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AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

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

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 42, Folder 2, O'Connor, John [Cardinal] - visit to Middle East,
1985-1987.



7A/B
CARDINA L O'CONNOR AND MIDDLE EAST P EACE
by RMHT

1 John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, just
2 returned from a three-day visit to Lebanon. In Beirut,
3 Rome, and New York, Cardinal O'Connor made a number of
4 provocative statements that left many people, especially
5 those of us who know him, and like him, deeply perplexed.

6 More than any of his predecessors in this prestigious
7 position, Cardinal O'Connor has publicly demonstrated his
8 friendship for the Jewish people and for Israel. He was the
9 first Cardinal to take part actively in a series of actions
10 in support of the human rights of Soviet Jewry. Until
11 last week, he has also sought to be fairminded in his
12 views toward Israel, seeing the Jewish state as a necessary
13 response to the horrors inflicted on Jews by the Nazi
14 holocaust and the world's indifference.

15 Since his Lebanon trip, his statements have become
16 contradictory, unreal, and baffling. While he repeatedly
17 spoke of his support of Israel, his conception of Israel's
18 role in the Middle East in fact scapegoats ISRAEL for
19 everything that is wrong in that area. Israel, the Cardinal
20 said, should solve the Palestinian refugee problem, that
21 suggests that the Arab nations who have exploited the Palestinian
22 plight for their own purposes have no responsibilities. Israel,
23 the Cardinal said, should make peace in Lebanon. Not a word
24 about Syria and the Shiite Muslims who have made Lebanon
25 into killings fields. Finally, the Cardinal said, Israel
26 should help guarantee the security of Arab Christians throughout
27 the Arab world.

28 The Jewish community needs to know that the Cardinal's
29 trip was orchestrated by the Catholic Near-East Welfare
30 Committee which for decades has been a one-sidedly
31 pro-Arab, pro-PLO group supported group. I have asked the
32 Cardinal for an appointment in order to persuade him
33 how badly he has been brainwashed by pro-Arab propagandists
34 in his church/

35 That message should have been addressed
36 to the Arab nations who bear primary responsibility
37 for each of those problems. Singling out Israel as the
38 scapegoat is nothing short of scapegoating verges on
39 the irresponsible, and worse.

ON CARDINAL O'CONNOR'S VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST

This brief review of the press coverage of Cardinal O'Connor's statements regarding his perceived role ~~as~~ as an active peace-maker between Israel and her Arab neighbors documents that nothing that the December 22 story in the New York Times interview with Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum was not said publicly before both by ~~the~~ the Cardinal and Mayor Koch.

Tanenbaum: "He (the Cardinal) said that he would...try to make some basic contribution to improving relationships with Israel and its Arab neighbors."

Cardinal O'Connor: "John Cardinal O'Connor returned yesterday from a seven-day trip to Lebanon and Rome saying he would gladly go to Israel if that would help bring peace to the Middle East...."

"The Cardinal said he hopes to lobby vigorously for the Palestinian homeless and others suffering in Lebanon.

"I will be presumptuous enough to make contact with the White House and the UN to plead for an intensification of concern.

"I am going to attempt to contact the very large number of representatives of the Lebanese people in the U.S. to try to bring them together in some fashion...perhaps in a conference in New York to discuss what they might do for the Lebanese people."

"O'Connor said the major disappointments of his visit were his failure to make direct contact with the American hostages, his inability to ~~visit~~ visit leaders of the Shiite and Druse Moslem factions and the lack of response to his feelers seeking to visit Syrian president Hafez Assad on behalf of the hostages."

(NEW YORK POST, June 21, 1986)

"CARDINAL SEEKS LEB PARLEY"

"Cardinal O'Connor said yesterday he would move to organize a conference to bring Christians, Moslems, and Jews together here to discuss ways to resolve the strife in war-torn Lebanon.

"O'Connor said he attempt to contact a large number of Lebanese people here in the United States...to discuss what they can do for the Lebanese. And my Jewish friends can make a significant contribution."

(N.Y. DAILY NEWS, June 21, 1986)

"O'CONNOR ENDS TRIP TO LEBANON"

"He said at the news conference that he was prepared to go anywhere in the world to see anyone who might want to talk to me about peace and justice in Lebanon and elsewhere."

(NEW YORK TIMES, June 18, 1986)

MAYOR

ON VATICAN-ISRAEL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

"Jewish leaders such as Rabbi Tanenbaum believe that the Vatican has begun to realize that its refusal to recognize Israel has not protected the security of Christians and so would consider some move toward upgraded diplomatic status."

(NEW YORK TIMES, Dec. 22, 1986)

"O'Connor made the proposal (for a conference on Lebanon) at a wide-ranging press conference during which he defended previously stated views on a Palestinian homeland and discussed ~~the~~ a possibility that Israel could receive diplomatic ~~xxxxxxx~~ recognition from the Vatican.

"O'Connor who met with Pope John Paul in Vatican City, said he felt the Holy See might conceivably advance the possibility of formal diplomatic recognition of Israel if it 'assists substantially' in the following areas:

"Resolving the Palestinian homeland question;

"Restoring peace in Lebanon.

"Trying to indicate in some way that Christians should be protected in the Middle East."

(NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, June 21, 1986)

"He also conditioned his support for formal diplomatic recognition of Israel by the Vatican on a solution to the Palestinian problem and safety guarantees for Christians living in the Middle East."

(NEW YORK TIMES, June 20, 1986)

MAYOR KOCH

Reporting on his "private, off-the-record" meeting ~~wikh~~ on July 17 with Cardinal O'Connor and Israeli Ambassador Benjamin Netanyahu, Mayor Koch said that the Cardinal's "statement may in fact be an effort to resolve one of the major sticking points in Catholic-Jewish relations - the resistance of the Vatican to recognize Israel diplomatically.

"I believe it is his desire to do what he can in a responsible way to effectuate that diplomatic formal recognition as soon as possible."

IT HAD TO HAPPEN

O'Connor

- entered in good faith, as did Israelis
- both sides negotiated itinerary and agreed on the details
- O'Connor - thru his people - agreed to meet with Shamir, Peres, Kollch, and Herzog
- ~~#~~ It was understood that he was being received as a Churchman, not a diplomat, and as president of Catholic Near East Welfare Association, with legitimate interests in the Middle East.
- The Vatican knew of his visit since September when O'Connor accepted Peres' personal invitation. His people met frequently with Israeli representatives in U.S. & Israel - there was no indication of any problems
- Earlier, when O'Connor returned from Lebanon & Rome, he announced publicly he would contact U.S. Govt, UN, and arrange a conference of Jews, Christians, Lebanese, Morians to discuss peace in Middle East.
- Difficulties began when Archdiocese issued press release announcing Cardinal would go to Israel as well as to Jordan & Egypt to meet with Govt and religious leaders.
- (Vatican wants to control all diplomatic initiatives)

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"The pope writes this message first of all for heads of state and heads of government," he said.

