# Preserving American Jewish History

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COPY

## THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Institute of Human Relations

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PARIS OFFICE 30, rue La Boétie

Paris VIII\*

January 28, 1976.

Memorandum

To: Bert Gold

From: Zachariah Shuster

Subj: Jerusalem meetings with the WCC and the Vatican Representatives.

After many prolonged discussions with the appropriate personalities of the World Council of Churches and the Commission for Relations with Jews of the Vatican the plans for the meetings in Jerusalem have taken shape and the general frame and agenda of both these events have been outlined a few days ago.

## WorldaCouncil of Churches

As you know, the proceedings at the Fifth International Assembly of the WCC which took place in Nairobi at the end of 1975 have turned out from our point of view better than could have been foreseen. The resolution on the Middle East clearly speaks out against terrorism and recognizes the right of Israel to live within secure and recognized boundaries. While some criticism can be made of sections of the resolution dealing with the PLO, the resolution as a whole is not so unfavorable as to put under a question mark the fundamental relations between Jewish representatives and the WCC as they have developed in the course of the last five years.

It has been agreed that the meetings with the WCC will begin in Jerusalem on Wednesday, February 25 at 8 pm. The meetings will be held at the Buber Center on Mount Scopus. With regard to the agenda the WCC has proposed that it should consist of the following foursmajor items:

" 1. Discussion on Structure of the future cooperation

closed meeting

2. The use of natural resources in Judeo-Christian Tradition. (Has nature been in an irresponsible way exploited? Must we find a new relationship to nature, use natural resources in a more responsible way?

Introduction by K. Stendahl and L. Vischer

1 . . .

3. The significance of Jewish-Christian relationship since the Bristol Study Paper of 1967 in the light of new documents and in relationship to the Orthodox as well as the Third World Churches. Can we agree on "Guidelines" for Christian-Jewish relations in the WCC and the Jewish Organizations?

Introduction by E. Flesseman-van Leer.

These topics are proposals for further study in the coming years. There should be short introductions (10 min.) to them and a discussion. Then, we can decide which topics we will work on. Other topics might be suggested. The discussion of this Study Program could be partly closed, partly open to guests.

4. Reports on Nairobi by K. Stendahl, L. Vischer and S. Samartha Open for guests

The WCC is now awaiting proposals of Jewish representatives with regard to these items and also our suggestions for including other items in the agenda.

The WCC delegation will consist of the following: Dr. Lukas Vischer, Director of the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC; Dr. S.Samartha Director of the Commission on Dialogue with people of Living Faiths and Ideologies of the WCC; Dr. Franz von Hammerstein, who is in charge of relations with Jews; Professor K. Stendahl, Dean of Harvard Divinity School; and Dr. Ellen Flesseman-van Leer, member of the WCC's Commission on Faith and Order.

The WCC delegation accepted the suggestion to spend the Shabbat following the meeting at a religious kibbutz which will probably be kibbuts Lavi. They also agreed to pay a visit to the Minister of Religion and with Inrael Interfaith Committee. The WCC expressed the desire not to have any publicity about this meeting or with regard to future plans.

# Meeting with the Vatican

As reported previously, the major item on the agenda agreed upon with the Vatican representatives was the presentation of two papers, one from each side, on the obstacles and impediments to developments in Catholic-Jewish relations following Vatican Council II. No other subjects have been suggested as up to now.

The Catholics also agreed to meet with the WCC representatives and the Jewish group at a religious kibbutz on Saturday following the meeting with the WCC.

The meeting with Catholics willbbegin on Tuesday March 2nd and will last three days.

A major change in the composition of the Catholic delegation will be the substitution of Msgr. Charles Moeller, Secretary General of the Secretariat for Christian Unity. Because of a serious illness Msgr. Moeller will not be able to attend the meeting in Jerusalem and his place will be taken by Bishop Ramon Torella Cascante who has become the Vice President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity since Willebradt has been made Archbishop of Utrecht. Msgr. Torrælla Cascante is Vice-President of the Pontifical Commission Justitie & Pax and Vice-President of the Pontifical Council Cor Unun; he is also a member of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

I should like to have your suggestions and reactions with regard to this at your earliest convenience.

cc: Rabbi M. Tannenbaum

M. Fine

B. Resnikoff

# THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date JUN 28 1977 June 22, 1977

from Marc Tanenbaum/Jim Rudin
M. Bernard Resnikoff

## subject

Some day, the WCC Consultation on the Jewish people will publish the proceedings currently under way. Meanwhile, I made some notes of the main session by Dean Stendahl. I put it in writing because it will be useful to me in my work. I hope it will be useful to you as well.

