



# THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

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Box 43, Folder 9, Protestants and Jews, 1976-1977.



**DIVISION OF  
HOMELAND  
MINISTRIES  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
(Disciples of Christ)

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*Voluntary Service*

**INTERNATIONAL  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
PROGRAM**

*Joint program  
Division of Homeland Ministries  
Division of Overseas Ministries*

**M Frisco Gilchrist**  
**Paul and Dede Wilson**

October 5, 1977

Rabbi James Rudin  
The American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, NY 10022

Dear Jim:

In line with our conversation I am enclosing copies  
of certain resolutions that will go to our General  
Assembly.

Cordially,

*RAF*  
**Robert A. Fangmeier**  
Director  
International Affairs

RAF:ds  
Encl.

~~THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, October 21-26, 1977:~~

- 1) encourage its congregations to study the issues related to dying with dignity
- 2) request the General Minister and President to appoint a person or persons to develop a theological statement to help our members reflect on the theological issues which surround the dying person in this time
- 3) encourage its members to engage in the dialogue pertaining to the formation of public policy toward the end that legislation which may develop in the various states is enriched by our concern for the moral issues at stake

The Northwest Regional Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)

~~The General Board recommends that Resolution No. 7724 be approved.  
(Debate time 12 minutes)~~

No. 7725

#### RESOLUTION CONCERNING UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS

*Background Statement on Universal Human Rights* Human Rights is central to Christian faith and tradition. The concern for persons and their dignity is at the heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares that all human beings are entitled, without distinction of any kind, no matter where they live or under what type of government—to basic rights which can serve as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

In keeping with the historic mission of the Church, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in International Conventions and General Assemblies over the past twenty years, has expressed concern for oppressed peoples throughout the world in their struggle for human rights. Resolutions by the 1958 and 1962 International Conventions and the 1975 General Assembly strongly stated the importance of human rights concerns in the policies of the United Nations (UN), Canada, and the United States (US). In 1973 at the Cincinnati Assembly, congregations, educational institutions and units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) were urged to emphasize human rights by study and action programs, by review of Canadian and US foreign assistance programs, and by supporting special ministries related to human rights.

*North America and Its Relationships to the Issue of Human Rights* The concern for human rights is deeply embedded in the democratic principles of the United States and Canada. Consistent with that democratic tradition, President Carter, addressing the United Nations on March 17, 1977, indicated his support for the work of the United Nations Human Rights Commission and the need to establish a High Commissioner for Human Rights. He also indicated his intention to sign the United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and to urge the United States Senate to ratify them.

The nations of Europe, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Great Britain, Canada and the United States affirmed the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a part of the Helsinki Agreement in August 1975.

The tradition of respect for the dignity and worth of all persons needs constant cultivation. We are aware that our policies have at times not adequately reflected that historic concern. Although the United Nations has adopted more than eighteen International Covenants or Conventions referring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United States Government has ratified only five conventions. The government of Canada, while ratifying most of the covenants or conventions, has not ratified the conventions dealing with War Crimes and Apartheid. Further, governmental policies of both Canada and the United States have sometimes had the effect of supporting repressive governments around the world.



The United States Central Intelligence Agency has used missionaries and foreign clergy in its information gathering. Such practices have been protested by the Administrative Committee of the General Board and by the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in a resolution passed February 20, 1976. Such practices reduce the credibility of our governments and people as advocates for Universal Human Rights.

*Response of the Churches to Human Rights Crises* The increasing violations of human rights have been made even more real as churches, church institutions and religious leaders having close historical ties with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), have come under attack by repressive governments. Religious leaders over the world have become increasingly active in promoting human rights.

The World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace issued a Joint Statement in 1973 appealing to churches to initiate or to intensify programs of instruction on human rights.

The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches reported on the role of the churches in the Helsinki Agreement signatory states in his "Recommendation on Human Rights." The World Council of Churches requested that the General Secretary continue his consultations and efforts in cooperation with the churches in those states, on human rights and religious liberty in the context of the Helsinki Agreement.

The Church is being called upon by the churches and religious leaders of many countries for support and assistance. During 1977 alone appeals have come to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from national church bodies and regional ecumenical structures in Asia, Latin America, Africa and Europe, where leaders have been imprisoned, tortured, in some cases to death, and/or deported for their support for the rights and dignity of all people.

#### *A Resolution Concerning Universal Human Rights*

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, October 21-26, 1977 approve the following:

- 1 Request the General Minister and President to
  - a communicate to the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada appreciation for their constructive leadership in the human rights area, and
  - b convey to the appropriate government leaders in the United States and Canada our deepening distress that some government policies continue to support (with military assistance, economic aid and other forms of assistance) governments engaged in consistent patterns of gross violations of human rights, at the same time we commend current governmental efforts to develop innovative and vigorous new policies designed to enhance human rights at home and abroad, and
  - c express to the legislative bodies the urgent need for the United States to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic and Cultural Rights, Canada having ratified these covenants on May 16, 1976, and the other Covenants and Conventions adopted by the United Nations.
- 2 Commend national and international ecumenical bodies for their work in aggressively pursuing human rights in their own and in other countries,
- 3 Support all manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in their efforts to give high priority to universal human rights.
- 4 Encourage regions and congregations to incorporate study/action programs in universal human rights at home and abroad as an integral part in developing global awareness and world outreach programs (see, for example, "Human Rights and International Order," Friendship Press, 1979-80),
- 5 Urge that universal human rights concerns be a part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) observance of World Order Sunday each October, and finally to
- 6 Request that the Week of Compassion Committee continue (within its mandate and past grant-making policies and practices) to support organizations working on human rights concerns.

Division of Homeland Ministries  
Division of Overseas Ministries

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The General Board recommends that Resolution No. 7725 be approved  
(Debate time 24 minutes)

**No. 7726**

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS**

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has taken its stance in favor of human rights within our nation and throughout the world, and

WHEREAS, there continues to be within the world and national community abuses of human rights, such as imprisonment of political dissidents, policy of apartheid, segregation, and suppression of other basic human freedoms,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, October 21-26, 1977, commend and support in prayer and action those national and world leaders who continue to speak out and work for basic human rights

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
in the Upper Midwest

The General Board recommends that Resolution No. 7726 be approved  
(Debate time 12 minutes)

**No. 7727**

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR THE CAUSE OF  
MINISTERIAL RELIEF AND ASSISTANCE**

WHEREAS, though approximately one-half of the retired ministers and missionaries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are reasonably well provided for through the Pension Plan, the other, older half need the concern of the Church through gifts of Ministerial Relief and Assistance, and

WHEREAS, much of the need has come about because of lack of church participation in the past in the Church's funded pension programs, or low ministerial salaries upon which pension dues were paid, and

WHEREAS, the purpose of gifts of Ministerial Relief and Assistance is to meet as nearly as possible, the needs of servants of the Church attempting to live on limited retirement income, and the task is difficult because these gifts are needed for several hundred persons, and inflation compounds the need as it raises the subsistence levels, and

WHEREAS, the churches, through present regular offerings, provide about 75% of the total Ministerial Relief given, with the remainder given by individuals (many of whom are retired beneficiaries of the Pension Plan themselves, concerned for the needs of these aged ministers and missionaries),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting at Kansas City, Missouri, October 21-26, 1977, express its continuing concern for these needy servants of the Church and call upon the Church and individuals to

- 1 Join in prayerful concern for these and those who minister to them
- 2 Make individual contributions to the Cause of Ministerial Relief and Assistance
- 3 Encourage increased giving through Church Finance Council to meet the needs of these faithful servants
- 4 Remember this Cause in individual wills, bequests and gift annuities

Board of Trustees  
Pension Fund of the Christian Church

The General Board recommends that Resolution No. 7727 be approved  
(Debate time 12 minutes)



WHEREAS, shootings, stabbings, beatings, fights, threats and coercion are a major part of the daily TV entertainment fare, an article in the December 8, 1975, *American Medical Association Journal* indicating the average high school graduate is exposed to 18,000 television murders, and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior reported in 1972 "a causative relationship between televised violence and subsequent anti-social behavior," and

WHEREAS, the studies of Dr. George Gerbner, dean of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, purport to show that even adults who watch a lot of television have a fear of crime that exaggerates reality, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Gerbner told a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee on communications in March 1977 that portrayal of violence had increased sharply on all three commercial networks in the previous fall season, and

WHEREAS, the networks have pledged to reduce violence in their programming, and advertising agencies such as J. Walter Thompson, and program sponsors such as General Foods, and organizations such as the American Medical Association and the Parent Teachers Association have spoken out strongly against TV violence, and

WHEREAS, in the ethics and teachings of Jesus Christ, whose name the church professes and whose life it tries to exemplify and share with others, violence is not an appropriate human response to conflict,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, October 21-26, 1977, commend the television networks, program producers and sponsors that actually are attempting to reduce the excessive and gratuitous violence on TV and urge them to publicize the means and results, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that congregations and members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be urged to monitor the new season's television offerings, to write and commend advertisers and networks identified with low-violence programming, to inform the sponsors of brutal and dehumanizing television programs of their displeasure with such sponsorship, and to practice selective viewing, encouraging children and adults to watch programs that stress positive solutions to conflict rather than violent action, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Office of Communication of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), through *The Disciple*, *Vanguard*, *The Social Action Newsletter*, *Communication News*, etc., from time to time provide information, including the names of the most objectionable programs and their advertisers, and provide names of the most acceptable programs and their advertisers

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we inform ourselves, both as private citizens and as a church body, about the programs of the National Parent Teachers' Association, the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting and like-minded groups, and cooperate with them in encouraging television programs more spiritually sensitive and more in accord with the teachings of Christ, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that units and members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) owning stock in networks or companies that advertise on television be urged to exercise their shareholder rights in support of non-violent programming