The justice and peace commission proposes peace themes to the pope and provides resource materials used in drafting the papal text, he said, but the pope writes the message.

END

TANENBAUM June 24, 1986 (340 words)

RABBI DEFENDS CARDINAL O'CONNOR AS 'DEVOTED FRIEND OF JEWS'

NEW YORK (NC) — Cardinal John O'Connor of New York is "a devoted friend of the Jewish people" even though his call for a Palestinian homeland "will be seen as an unfriendly statement" toward Israel and the Jews, said a leading American rabbi.

Cardinal O'Connor is "deeply committed to the security and well-being of the people and the state of Israel," said Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, director of the American Jewish Committee's international relations department.

He also called on the cardinal to visit Israel to learn about current Middle East negotiations.

Rabbi Tanenbaum made the comments in a statement after Cardinal O'Connor had discussed the Palestinian issue at a news conference June 18 at the Vatican following his three-day visit to Lebanon.

The cardinal said Vatican diplomatic recognition of Israel would not help bring peace to the Middle East, including Lebanon, unless it is tied to a comprehensive package which includes finding a Palestinian homeland and assuring protection for the millions of Christians in the region.

The cardinal also defended Israel's right to exist and said that finding a Palestinian homeland should involve "nothing adverse to Israel."

Rabbi Tanenbaum, in noting the cardinal's friendship with Israel and the Jewish people, said "Jews are as concerned as anyone else over achieving justice for the Palestinian people. We believe that such justice can be realized only through peaceful negotiations between Israel and her Arab neighbors."

The rabbi said Cardinal O'Connor would be well-advised to visit Israel soon to "learn firsthand about the present situation of negotiations between Israel, Jordan and Egypt on whose outcome the resolution of the Palestinian problem depends."

He said the American Jewish Committee has indicated to Cardinal O'Connor in recent private meetings its "readiness to use our good offices in arranging meetings for him with the highest authorities," both religious and political, in Israel.

"We look forward to his positive response to our proposal, for such a visit would lend balance to his understanding of the complex Middle East situation," he added.

END

USCC—CONTRAS June 24, 1986 (270 words)

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DRAFT - RESOIBBSE TO MAYOR KOCH

I categorically reject his statement which is simply untrue and has no basis in fact.

Besides, Mayor Koch has little credibility in criticizing anyone else over talking with the press about private meetings with Cardinal O'Connor. On Aug. 12, Mayor Koch gave the New York Times ~~an~~ a detailed report on his private, off the record breakfast meeting on July 17 with Cardinal O'Connor and Israeli Ambassador Benjamin Netanyahu over the identical subject and he said practically the same things that I was quoted as saying/ in the Times Dec. 22 story.

In the Aug. 12th interview, Mayor Koch said, in resorting on his private meeting with Cardinal O'Connor, that the Cardinal's "statement may in fact be an effort to resolve one of the major sticking points in Catholic-Jewish relations - the resistance of the Vatican to recognize Israel diplomatically.

"I believe it is his desire to do what he can in a responsible way to effectuate that diplomatic formal recognition as soon as possible, Mr. Koch said."

In the Dec. 22 Times interview with me, I said practically the same thing that the Mayor is quoted as saying; namely:

"According to Rabbi Tanenbaum, the Cardinal told him before and after the Cardinal's trip to Lebanon ~~in~~ in June of his deep interest in helping to bring about a Middle East peace. ...He believes ~~that~~ he's particularly well situated to try to play that role, ~~because~~ because he regards himself as a genuine and trusted friend of the Jewish people."

I cannot understand neither the logic nor the moral decency that suggests that if Mayor Koch says ~~something~~ that Cardinal O'Connor is a friend of the Jewish people that's an act of statesmanship but if Rabbi Tanenbaum says the identical thing it's a terribly mistake.

O'Connor, in Jerusalem, Apologizes to Israelis

By JOSEPH BERGER

Special to The New York Times

JERUSALEM, Jan. 1 — John Cardinal O'Connor of New York today used the occasion of his first public ceremony in Israel to apologize to the country's people and Government for canceling meetings he had scheduled with leading Israelis.

"It is fitting and it behooves me to say that I deeply regret and certainly apologize for any offenses that might have been perceived as intended by those who govern Israel," he declared, at a New Year's Day mass in St. Saviour's Church, in the Old City of Jerusalem.

The Cardinal, in remarks from the altar that he later said had not been planned, took the blame for hastily scheduling then rescinding appointments with President Chaim Herzog and Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

No Ill Will, He Says

He said he had not realized that Vatican protocols forbade meetings in Jerusalem with top-ranking Israelis. The Vatican does not recognize Israeli control over the city, the eastern part of which was captured from Jordan and annexed during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

"I failed to be sufficiently thorough in my preparations," he said. "I failed to familiarize myself with the protocols normally surrounding a visit by a member of the College of Cardinals. Because of that error on my part, unfortunately, it is quite understandable that the people of Israel and those in the Government might well have construed some deliberately intended offense."

The Cardinal also asserted that the error had been made without any ill will, that the Vatican too "bears no ill will" toward Israel and that he hoped to find an opportunity to make "whatever compensation can appropriately be made."



Reuters

John Cardinal O'Connor meeting with Jerusalem's mayor, Teddy Kollek.

The Cardinal's dramatic apology, which he delivered at the end of a mass stressing Pope John Paul II's World Day of Peace message, came after more than a week of bruised feelings here over the planning of the trip.

Both Mr. Shamir and Mr. Herzog had said they would refuse to meet the Cardinal anywhere but in their offices in Jerusalem. Shimon Peres, the Foreign Minister, who extended the original invitation to the Cardinal to visit Israel, has also been reluctant to meet with him outside his Jerusalem office and no meeting has been scheduled.

But the Cardinal did meet today with Jerusalem's Mayor, Teddy Kollek, at the Mayor's municipal offices. The two described their meeting as warm and gracious and both took the occasion to place a cheerful phone call to Mayor Koch in New York.

Mr. Kollek said that at their 45-minute meeting he had tried to explain to the Cardinal that Jerusalem had been a Jewish capital since biblical days, that the Israeli Government had protected Christian and Moslem holy sites since it took over the whole of the

Continued on Page A6, Column 4

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O'Connor on Palestinian Terror

Special to The New York Times

June 20, '86

ROME, June 19 — John Cardinal O'Connor, the Archbishop of New York, said today that the plight of the Palestinian people, if left unresolved, "has to spawn terrorism."

At a news conference after a meeting with Pope John Paul II, Cardinal O'Connor sought to make clear that his support for "a Palestinian homeland" did not in any way imply a criticism of Israel, or a political proposal.

But he used strong language to press his case for a solution to the Palestinian refugee problem. He also conditioned his support for formal diplomatic recognition of Israel by the Vatican on a solution to the Palestinian problem and safety guarantees for Christians living in the Middle East.

