version of the Oberammergau Passion Play. The difference between that famous play as performed a decade ago and what thousands will see performed in the tiny German village next year is, in a symbolic way, the difference between suspicion and acceptance, between bigotry and fairness. The changes and the way they were achieved are reason to feel somewhat optimistic about the human character.

Oberammergau has made itself world-famous with a play about the suffering and death of Jesus. The mostly Roman Catholic village vowed to do the Passion Play once every decade after it was miraculously spared the effects of a plague that swept southern Germany in 1633. The play has grown in scope and importance so that now the town's life revolves around it, and half-a-million visitors are expected to view it in 1980.

In the version of the play performed in the last 170 years, Jews have been portrayed as the villains (After the Enlightenment it was no longer acceptable to portray the devil as the root of all evil). There has been enough anti-Semitism in the play to cause Hitler to praise it and Jewish groups to condemn it. The unrealistic

and unjust portrayal of Jews should never have occurred. But the fact that anti-Semitic references are now being removed is a tribute to the diligence of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, to the diplomacy of the Temple University professor who went to Oberammergau to discuss the changes, and to the more open thinking of the modern-day residents of Oberammergau.

Leonard Swidler is the Temple specialist in Catholic thought and interreligious dialogue who went to Oberammergau at the behest of the Anti-Defamation League. He and colleague Gerard S. Sloyan had suggested revisions in the script at the request of the League and these had been sent to Oberammergau for reaction. The matter was handled with respect for the feelings on both sides and with awareness of the importance of the play to the town. The dialogue achieved what more vigorous confrontation may not have. Jewish spectators will be specifically welcomed to the play, scenes depicting Jews in an unflattering way have been eliminated and accusatory references about Jews have been removed. That the changes have been made should be a source of pride to the Anti-Defamation League, to the professors and to Oberammergau. They are all the winners, as are the future spectators.

The Travel Agent

THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY NEWS MAGAZINE

13 Sept. 79

2 WEST 46TH STREET
NEW YORK N Y 10036
(212) 575 9000
CABLE AGENTRAVEL NEWYORK
TELEX 126086

Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th St.
New York, NY 10022

Dear Rabbi Tannenbaum,

Enclosed is the Oberammergau piece we spoke about. Thank you for your insights and explanations of the situation there. I spent a day in the village on my recent trip to Bavaria. It included interviews with Dr. Schweighofer and Mayor Ernst Zwinck plus a number of regular residents. Overall, the villagers seem to believe the issue of the play is a bygone one...that it was an issue, but that the town vote has settled the question once and for all and that anyway the revisions made should counter all complaints. Many sounded resentful that an outsider (myself) should be stirring up these coals yet again. It may be you have accomplished the maximum compromise possible with the present generation of Oberammergauians. As you may know, too, the mayor's son is playing this production's Jesus Christ! Thanks again for your help.

Sincerely,

David Reed

David Reed
Associate Editor



TRAVEL MARKET

Germany

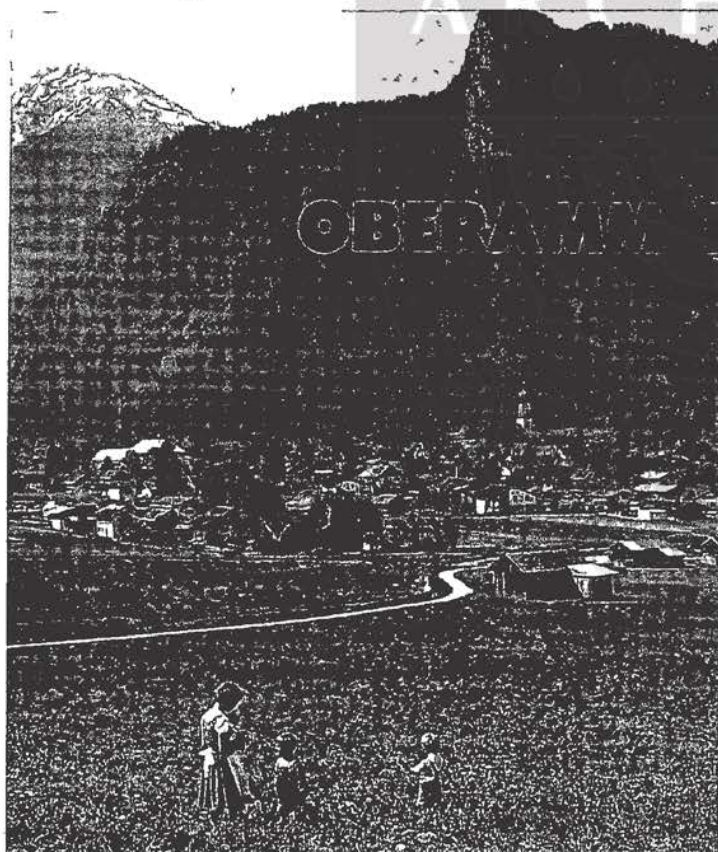
EMBROILED IN CONTROVERSY, but sold out to the last seat, the Passion Play of Oberammergau is about to begin its 37th run since 1634. In that year the tiny Bavarian village vowed to produce a drama of Christ's suffering and death every 10 years "until the end of time" if God would spare it from a plague then sweeping the region. The plague bypassed Oberammergau. The vow has been kept to this day.