Christian Church Services, Inc.  
Disciples Peace Fellowship

The General Board recommends that Resolution No. 7731 be approved  
(Debate time 12 minutes)

## No. 7732

### RESOLUTION CONCERNING JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS

WHEREAS, the Biblical tradition affirms that (a) the Church of Christ is rooted in the life of the people of Israel, (b) Gentiles, because of the grace of Jesus Christ, are numbered among the children of Abraham, living in one family with Jews who first entered into that relation, and (c) Jesus confirms God's covenantal relation with Israel, and does not abrogate it, and

WHEREAS, the church and Christians have sometimes sinned by misinterpreting the new covenant as a justification for bitterness between themselves and Jews, and have sometimes endorsed and engaged in persecution of the Jews (a persecution most tragically displayed in the Nazi Holocaust 1933-1945, but which in other forms continues to exist insidiously in contemporary Christian culture), and

WHEREAS, Lectureships and courses in Judaica and Jewish-Christian dialogue, scholarly reflection and publications in the journal ENCOUNTER, and the cultivation of personal ties between Christians and Jews have contributed significantly to the life of faculty and students at Christian Theological Seminary, have assisted in reconciling Christian and Jewish communities in central Indiana, and have moved students at the seminary to initiate this resolution, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, October 21-26, 1977, affirm its intent that atrocities such as the Holocaust not take place again, anti-semitism be discouraged, reconciliation of Christians and Jews be brought about, and fruitful means of dialogue and mutual service to humankind be discovered, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that (a) this General Assembly reaffirm participation in Jewish Christian dialogue through the office on Jewish-Christian relations of the National Council of Churches, (b) the administrative units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be encouraged to continue and expand Jewish Christian relationships wherever feasible (c) Regions and congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be encouraged to engage in dialogue with Jewish communities, whenever possible, to explore the common features of our heritage, and (d) seminaries and departments of religion of colleges be commended for continuing or initiating curricula and programs in the areas of Judaica and Jewish-Christian relations

Christian Theological Seminary

The General Board recommends that Resolution No. 7732 be approved  
(Debate time 12 minutes)

No. 7733

#### RESOLUTION CONCERNING WELFARE REFORM

##### The Situation

While various attempts at reform have been made in recent years, the welfare system in the United States continues to be sharply criticized by both welfare recipients, tax payers and those representing every point of view in the political spectrum

What remains clear is that millions of United States citizens continue to live in poverty. Inflation and high unemployment increase the seriousness of the problem.

Among the many issues which have not been solved are the following:

1. Disagreement about policies and practices which need to be incorporated in an income maintenance program.
2. Wide differences in welfare payments among the states.
3. Bureaucratic procedures which demean the self-respect of welfare recipients.
4. Administrative practices of the welfare system such as those pertaining to Aid to Families with Dependent Children, which fail to encourage and support the stability of the family.
5. Tax policies which offer little incentive for increased income through work.
6. Inadequate child care facilities for welfare mothers who would choose to work.
7. Continued high unemployment.
8. Insufficient work training programs without which the poor are limited to menial, low paying jobs.
9. A poverty income level set by the federal government far below that which most Americans consider sufficient for a decent standard of living.

##### The Principles

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the General Assembly has frequently spoken of the gospel imperative to be concerned with the poor and the powerless.



In 1969 the General Assembly endorsed in principle "some form of family income support which will both be adequate to maintain health and human decency and also be designed to afford incentive to productive economic activity"

#### The Resolution

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, October 21-26, 1977

- 1 Reaffirm its support for a family income support policy adequate to maintain health and human decency and designed to afford incentive to productive economic activity. The income level should be at least that of the poverty index set by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics
- 2 Call upon the individuals and congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to study the various plans for income maintenance especially when they are translated into legislative proposals
- 3 Urge the members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to work for federal legislation which will assure an equitable income maintenance program for all United States citizens

Division of Homeland Ministries

The General Board recommends that Resolution No. 7733 be approved (Debate time 12 minutes)

## AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

No. 7734

### RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE UNITED NATIONS

#### I PREAMBLE

As the United Nations enters its fourth decade the easy optimism of earlier years has disappeared. People in many lands, including our own, now look upon the world organization "with an uneasy mixture of admiration, gratitude, trust and hope, countered by disaffection, resentment, distrust and antagonism".\* The U.N.'s achievements in areas such as peacekeeping, arms control and disarmament, universal membership, human rights and economic development seem diminished by the failures in these same areas which are numerous, visible and a painful reminder that building world community requires patience and dedication in the decades ahead.

Any perspective on the U.N. in the 1970's cannot ignore the reality of the growth of its membership and the enlargement of its agenda. It has grown from 51 nations to a nearly universal membership of 145. It has evolved from an organization largely dominated by the West to one in which the voices of the poor of the Third World are heard loudly and clearly. All the antagonisms of nationalism, ideology, race, religion, economics, and culture have taken their place on the agenda of the world organization. Emerging and ancient grievances between the nations exasperate the dialogue within the U.N. and its related agencies. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that its failures should be so visible and its successes so little appreciated.

The Governing Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (May 4-5, 1977, Cincinnati, Ohio) in reaffirming its support of the United Nations suggests a theological stance for Christians as they formulate their own guidelines for study and action in the years ahead.

"Because the Creator has charged us with responsibilities to each other and for the earth, and because God cared enough for the world to enter history in Jesus Christ, as Christians we cannot be indifferent to the plight of our brothers and sisters, nor can the Church as an institution be indifferent to the affairs of the world. It is our duty to help create a worldwide community, in which governments and peoples treat each other compassionately as members of one human family. We are therefore called to participate in institutions, however imperfect, which are working toward the reconciliation of the peoples of the world and of all humanity with the total creation."

\*Resolution of the Governing Board, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

The United Nations is "a human institution with obvious imperfections," the Governing Board observed, but "is nevertheless a potential instrument for the expression of compassion and



justice throughout the world. It could become the best instrument devised by women and men for the political, social, and economic welfare of the entire human family and it deserves our continued support."

## II EVALUATING THE PAST AND PRESENT

Recognizing the need for reform and renewal of all human institutions, we are called upon to reflect on those areas of the U N's life that should be taken more seriously by us, as Christians, and by the nations of which we are citizens.

### *Keeping the Peace*

Its Charter mandates the United Nations "to maintain international peace and security." To implement this principle it is clear that the institutions of international conciliation must be strengthened and a permanent peacekeeping force established. The U N has, over the years, played a mediating role that has resolved many conflicts. Its peacekeeping forces have stood between warring groups to police cease-fire arrangements and provide negotiators with the calm of an armistice that gives the necessary time to resolve fundamental issues.

It is also true, however, that measured against the frequency of wars in this generation, the commitment to conciliation and peacekeeping has been timid and spasmodic. Efforts to strengthen conciliation services and establish a permanent peacekeeping force have faced substantial resistance. Instead of giving way to cynicism and despair, it seems important now for Disciples living in the United States and Canada to involve themselves once again in the movement for a stronger peacekeeping system in line with the spirit of the 1969 resolution of the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) which supported "the formation of a U N peacekeeping force" and urged all governments to assume a fair share of the cost of financing such a force.

### *Arms Control and Disarmament*

The modest institutions of control emerging from United Nations initiatives in recent years have been overwhelmed by technological advances, national fear, and pride. The annual world armaments bill of \$300 billion is frightening testimony to the spread of nuclear and conventional weapons. The threat to world peace is obvious.

Outside of the U N, bilateral negotiations such as SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) talks between the United States and the Soviet Union are a commendable first step in an imperfect world to control the rate at which the two super powers will allow their nuclear weapons potential to grow. Neither these talks nor the consultations within the U N community, however, deal in a significant way with the accumulation of conventional and nuclear weapons by a score of nations. If the arms race is to be controlled in the decades ahead, the nations that make up the U N must demonstrate their commitment to stronger institutions of international control. The special session of the U N General Assembly on arms control and disarmament in 1978 can provide the nations of the world with an opportunity for a systematic and comprehensive review of all problems related to the control of conventional and nuclear weapons.

### *Universal Membership*

The steady evolution of the United Nations toward universal membership has marked it as the one and only place where every national voice is heard and every grievance is considered. Since its beginning at San Francisco in 1945, the U N has been an organization in which member nations worked with enemies as well as friends. It is to accommodate and, if possible, reconcile the antagonisms of 145 nations representing almost four billion people that the world organization justifies its existence. In this context, universal membership is fundamental to the U N Charter.

Always in U N debates over membership, however, there has existed a malignant force that threatened the world organization itself and the principle of universality. Some nations have been denied membership by ideologically motivated vetoes. Other states have been excluded from U N activities or threatened with expulsion from the organization. In recent years Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have been denied membership. Israel has been excluded from participating in certain U N agencies. Attempts to prevent the admission of new nations or exclude or expel present members are contrary to the U N spirit. In 1956, 1958, 1961, 1963, 1968, and 1975 International Conventions and General Assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have affirmed "the principle of universal membership in the United Nations as a desirable goal which provided the basis for building a rule of international law and order."

### *Human Rights*

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights has recommended high ethical standards and the U N has drafted a series of declarations and conventions in specific areas. However, the machinery for enforcing these rights is still lacking. It is true in 1977 as it was in 1973 when the Cincinnati General Assembly noted that "in many respects the hopes ex-

pressed on a world scale a quarter of a century ago have been largely unfulfilled and require continued vigilance." In another resolution the Kansas City Assembly in 1977 will fully consider Human Rights. Here it is only necessary to restate that "in many countries there has been a deterioration of the consensus on human rights, with the invasion of privacy, the suspension of constitutional safeguards, the flagrant use of torture, and the unalleviated oppression of the poor (and) helpless." The U N Human Rights standards offer a hope that cannot be realized until the nations of the world, including the United States and Canada, fully subscribe to institutional arrangements wherein the U N has the authority to investigate and adjudicate complaints by individuals and groups who cannot secure redress for their grievances in any other way.