Asked about his comments on a Palestinian homeland in an interview on Wednesday, Cardinal O'Connor said every new generation of Palestinians "is being reared in a situation that I

would think would have to spawn a great deal of bitterness and hatred."

"The Palestinians need some security, some roots," he said. "If the situation continues, it would seem to me that it has to spawn terrorism."

Cardinal O'Connor's statements on the Palestinian problem had created "concern" among some Jewish leaders, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, the director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee, said today.

"There is a danger," Rabbi Tanenbaum said in a telephone interview from New York, "that they will be misunderstood as an unfriendly statement toward Israel and the Jewish people."

"It is important to record that Cardinal O'Connor is a devoted friend of the Jewish people and is deeply committed to the security and well-being of the people and of the State of Israel," he said.

O'Connor Tries to Assure Muslims After Canceling West Beirut Visit

By IHSAN A. HIJAZI

Special to The New York Times

BEIRUT, Lebanon, May 29 — John Cardinal O'Connor of New York telephoned Muslim leaders today to assure them that his mission to this war-torn country was for humanitarian reasons.

He called Dr. Seïm al-Hoss, who heads a predominantly Muslim Cabinet in the divided Government; Hussein al-Husseini, the Speaker of Parliament; Sheik Mohammed Wandi Chamseddin, the Shiite spiritual leader, and Sheik Mohammed Rasim Kabani, the senior Sunni cleric, to explain why he could not meet them in West Beirut, the Muslim part of the capital, a Muslim Government figure said.

The Cardinal was scheduled to cross over from Christian East Beirut on Sunday but did not for what he called "security reasons." West Beirut's leading daily, *As Safir*, reported today that a warning to avoid West Beirut had come directly from the American Am-

bassador, John McCarthy. The United States Embassy would not comment on the report.

Reports published in the press here without attribution said there was fear that the Cardinal would be killed or kidnapped by fundamentalists, who already hold 9 Americans and 10 other Westerners hostage in Lebanon.

Objection to O'Connor's Remarks

But Dr. Hoss and Mr. Hussein said no threat to the Cardinal if he came to West Beirut. Dr. Hoss also objected to remarks made Sunday by Cardinal O'Connor about the Lebanese conflict.

The Cardinal, who arrived here on Saturday on a three-day visit, said on Sunday that Lebanese could not build a stable government or agree on political changes while they were being shelled and while Lebanese territory was under occupation by outside forces.

From a Muslim point of view, Cardinal O'Connor adopted the stand of the Christian side as expressed by Maj. Gen. Michel Aoun, the head of a Christian military Cabinet. The Cardinal spoke after meeting General Aoun.

As Safir, known to reflect Muslim thinking, said today that the Cardinal's attitude and Ambassador McCarthy's advice to avoid West Beirut signaled a shift in favor of the Christians by the Bush Administration.

Cardinal O'Connor met today with bishops of 16 Christian denominations. *Voice of Lebanon*, a Christian radio station, said he had asked them for their written views as to how the Lebanese problem could be resolved.

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Religious Leaders Fear Dispute's Effect on Ties

By ARI L. GOLDMAN

The controversy surrounding the trip to Israel by John Cardinal O'Connor is being viewed with deep concern by American religious figures who have labored in the last two decades in the field of Roman Catholic-Jewish relations.

At the same time, they have sought to put the O'Connor trip in perspective, noting that a great stride was made in relations between Catholics and Jews when Pope John Paul II visited a synagogue in Rome last April.

The controversy arose when the Cardinal, under Vatican pressure, canceled meetings he had arranged with several high-ranking Israeli officials. The Vatican has indicated it objects principally to the idea that the Cardinal was to hold the meetings in Jerusalem, which it does not recognize as Israel's capital. The Vatican, like almost all countries, does not recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Lester Pollack, president of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, said, "The 'unscheduling' of sessions with high-level Government officials in Jerusalem, after going ahead with meetings with Jordan's King and other officials in Amman, signals a critical setback in the process of advancing understanding between the two faith groups."

Relationship Called Sound

Other Catholic and Jewish leaders echoed Mr. Pollack's statement, but preferred to emphasize that the relationship between American Catholics and Jews was a sound one that would survive this setback.

"Our discussions can't stop and won't stop," said Eugene J. Fisher, executive secretary of the Secretariat for Catholic Jewish Relations at the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Vatican's refusal to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel or to acknowledge its sovereignty over Jerusalem has been central to the interfaith talks. Other issues broached in Catholic-Jewish exchanges have been abortion, parochial school aid and educational matters, such as the setting up of Holocaust curriculums and joint education programs for seminarians.

Russell Shaw, a spokesman for the national bishops group, which represents the 300 American prelates, said it was "sometimes difficult for non-Jews to understand the significance" of Israel to Jews. By the same token, he said, "there is a lack of appreciation on the Jewish side for the essentially benevolent policy that the Vatican is trying to play" in the Middle East.

Mr. Fisher said the O'Connor trip underlined the need for more discussion but he declined to call the incident a setback. "It certainly is not a step forward," he added.

Catholics, said he did not expect the O'Connor trip to have a long term effect on Catholic-Jewish relations. He said the Jewish organizations were aware that there were "elements" in the Catholic world that were unfriendly to Israel. "I think our good relations are strongest on the American scene," he said, adding that the American bishops "are having their own problems with the Vatican."

Rabbi Binyamin Walfish, the executive vice president of the Rabbinical Council of America, an Orthodox group that engages in talks with Catholics on social issues but not on theological matters, said the O'Connor trip was a lesson in the limits of Catholic-Jewish dialogue.

"We have to be more realistic about our relations with the church and realize that they have theological and religious considerations that supercede their relationship with the Jewish community and Israel," he said.

Cardinal O'Connor has explained that he canceled appointments with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of Israel and President Chaim Herzog at the direction of the Vatican. Several leading Catholics and Jews said they were baffled by the sudden change in plans, which came just before the Cardinal left for the Middle East on Saturday.

Rabbi's Remarks Noted

One theory — given credence in recent days by Mayor Koch and by an article in *The Jerusalem Post* — was that Vatican officials were concerned about a report in *The New York Times* on Dec. 22 that quoted Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum on the Cardinal's plans. Rabbi Tanenbaum, the international relations director for the American Jewish Committee, said Cardinal O'Connor hoped to make peace in the Middle East "a central concern of his ministry."

In a statement Tuesday, Dr. David M. Gordis, executive vice president of the committee, denied charges that the disclosure of the Cardinal's plans touched off the Vatican action. "The



The New York Times
Morris B. Abram, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations

curtailment of Cardinal O'Connor's schedule originated in the Vatican and not in New York," Dr. Gordis said.

While some are trying to use Rabbi Tanenbaum's comments as "a pretext," Dr. Gordis said, "the responsibility for transforming what might have been a contribution to reconciliation and friendship into an embarrassment and humiliation lies squarely with those in the Vatican who for their own reasons have chosen this course."