But what began as a modest performance in the local

come famous for its timbered houses painted with colorful murals of folk tales and Bible scenes. Woodcarving, especially of religious figures, has become another village specialty. But Oberammergau's greatest fame rests in its Passion Play. At six-and-a-half hours it's the longest live dramatic performance in the world.

Two varying versions of the Passion Play have caused a controversy this year which many people thought had been settled after the 1970 production. In that year the Catholic village produced an 1860 version of the play which lays full blame for Christ's crucifixion on the Jews.

Religious and political leaders in the U.S. and Germany protested. They said it would be more faithful to Biblical



OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY ROUSES PASSION

by David Reed

This tiny Bavarian village prepares for another production of its famous drama

truth and less offensive to Jewish sensibilities to use a 1750 version which blames Christ's death on the dark angel Lucifer and the universal evil in mankind.

The villagers of Oberammergau split 50-50, mostly along age lines. The young favored the less offensive version, the old clung to the text used since the last century, the one they had grown up with and learned. Finally, the decision was made to change to the 1750 text. Then, at the last minute, a newly-elected mayor and town council reversed the decision again. For now, the village elders have won their way.

In response, the American Jewish Committee (AJC) in New York is issuing a study of the two texts to clarify the controversy and to explain the reasons for opposing the performance of the text.

"We will make our analysis of the two versions available to travel agents and to anyone planning to see the play," says Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum, AJC National Director for Interreligious Affairs. "We are not advocating a boycott of

Continued on page 20

church cemetery has become a full-scale pageant viewed by 5,000 people a day, five days a week for 20 weeks (May 25-Sept 28). Oberammergau doubles its population with each day's influx.

By the end of the Passion Play season Oberammergau will have welcomed 500,000 visitors in 100,000 cars and 8,000 buses. A million ticket applicants will have been turned away for lack of space in the covered open-air theater.

Located 60 miles south of Munich, Oberammergau has be-

the play, but we want people to understand what they are seeing and to know its background."

The German National Tourist Office (GNTO) is not actively promoting the play due to the uncomfortable situation of its being an anti-Semitic production in Germany. But neither is the GNTO ignoring the once-a-decade event, one of Germany's major tourism generators. The Passion Play tends to increase tourism for as long as two years beyond its own season.

That ripple-effect could last longer this time, because a group of young villagers opposed to the current production will perform the Lucifer text in 1984 to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the plague pledge.

The play uses 1,000 of the 5,000 residents of Oberammergau. Men are now growing their hair and beards, since no false hair or makeup are allowed in what is considered es-

and Boppard for \$899. Some meals. Travex Tours, 180 N. LaSalle, Chicago 60601, telephone 312-977-7477 or 800-621-2133.

Maupintour Six itineraries covering different aspects of Europe. *Middle Europe Highlights*, 10 days, \$1,218 (includes King Tut exhibit in Cologne), *Bavaria and Austria*, 15 days, \$1,628-\$1,798, *Grand Germany*, 15 days, \$1,720 (includes East Germany), *Middle Europe Leisurely*, 15 days with Rhine cruise, \$1,698, *The Alps of Europe*, 16 days, \$1,800-\$1,920, *Passion Play-Salzburg Festival*, 20 days, \$3,690 plus Concorde flight for \$1,848. Most meals covered.