#### *Economic Development*

A variety of United Nations agencies have contributed to the unprecedented economic growth of many countries since the end of World War II. The advance of some developing nations, however, still leaves the great majority of the people of the world living in extreme poverty. To seek a more equitable and lasting solution to the growing gap between the rich and poor nations, the United Nations convened the Sixth (1974) and Seventh (1975) Special Sessions of the U N General Assembly. These gatherings have initiated negotiating forums in which developed and developing nations can take part in the world economic development decision-making process.

The New International Economic Order proposed by the Seventh Special Session deserves serious study and support in principle by Christians living in the United States and Canada and their governments. The General Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U S A (1976) suggested that "if the promises made in that historic session are to be kept, religious groups must diligently monitor and translate the intense debate on ways of achieving more equitable trade relations, or transferring capital, and of developing and sharing appropriate technology without creating dependency on the part of the developing countries."

#### *The United States and Canada*

As founding members of the United Nations and among its most influential members, the United States and Canada have a continuing obligation to participate in the renewal and reform of the world organization. If these two nations are to play a positive role in the world community, the United Nations must be at the center rather than at the edges of their foreign policy planning. Disciples living in the United States and Canada should continue to press their governments to take seriously their participation in the United Nations and to gear their policies and procedures to the cooperative achievement of a humane world.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting at Kansas City, Missouri, October 21-26, 1977 reaffirm its support of the United Nations and, recognizing the need for reform and renewal by all human institutions, call upon its own members and the political leaders of the United States and Canada to support

- 1 the establishment of a permanent peacekeeping force and stronger international institutions for conciliation,
- 2 the principle of universal membership by sponsoring the admission to the United Nations of Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea (Cambodia) and any other sovereign state, and opposing any and all moves to exclude or expel any member-nation from the United Nations or any of its units or specialized agencies,
- 3 renewal and reform of agencies dealing with human rights to make them vital instruments that can investigate and act against oppression in every area of the world regardless of ideology, race, religion, economic system or national status,
- 4 meaningful and positive participation by the United States and Canada in negotiations related to the New International Economic Order.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Division of Homeland Ministries, in cooperation with all other units of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), emphasize the United Nations as a part of the imperative on world order, justice and peace, and that the General Minister and President be asked to share this resolution with the appropriate political leaders of the United States and Canada.

Division of Homeland Ministries  
Division of Overseas Ministries

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The General Board recommends that Resolution No 7734 be approved  
(Debate time 24 minutes)



BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that every ordination agency, commission, or church provide the following services to all such candidates

1. Compile and distribute a nation-wide listing of both church and non-church related counseling resource materials that offer non-judgemental counseling for homosexual and bisexual persons and their families
2. Compile and distribute an annually updated listing of vocational guidance and counseling agencies with experience in counseling homosexual and bisexual professionals
3. Distribute a comprehensive bibliography of books, articles and audio-visual aids concerning human sexuality, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that church-homosexual candidate relationships remain open for encouragement and ministry until such life-styles are corrected and brought in line with Biblical Judeo-Christian morality of sexual behavior, and then ordination carried out

First Christian Church  
Santa Maria, California

The General Board recommends that Resolution No. 7744 be referred to the Division of Homeland Ministries for further development, with the request that a progress report be made to the 1978 meeting of the General Board and that the subject become a business item for the 1979 General Board and General Assembly. Such an action should be taken with assurance to the church for the present that referral means neither encouragement nor discouragement of the ordination of homosexual persons. Regional commissions on the ministry are urged to give pastoral care to the total professional ministry. The resolution in its present form appears to be judgmental and does not provide sufficient data from which an informed decision by the church can emerge. It is deemed important to channel this issue through the processes of the church. Referral launches a process within the whole church which affords opportunity within each manifestation to cultivate reason, sensitivity and knowledge of the issue. (Debate time 24 minutes)

## No. 7745

### RESOLUTION CONCERNING VIOLATION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN COMMUNIST DOMINATED AREAS

WHEREAS, the Official Board of University Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Normal, Illinois, reminds Christians in the United States and their duly appointed governing bodies as well as the World Council of Churches and its constituent members that there are many documented reports of religious repression and the denial of human rights in communist countries whose constitutions guarantee such rights and who are signatories of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted without dissent on December 10, 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and more particularly, by such countries who are signatories of the Final Act of the Helsinki Agreement on Security and Cooperation in Europe, signed by 35 heads of state in August of 1975, and

WHEREAS, the persecution of Christians, particularly Initiative Baptists and Pentecostals, Jews, Moslems and other believers continues as an overt fact including such things as financial and educational discrimination, separation of families, arrest and imprisonment of those who openly practice their faith, and

WHEREAS, the suppression of the Jewish minority, especially in the USSR, has been particularly blatant in that Jews are not permitted to publish devotional literature, have contact with coreligionists abroad, maintain seminaries, or emigrate, and

WHEREAS, peaceful critics of communism within such states are being treated as insane and interned in psychiatric wards, further subjected to harassment and arrest and placed in prisons, and

WHEREAS, these several conditions generally exist, certain examples require mentioning the secret trials and long prison terms given the Reverend George Vins, Baptist minister, and Vladimir Osipov, an Orthodox Christian and editor of the religious journal, *Veche*, in the

USSR, the arrest of political dissenters such as the Poet Alexander Ginzburg, head of the unofficial Helsinki monitoring committee, and further the arrest of Mykola Rudenko, head of the Kiev chapter of the same Helsinki group as well as his colleague, Oleska Tykhy, the detention of Valentyn Moroz, the Ukrainian historian, the arrest of the craftsman, Pyotor Ruban, the arrest of the Biologist Sergu Kovalev, who is serving a seven year sentence, the harassment of the Poet Konstantin Bogatyrev, and especially the continued persecution of Academician Andrei Sakharov, all in the USSR, in Yugoslavia where some 600 political prisoners are being held in jails, in Bulgaria where repression is very cruel, in Rumania where the Novelist Paul Goma has been persecuted for exposing that country's concentration camp system, in East Germany where some 200,000 persons have been denied the right to emigrate but the Poet Wolf Bierman was forced into exile and the Physicist Robert Haveman has been under arrest, in Poland where members of the Workers' Defense Committee, especially Novelist Jerzy Andrzejewski, have been beaten, in Czechoslovakia where President Gustav Husak has led the persecution of dissenters in his country, particularly those who signed "Charter 77" in support of the Helsinki Agreement, and

WHEREAS, to these few specific instances as illustrations of far more concentrated and systematic efforts to crush political dissent and religious freedom, we note with dismay the "ecumenical appeasement" and "zone of silence" which has prevented open and candid discussions of such general and specific communist violations in the meetings of the World Council of Churches, particularly the lack of balance in the World Council and many of its constituent bodies which note the wrongs in, and perpetrated by, the West, while being conciliatory or silent as to the questions of human rights and religious freedom in communist dominated areas. The problem of the persecution of peaceful religious and political dissenters in our time ought to be raised in all such international meetings where it is possible to speak to those states which are responsible for that persecution. We, especially, mention here the refusal of the World Council of Churches Fifth Assembly at Nairobi, Kenya, in October, 1975, which refused officially to respond to the appeal of the Reverend Gleb Yakunin and the Historian Lev Regelson of the USSR which concerned such persecution in the Soviet Union.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting at Kansas City in October, 1977, call attention to the violation of religious freedom and human rights in communist dominated areas, particularly those communist states which ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and even more specifically, those communist states which are signatories of the Final Act of the Helsinki Agreement i.e., the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the Polish People's Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Hungarian People's Republic, the Socialist Republic of Rumania, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic, and asks these states to observe fully basic human rights which their own constitutions also guarantee, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that these same countries be called upon to cease financial, vocational, educational and other forms of discrimination, the separation of families, arrest and prison terms to peaceful believers and political dissenters, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that believers and political dissenters be allowed to live in accord with their cultural and religious heritages freely and openly, including the right to publish devotional literature and have contact with coreligionists abroad, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be sent to the United Nations' Ambassadors of the above listed countries which are signatories of the Helsinki Agreement and to those same countries' Ambassadors to the United States, and a copy also sent to the President of the United States, the Secretary of State of the United States, to the United States' Ambassador to the United Nations, and to the World Council of Churches, to Dr Philip Potter, General Secretary, Geneva, Switzerland

University Christian Church  
Normal, Illinois

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The General Board recommends that Resolution No 7745 be disapproved for the following reasons 1) the language of the resolution appears to be argumentative and, at points, inaccurate, 2) the content of Resolutions No 7725 and No 7726 is similar to No 7745 in respect to human rights, 3) the General Board disagrees with the characterization of the World Council of Churches as appeasing and silent upon human rights issues, believing that ample evidence exists illustrating significant and strong advocacy by the World Council on behalf of human rights in regard to both Communist and non-Communist nations, and 4) the interpretation of the actions of the Nairobi Assembly is considered to be an inaccurate portrayal of that meeting (Debate time 24 minutes)



February, 1977

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Insensitivity to matters of profound Jewish concern by the National Council of Churches since the Six-Day War in 1967, but especially since the 1973 surprise attack by Egypt and Syria, have deeply troubled many American Jews and sympathetic Christians. The insensitivity of the NCC is manifest in its recent failure to provide moral leadership in the case of Archbishop Valerian Trifa, who has served on the Council's Governing Board, and in continuing evidence of pro-Arab, anti-Israel bias with respect to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

This memorandum summarizes evidence of disturbing NCC activities since the 1973 Yom Kippur War. It does not include similar evidence of NCC insensitivity prior to 1973 -- for example, the NCC public statement concerning the 1967 Six-Day War, other Council declarations on the Middle East, or the speech delivered at the 1972 NCC Triennial General Assembly by Imamu Amari Baraka, the well-known anti-Semite also known as LeRoi Jones. The latter incident caused the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, an "invited observer," to withdraw from attendance at the meeting and to issue a public statement indicating the reasons for its withdrawal.