In another development, Dr. M. T. Mehdi, secretary general of the National Council on Islamic Affairs, praised the Vatican for curtailing Cardinal O'Connor's schedule. "As American Moslems we are grateful that there is the Vatican which opposes on moral grounds the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem and other Palestinian lands," he said.

Dr. Mehdi noted that several leading American Jews had called on Cardinal O'Connor not to go through with his trip if he could not meet with Israeli officials. Dr. Mehdi said that in part he concurred. "We agree with the Jewish groups that possibly the Cardinal should cancel his visit to Israel. He will then be strengthening his moral opposition to that garrison state."

O'Connor Apologizes to the Israelis

Continued From Page A1

city and that the city was freer for worship than it had ever been before. In 1967, Mr. Kollek noted, 200 Israeli soldiers died trying to recapture the Old City because the army decided not to use artillery or other weapons that might damage holy sites.

A Distinction Is Noted

A reporter asked Mr. Kollek why the Cardinal would meet with him in Jerusalem but not with other Israeli leaders. The Mayor replied, "Because the city is not a political entity, it is an administrative entity. When the reporter responded that he did not understand what that distinction meant, the Mayor replied, 'Neither do I'."

The Mayor praised the Cardinal for righting a diplomatic gaffe "very graciously by taking the blame on himself." There was no immediate response from other Israeli officials to the Cardinal's apology.

After a four-day trip to Jordan, where he made several statements expressing support for the right of Palestinians to self-determination, the Cardinal entered Israel by walking across the Allenby Bridge, a short, narrow span, over the muddy Jordan River. The Cardinal said he chose to enter Israel on foot as pilgrims had done for centuries.

Few pilgrims, however, are met by a crowd of jostling reporters and photographers, as Cardinal O'Connor was today.

Archbishop Carlo Curia, the Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem, welcomed the Cardinal. But Israel was represented only by two low-level Foreign Ministry officials and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

This was in sharp contrast to the Cardinal's arrival in Jordan on Sunday night when he was met by the Minister of Islamic Affairs, the Governor of Amman and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Cardinal also met with King Hussein and other high-ranking Jordanian leaders. A spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry said Wednesday that Israel had downgraded the Cardinal's visit to a private rather than an official event.

The Cardinal, exploiting the fact that he entered Israel on New Year's Day, told reporters, "Yesterday I said in Amman, 'Next year in Jerusalem, so I kept my promise'."

The Cardinal's motor caravan drove from the bridge through the ancient city of Jericho, then headed out of the river valley up bare mountains tinged with pink and orange and dotted with Bedouin tents and the mud hovels of Palestinians just outside Jerusalem, but still in the occupied West Bank, the motorcade passed Maale Adumim, a town first settled after the 1967 war by Israelis who believe the West Bank is part of Israel's larger biblical legacy. The town, with its modernistic housing, has now become a growing suburb of Jerusalem.

The motorcade went directly to St. Saviour's Church, where the Cardinal donned white vestments and a miter and celebrated a Latin mass at the invitation of James Beltratti, the Patriarch of the Latin Rite churches in Israel, Jordan and Cyprus.

The Cardinal's homily was based on the Pope's World Day of Peace message, but, in veiled fashion, he sounded themes that he had struck while in Jordan that called attention to the plight of the Palestinians. The Cardinal emphasized the Pope's words that the "solidarity of the human family" implies that all human beings are "equal in dignity" and "endowed with fundamental and inalienable human rights."

He spoke of the homelessness of Joseph and Mary in the Gospel, a theme that echoed his repeated references to the homelessness of the Palestinians. Joseph and Mary, he said had to flee into a hostile environment, but were "finally able to return to their homeland."

The Cardinal also read a long excerpt from Elie Wiesel's "Night" in which Mr. Wiesel wrote how as a boy he had watched his father die of hunger and illness in a concentration camp. When his father at the end asked him for water, the young boy in "Night" was afraid to risk blows from the camp police and did not bring the water. The Cardinal said Mr. Wiesel was haunted by his failure to heed his father's sum-

mons and dedicated his life thereafter to strengthening human dignity.

The Cardinal said he wondered if the world responded to the Pope's summonses when he spoke of peace with justice or asked for an end to weapons stockpiles.

The Cardinal called on "those who practice violence and terrorism" to "turn away from violence even if the goals thereof are just." "The way of violence cannot obtain justice," he said.

He ended the homily with a paraphrasing of a Jewish blessing, "May the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," he said, "shine his face on all of us, turn his countenance to each of us, and grant us peace."

The Cardinal later explained that when he saw the numbers of reporters gathered at the church, he decided "impromptu" to make an apology "to all peoples of Israel and its Government." He said he had intended some statement because he recognized "how deeply wounded feelings were."

'Out of a Fellini Movie'

After lunch the Cardinal took part in a procession to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the site where Christians believe Jesus was crucified and entombed before the Resurrection.

The procession of colorfully clad clergy was led by drummers from a Roman Catholic corps of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and by men wearing fezzes and carrying sheathed swords at their side. The procession wound through narrow stone paved streets lined with shops selling souvenirs, jewelry, brass and wood and crowded with tourists and merchants in Arab head-dresses. Policemen and rifle-bearing Israeli troops tried to restrain the dozens of photographers and television crew members pushing for a better glimpse of the Cardinal.

Astonished by the mixture of sacredness, pomp and chaos, the Cardinal's secretary, Msgr. James McCarthy, said later, "It was a scene out of a Fellini movie."

What's Sunday without The Times?

No Long-Term Effect Seen

He said that the case of Cardinal O'Connor who is generally perceived as a conservative in the church, could be seen as another example of Rome trying to assert control over American Catholic bishops in the manner that Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthauser of Seattle was disciplined last year for liberal policies.

"I wonder if the Vatican feels that aggressive in Catholic-Jewish relations," Father McGarry said. "Maybe this would be one more example of them saying, 'Hey, slow down a minute we have a wider view of this.'"

Rabbi Alexander M. Schneider, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, a Reform group that has emphasized discussions with

A 'Blip' in the Progress

Morris B. Abram, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, called the O'Connor incident a "blip" in what he said has been a growing understanding between Jews and Catholics particularly in the United States.

He noted that last year Catholics and Jews celebrated the 20th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate," the declaration of the Second Vatican Council which deplored anti-Semitism and marked the beginning of a new openness between Catholics and Jews.

"We never see progress without blip," Mr. Abram said. "And this is blip. What is fundamental is that for the first time in 1,900 years a Pope visited a synagogue. What is fundamental is that the church says that the death of Jesus cannot be blamed on Jews in our times. What is fundamental is that Cardinal O'Connor joins us in New York demonstrations to free Soviet Jewry."