Maupintour, 900 Massachusetts St., Lawrence, Kan. 66044, telephone 913-843-1211 or 800-255-4266. Sales offices in New York, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.

Trafalgar Tours *Oberammergau Special*, 12 days for \$1,040 to Amsterdam, Heidelberg, Oberammergau, Verona, Venice, Lucerne, Paris, *Oberammergau Spectacular*, 14 days for \$1,-

GERMANY

PASSION PLAY ROUSES PASSION

Continued from page 18

entially a religious service. For the same reason there is traditionally no applause at the end of the performance.

The Passion Play opens with Christ's entry into Jerusalem. The morning session depicts His farewell to His mother, the Last Supper, Judas' betrayal and Jesus' arrest. The afternoon session follows a three-hour midday break. Christ's trial and persecution, His crucifixion, entombment and resurrection all conclude at about five o'clock.

Most tour operators including Oberammergau in their 1980 itineraries have made it a stopover on longer trans-European tours. An overnight in the village is a requirement of any tour package. Below is a roundup of operators selling Oberammergau with a thumbnail sketch of their programs. All prices are per person double, land only.

Centrotourist Four 16-day tours from New York via Lufthansa to include Heidelberg, Munich, Oberammergau, Salzburg, Vienna, Bled, Opatija, Innsbruck and Baden Baden. \$1,255 MAP. Centrotourist, 509 Madison Ave., New York City 10022, telephone 212-752-7795 or outside New York State 800-223-7514.

Travex Tours 17 departures for one- and two-week programs. One week includes Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Lucerne, Oberammergau and Mainz for \$550. Two weeks are allowed to cover the above cities plus Cologne, Amsterdam, Brussels

175 to Rome, Florence, Venice, Verona, Salzburg, Oberammergau, Stresa, Interlaken and Lucerne plus two Ludwig castles. 18 departures to London. Most meals.

Trafalgar Tours 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City 10020, telephone 212-586-1785 or 800-223-5572, or Trafalgar Tours West, 18872 MacArthur Blvd., Irvine, Calif. 92713, telephone 714-752-5482, in California 800-432-7269, nationwide 800-854-0103.

Fourways Coach Tours Nine itineraries with British Airways from 12 to 28 days, price range approximately \$900 to \$1,400 including various meals. All tours are multi-country programs beginning and ending in London. Fourways Travel Ltd., 950 Third Ave., New York City 10022, telephone 212-935-5180 or 800-223-7872/3.

Olson-Travelworld 15 tours, 12 of them newly designed, with 291 departures on eight cooperating carriers. Four of the tours are moderate-priced *Jet Trek* plans. Price range is approximately \$1,200 to \$2,600 for tours from 11 to 22 days. Olson-Travelworld, P.O. Box 92734, Los Angeles, Calif. 90009, telephone 213-670-7100 or 800-421-2255.

Unique Holidays Fly-drive and escorted tours from one to three weeks. Group plans are for two and three weeks and include various mixtures of Germany, Austria, Italy,

Continued on page 27

Maupintour's 1980 Oberammergau Passion Play

Maupintour holds reservations in the two BEST CATEGORIES and in the BEST HOTELS for the 1980 Passion Play at Oberammergau. Six different programs, 10 to 20 days.

Ask for Maupintour folders or phone
800/255-4266
quality tour operation since 1951
Maupintour



TOUR ALERT

DESTINATION	OPERATOR	PROGRAM	DURATION	VALIDITY	GATEWAYS	PRICE
Germany	Trans National Travel 617-262-9200 800-225-7696	Rhine River	7 nights	Oct. 3	several	\$580-\$660 pp dbl
Germany Bavaria	Trans National Travel Europacar 212-751-3250 800-223-6626	Alpine Adventure Customized Ski Holiday	14 nights 1 & 2 weeks	Oct 29 Mar 31	several any	\$700-\$870 pp dbl from \$139
Germany	Europacar	Scenic Germany	8 days	Oct 14	any	from \$498 pp dbl
Germany	Europacar	Medieval & Modern	8 days	Oct 8	any	\$598 pp dbl
Germany	Europacar	Best of Germany	15 days	Oct 7	any	\$1,075 pp dbl
Germany	Trafalagar Tours 212-586-1785 800-223-5572	European Spree	10 days	Dec 27	any	\$510-\$530 pp dbl
Germany	Trafalagar Tours	European Interlude	15 days	Dec 28	any	\$690-\$720 pp dbl
Germany	Trafalagar Tours	European Contrasts	16 days	Oct 15	any	\$885-\$935 pp dbl