I. MIDDLE EAST CONCERNS

(a) "Resolution concerning the Middle East," October 15, 1973

In the face of the surprise attack by Egypt and Syria on Israel while they were at prayer on the Day of Atonement, the NCC totally failed to voice any moral condemnation of the Arab attack on Israel. Moreover, in the face of a massive Soviet airlift of arms to the Arab aggressors, and in the face of a desperate Israeli need for U.S. arms resupply, an NCC statement was issued in which the General Board called on the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. "to effect an immediate mutual cessation of arms shipments and other military assistance, either directly or indirectly, to the belligerents." Since NCC resolutions carry no weight in Moscow, this was tantamount to a call for a ban on arms resupply to Israel alone.

Furthermore, an amendment to the October 15, 1973 NCC resolution "supporting the need for Israel to defend its right to exist" was overwhelmingly voted down. With respect to the NCC resolution, the chairman of the Council's committee on reference and counsel denied that it amounted to a call for a unilateral arms embargo against Israel, and he referred to Israel's battle for survival, then in progress, as merely one of many "isolated instances" about which the NCC refrains from passing judgment.

(b) "SWASIA" and its Co-Editor, Norton Mezvinsky

The weekly publication "SWASIA" is produced by the Middle East and Europe Working Group (MEEWG) of the Division of Overseas Ministries of the NCC. "SWASIA" is a pro-Arab propaganda organ. Its pro-Arab and pro-Palestinian thrust is achieved through careful selection of items published. Items from the Arabic press preponderantly reflect official Arab and PLO viewpoints. Items from the Israeli press tend to reflect unfavorably on Israel and Israeli policy. "SWASIA" downplays mainstream Israeli opinion, except for items selected to convey an impression of Israeli rigidity or intransigence in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and instead carries material that predominantly reflects the views of small splinter groups and parties critical of Israeli policy as too rigid.

By its very nature, "SWASIA" is the product of selectivity and inevitably reflects the judgment and the biases of the editors who select articles for reprint or inclusion in summaries. Such a publication requires strict objectivity if it is to be anything more than a propaganda organ.

The NCC has chosen Dr. Norton Mezvinsky, long a Jewish anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian activist, as an editor of "SWASIA." Such a choice not only calls into question the objectivity of the publication but reflects callous insensitivity on the part of the NCC. The NCC's "SWASIA" can lay no claim to objectivity with Dr. Mezvinsky as co-editor. His selection -- and his continuing as co-editor of "SWASIA" -- can only be regarded as a deliberate affront to the Jewish community.

(c) "SWASIA's" Cooperative Relationship with MERIP

Evidence of the pro-Arab, pro-PLO bias of "SWASIA" and those in the NCC's Middle East and Europe Working Group responsible for it can be found in a June, 1975, "Dear SWASIA Reader" letter circulated by the Middle East Research and Information Project. MERIP is a New Left, pro-PLO organization run by "collectives" in Washington, D.C., and Cambridge, Mass. The fact that "SWASIA's" list of subscribers was apparently made available to MERIP for its solicitation in June, 1975, is indicative of a cooperative relationship between the two pro-Arab and pro-PLO operations.

(d) "SWASIA" Article Defaming the ADL, June 6, 1975

"SWASIA" published an unfriendly, if not defamatory, article about the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith in its June 6, 1975 issue, entitled "Sorry, the Event was Cancelled." The article, translated from the Israeli publication "Haolam Hazeh" of April 23, 1975, purported to give the inside story of why several Israeli lecturers on the Middle East, visiting in the United States, "were mysteriously cancelled at the last minute" and included a section, referring to the ADL, captioned "Jewish KGB". It asserted that "...the organization responsible for such tasks bears the innocent name of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) ..."

This article was obviously selected by the editors of "SWASIA" from hundreds of available items that had appeared in the Israeli press during a period of approximately six weeks. It is noteworthy that the page of the "SWASIA" issue



which carried the offensive item contained a boxed "Note" indicating that "translations published in SWASIA are chosen to reflect significant and representative opinions among the people of Southwest Asia and North Africa" and that "nothing in the translations or in SWASIA's news summaries should be construed as representing the opinions of the National Council of Churches or the editors." An examination of other issues of "SWASIA" indicates that this demurrer was unusual before that issue -- and since.

After ADL conveyed its displeasure to NCC staff members, the August 1, 1975 issue of "SWASIA" published an "Addendum" which failed to retract or apologize to the ADL for the inaccurate and insulting item published in the June 6th issue. The ADL subsequently wrote formally to Dr. Claire Randall, General Secretary of the NCC, requesting that "SWASIA" publish an apology. Dr. Randall's response reflected no readiness whatsoever to accede to the ADL's request. She claimed that "SWASIA's" "Addendum," -- which merely stated that the offending item was "inaccurate," and in fact repeated the anti-ADL slur -- constituted a "retraction" that was "adequate." The ADL did not agree that terming an unfriendly slur "inaccurate" was adequate retraction, let alone an apology.

(e) "SWASIA" Articles about the "Koenig Memorandum"

"SWASIA's" pro-Arab approach to Middle East concerns was recently illustrated in its handling of articles and items about the so-called "Koenig Memorandum," written by an Israeli civil servant concerning proposed policies toward Israeli Arabs, which Prime Minister Rabin said in no way reflected official Israeli government policy. Beginning with its September 17, 1976 issue, "SWASIA" played up the subject, ultimately devoting the entire issue of October 15, 1976 to it. Indeed, "SWASIA" reprinted the entire memorandum.

The ADL wrote to Dr. Randall indicating that publication of the "Koenig Memorandum" by "SWASIA" represented a "cheap shot" at Israel and was "deliberate and dishonest" in failing to set the story in perspective. Dr. Randall responded that she was informed by Mr. Richard Butler, MEEWG's Director, that "SWASIA's" handling of the story was "deliberate" but that the "deliberateness was not of the variety" suggested by the ADL. ADL in turn replied that Butler's comments simply confirmed that "SWASIA" reflects the bias of the people who edit it.

(f) "SWASIA" Article Defaming American Jews, December 17, 1976

"SWASIA's" distortion of the Middle East conflict was further illustrated in its selection and publication on December 17, 1976, of an editorial defaming American Jews entitled "What Do We Expect From America" taken from "Al-Quds," an East Jerusalem Arabic language paper. The editorial stated in part. "We expect the United States to stand firm against the American Jews, and to demand that they be loyal in everything to the American flag first." Not only does such a statement transmit Arab propaganda at its most blatant but it maliciously calls into question the loyalty of American Jews to the United States -- a theme promoted for decades by the most vicious Jew-baiters in the U.S. and elsewhere around the world.



(g) The MEEWG and the Office on Christian-Jewish Relations

In contrast to the extremely modest budget and program of the Office on Christian-Jewish Relations, the NCC's Middle East and Europe Working Group, a new incarnation of earlier departments dealing principally with the Middle East within the framework of the National Council's Division of Overseas Ministries, was expanded. Although parallel grants presupposed an even-handed operation and equality of priorities, the Office on Christian-Jewish Relations has barely scraped by the past three years while, in contrast, the "part time" field representative of the MEEWG has traveled coast to coast, setting up seminars on the Middle East, some of which have not fairly presented Israel's case or the concerns of American Jews for Israel's survival as an independent Jewish State, legally and morally entitled to recognition by the Arabs and to live in peace.

(h) MEEWG Seminars, Publication and Materials

Some of the seminars conducted by the MEEWG around the country have been decidedly one-sided in their pro-Arab content, creating an atmosphere of hopelessness about any Middle East solution in which Israel would continue to exist as an independent, recognized Jewish State -- the very opposite of reconciliation, the claimed purpose of the seminars. Moreover, "Middle East Briefing," a 16-page tabloid issued by the MEEWG early in 1975, was heavily weighted on the Arab/Palestinian side, despite a few articles friendly, or even-handed, with respect to Israel. The bias of "Middle East Briefing" was evident in a listing of suggested books, films and periodicals it carried that was weighted in favor of pro-Palestinian materials. Especially one-sided was a list of recommended periodicals. In addition, a poem by an Israeli included in the material reflected a harsh and bloodthirsty attitude toward Arabs.

On another occasion in 1975, a portfolio of articles and newspaper stories on the Middle East was distributed by the MEEWG with a preponderant number of items hostile to the Israeli position. In addition, the MEEWG has extended invitations to guest speakers from the Middle East to address NCC staff, and these speakers have invariably represented pro-Arab, pro-PLO viewpoints. Prominent in the participation of these meetings have been several officials of pro-PLO organizations which have offices in the Interchurch Center building. One such group, Americans for Middle East Understanding (AMEU) has used material from "SWASIA" to supplement material it publishes in its own pro-Arab, pro-PLO publication, "Link," which, at one time, also offered to supply its readers with additional copies of "Middle East Briefing." (AMEU, formed after the Six-Day War, has received substantial funding from the Arabian-American Oil Co. [ARAMCO] and other major oil firms.)

(1) NCC "Middle East Working Forum," April, 1975

In December, 1974, Dr. Randall was directed by the Executive Committee of the NCC to convene a forum on the Middle East "where ecumenical and denominational concerns may be explored and objectives pursued within a 'total strategy'". The forum was held in mid-April, 1975 at the Mt. Augustine Retreat Center in Staten Island, N.Y. Some 50 persons attended. With the exception of a few voices calling for sympathetic understanding of Jewish concerns and the State of Israel,



the tone of the meeting was strongly pro-PLO, and those who attended included a noticeable admixture of pro-Arab and pro-PLO activists. The seminar participants heard fulminations against Israel, and attempts were made to smother any dissenting pro-Israel viewpoints.