## The Importance of Dialogue and how to make it more effective

- We need to reduce the power of the majority.
   One has only to compare dialogue in Israel with some other Western country to see how powerful this point is.
- 2. It is still the only way to find out what the other thinks and feels. To do so in a meaningful way we have to believe and act out the ninth commandment.
- 3. Does the New Testament always have to upstage the Old Testament? (Somewhere I saw the Old Testament referred to as the First testament. This is much better.)
- 4. A true theologian doesn't talk about God. He talks about the kind of world he believes God wants.
- 5. There is a critical difference between mission and witness. (See the Rottenberg article in <a href="The Christian Century">The Christian Century</a>.) This is related to point 2 above: you have to listen to the other in his own terms.

## New Tasks in Dialogue

- 1. We need to de-Westernize dialogue.
- 2. We need to watch out 'as Western anti-semitism seeps, via Jesus stories and even Shakespeare, to other parts of the world. (Why, indeed, should there be stirrings of anti-semitism in Japan?)
- 3. We must allow the other to define himself. The fact of the matter is that Israel is a theological fact.
- 4. Critical point: in dialogue, who asks the questions? (This is another way of asking who formulates the agenda? Why, for example, are theological questions so prominent in dialogue? Is it not a fact that, for us Jews, theology is not a major preoccupation?)

## Points made in discussion following Stendahl presentation

- Christianity emphasizes theology. That's fine. But theology is only one aspect of the problem from the point of view of comparative religion, which, in addition, goes with reciprocity and in the comparison of systems which have individual integrity.
- 2. It is not enough to recognize fact. It is much more important to recognize the legitimacy of facts.
- 3. There is a basic asymmetry between Christianity and Judaism. The latter is wholistic, has integrity, whereas Christianity requires dialogue with the Jew which is a form of dialoguing with himself.
- 4. Christian-Jewish dialogue is different from dialogue with other religions, because both Judaism and Christianity are post-modern religions, having confronted secularization. Both are committed to Creation (physical universe) and Relevation (moral universe). Since these two universes cannot be fully experienced, both Judaism and Christianity point to the limitation of the human being.

MBR:fp

cc: Morris Fine Zach Shuster

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

World Council of Churches'

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People

Jerusalem, June 26 1977

Jerusalem was the site of the biennial session of the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People of the World Council of Churches. Previous meetings of the Consultation convened representatives from those parts of the globe where Jews are to be found in greatest number -- Europe, the Siviet Union and North America. This Consultation, meeting from June 16 to 26, made a first effort to globalize the Consultation by inviting African Christian guests to join in exploring relationships between Christians and Jews.

Eighteen Europeans, six North Americans, and five Consultants from Israel were joined by thirteen Africans from Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. For the first time Jerusalem was chosen as the meeting-place of the Consultation, in order to strengthen the Christian presence in the Holy City and because of the centrality of Israel for Judaism throughout the world. The Jerusalem site made it possible to visit the Patriarchates of the Ethiopian, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian Churches, and the Russian Orthodox and Rumanian Orthodox Missions in Jerusalem. The host of the Consultation was the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel in the Dormition Abbey on Mt. Zion.

The delegates visited the Holocaust Memorial, Yad Va-Shem, Jewish-Christian reconciliation projects, the Ecce Homo Convent, and the Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Studies at Tantur. The delegates celebrated Shabbat in local Jewish homes.

In the Galilee and West Coast area visits were made to the Christian monastic community at Lavra Netofa (near Deir Hanna), the Ecumenical Committee of Nazareth, the Arab-Jewish Centre in Acco, Kibbutz Kfar Ha-Maccabi, the Christian village Nes Ammim, the United Christian Council in Israel, and the Afro-Asiatic Institute for Community Development in Tel Aviv. The members of the Consultation participated in Sunday worship at St. Andrew's Church of Scotland in Jerusalem and at St. John's Episcopal Church in Haifa.

Daily Eitle studies were led by Dr. Hans-Ruedi Weber of the World Council of Churches, assisted by the Armenian Bishop Ajamian, Ethiopian Professor Yacob Tesfai, and the Jewish translator of the Bible, Professor André Chouraqui.

Professor Krister Stendahl of the USA and Professor D.C. Mulder from Holland addressed the topic, "Jewish-Christian Relations in the Wider Perspective of Dialogue with People of other Faiths and Ideologies." The theme, "How do African Christians Relate to Israel" was explored by Professor John Mbiti (Kenya). Other papers were submitted by Modupe Oduyoye (Nigeria), Solomon Aderi (Kenya), Temba Mafico (Zimbabwe) and Yacob Tesfai (Ethiopia). The delegates devoted a day to surveying existing guidelines for the relationship between Christians and Jews and made plans for ecumenical guidelines.

Area guidelines from Britain, Israel and the USA were received by the Consultation. Plans were made for use of these documents in the development of ecumenical guidelines.