AMEROPA AND THE FIT TRAVELER

BROOKLYN, N.Y.—Ameropa Travel has assembled accommodations, tours and transportation arrangements for flexible use by FIT travelers in Europe. The company's *Europe on a Pass* program is in cooperation with Delta Airlines, but may be used on any number of other airlines through Oct. 31.

Europe on a Pass allows the traveler to choose where and when to go with any number of itinerary changes allowed mid-trip. The program is available in four forms or in any combination thereof.

Eurotelpass costs \$25 per night per person double for lodging at any Ameropa-designated hotel in 10 countries from England to Spain. Seven German cities are available with a total of 11 hotels.

German cities offered include Cologne, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Leverkusen, Ludwigshafen and Munich.

A *Eurodrivepass* includes an Avis rental car with unlimited mileage for \$115 to \$370 a week depending on size of car. Cities with cars in Germany are Bonn, Berlin, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Munich and Hamburg.

For more information, contact Ameropa Travel, 26 Court St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11242, telephone 212-522-1000 or 800-221-9690.

HIKERS' PASS TO THE BAVARIAN FOREST

SANKT ENGLMAR — A *Wonderer's Pass* available to Oct. 27 gives hikers in the Bavarian Forest seven nights' bed and breakfast at mountain inns along the trails for \$35 (\$80 if dinners are included). A complementary senior citizens program available to Dec. 19 includes walking tours, film showings and open-air concerts with two meals a day for \$98. Brochures can be obtained from Verkehrsamt, 8441 Sankt Englmar, West Germany.

PASSION PLAY ROUSES PASSION

Continued from page 20

Switzerland and Scandinavia from \$993 to \$1,589, a one- to three-week plan for people picking up a Mercedes Benz for U.S. delivery and an FIT plan now in the planning, two-week fly-drive with Avis Rent-a-Car for \$590, Holy Land-Oberammergau combination two/three weeks, \$1,995-\$2,690 (air included).

Unique Holidays, 1774 Skypark Blvd., Suite 220, Irvine, Calif. 92714, telephone collect 714-979-5115.

SAS Scandinavian Airlines Five 15-day programs run from May 22 to Sept. 11 in conjunction with Faith Tours of Rockville Centre, N.Y. Geared to Protestant and Catholic interests with Holy Land extensions available \$829 to \$979. Contact SAS, Box NC, 630 Fifth Ave., Suite 1465, New York City 10020 or any SAS office.

American World Travel *Nine Days-Central Europe* (all September), \$619-\$629, *The Heritage of Martin Luther*, 15 days, \$1,046, *Europe for the Young*, 22-day grand tour from England to Italy, \$1,140, *Charm of Europe*, 15 days, \$1,040, *Scenic Europe*, 15 days, \$1,044.

American World Travel Inc., 6005 Martway, Shawnee Mission, Kan. 66202, telephone 913-722-5929.

Trans National Travel *Alpine Adventure* now in its third

year, two-week program to Munich, St. Moritz and Innsbruck with Oberammergau option \$799.95 to \$929.95 plus \$70 for full-day Oberammergau trip from Munich. Trans National Travel, 2 Charlesgate West, Boston, Mass. 02215, telephone 617-262-9200.

C.L. Hoechner-Overseas Tours dba Oberammergau Tours with eight packages, four with Lufthansa and four with Air France. Lufthansa plans are available from four to 21 days costing from \$339 to \$1,498 AP. Air France plans from four to 15 days costing \$339 to \$1,137 AP. Contact Oberammergau Tours, Suite 211, Pan American Bank Building, 150 S.E. Third Ave., Miami, Fla. 33131, telephone collect 305-358-5095.