As a result, this seminar recommended that, as of January 1, 1976, the National Council of Churches set up a special office in Washington, D.C., to "effect lobbying and distribute information." While this proposal has apparently not yet been implemented, the plan for a pro-Arab, pro-PLO lobbying office symbolizes the present NCC trend and the pro-Arab, pro-PLO direction which NCC and denominational staff dealing with Middle East matters have been taking.

(j) MEEWG Director Joins ANERA Board of Directors

The pro-Arab, pro-PLO direction being taken by the NCC and its denominational staff is still further illustrated by the 1976 election of Richard Butler to the Board of Directors of American Near East Refugee Aid, Inc. (ANERA). Mr Butler is Director for the MEEWG of the NCC's Division of Overseas Ministries, and he is responsible for "SWASIA". The Washington, D.C.-based ANERA, despite its declared role as a charitable and educational organization, has had a propaganda impact on the American scene with respect to the Middle East through its ongoing efforts to raise funds for the Arab Palestinians. In March, 1974, the respected "Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report" named ANERA as part of the "Arab lobby" in the U.S.

(k) MEEWG Director Promotes Quaker-Sponsored Conference

A December 2, 1976 "Dear Friend" letter from the American Friends Service Committee, Inc., promoted and encouraged participation in a Quaker-sponsored pro-Arab, pro-PLO conference set for mid-February, 1977, which was scheduled to be addressed, among others, by Sabri Jiryis, a top PLO official. (In the Fall of 1976, Jiryis was ordered to leave the U.S. for possession of a fraudulent passport.) The AFSC letter indicated that Richard Butler and others called by him to a meeting at the National Council of Churches had consented to urge "key Middle East people across the country" to promote the Quaker-sponsored conference, and to share with the AFSC "the names of those people." Moreover, an AFSC promotional brochure for its scheduled meeting, entitled "The New Imperative For Israeli-Palestinian Peace A Learning and Organizing Conference on the U.S. and the Middle East," listed Butler as a participant, and identified him as an NCC official.

(l) NCC Middle East Studies

The November 22, 1976 issue of "Action," a publication of the Action Committee on American-Arab Relations, headed by Mohammed Mehdi, a long-time spokesman in the U.S. for the Arab cause, stated that, following a plea by Frank Maria, a pro-Arab activist on the Governing Board of the NCC, the Council's Executive Committee voted to request that work begin on two studies. "The first," said "Action," "was a study of the violations of human rights and international law by Israel within Israel and in the occupied territories, and the second was a study of the detrimental influence of the unresolved Arab/Israel conflict on church and society in the U.S.A." "Action" added that the study of violations of human rights had been enlarged "to include besides Israel and the Israeli occupied Arab territories, Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon which border on Israel." No other Arab countries, however, were included.



## II. THE TRIFA CASE

For several years prior to October, 1976, when the matter was forcefully brought to its attention, the National Council of Churches failed to come to grips with the moral challenge confronting it by the membership on its Governing Board of Archbishop Trifa of the Orthodox Church in America. Trifa allegedly took part in atrocities against Jews and Christians in Rumania during World War II as a member of the Iron Guard, the green-shirted combat arm of the Legion of the Archangel Michael, a mystical Rumanian Fascist movement. Despite protests, the NCC failed to expel or suspend Trifa from its Governing Board.

In October, 1976, Jewish youths protested Trifa's membership on the NCC Governing Board. As a result, the Governing Board referred the matter to its credentials committee. They held that Trifa was a member in good standing of the Orthodox Church in America and that his church had selected him to represent them on the Governing Board. Dr. Randall noted that the NCC constitution did not permit the Board to expel a member. She added that even if it did she could not believe that the Board "would do so on the kind of undocumented charges" against Trifa that "they actually had before them".

One week later, coincidental with another non-violent protest by Jewish youths at the NCC headquarters in New York to protest the Council's refusal to oust Trifa, NCC President William P. Thompson stated that charges against Trifa had been investigated twice by U.S. immigration authorities and twice by Trifa's Orthodox Church and that the charges had "not been substantiated". He added that the NCC was "not a court" and that the Board did not have the authority to unseat Trifa.

The NCC's apparent abdication of its moral responsibility did not go unnoticed in the Christian community. The Committee on Christian Unity of the Reformed Church in America (RCA), for instance, publicly criticized the NCC Board's response to the protests against Trifa and his continued membership on its Board. The RCA committee called the NCC Board's position "spiritually and morally untenable." In addition, the RCA committee criticized the Governing Board for its failure to undertake a full investigation of the facts concerning Trifa.

On October 20, 1976, the NCC's top staff cabinet met in New York with the Jewish protesters to consider the Trifa matter and after an eight-hour meeting urged that an emergency meeting of the Executive Committee of the NCC Board be held as soon as possible. The senior staff cabinet said that, in its opinion, "the allegations against Archbishop Valerian Trifa are so serious that the moral responsibility of the Council is being challenged."

The resulting special session of the NCC Executive Committee failed once again to come to grips with the profoundly moral issue posed by the membership on its Board of Trifa. The Committee proposed that Trifa be asked to suspend himself as a member of the Board pending the disposition of the charges against him, and that an Orthodox Church committee be appointed to study the case.

With the OCA committee subsequently set up to fact-find the charges against Trifa not anticipating completion of its work before March, 1977, the NCC requested a "progress report" for its February 4, 1977 Executive Committee meeting. At that meeting, Father Leonid Kishkovsky, representative of the Orthodox Church, announced that "in view of the atmosphere surrounding the case and person of Archbishop Trifa in the National Council of Churches," the Archbishop would "not take part in the Council's work nor attend meetings of the Governing Board until further notice."



A statement issued at the same time by the Executive Committee of the NCC accepted "the assurance of the Orthodox Church in America that Archbishop Valerian Trifa will not function as a member of the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches during the investigation now being conducted by the Orthodox Church in America and by the investigation connected with the litigation in the United States courts." The NCC statement added "Indeed, it is our conviction that he should not do so because of the serious moral implications of the allegations against him."

Thus, as the New York "Times" reported, the Orthodox Church "in effect" suspended Trifa from the Governing Board of the NCC. Trifa said he did not consider himself suspended but would comply with the "wishes of my church," according to the "Times." The Religious News Service stated that Father Kishkovsky and the NCC executives stressed to newsmen that they were not describing the action taken as a suspension of Archbishop Trifa. NCC President William P. Thompson added, however, that he considered "the practical effect of the action to be identical with what might have happened if the word 'suspension' had been used "

Despite the foregoing, however, the fact remains that the National Council of Churches failed to demonstrate moral leadership in the Trifa case and reacted only when outside pressure made its previous position no longer tenable





THE OFFICE ON  
**CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS**  
OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

March 29, 1977

Dear Friend,

The Synagogue Council of America and the National Council of Churches have joined in sponsoring *Interfaith Forum*, a series of bimonthly discussions on major issues in interfaith relations. We hope that this new project will prove to be an important development in Jewish-Christian sharing.

We are inviting a limited number of religious leaders active in synagogue and church life, professional and lay, and academicians with an interest in this field, to become "members" of the Forum.

We invite you to attend the second meeting of *Interfaith Forum*, Thursday May 19, at the National Council of Churches.

The theme of this second session will be *The Holocaust Jewish and Christian Religious Responses*. Following a light luncheon, Professor Irving Greenberg and the Reverend William H. Harter will briefly address the topic. A discussion among the participants will follow.

We look forward to your participation with us. An envelope is provided for you to send back your acceptance of this invitation.

Sincerely,

*William L. Weiler*

Dr. William I. Weiler  
Office on Christian-Jewish Relations  
National Council of Churches

*Mordecai Waxman*

Rabbi Mordecai Waxman  
Committee on Interreligious Affairs  
Synagogue Council of America



The Office on Christian-Jewish Relations  
475 Riverside Drive, Room 872  
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Tel (212) 870-2229





THE OFFICE ON  
**CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS**  
OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

February 1977

- Feb. 3-21     *Middle East Study Mission, National Council of Churches/CORLE and American Jewish Committee*
- Mon., Feb. 7     *Advisory Committee Meeting, Office on Christian-Jewish Relations NCC, New York, 10:00 - 3:00*
- Feb. 14-17     *National Workshop on Christian Unity  
Mutuality in Christian Unity, Pittsburgh*
- Feb. 14-24     *First Jerusalem Conference of Christians and Israelis*
- Wed., Feb. 16     *The Book of Ruth: Textual Analysis  
Jewish-Christian Bible Study, Columbia University, 4:30-6:30*
- Feb. 16-18     *2nd Philadelphia Conference on the Holocaust  
Humanizing America A Post-Holocaust Imperative*
- Feb. 21-24     *ADL Princeton Academic Seminar on Judaism  
Princeton Theological Seminary*

March 1977

- Wed., Mar. 2     *NCC/SCA Bi-monthly Discussion Group  
Synagogue Council of America, New York, 12:30-3:30*
- Wed., Mar. 2     *The Book of Ruth: Two Women in a Man's World  
Columbia University, 4:30-6:30*
- Thu., Mar. 3     *Purim begins at sundown.*
- Mar. 6-8     *Annual Scholar's Conference on the Church Struggle and the Holocaust, Loew's Summit Hotel, New York*
- Mar. 7-28     *Middle East Study Visit, National Council of Churches*
- Tue., Mar. 8     *The Book of Ruth The Later Use of Ruth in Art  
Columbia University, 4:30-6:30*
- Tue., Mar. 29     *Music of Passover, with Cantor Tilman of Jewish Theological Seminary, National Council of Churches, 12:00-12:30*