The Rev. Michael McGarry, the rector of Saint Paul's College in Washington, stressed that it was important that exchanges between American Catholics and Jews should continue because they could ultimately influence Vatican policy on Israel.

"If there is any chance for change in the Vatican view regarding Israel, it is going to come from the United States," said Father McGarry, who recently spent a year at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and favors full diplomatic relations between Israel and the Vatican.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date January 2, 1986.
to Marc Tanenbaum/George Gruen
from M. Bernard Resnikoff
subject Role of Christian Churches in Jerusalem

The Israel Office tries to maintain contact with a large number of symposia and assorted conferences that take place in Jerusalem. With the government, Jewish Agency and Hebrew University all in the city, it is virtually impossible to monitor all of them.

Still, when the announcement was made of a major symposium about a week ago at the Van Leer Institute on 'The Role of Christian Churches in Jerusalem', in which very prominent academics and officials were involved, I decided to cover it and to make our own individual summary of what took place. That summary is attached

Please share the text with those receiving copies of the memorandum.

MBR/ml
c.c. James Rudin
David Gordis



THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM

A SUMMARY OF A DISCUSSION WHICH TOOK PLACE ON DECEMBER 23, 1985
AT THE VAN LEER INSTITUTE IN JERUSALEM.

GUEST SPEAKER: Professor Frans A. M. Alting Von Geusau, Director,
Kennedy Institute, Tilberg University, Holland.

MODERATOR: Professor Zvi Werblowsky.

PARTICIPANTS: FATHER MARCEL DUBOIS, PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY,
HEBREW UNIVERSITY; PROFESSOR SHLOMO AVINERI, HEBREW UNIVERSITY;
DR. GEOFFREY WIGODER; ABBOT NICHOLAS ENGLANDER OF THE DOMINICAN
CHURCH; YAEL VERED, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS; MR. ELKANA,
DIRECTOR, VAN LEER INSTITUTE; RABBI KAPLAN; NAOMI TEASDALE
and others.

OPENING REMARKS BY PROF. WERBLOVSKY:

Prof. Werblowsky raises the question whether the churches have
a role to play in the delicate situation in Jerusalem. There
are many churches that struggle for their rights in view of
the status quo that was recognized by all the churches in the
world. The churches are part of the scene and they have definite
religious and political interests. Therefore, they cannot be
viewed as a mediator or a conciliator.

PROF. VON GEUSAU:

He is very impressed with what was done in Jerusalem since its
unification in 1967. It was developed into a city where one
can live and not only visit.

Historically, the Christians have had a long presence in Jerusalem
guarding the holy sites. Today, the Christian population of
Jerusalem is in decline and it looks like this trend will
continue. The Christian presence in Jerusalem is a source of
inspiration for the world-wide Christian community. However,
the Christian community in Jerusalem is very divided and fragment-
ed. The most important task of the Municipality is to preserve
the autonomy of the Christian churches as well as tolerance
towards the churches by the general community.

Since the 4th century C.E. the Christian churches established
themselves ~~as the guardians of the holy places~~. This was their
main focus and the Christian communities remained small. Since
Hironimus, the Christians have paid more attention to Jerusalem.
Since the ecumenical spirit of 1964, more Christians have
come to Jerusalem in order to conduct a dialogue with the Jews.

The fragmented presence of the Christian church in Jerusalem is a result of a long history of relations between the churches and the various rulers of Jerusalem. Today, all churches maintain the status quo as well as the secular authorities. This is essential for maintaining peace in the city but it runs against the missionary tendencies of the churches. The question is: how does one overcome this problem?

The tendency today is to maintain the status quo rather than to improve the Christian presence in Jerusalem. This is the second important issue that must be addressed.

THE POLITICAL CONTEXT: The present political situation of the churches is better than ever, including the period of the Crusaders and the Byzantines. The churches have more autonomy in running their own affairs than ever before. Therefore, the churches should accept the present political situation and should officially recognize it, including the Catholic church.

The churches have an outstanding opportunity which they did not have in the past to improve and increase the Christian presence in Jerusalem. Therefore, the Christian churches should recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

The Christian churches should direct their missionary efforts to attract more Christians to come to Jerusalem rather than to direct them towards the citizens of Jerusalem.

One must understand that the relations between Christians and Jews differ from those between Christians and Moslems. The Christians should develop a new concept regarding their presence in Jerusalem which will be along the lines of ECUMENISM.

SUGGESTIONS: The Jewish and Christian communities should try to explore the following common issues:

1. What is the meaning of Jerusalem for the respective religions and communities? It is obvious that Jerusalem, for the Christian community, is no more than a religious center and therefore, they struggle over the holy places.

2. In view of the political-historical background, how do the churches develop their attitude toward the present Israeli regime?

3. The present status quo was established in 1852 by the Ottoman Sultan. One should explore whether legal solutions appropriate for today's situation can be found. One should try to check the privileges granted by the churches to their representative in Jerusalem in comparison with the privileges granted today by the Israeli regime.

The Jews and Christians should try to explore their common roots in order to improve their relations in the present.

PROF. AVINERI:

He suggests studying the way the churches went along with the various regimes in Jerusalem throughout history. It should be very interesting to study how the Catholic Church relates to the modern state, in particular with regard to the modern State of Italy. The arrangements between the Vatican and the State of Italy took 60 years to develop.

The absence of diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Israel makes it difficult to maintain relations between Israel and the Catholic Church in this country. Jews and Christians who conduct a dialogue today do not discuss the relations between Israel and the Vatican. This subject should be dealt with in a pragmatic manner rather than on a theological level.

PROF. VON GEUSAU:

I have been trying to convince the Vatican to establish diplomatic relations with Israel since 1975. The answer always given is that it is a political issue and any discussions are prohibited except by the State Secretariat. There is a definite distinction between the Holy See as a spiritual and a political leader. The church has yet to resolve this problem. All the arguments against the recognition of Israel have no political and juridical value. It stems from much deeper reasons of the way the Catholics view the Jews. Only when this problem is dealt with will the problem of recognition be solved.

GEOFFREY WIGODER:

In one of his discussions with representatives of the Catholic Church, four reasons were mentioned as preventing the recognition of Israel: 1. Lebanon, 2. the Territories, 3. the Palestinian refugees, 4. Jerusalem. The subject of borders as preventing recognition was not mentioned. Neither was it explained what the problem is regarding Jerusalem. It is known that in the past the Vatican wanted internationalization of the city. Now it talks about international guarantees but it is not clear who will be the guarantors. If the guarantees are provided by the United Nations then this would include the Soviet Union. If the guarantees are given by the same powers that granted them in the 19th century, Turkey should be included.

PROF. VON GEUSAU:

No one in the Vatican knows what international guarantees mean. The reasons for not recognizing Jerusalem changed with the political developments. In 1948 the Vatican refused recognition because Israel was not within the 1947 boundaries. Starting in 1970, the Vatican gave new reasons for non-recognition of Israel.