Wolters Tours *One-Week Bavaria* for \$607 AP, two-week *Lutheran Heritage* for \$1,005, and two-week *Alpine Highlights* for \$976 AP, all in cooperation with Lufthansa. Contact Wolters Tours, 20 E. 46th St., New York City 10017, telephone 212-972-1520.

American Express Four tours with Pan Am, Swissair and Lufthansa. *Oberammergau and Five Great Cities*, 15 days from \$1,459 to \$1,667, *Oberammergau Special*, 10 days from \$1,178 to \$1,290, *Heart of Europe*, 17 days from \$1,497 to \$1,647, *Alpine Explorer*, 17 days from \$1,876 to \$1,998. Some meals included. Prices given include air fare. Contact any American Express office.

memorandum

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date December 7, 1979
to Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum and
Bertram H. Gold
from William S. Trosten
subject

Do you think it would be a good
idea to point out to the Muenchner
Merkur that we did not threaten a
boycott? The letter of explanation
would provide another opportunity
to state our position.

WST/bjb
att.



MUENCHNER MERKUR -11/26/79

OBERAMMERGAU ---

MAIN PERFORMANCES ARE PRACTICALLY SOLD OUT

In the Passion Play village of Oberammergau tickets are in short supply -- even though they have not yet been printed. Although the Passion Play of 1980 does not begin for another seven months on May 24th, the villagers are practically overwhelmed by reservations and demand for tickets. As a result of this the 73 principal international performances are as good as sold out.

In addition, tickets for 19 supplementary weekend performances designed principally for the benefit of Bavarians who wish to drive home after the play are in short supply. The official Bavarian Travel Bureau which along with the village of Oberammergau is responsible for the sale of tickets recommends that interested parties should order their tickets now.

It appears that the international demand for tickets to this 37th performance of the Passion Play has never been greater. More visitors from the United States than ever before are expected.

The boycott of the Passion Play because of its continued anti-Jewish character threatened by the American Jewish Committee has apparently not materialized.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date January 11, 1979
 to Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
 from William S. Trosten
 subject

1. Listed below is the translation of excerpts of the sermon delivered by Alois Daisenberger in 1860 on the eve of the first performance of the Daisenberger Passion Play.

To the actors portraying Jews, priests, etc., he gave the following directions. "You who are to portray persons who hated and persecuted the beloved and most holy must portray these people in all of their evil, hatefulness and hypocrisy in order to evoke disgust at such shameful behavior in the mind of the spectator. In this way, the innocence, the sweetness, the majesty of our savior appear in an even brighter light. It is through the shadows in a painting that the light is accentuated."

2. OBERAMMERGAU, SECOND CHAPTER

Last weekend something took place that was a first of great importance and that all of us should take cognizance of. The Catholic Academy of Bavaria in Munich, known throughout the world as one of the most important institutions of scholarly Catholicism invited Catholic and Jewish theologians as well as lay scholars to a symposium in Munich. In order to discuss and explore the connection between the Oberammergau Passion Plays and anti-Semitism in our society.

In connection with this, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum from the American Jewish Committee in New York, who led the Jewish delegation at the Symposium, was invited to Oberammergau to deliver a talk on the theme "Anti-Semitism and Jewish-Christian Relations." Invited to this meeting were the citizens of the village including, of course, all members of the Town Council, organizers and players in the next Passion Play. This was the first time since the establishment of the Oberammergau Passion Play in 1634 that a Jewish speaker was invited to present the official Jewish position. According to reports, both meetings -- Munich and Oberammergau were harmonious and successful although it is much too early

continued....

to judge whether this important breakthrough will bring about some practical results.

It is not necessary for us to give our readers the details of the painful story of the Passion Play of 1980. It should be remembered that the German Airline, Lufthansa, to its credit and this should be underscored -- refused to advertise the play in the event that the so-called Daisenberger Text with its anti-Semitic references be played again. And that after great discussion supported by a number of Oberammergau citizens of good will another (even older) text by a Bavarian abbot by the name of Rosner was rehearsed. Two years ago, this version was judged to be unobjectionable and completely acceptable by Rabbi Tanenbaum, his colleagues from the American Jewish Committee and the writer of this article. Thanks were expressed in the Aufbau and elsewhere to the director, Hans Schwaighofer, the reviser of the text, Dr. Fink from Bavarian Radio and some members of the Village Council.