The Office on Christian-Jewish Relations  
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April 1977

Sat., Apr. 2 *Passover begins at sundown.*  
Fri., Apr. 8 *Good Friday*  
Sun., Apr. 10 *Easter Sunday*  
Fri., Apr. 15 *Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Day)*  
Fri., Apr. 15 *Visit of Father Cornelius Rijk, NCC, 12:00*  
Apr. 19-21 *Living Together in an Age of Pluralism*  
*National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations, Detroit*  
*Rabbi Jakob Petuchowski and Bishop John Burt*  
Thu., Apr. 21 *Observance of Israeli Independence Day*  
Sat., Apr. 23 *Israel Study Group, New York*

May 1977

Sun., May 1 *Solidarity Sunday for Soviet Jewry*  
May 2-5 *NCC Executive Committee and Governing Board Meeting*  
May 3-4 *Bases and Boundaries of the Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogues*  
*Graymoor Ecumenical Institute, Graymoor Center, Garrison, New York*  
Sun., May 8 *Exploration of Williamsburg, New York*  
*Advisory Committee, Office on Christian-Jewish Relations*  
*Professor Michael Wyschogrod*  
Mon., May 9 *Advisory Committee Meeting, Office on Christian-Jewish Relations*  
*NCC, New York, 10:00-3:00*  
May 15-17 *National Conference of Christians and Jews*  
*Interreligious Conference, Philadelphia*  
Thu., May 19 *NCC/SCA Bi-monthly Discussion Group*  
*National Council of Churches, 12:30-3:30*  
Sun., May 22 *Shavuot (Jewish Pentecost) begins at sundown.*  
May 25-Jun. 15 *Annual Middle East Trip, Seton Hall University,*  
*London, Dachau, Israel*

June 1977

Jun. 1-10 *ADL Vanderbilt Graduate Summer Institute on Judaism*  
*Vanderbilt Divinity School, Nashville, Tennessee*  
Jun. 8-12 *West German Church Assembly (Kirchentag), Berlin*  
Jun. 20-23 *Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People*  
*World Council of Churches, Jerusalem*





THE OFFICE ON  
**CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS**  
OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

invites you to take part



Tuesday, April 5 at 12 noon

8th Floor Conference Room, 475 Riverside Drive

Father Marcel DuBois

Professor of Philosophy at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem  
*Judaism and Israel according to Christian Theology*

Father DuBois, a Dominican from France, now a citizen of Israel, is a frequent lecturer at Ecole Biblique and the Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem.

Bring your lunch. Coffee will be served.



Friday, April 15 at 12 noon

Holocaust Remembrance Service

Interchurch Chapel, First Floor, 475 Riverside Drive

An interfaith service will commemorate the destruction of European Jewry during the Nazi Holocaust.

After the service, Father Cornelius Rijk  
Former director of the Vatican Office for Catholic-Jewish Relations,  
presently director of the International Judaeo-Christian Documentation  
Service, Rome, will address the group.



Solidarity Sunday, May 1 at 11:00 a.m.

Join with the *Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry* in a demonstration of solidarity with the Jews of the Soviet Union.

Meet at 11 a.m. on Broadway between Vesey and Fulton Streets for the march to Battery Park and the rally which follows.



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OFFICE ON CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A.

Meeting of the Advisory Committee  
February 7, 1977 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
475 Riverside Drive Fifth Floor Conference Room

*Agenda*

- I Welcome to the meeting by Isaac Rottenberg
- II Words of Torah, William Weiler
- III Report of the Director, William Weiler
- IV Calendar of Events
- V Minutes of the previous meeting, November 1, 1976
- VI Old Business
- VII New Business
- VIII Lunch and Discussion
- IX Adjournment

Next meeting. Monday, May 9, 1977, 10:00 to 3:00

*Those attending*

Cynthia Bronson  
~~Richard Butler~~ (morning session)  
Peter Day (morning session)  
Rachel Davis DuBois  
Eva Fleischn̄er  
William Harter  
Mary Ellen Philbin (for Howard Schomer)  
Ruth Prudente (for Robert Huston)  
Claire Randall (afternoon session)  
Isaac Rottenberg  
James Rudin (guest, afternoon session)  
Landrum Shields  
Robert Torb̄t  
Ann Patrick Ware  
William Weiler  
Michael Wyschogrod (guest, afternoon session)

*Those absent*

~~Edward Flannery~~  
~~Robert Huston~~  
Howard Schomer  
John Sheerin  
Robert L. Turnipseed



Next Advisory Committee Meeting:

Monday, May 9, 1977  
8th Floor Conference Room  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

OFFICE ON CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Minutes of the meeting of February 7, 1977

The meeting was opened at 10:15 by Isaac Rottenberg, who led the group in prayer. William Weiler then introduced Mary Ellen Philbin, who was attending in place of Howard Schomer, and Ruth Prudente, who represented Robert Huston.

*Words of Torah* followed, during which Dr. Weiler introduced the members to Nahum ben Gimzo, who was led upon numerous occasions to declare, "Gam zo letova!", "Even this is for the good!", sometimes to the surprise of his listeners.

With the consent of the Chairman, Dr. Weiler then continued with the Report of the Director, placing the minutes and calendar of events further ahead on the agenda.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

1. Study of Human Rights in the Middle East

At its last meeting on November 1, 1976, the Advisory Committee made two resolutions in connection with the NCC Executive Committee's request that the OCJR and the DOM Middle East Committee conduct a study of alleged violations of human rights in the Middle East (Minutes of November 1, 1976, p.2 and 3). As resolved, the director conferred with Mr. Richard Butler of the Middle East Committee. Mr. Butler presented a report to the Executive Committee at its February 4 meeting which raised questions about the advisability and practicality of such a study. The Executive Committee accepted the report and requested that a summary of existing studies and a bibliography be made available for further information and consideration of the question.

2. Funding of the OCJR for 1977-78

Funding from three denominations for the first time (ABC, UCC, UPUSA), as well as increased pledges from the United Methodist Church and the Episcopal Church and a grant from the Aquinas Foundation for the National Workshop in April, will enable the Office to continue through 1977. The director stressed, however, that the financial crisis of the Office was far from over; without increased funding for 1978, the view is dismal.

3. Program Activities of the Office

The director outlined recent and forthcoming activities of the Office (saving the activities connected with the Trifa issue for a later section of the report). The Overseas Ministries Study Center Seminar, *Christians and Jews Sharing Their Faith and Traditions*, which took place Jan. 17-21, received national advertising and drew an average of 22 participants over



the week. Brochures are now in preparation for the National Workshop, April 19-21. The Aquinas Foundation of New York has awarded the Office a grant of \$1000.00 for this event. The Office will participate in the planning for the 1979-80 Friendship Press theme, *Middle East Mosaic*. The December issue of *Engage/Social Action* contained a bibliography prepared by the director, whose help was sought also in coordinating the *E/SA Forum* which focussed on Christian-Jewish Relations.

#### 4. Developments in the Issue Involving Archbishop Valerian Trifa

Throughout the months in which this issue has loomed so large, the Office has engaged in continuing communication with constituency, staff, the Jewish community, and the public at large, through information mailings, letters, telephone calls, and personal visits. The Office has convened a number of meetings initiated by leaders in the Jewish community who wished to meet with NCC leadership for clarification of the Trifa affair: with the Synagogue Council in November and February, and with the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council in December. Informal meetings have taken place with leaders of the Orthodox Church in America and others. The Office served in the management of conflict on two occasions when members of Concerned Jewish Youth visited the Interchurch Center: on December 16 for a rally outside the building, and on January 24 for a memorial service in the first floor lounge. These visits were taken seriously, with regard both for protecting life, limb, and property, and for giving the visitors a hearing. There were no arrests, though police were notified and present on both occasions. There was on-going communication, direct and indirect, with Concerned Jewish Youth in order to convey information, dispel false reports, and maintain a level of trust which served to diffuse tempers. A final aspect of the work of the Office throughout these months has been to assist the President and General Secretary in planning strategy which would move the issue to resolution.

#### 5. Prospects for the Future

The director noted that with the pressures of the crisis situation, program planning and the exploration for funding had suffered. These will necessarily be priorities in the future work of the Office. As a result of the Trifa crisis, the need for Christian-Jewish relations in the form of ongoing exchange is seen more clearly by some. There is hope for a wider spectrum of Christian cooperation, particularly among Orthodox Christians. There is need for continuing and further cultivation of leadership; though the crisis experience may have helped some to see the need for Christian-Jewish relations in a new light, it also revealed again that much lack of understanding and empathy remains. The overnight retreat being planned with the Synagogue Council of America is an effort to meet this problem. The need to cooperate with other agencies in the field of Christian-Jewish relations is also present.

The director outlined the plans for programs with the Synagogue Council of America. These include a bimonthly discussion group Interfaith Forum for staff workers, pastors, lay persons and academicians in the New York area to discuss issues of common concern. The first meeting will be held on March 2 at the SCA. The second, on May 19, will be at the NCC. Also underway is the *New York Rainbow Group*, a bimonthly gathering of Christian and Jewish scholars in the New York area to be patterned after the



Jerusalem Rainbow Group. A planning team is now at work preparing the first of these sessions for October 1977. The third common project is an overnight retreat for about 30 policymakers from both communities. Designed to be an experience of sharing in a warm and relaxed atmosphere, this will take place at Seabury House in Greenwich, Connecticut, October 30 and 31, 1977.

In response to the director's report, the Committee noted its concern that the necessary groundwork take place so that the programs planned with the Synagogue Council are not attended only by those whose concern and sympathy for Christian-Jewish sharing is already evident. Discussion revealed a strong feeling that commitments from people must be secured soon in order to capitalize on the heightened awareness of recent months.