Yael Vered:

The situation today is even more complicated. What is the meaning of the religious status quo - functional or territorial?

The three main religions should have an equal role. There are many churches - what should be their role? The Vatican looks to create a statute of international guarantees where the three main religions play an equal role.

Prof. Von Geusau:

The Vatican has reached the conclusion that internationalizing Jerusalem along the lines of 1947 is not realistic. However, it is not yet ready to accept the present situation. It is moving from its demand to internationalize the city to a new concept which is not yet clear.

Father Marcel Dubois:

The position of the Vatican is illogical. Jerusalem is divided between three borders: 1. ancient and modern; 2. those for and against the Jews and 3. Palestinian Arabs and Jews. All three borders are really one. We must make a distinction between relations between Christians and Jews and between Christianity and Judaism.

One should find out whether the Christians leave Jerusalem because they are Arabs or because they are Christians. I think that they leave Jerusalem in most cases because they are Arabs who belong to the Arab community. One cannot measure the Christian presence in number but in quality and depth of Christian thinking. The presence of church personnel in Abu Gosh is more important than the number of Christians living in Jerusalem.

Prof. Werblovsky:

The Christians leave Lebanon because of Moslem pressure. The Moslem Arab finds it more difficult to immigrate to the West than the Christian Arab who has many relatives there.

Naomi Teasdale:

Statistics show that there is no decline in the numbers of the Christian community in comparison with the Jordanian period. However, the number of the Christians is in decline in comparison with the Jewish and Moslem communities that grow more rapidly. This means that the decline is in percentage and not in numbers.

Yael Vered:

The Christian community has doubled itself under the Israeli regime.

Abbot Nicholas Englander:

The local churches are not represented and this is our problem. The representatives of the international churches must decide how to assist the local churches (the Greek Orthodox etc). The discussion whether or not to recognize the State of Israel is 'above the heads' of the local churches which are interested in their own problems. The local churches have no voice and no influence. I am convinced that the status quo is paralyzed and paralyzes any progress for the future.

Prof. Werblovsky:

The local churches feel very much like Arabs and often behave like Arab patriots. They do not view the representatives of the churches as their legitimate spokesmen because they are Westerners. They say that they were not involved at all with the Holocaust and therefore have no moral obligation to support Israel. Some of them even support the P.L.O.

Father Dubois:

I am of the opinion that the voice of the local churches is heard in the Vatican and therefore I disagree with the Abbot. International public opinion is more sympathetic to pro-Palestinian churches than to the ones in the Jewish part of Jerusalem.

Prof. Werblovsky:

Bishop Hakkim represented his local Catholic Church in a very strong way. He was viewed as the spokesman not just of the church but also of the Arabs in Israel. Today there is no leader of his caliber and therefore the local churches are not heard.

Regarding the status quo, one remembers the difficult discussions between the churches regarding the renovations in the Holy Sepulchre. Therefore, any initiative to change the status quo must come from the Christians.

Rabbi Kaplan:

The purpose of the status quo is to freeze the situation because everyone concerned is afraid of the unknown alternatives. One must notice the increase of Orthodox Jews in the city which presents a future problem for the churches in Jerusalem far graver than the issue of the status quo.



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Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum,
c/o American Jewish Committee,
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Rabbi Tannenbaum:

I feel urged to contribute to their recent publications of Mr. Bronfman, and others, also to your reply, all concerning the Vatican's position in re of recognition of the State of Israel.

I was the first Jewish scholar, who during the pontificates of Pius XI and Pius XII, was invited to lecture at the Vatican. This happened at the occasion of the Anno Santo in 1950. In the Vatican's International Congress of Catholic Church music I was the first and only Jewish representative, invited by Cardinal Tisserant and Msgr. Higionio Angles, the prefect of the Pontifical Academy of Sacred Music in Rome. My paper "The Common Ground" is published in "Atti del Congresso", Rome, 1951. After my arrival in Rome I was politely, but rather urgently, invited to appear at the palace of Crd. Tisserant. As for the following report, it represents the gist of my (German-written) personal diary.

Following the summons of the Cardinal, I found myself in the anticamera of his office. The elegant room was replete with questionnaires in four languages: "Were were you during the years 1937 - 45?" "Did you do anything to help fugitive Jews" "Which Jews did you help and in which way" (Name month, year, place, and situation!). These questionnaires strengthened my suspicion that the Cardinal wished to hear from me about such personal experiences.

However, I was mistaken.

The Cardinal, some of whose studies about Eastern Christianity (Syrian, Nestorian, etc.) I knew, addressed me very politely in French. As my French was rather rusty, we discussed our topics in a mixture of Italian and Latin, which we well commanded. After a few introductory remarks, he asked me: "What do the American Jews expect from the Holy See with respect to the new State?" (de re publica novissima?) - he did not name, not even once, ~~name~~ Israel by name. I replied "Eminence, I do not represent any Jewish organization and cannot speak for one". He replied: (with an ironic smile): "If you were, I would not have asked you for your visit. But do tell me, what in your private opinion as a Jew and as a scholar (essendo Ebreo e dotto erudito)?" I replied: "I believe, the Jews of America and of the world would appreciate some gesture of friendship, or at least of benevolence from the Holy See". He: (sternly): "The Holy See is not at all interested in the new state (no name!), but it is most interested in the intact and unchanged state (stato intatto ed integro) of the Holy Places. It might be best - in our opinion - to place them under the guardianship and jurisdiction of the Christian Church. And if I say 'the Church' I mean this, the sole authentic Church (questa, sola chiesa auctoritatis perfecta). I: "Shall I transmit or convey this message?" He: "That is up to you".

And after a few polite words I was dismissed.

Here ends my conversation. Let me add that I had to revise my original suspicion of the Cardinal, when two letters of his to Pope Pius XII came to light, wherein he, the only ranking Cardinal, implored the Pope to save the Roman and Italian Jews from their persecutors, "in which way whatever". I submit this account to your trust; you may dispose of it according to your best judgment.

Meanwhile I remain with cordial regards yours faithfully



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VIA FAX-5

TO: MARK TANENBAUM / DAVID FORDS
FROM: SHIMON SAMUELS

Thursday, January 1, 1987 The Jerusalem Post Page Four

O'Connor's own views on Mideast made him an easy target for controversy

By WALTER RUBY

Jerusalem Post Correspondent
NEW YORK. — As New York's Archbishop John Cardinal O'Connor found himself embroiled in controversy over whether or not he would meet Israel's top leaders during his upcoming trip to the Jewish state, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, international affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, remarked this week that O'Connor had become "the victim of Vatican foreign policy."

Tanenbaum's analysis that O'Connor had wanted his trip to be a warm and generous outreach to Israel, but that he had been rebuffed in by Arabists within the Vatican, seemed generally accurate. O'Connor appeared to have agreed to hold meetings with Israel's top leaders, only to have the trip called out from under him with no warning last week by the Vatican.