But that was not the end of the story. Daisenberger had supporters in the village (the village has absolute control over the Passion Play -- not even the cardinal in Munich can mix in). And it appeared that these Daisenberger supporters had the majority. Perhaps more out of a dependence on the traditional text than anti-Semitism and without question as a stiff-necked reaction to the "Mixing in of outside elements like American Jews, Lufthansa directors, and representatives of the government in Bonn." In the village a civil war mind set took over. Rosner and Daisenberger supporters no longer spoke to each other, conflicts within families developed and, at the election for the new Town Council (March 1978) the Daisenberger faction won a clear victory. The new Town Council decided immediately to discard the Rosner version and return to Daisenberger despite the trial performances, the new stage designs, etc.

However, the defeated stage director Schwaighofer would not concede defeat. Together with his supporters, he founded an association (ARBEITSGEMEINSCHAFT) and together with his troupe rehearsed a "Totentanz" and "Hexentanz" (with music by Carl Orff) which he performed in neighboring communities because he could get no room in Oberammergau. Then, something occurred that was completely unexpected: the Daisenberger majority led by the arch-conservative mayor of the village did not celebrate its victory but in spite of all traditionalism, anti-Semitism, conservatism and provincialism, decided to bend a little.

Yes, indeed, they bent a little. under the pretext that it had to be shortened. They revised the Daisenberger text and removed or watered down those passages that would be objectionable from a Jewish standpoint: they wrote letters to Rabbi Tanenbaum assuring him of their good will and religious tolerance; they distributed similar statements to the "still skeptical German press" and they even as we mentioned at the beginning, invited Rabbi Tanenbaum to present his position to the entire community. Therefore, is the bridge building completed, has the peace been restored, is there universal harmony?

One should and must wonder and wait until Rabbi Tanenbaum reports on the Bavarian meetings of last week and until one knows how the revised "new" Daisenberger text really looks. But there are in the meantime other things that have occurred that would suggest that the citizens of Oberammergau will not have peace so soon.

The Social Democratic Party of Oberammergau has issued a complaint in court against the Town Council accusing the council of considering only men in the selection of the Passion Play Committee and excluding women. The CSU, the majority party in town has also spoken out against this decision but, as of yet, there is no final word from the court. The court is also expected to decide on another much-debated point. according to tradition only women who are unmarried, under 36 years of age and judged by the Passion Play Committee to be pure can participate -- this tradition in the past has led to horrible rumor campaigns -- often with tragic consequences. The Rosner supporters wanted to get rid of this outmoded clause and whether the conservative majority will really stick with it is unclear and remains one of the many points of argument over which the villagers are divided. Therefore, for many reasons, there is a long road ahead to achieve harmony.

It's really a pity. there is this town, Oberammergau, a charming beautiful spot in a beautiful region with outstanding and hospitable hotels close to the world-famous baroque cloister Ettal, a spot that one could fall in love with and a place that one could recommend to everyone if the courageous and decent Hans Schwaighofer through his iron will succeeded in performing the unobjectionable Rosner text. Today, everything is uncertain and we must wait to see if Lufthansa, the American Jewish Committee, the German Tourist Office in Frankfurt and indirectly at least the cardinal in Munich and the Foreign Office in Bonn are satisfied with the new situation or whether the unpleasantness and honest differences will continue.

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Oberammergau, zweites Kapitel

Von HANS STEINITZ

Am vergangenen Wochenende geschah etwas, was ein erstmaliges Ereignis von sehr grosser Bedeutung war und uns allesamt aufhorchen lassen muss. Die Bayerische Katholische Akademie in München, weltweit als eine der bedeutendsten Institutionen des wissenschaftlichen Katholizismus anerkannt, hatte katholische und jüdische Theologen und Laienlehrer zu einem Symposium nach München geladen, das die Wechselwirkungen zwischen den Oberammergauer Passionsspielen und antisemitischen Tendenzen in unserer Gesellschaft diskutieren und prüfen sollte.