The chairman reiterated the point that there is substantial opportunity now for honest and more open dialogue with the Jewish community, and that this opportunity must not be lost.

## AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dick Butler reported on plans for the NCC Middle East Study Tour, March 7-28. He hoped for participation from members of the Committee or others known to them. The plan of the trip is to keep a continual check on the perspectives on the Middle East brought by the travelers and developed along the way, in hope that the trip experience will enable participants to become reconciling forces.

William Harter reported on the progress of the First Conference of Christians and Israelis, scheduled for Feb. 14-28, noting that it would be the first conference to focus on the theological meaning of the state of Israel.

Ann Patrick Ware noted that May 1 is Solidarity Sunday for Soviet Jewry, and that it should appear on the OCJR Calendar of Events. She also suggested that the Office plan a commemorative service for Yom Hashoah on April 15.

The Committee discussed the trip to Williamsburg planned for Sunday, May 8. It was felt that rental of a bus was not necessary. Also, if spouses or friends of members wished to come along, there would be no problem as long as the group did not become too large.

## MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of November 1 were approved.

Dick Butler, who had not been present when the subject arose earlier in the meeting, spoke about the Middle East Human Rights Study requested by the Executive Committee at its October 7 meeting. He reviewed the steps that had been taken so far, and interpreted the action of the Executive Committee. He stressed the value of careful study before any resolutions are made by the body. He and William Weiler will continue to work together to prepare the documentation requested for the May Executive Committee meeting.

## OLD BUSINESS

Rachel DuBois reported that the National Conference of Christians and Jews was planning to implement the Grass Roots Dialogue Project which she had designed and directed. The Committee then resolved that:

Members of the Advisory Committee of the Office on Christian-Jewish Relations deeply appreciate the implementation by the National Conference of Christians and Jews of the Grass Roots Project on Interfaith Relationships, a pilot project under the direction of Dr. Rachel Davis DuBois.

The Director reported that the proposed change in the NCC By-Laws to include the Office on Christian-Jewish Relations has met with the approval of the General Secretary, who noted that the Washington Office was also not included in the By-Laws and ought to be. She has directed the proposal back to the Office of Research, Evaluation and Planning for proper wording.

The Committee then discussed how to present the proposal to the Governing Board. An Patrick Ware reminded the members of the work of the Theological Task Force, which had already suggested that a theological presentation be made in connection with the By-Laws change. Now, particularly, was an opportunity for consciousness raising at the Governing Board. All agreed on the urgency of bringing it before the Governing Board session in May. The question was raised as to what would happen if the proposal did not pass. It was suggested that the proposal be taken first to the Executive Committee; if they gave it even an informal blessing, it would help a great deal at the Plenum. The Chairman made clear his willingness to work on strategy, familiarize himself with the procedures, and make the presentation to the Governing Board.

This topic raised questions about the funding of the Office. What would such a change imply about the funds available from the NCC? Would contributions to the OCJR then be counted as contributions to the General Program Budget of the NCC?

The Theological Task Force agreed to meet on February 28 at 1 p.m. in Isaac Rottenberg's office to discuss these questions further.

## NEW BUSINESS

Noting the projected plans for dialogue with the Synagogue Council of America, members of the Committee expressed concern about the sensitivity of other long-time dialogue partners. Again, the question arose about how the Office and the Committee ought to relate to the Jewish community. Even the appearance of seeming to choose with whom the OCJR or NCC wishes to speak must be avoided, but how can this be done without guidance from the Jewish community itself? The Committee agreed that a letter sent to institutional partners to assure the continuing interest and appreciation of the OCJR would be helpful.



Some discussion followed about freeing more meeting time for the exploration of questions which impinge deeply on the future directions of the Office. Members requested that more material be sent in advance of the meeting so that time could be saved for other agenda topics.

#### LUNCH AND DISCUSSION

James Rudin and Michael Wyschogrod joined the Committee for lunch and the discussion which followed. Rabbi Rudin noted that the events and issues surrounding Archbishop Trifa's presence had raised the NCC's sensitivities to the Holocaust, and that more needed to be done in this area. Professor Wyschogrod felt that the reaction of the Jewish community over the past few months revealed that their expectations of the Council had actually risen; the expressions of outrage were an indication of increased trust and hope. An informal discussion flowed from these statements, which touched on many areas where dialogue is needed between the two communities.

Robert Torbet posed to the guests the question of how the NCC, itself a pluralistic body, can enter into dialogue with the Jewish community without seeming to determine for itself who the Jewish partners are. He suggested that discussion of this question might be appropriate as a future agenda item. Michael Wyschogrod suggested that a written portrait of the Jewish community could be developed for further understanding.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Advisory Committee is scheduled for May 9, 1977, from 10 00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Eighth Floor Conference Room.



THE OFFICE ON  
**CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS**  
OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

February 14, 1977

Dear Friend,

The National Council of Churches and the Synagogue Council of America have joined in sponsoring *Interfaith Forum*, a series of bimonthly discussions on major issues in interfaith relations. We hope that this new project will prove to be an important development in Christian-Jewish sharing.

We are inviting a limited number of religious leaders active in synagogue and church life, professional and lay, and academicians with an interest in this field, to become "members" of the Forum.

We are writing to invite you to become a member of *Interfaith Forum*, whose first meeting will take place Wednesday, March 2, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., at the Synagogue Council of America, 432 Park Avenue South, New York City.

The theme of the first session will be, *Is Auschwitz the beginning of a new era?* Following a light luncheon, Professors Eva Fleischner and Ismar Schorsch will briefly address the topic. A discussion among the participants will follow.

The second meeting of the *Interfaith Forum* will be held at the National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York City, Thursday May 19 at 12:30.

An envelope is provided for you to send back your acceptance of this invitation.

Sincerely,

*Mordecai Waxman*

Rabbi Mordecai Waxman  
Committee on Interreligious Affairs  
Synagogue Council of America

*William L. Weiler*

Dr. William L. Weiler  
Office on Christian-Jewish Relations  
National Council of Churches



The Office on Christian-Jewish Relations  
475 Riverside Drive, Room 872  
New York, N Y 10027  
Tel (212) 870-2229



# interfaith forum

IS AUSCHWITZ THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA?

An informal discussion led by Professor Eva Fleischner and  
Professor Ismar Schorsch

Wednesday, March 2, 1977  
12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Synagogue Council of America  
432 Park Avenue South, New York City

You are welcome to take part in this informal  
discussion group. Following a light luncheon,  
Professors Fleischner and Schorsch will briefly  
address the topic and lead the participants in  
discussion.

This is the first in a series of  
bimonthly discussions sponsored  
by the National Council of Churches  
and the Synagogue Council of America.

The second meeting of the  
Forum will be held at the  
National Council of Churches,  
Thursday, May 19 at 12:30 p.m.

For information call the NCC (212) 870-2229 or the SCA (212) 686-8670.

Kindly tear off the form below and return it in the envelope provided.

Dear Dr. Weiler,

I look forward to attending the INTERFAITH FORUM at the  
Synagogue Council of America on Wednesday, March 2, beginning  
with the luncheon at 12:30.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

memorandum

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** August 19, 1976  
**to** Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from** Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject**

IMPORTANT

The enclosed is a copy of Canon Jeffrey Cave's sermon of August 15th in which he comes out strongly against the inclusion of the "reproaches" in the new Episcopal Church Prayerbook and Hymnal.

As you know, I supplied him with much of the background material and he has expressed personal thanks to me for the help. We may want to issue a statement welcoming his sermon. What do you think? In any event, it should be done as soon as possible.

Aside from a few inaccuracies - "The Talmud is the Jews' equivalent of The New Testament" it is basically a good sermon and given the setting in which it was delivered, it takes on special importance.

AJR:FM  
Encl.

cc: Brant Coopersmith





From: Washington Cathedral  
Mount Saint Alban  
Washington DC 20016  
Nancy S. Montgomery  
966-3500

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Reverend Canon Jeffrey P. Cave, in a sermon preached today (Sunday, August 15) at Washington Cathedral, issued a strong plea for a modern-day crusade against anti-semitism.

"One can only say that anything which serves to discredit the Jews among followers of Christ is an insult to Jesus," Canon Cave said. He went on to fault the inclusion of the "reproaches" --- an ancient hymn --- in the new Episcopal Church Prayer Book Hymnal to be voted on at the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Minneapolis in September. "The hymn ... is a poem of a dialogue of Jesus with the Jews. 'Dialogue' is a polite word ... it is a harangue against the Jews," Canon Cave said.

In his introduction Canon Cave mentioned the two hundredth anniversary of the death of Francis Salvador, the first Jew to die for this country. He was scalped in an ambush on August 1st, 1776.

The full text of Canon Cave's sermon is enclosed.

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i

## AMERICAN JEWISH

The first Jew to serve in a government of the new world was Francis Salvador, the offspring of a distinguished London family. He became a member of the Second Provincial Congress of South Carolina; and at a difficult time, when the loyalists and the Cherokee Indians had formed an alliance and were pressing in on the revolutionists from the West, and the British were squeezing in from the coast, Francis Salvador became the first Jew to die for the cause of the embryonic nation. In an ambush, he was scalped alive just 200 years and two weeks ago, on August 1st, 1776. A monument to him bears this epitaph:

Born an aristocrat, he became a democrat,  
An Englishman, he cast his lot with America;  
True to his ancient faith, he gave his life  
For new hopes of human liberty and understanding. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Jacob Marcus, The Colonial American Jew, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1970. 3 vols.



A modern novelist, Elie Wiesel, has said:

To be a Jew is to have all the reasons not to have faith in language, in singing, in prayers, and in God, but to go on telling the tale, to go on carrying on the dialogue, and to have one's own silent prayers and quarrel with God.