The official reason was that Vatican protocol forbids a cardinal to meet Israeli leaders in Jerusalem, as the Vatican does not recognize Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem. Earlier Meir Jaffe, the cardinal's spokesman, had conceded that O'Connor would be visiting to meet Israeli leaders, but only in "informal" meetings.

Nevertheless, an analysis portraying O'Connor as the "good guy" in the Vatican, who has been rebuffed by Israel, overlooks the tension in O'Connor's own role and outlook vis-a-vis Israel and the Middle East. On the one hand, ever since becoming New York's archbishop in January 1984 (he was invested by Pope John Paul II with the more exalted title of cardinal in May 1985), O'Connor has attached a high priority to outreach to New York's large and influential Jewish community. He has made appearances at rallies in support of Soviet Jewry, called on Christians to come to terms with the moral issue of the Holocaust and stressed the commitment to the right of the State of Israel to exist within safe and secure boundaries.

On the other hand, even before

his controversial visit to Lebanon last June, where he called for "a Palestinian homeland," O'Connor had spoken of the need to find a solution to the Palestinian problem, so as to alleviate the suffering of Palestinian refugees. According to a 40-year-old tradition, the archbishop of New York serves as president of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, an organization that supports and operates humanitarian and charitable foundations in 18 countries in the Middle East.

O'Connor, 66, is a native of Philadelphia, and spent much of his ecclesiastical career as a chaplain in the U.S. military, serving in the Korean War, and later as head chaplain of the U.S. Naval Academy. After brief service as bishop of Scranton, PA, O'Connor was appointed archbishop of New York in January 1984.

From the beginning of his service as archbishop, O'Connor has been seen as one of the leaders of the conservative faction among U.S. cardinals and bishops, especially on so-called "social issues."

During the 1984 election campaign, he stressed that abortion was the pre-eminent moral issue of the times and asked the question of whether Catholics could in good conscience vote for candidates who support legalized abortion.

O'Connor has also opposed homosexuality as sinful, and headed a coalition, including some Orthodox Jewish groups, which unsuccessfully opposed a bill passed by the City Council last year outlawing discrimination against gays.

Like Pope John Paul II, with whom he enjoys a close friendship and a shared philosophical outlook, O'Connor has an informal style, and loves to mingle with crowds. Despite his rigid moral views, O'Connor has a warm personal style and a refined sense of humor.

Sharp differences with O'Connor on gay rights, notwithstanding, Mayor Ed Koch has formed a close alliance with the cardinal on many issues, and even travelled to Rome



Cardinal John O'Connor.

(Reuters)

last year for O'Connor's investment as cardinal Koch has sought to sensitize the cardinal on Jewish issues, and has introduced him to Jewish community leaders here, and to resident Israeli diplomats.

In his very first sermon in ornate St. Patrick's Cathedral on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue after becoming archbishop, O'Connor said "The lessons of the Holocaust are ignored at our peril. We owe a great debt to our friends of the Jewish faith, who do us the incalculable favor of reminding us of the significance of the Holocaust. While we can forgive, we can never forget."

O'Connor has also taken the lead in urging teachers in Catholic schools to wipe out every vestige of anti-Semitism from their teaching.

Giving speeches to Jewish groups, O'Connor has said that he believes that Israel has a right to exist within secure and recognized boundaries and to be safe from incursions. But he has declined to demand openly of the Vatican that it establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

O'Connor's position as the American Jewish community's favorite

cardinal was shaken last June when he made a three-day visit to Lebanon, during which he unsuccessfully tried to contact the Shi'ite captors of American hostages in order to win their release. After leaving Beirut for Rome, he said that he had been deeply moved by the suffering of Palestinian refugees he had seen in Lebanon, and called for the creation of a Palestinian homeland in order to alleviate their plight. O'Connor stressed in subsequent interviews that it was not up to Israel but to the whole world to solve the Palestinian problem, and that he was not necessarily referring to Israel's occupied territories as the location for the Palestinian homeland. Nevertheless, O'Connor's call for a Palestinian homeland was criticized by such Jewish leaders as Nathan Perlmutter of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, while others such as Tanenbaum defended O'Connor's position, saying that they too looked forward to a just resolution of the Palestinian problem.

It was Tanenbaum, in the wake of the Lebanon visit, who took the lead in urging O'Connor to visit Israel in order "to see the other side of the story."

Later, Mayor Koch, Israeli Ambassador to the UN Binyamin Netanyahu, and Israeli Consul General in New York Moshe Yegar met informally with the cardinal to convince him that the government of Israel would like him to visit and would give him red carpet treatment if he decided to come.

While no one in the Jewish community here expected O'Connor to announce his support for establishing diplomatic relations between Israel and the Vatican during his visit, Rabbi Ronald Sobel, senior rabbi of Temple Emanuel here, and a friend and confidante of O'Connor, said "The hope was clear and evident that improvement in relations and understanding would follow the cardinal's visit." In the wake of the Vatican order to O'Connor to cancel his meetings with Israeli leaders, however, that hope appears to have dimmed considerably.

Holiday in search of Palestinian 'reality'

By ANDY COULT
For the Jerusalem Post

Donkey carts and army jeeps were common sights on the roads of the Gaza Strip last Saturday, but came to the early stop-and-go line as the bus carrying the soldiers' wings of the refugee camp. Gunfire is heard in the distance.



does provide some Israeli perspectives. A B'nai B'rith representative has addressed the group and a member of the Peace Now movement is scheduled to meet with participants in Tel Aviv.

In addition to Christian and Palestinian sites, they have visited the Israel Museum, Yad Vashem, and Masada.

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Translation by Zachariah Shuster from DIE ZEIT of October 8, 1982

On July 15, 1941, Father Maximilian Kolbe wrote the last letter to his mother, in German as prescribed. Kolbe was a controversial figure; sometimes he was described as a "naive dreamer," sometimes as "Crazy Max," he was a fanatical worshiper of Mary. His small newspaper was known as a radical publication, which also carried on polemics against Freemasons and Zionism.

"HATRED IS NOT A CREATIVE FORCE"

Forty-one years after his death as a martyr in Auschwitz, Maximilian Kolbe was proclaimed a saint in Rome.

After noting the unusual speed with which the Vatican canonized the Polish priest, the writer Hans Jacob Stehle, Rome correspondent of the prominent German Weekly "Die Zeit," presents a biographical sketch of the priest.

"Who was this man who voluntarily let himself be tortured to death and take the place of another one, a desperate family father? Was he a knight without fear or blemish and therefore remote from real life? Or was he rather a man of his time and environment, who at the end emitted a signal of light in this dark "modern" century?"