Im Anschluss daran war der New Yorker Rabbiner Marc Tanenbaum (vom American Jewish Committee), der auf dem Symposium die jüdische Delegation führte, nach Oberammergau eingeladen worden, um dort vor den Bürgern des Dorfes, einschliesslich natürlich alle Gemeinderatsmitglieder, Veranstalter und Mitwirkenden an den nächsten Passionsspielen, eine Ansprache zum Thema "Antisemitismus und jüdisch-christliche Beziehungen" zu halten. Das erste Mal seit Bestehen der Oberammergauer Spiele (1634), dass ein jüdischer Sprecher offiziell zur Darlegung des jüdischen Standpunktes nach Oberammergau eingeladen wurde. Nach den bisher vorliegenden Berichten sind beide Veranstaltungen, die in München und die in Oberammergau, harmonisch und erfolgreich verlaufen, wenn es auch natürlich viel zu früh ist zu beurteilen ob diesem beachtlichen Durchbruch irgendwelche praktische Resultate beschieden waren.

Wir brauchen vor unseren Lesern nicht mehr die Leidensgeschichte der Passionsspiele von 1980 in Einzelheiten zu rekapitulieren. Es sei nur daran erinnert, dass die deutsche Luftfahrtlinie Lufthansa zu ihrem Ruhme sei es dick unterstrichen, ablehnte, die Auslandswerbung für die Spiele zu übernehmen, falls der sogenannte Daisenberger-Text mit seinen antisemitischen Ausfällen wieder gespielt werden würde, und dass nach unendlichen Bemühungen, unterstützt von eifrigen gutwilligen Oberammergauer Bürgern ein anderer (noch alterer) Text eines bayerischen Abtes namens Rosner einstudiert wurde, der vor zwei Jahren von kompetenter jüdischer Seite (Rabbiner Tanenbaum, seinen Kollegen vom American Jewish Committee) wie auch vom Schreiber dieser Zeilen, als ein-

wandfrei und völlig akzeptabel beurteilt wurde. Dem neuen Spielleiter dieser Fassung, Hans Schwaighofer, dem Bearbeiter des Textes Rosners, Dr. Fink vom Bayerischen Rundfunk, und einigen Mitgliedern des dorflichen Gemeinderates wurde, auch im "Aufbau", für ihre aufrichtigen Bemühungen der Dank und die Anerkennung ausgesprochen, die ihnen gebühren.

Aber das war nicht das Ende der Story. Daisenberger hatte Anhänger im Dorf (das über die Passionspiele völlig souverän entscheidet, nicht einmal der Kardinal-Erzbischof von München kann da dreinreden), und es stellte sich alsbald heraus, dass sie die Mehrheit hatten. Vielleicht nicht so sehr aus

Fristablauf für Österreichischen Hilfsfonds

Das Österreichische Generalkonsulat in New York ersucht um Mitteilung an die Leser des "Aufbau", dass Anträge an den Fonds zur Hilfeleistung an politisch Verfolgte (Hilfsfonds) nur noch bis spätestens 31. Dezember 1978, einlangend beim Hilfsfonds in Wien, Schliessfach 126, A-1040 Wien, berücksichtigt werden können. Antragsformulare sind beim Österreichischen Generalkonsulat erhältlich.

Antisemitismus, als vielmehr als Anhänglichkeit an die textliche Tradition und, zweifellos, als trotz-verkniffene Reaktion auf die "Einmischung" ortsfremder Elemente, wie amerikanischer Juden, Lufthansa-Direktoren und Bonner Regierungsstellen. Im Dorf griff eine Art Bürgerkriegsstimmung Platz, Rosner- und Daisenberger-Anhänger redeten nicht mehr miteinander, Konflikte innerhalb von Familien haften sich, und als es Neuwahlen zum Gemeinderat gab (März 1978), errang die Daisenberger-Fraktion einen klaren Sieg. Der neue Gemeinderat beschloss sogleich, die Rosner-Fassung, trotz schon stattgefundener Proben, Bühnenumbauten usw., zu verwerfen und wieder auf Daisenberger zurückzugreifen.