Above the high altar in this cathedral is a statue of the most famous Jew who ever lived. Looking at the idealized form, one is struck neither by his "Jewishness", nor by his meekness. He appears as the "apocalyptic Christ"--the figure of a rather Byzantine king seated on his throne surrounded by adoring angels and elders of the church. Probably the furthest thing from one's mind when entering into a relationship with the iconography of Jesus--whether the "Christus" of this cathedral church or other pictures that come to mind, including the well-known blonde "YMCA Jesus"--is his ethnic background or his actual manner of life. In most cases his body is that of a Greek athlete, his face more Nordic than Mediterranean, and our associations with the Christian savior, and not with the young Jewish rabbi he was.

The problem for Christians and for Jew is that he is both. And Christians and Jews are often on the brink of hostility, probably always in the quagmire of misunderstanding. The pity is that scorn, usually of Christians for Jews, is the result.

## II

It is difficult to piece together the whole story, in fact it is a jigsaw puzzle with a thousand pieces. But one thing is

unmistakably clear: as the pieces come together, the picture is one of the centuries and centuries of anti-Semitism, beginning scarcely half a century after the crucifixion of Jesus. In fact, much of the problem can be traced to a naive interpretation of the death of Jesus as being the particular responsibility of the Jews-- "all, all, all of them"-- to paraphrase W. H. Auden. Yes, the leaders in Jerusalem were instrumental. Yes, the order was given by the Roman pro-consul. Yes, the young rabbi was not an establishment tycoon. Nor was he a renegade --from his own people or faith, from the Roman super state, certainly not from those who seemed to appreciate his style: the poor, the sick, the ritually impure. What had to be done was done, and Jews were involved. He was, after all, a Jew. The earliest proponents of his cause go to great lengths to document his Jewish pedigree.

But there were Jews all over the inhabited world, and Paul, who had never seen Jesus, used his Jewish credentials whenever he went to get a hearing for the gospel of Jesus. In a curious way, the Christ seemed to be offering his Jewishness as a free gift to gentiles, as God's way with people, and as the people's truest hope. Probably only a handful of the Jews of that time had ever heard of Jesus or Paul, so it is ridiculous to blame anybody, really for the death of Jesus, especially since it seemed that what he was doing in a way was a kind of "spiritual hara-kiri", an act of solidarity with what he thought to be the soul and the life of his people, their covenants



with Yahweh, the God of mercy and justice. He was not, after all, assassinated, or lynched.

A very different sort of crucifixion took place within the memories of many who are here today--the holocaust, or systematic annihilation of some 6,000,000 European Jews during the second world war by Christians, under Hitler. The creation of the state of Israel has been, in part, at least, a reaction to that event and to all that went between the first crucifixion and the second. For many Jews, both the holocaust and Zionism have been a modern day resurrection, no less powerful than the startling consequences to Jesus' death. "He is risen!" "They are risen!"

### III

One or two episodes from the 19 centuries in between will suggest how really ghastly the history of the Jews has been, both in terms of the basic principles of human justice, and in terms of their indispensable and unrelenting faithfulness to the God of their fathers, who as the God of Jesus, is also the God of the Christians.

One only has to turn to William Shakespeare to have one's anti-semitism vindicated, if that is one's particular sport. In the Merchant of Venice, one of the characters is heard to say "certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnate."

Martin Luther, just a few decades before, told the tale of a converted Jew who became the dean of a cathedral. When his will was opened, the blood-thirsty Christians were satisfied that

no permanent change could ever befall a Jew through baptism; for the old dean had ordered a cat and a mouse to be carved upon his gravestone to indicate that a Jew could as little become a Christian as two such beasts become friends. "As surely as the mouse never eats the cat, so surely can the Jew never a true Christian become." What a lovely irony!

The book of Revelation calls the Jewish house of prayer a "synagogue of satan" and through ages mostly dark for the Jews, Christians never forgot that. For a very long while, Christians spread the rumor that Jews used the blood of freshly-killed Christian babies to sweeten the wound of freshly-circumcised Jewish baby boys, and you can imagine the result in catholic medieval Europe--thousands upon thousands of dead Jews--people who had no civil rights at all, all of their peculiarity traced, in the popular<sup>2</sup> mind at least, to the vengeful act they had committed upon the Messiah. Few Christians ever thought that if followed logically such an act would have been an act of the utmost grace, as the whole world was forgiven in the dying breath of the young Jewish prophet.

One can only say that anything which serves to discredit the Jews among followers of Christ is an insult to Jesus the Lord of the Church. The Second Vatican Council's very sweeping condemnation of anti-semitism in 1963 is offset by the total absence in the council documents of any sign of repentance on the part of the largest single body of Christians for the countless despicable acts of violence.

<sup>2</sup>The Devil and the Jews, Joshua Trachtenberg, Yale University Press, 1943.



and human degradation which were countenanced for centuries.

Recently, however, this trend in ecclesiastical pomposity has begun to change. Catholics and protestants alike are calling for a new era of Christian-Jewish relations, based upon a correct reading of history--upon the fact that it is in the dispensation of God, that the Jews have been uniquely called upon, both to suffer, and to hold aloft for all to see, the faith of Jesus himself, uncomplicated by centuries of adaptation, perversion, and schism. The Christian Church, after all, is a house divided against itself many times over. Jews don't agree upon everything either, but a least few of them have not been affected by the new situation which has come about in the past thirty years or so--holocaust and homeland--and have not themselves begun to reassess the vitality of the faith they have continually borne aloft of the God of history who "deals with his people." "Belonging to Israel is in itself a spiritual act. It is utterly inconvenient to be a Jew." (Abraham Heschel)

IV

Both Roman Catholics, and more recently, Episcopalians, have been called upon to reassess their commitment to the "people of Jesus" when a revision of our liturgy, the public worship of the church, has been undertaken. No Christian could complain about a single syllable of Jewish Liturgy, much of which would have been prayers of Jesus, himself. Few Jews on the other hand have cause to rejoice in the faithfulness of Christian worship to a common bible and a common God.

In recent Liturgical revising, the catholics have gotten more protestant, and the protestants have gotten more catholic. For catholics, this has meant the use of the vernacular tongue in the services, a principle Anglicans discovered sometime back in the 16th century. But for protestants, and especially for the Episcopal "bridge church" this period has been characterized by a "Catholicization" of the liturgy. In this we have attempted to bring back into the cycle of daily, weekly, and yearly prayer, much of the great tradition which was ultimately lost at the reformation. At the core of this renewal are the great services of Holy Week, when Christians follow the steps of Jesus through the streets of Jerusalem as he went to the holy city to celebrate the passover with his disciples--all of them Jews. As we all know he was alone on the cross, and the missionary zeal of the apostles afterwards could not make up for their betrayal of him before. Yet, once again, we are faced with the inevitability and necessity of the sacrifice of this one just man.

In the midst of the service for Good Friday now in use in the Roman Churches and presently in trial use in the Episcopal Church, but proposed for inclusion in our next official prayer book is a dramatic hymn called "the reproaches." We have sung the poignantly beautiful music of this hymn on the last two Good Fridays here at Washington Cathedral. The hymn which was lost to us in the sixteenth century is a poem of a dialogue of Jesus with the Jews. "Dialogue" is a polite word. In fact, it is a harangue



against the Jews, a parody of one of the most impressive moments of the Jewish passover ritual. A typical verse of the Jewish hymn reads "If he had brought us forth from Egypt, and had not inflicted judgement upon the Egyptians, it would have been sufficient." This is a celebration of the goodness of God.

The Christian version reads, "Because I led thee forth from the land of Egypt, thou hast prepared a cross for thy savior." This is the root of much Christian guilt and sin and a perversion of the goodness of God.

The New Testament itself is full of words placed upon the lips of Jesus, in all likelihood, words invented by the earliest church to prove its claim that he was the Messiah--the long awaited fulfiller of Hebrew hopes. The prayers of many Christians today, if they are healthy prayers, are conversations with the crucified Jesus, rich in imagination and inventiveness, and fulfilling both for their therapeutic value as well as for the reality they open up for the believing doubter or the doubting believer. Christ is the perennial conversation of God with the deepest darkness and the highest hope of mankind--so this is nothing new. But to place at the heart of the holiest service of the holiest day of the Christian year a hymn which phrase after phrase lambastes the Jews for their unfaithfulness and their cruelty is to reopen a chapter in liturgy and in life which, since the holocaust and the homecoming of Israel, need never be opened again--the insidious persistence of anti-Semitic thoughts and deeds on the part of Christians, the first cousins of

the Jews. Next month, in Minneapolis, when Episcopalians finally reckon with this bit of unfinished business, they should reject it on these grounds, as lovely as the thought or the music may be for personal devotion. The "reproaches" have no part in the Christian liturgy.

The nature of God revealed in Jesus Christ, if we take it seriously, is self-giving love. That love is the very essence of the Jewish law, of which Christians say Jesus was the fulfillment. God, in his kindness, has not put the burden of the law on Christian shoulders. It is still borne by the Jews. Thanks be to God! One hopes that the Jews recognize in their rabbi Jesus a stage in their religious development. One writer said, "in the Jew of Nazareth, God assumes, identifies with, and bears the suffering of this world." (Elie Wiesel) Another said "God participates in the sufferings of men, and man is called to participate in the sufferings of God." (Franklin Sherman)

The Talmud is the Jews' equivalent of the New Testament. It is a collection of writings which began to grow up even before Jesus. In this parable we are reminded of words we have often associated with Jesus. They are the core of Jewish religion and are the reason Christians should both cherish their Jewish neighbors and study their religious and secular history!

"When man appears before the throne of judgement, the first question he is asked is not, 'Have you believed in God?' or 'Have you prayed?' or 'Have you performed the ritual properly?' but 'Have you been honorable and faithful in all your dealings with your fellow man?'"

Thank you, Francis Salvador.