Kolbe was born in 1894 in a family of textile workers in the industrial city of Lodz which then belonged to Russia and where in the economic boom, the population consisting of Poles, Jews and Germans, was multiplied six times. The agile Kolbe Raimund (this was his baptismal name) was fortunate in being sent to study in the church gymnasium in Lwow. His future was thus determined. At the age of 16 he wore the garb of the Franciscan novice and the order-name Maximilian. The misery from which he came

Wolfgang Martini
about the fifth

-Kolbe/2

imbued him not only with a religious spirit, longing for heavenly glory, but he appeared to his classmates also as a "naive dreamer" because although gifted for mathematics and physics he involved himself in apparently impossible things. His projects for a teletype, a recording machine, a rocket vehicle to the moon, evoked irony among the superiors of his order, even when in 1912 they let him study theology and philosophy in Rome.

The capital of Italy, where the Pope, having lost the Church-State, lived as a "prisoner" in the Vatican, where the King was an atheist and anti-Catholicism was evidence of a patriotic state of mind, frightened the young monk from the Polish provinces. These were the years when the Jewish national liberal Ernesto Nathan was Mayor of the Eternal City and Grand Master of the Freemasons. Kolbe's rector at the order college was dominated by the idea that the Freemasons are responsible for all evil. He mixed them up with the anarchists who one day painted the devil on their black flag and demonstrated in St. Peter's Square. It was in the year 1917 that the Pope attempted to bring about peace and an end to the World War, something which displeased Italy. In Russia the revolution was going on, while at the same time one celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Reformation and 200 years since the establishment of the first Grand Lodge of the Freemasons. In Rome, the Freemasons marched to the monument of Giordano Bruno on Campo di Fiori where the "heretic" was burned and in Fatima shepherd-children heard the Madonna announcing the impending catastrophes.

On October 17, 1917, the 23-year old Kolbe who suffered from a lung ailment and ulcers of the stomach, established with several colleagues, Militia Immacolata, Soldiers of the Virgin Mary. This organization,

Kolbe/3

immediately approved by the Pope, declared in the statutes, that its purpose is to "convert the sinners, heretics, schismatics, Jews, and especially the Freemasons."

As methods to achieve this purpose Kolbe stated, "everything permitted by law."

After his return to Poland he established a periodical ^{Rycerz} ~~Rycerz~~ Niepokonanej (Knight of the Impeccable) whose circulation jumped in fifteen years from 15,000 to a million and notwithstanding all doubts and apprehensions of the order, whose provincial described this publication as "confusing," the brothers of the order nicknamed Father Maximilian "Crazy Max" and in the church-approved biography composed in 1979 by the Ursuline ~~Sister Kinga Strzelecka it is said that he was then called the "boring Marmelade"~~ because in conversation he always came back with the stubbornness of a fanatic to the same subject — the impeccable ones. Some were bored, others laughed, ^{the} ~~the~~ plans to conquer the world with the help of a miracle medallion were considered as a childish idea. Although Kolbe struggled all his life against frail health, his activism knew no limits, he used to say, "Sometimes the fever is heating my head." In 1927 a Polish nobleman donated 28,000 square meters of land to Father Kolbe to build a commune for members of the order. 700 Persons lived in this commune and it was characterized as "real communism."

On December 18, 1934 Kolbe wrote, "It would be better not to speak about removing the Jews from the economy, but to increase the role of Poles in the economy which will lead to the objective sooner."

Kolbe/4

Kolbe was generally not very cautious in his expression. In his newspaper "Knight of the Impeccable" he called Luther a "renegade" who "married and then established Protestantism." He characterized Freemasons as "an organized clique of fanatical Jews who want to destroy the church."

Thirteen years later, in a calendar for the year 1939, which had a circulation of a million copies, Kolbe wrote "Authentic communism seems to become increasingly more savage. Its origin can easily be traced to the criminal Mafia which calls itself Freemasonry, and the hand which is guiding all this for a clear purpose is international Zionism. That doesn't mean that one cannot find good people also among Jews..."

Kolbe shied away only partly from the widespread anti-Semitism in Poland during the inter-war years. He wrote, "There is no doubt that the bishops have a negative attitude toward the zoological anti-Semitism, but their views are not taken in to consideration either in groups connected with Catholic organizations, nor among the broad masses of the clergy."

In 1935, in a letter from Japan, Kolbe has written "I shall carefully seek not to provoke or deepen among the readers hatred toward the Jews which exists anyway... our supreme goal must always be conversion and sanctification of the souls." Typical of Kolbe's attitude is that he engaged as collaborator the priest Trzeciak who coined the slogan "Judo-commune" although he sent back many of his manuscripts because Trzeciak is a "wild anti-Semite, a chauvinist."

Kolbe's tragedy is that he, like his country, fell victim of those who have driven anti-Semitism to its most criminal consequences -- the Nazis, but about them there is not a single word in the more than three thousand pages left by Kolbe.

In 1939 he was brought as a civilian prisoner to a camp in Silesia, but in 1940 he returned again to Niepokalanów and even managed to print his newspaper. At the outbreak of the war the town of his order served as a refuge for thousands, among them many Jews. On March 16th Kolbe wrote to the German chief of the police in Sochaczew, who became suspicious, "You and I will not be alive in a hundred, two hundred years, and then all our problems, even the most important and urgent ones will come to an end, but one will remain: Will we exist then? and where? and happy? Every hour brings us nearer a whole hour (and not less) to that moment. Our newspaper deals with this kind of problem, I do not feel any hatred against anyone on this earth."

At the beginning of February 1941, a German publication in Warsaw published an article to the effect that in Niepokalanów a newspaper is being published that makes propaganda against the Germans. Three weeks later Father Kolbe was imprisoned in the Gestapo prison in Warsaw and in May he was transported to Auschwitz. This was before the extermination of Jews. The commandant of the camp Karl Fritzsche, a veteran of the SS group "Oberbayern" from Dachau, has not yet tried the gassing method of Cydon B. The 13,000 Polish inmates ^{were} have victims of daily sadism. When at the end of July one of the inmates succeeded in escaping, ten of others were put in a bunker where they perished from starvation.

He (Kolbe) stood up and asked the commandant to take him to the starvation bunker in place of the inmate Gajowniczek.

"What does this Polish pig want?" shouted Fritzsche, and when he understood, he asked, "Who are you?" "A Polish priest." Fritzsche agreed.

Some theologians have expressed doubt whether Kolbe was in the strict sense of the word a "martyr of the faith."

While some prelates found in Kolbe's whole life nothing but "heroic virtues," the Polish and German bishops appealed to the Pope in a letter from Auschwitz, dated June 5, 1982, that he should not refuse to grant Kolbe a martyr's death.

The man who voluntarily, with nine others, went into the starvation bunker where he spent ^{three} two weeks until on August 14, 1941, a murderous poison injection in the pulse made an end to his shattered body. His ~~ashes are gone. No relic is left.~~ However, ^{it} ~~was confirmed~~ among the ~~last words he spoke in the hell of Auschwitz and which are more than a pious remnant are these~~

"Hatred is not a creative force -- creative is love."