Der geschlagene Spielleiter Schwaighofer aber gab sich nicht besiegt, er gründete mit seinem Anhang eine "Arbeitsgemeinschaft Passion" und studierte mit "seiner" Truppe einen "Totentanz" und einen "Hexentanz" (mit Musik von Carl Orff) ein, die er — weil er in Oberammergau keinen Saal be-

kommt! — in Nachbargemeinden aufführen lässt. Daraufhin aber geschah etwas völlig Unerwartetes: die Daisenberger-Mehrheit, geführt von dem erzkonservativen Bürgermeister des Dorfes, freute sich nicht ihres Sieges, sondern, trotz allem Traditionalismus, Antisemitismus, Konservatismus und Provinzialismus, entschloss sich einzulenken.

Jawohl, sie lenkte ein. Sie liess den Daisenberger-Text, unter dem Vorwand, er bedürfe der Kürzung, neu bearbeiten und die vom jüdischen Standpunkt anstössigsten Passagen streichen oder verwässern. Sie schrieb Briefe an Rabbiner Tanenbaum, ihm ihres guten Willens und ihrer religiösen Toleranz versichernd, sie verteilte entsprechende Erklärungen an die (freilich dennoch skeptische) deutsche Presse, und sie hat nunmehr sogar, wie eingangs erwähnt, Rabbiner Tanenbaum zu sich eingeladen, um vor der ganzen Gemeinde Oberammergau seinen Standpunkt darzulegen. Ist also der Brückenbau vollendet, ist der Friede wieder hergestellt, regiert jetzt allgemeine übereinstimmende Harmonie?

Man darf und muss daran immer noch zweifeln und auf jeden Fall abwarten, was Rabbiner Tanenbaum von den Bayerischen Begnungen des letzten Wochenendes berichten wird — und wie der revidierte "neue" Daisenberger-Text nun wirklich aussieht. Aber es sind, groteskerweise und fast als ein dem Drama folgendes Satyrspiel inzwischen noch andere Dinge passiert, die Dorfbewohner von Oberammergau kommen offensichtlich so schnell und bequem nicht zur Ruhe.

Die Ortsgruppe Oberammergau der Sozialdemokratischen Partei hat vor Gericht Klage gegen den Gemeinderat angestrengt, weil die-

ser bei der Wahl der "Passionsspielkomitees" nur Männer berücksichtigt und Frauen ausdrücklich ausgeschlossen hatte, auch die örtliche Mehrheitspartei, die CSU, sprach sich gegen diesen Beschluss aus, aber eine endgültige Gerichtsentscheidung steht noch aus. Von ihr wird auch ein anderer Punkt, der umstritten ist, abhängen: traditionsgemäss dürfen in den Spielen Frauen nur mitwirken, die unter 36 Jahre alt und unverheiratet waren und vom Passionsspielkomitee als "unbescholten" angesehen wurden, — was in der Vergangenheit oftmals Anlass zu hässlicher Gerüchtelei oder gar tragischen Katastrophen geführt hat. Die Rosner-Anhänger hatten diese veraltete Klausel abschaffen wollen; ob die konservative Mehrheit weiter auf ihr beharren wird, ist unklar — und einer der vielen Streitgegenstände, mit denen sich die Dorfbewohner auseinandersetzen müssen. Es ist also aus mehr als einem Grunde noch ein weiter Weg zur Harmonie.

Es ist ein wahrer Jammer, da liegt dieses Dorf Oberammergau, ein entzückender schmucker Ort, in herrlicher Landschaft mit gepflegten gastlichen Hotels, in unmittelbarer Nachbarschaft zu dem weltberühmten Barockkloster Eitel, ein Ort, in den man sich verlieben konnte und man konnte das genau auch jedermann empfehlen, wenn der tapfere und hochanständige Hans Schwaighofer seinen eisernen Willen, den einwandfreien Rosner-Text zur Aufführung zu bringen, durchgesetzt hatte. Heute ist aber alles zweifelhaft geworden, und wir müssen abwarten, ob sich die Lufthansa, das American Jewish Committee, die deutsche Fremdenverkehrszentrale in Frankfurt und, indirekt wenigstens, der Kardinal von München und das Auswärtige Amt in Bonn mit der neuen Lage zufriedengeben werden, oder ob Unbehagen und ernste Differenzen fortbestehen.

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