European and North American participants, most of whom live in close association with Jewish neighbours, were interested in preventing antisemitism and in exploring the dimensions of witness and dialogue in their relations with Jews. The African Christians, who know Judaism chiefly through the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament and have little contact with a living Jewish community, focussed on the Jewish background of Christianity and the cultural parallels between Africa and Israel. The Africans found it difficult to accept the distinctiveness attributed to the Christian-Jewish dialogue as compared with dialogue with Islam and with people of other faiths. Moreover, the Africans felt no burden of guilt for the Holocaust, because during the same period black people suffered excruciating vilification from a triumpahnt West.

The Consultation was held as a part of the programme of Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, fostered by the World Council of Churches' Division on Faith and Witness. Recommendations toward guidelines for Christian-Jewish relations will be forwarded by the Consultation to its parent body of the WCC which convenes between the sessions of the World Council Assembly.

## Suggested Draft statement of CCJP Conference, June 1977.

- 1. To the official statement on 'Dialogue in Community' adopted by the Theclogical Consultation held at Chiang Mai, Thailand, April 18-27, 1977, several reports on specific topics are attached which were received by the Consultation. One of these reports deals with Christin-Jewish relations. Under the heading 'Recommendations for issues in further Christian-Jewish Dialogue' three questions are asked which according to the report must be faced in all dialogues with Jews:
  - (I) What assurances can Christians give as to the eradication of the antisemitism known in Christian history?
  - (II) In what sense can Christians identify with the right of the Jewish people to statehood?
  - (III)What assurances can Christians give against the proselytizing of Jews?

    In the following we shall consider these three questions and try to give an answer to them. But first of all we shall have to make some preliminary remarks pertinent to the three questions.
- Among the various dialogues Christians are holding with people of other faiths and ideologies the dialogue with the Jews is of a special character because of the unique relationship which exists between the Church and the Jewish people (Faith and Order Document, Bristol, 1967; DFI Document, Chiang Mai, 1977, \$ 2/a). To no other people the Church is historically and theologically so intimately bound. It is a fact of history that Christianity has its roots in the Jewish community of the first century. / Jesus was a Jew; he and his message cannot be properly understood apart from the pre-Christian history of the Jewish people. Also the apostles and the first disciples were all Jews. The Scriptures of the early Church were the Scriptures of the Jewish people. Many of the most important concepts we as Christians use are taken over from the Hebrew Scriptures and early Judaism - even though they may have received partially new connotations -, as for instance: sin, redemption, creation and covenant, grace and peace, righteousness and love, repentance and atonement (cp. ThWNT), in Christian liturgy owes much to Jewish liturgy of pre-Christian times.
- Because of their common roots Christians and Jews share together some very fundamental convictions. Both worship God, as the One, who is Creator of all that is, who made his will known to human beings and relates to them as Father, Teacher and Redeemer. Both believe that man is created in God's image; that he is called to be holy, is given stewardship under God over his creation and is accountable to God for the way he exercises this stewardship. Both share, to a large extent, a common ethic, knowing themselves responsible for their fellowmen, especially for those who are weak, poor or persecuted. Both have a common hope, looking forward to a renewed creation, where all suffering will be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and in every respect; inspired by this ultimate hope they are at work for greater righteousness.
- 4. Question I: What assurances can Christians give as to the eradication of the antisemitism known in Christian history?
  - The WCC., at its very first assemby at which it was constituted, (Amsterdam, 1948), denounced antisemitism. There was stated .... (quotation from document). This

/ pronouncement ...

pronouncement has been repeated on many occasions, in one form or another. such pronouncements are worthless if the Churches do not actually strive to eradicate all forms of antisemitism in their midst. In order to achieve this it is necessary that Christians honestly face the common history they have with the Jews a history determined to a considerable extent by guilt on the Christian side and suffering on the Jewish side. e. It is only by facing this history that Christians will come to understand the deep-rooted suspicion many Jews up to today have against Christians and Christianity. It is certainly true that particularly Churches of the Western and East-European

world have beome guilty in the past; however, Christians from other Churches might do well to acquaint themselves with the history or antisemitism, in order that they be forewarned and do not fall into the same sin (cp. Chiang Mai Report It is also true that antisemitism has a sociological basis: Christians are called upon to fight - wherever they can - these sociological prejudices. But we should be especially attentive to certain traditional Christian convictions which have furthered an anti-Semitic stance of Christians, or anti-Semitic attitudes on the part of Christians. m. in high of the rivers of

In this respect attention should be given to the following points: the existence of Jews should not be presented as a kind of anachronism which became obsolete after the coming of Christ; they are a real people, very much alive and active in our present time as for instance, the establishment of the state of Israel Neither should the impression be given that the Church has taken the The Jewish people, also in its non-acceptance of Jesus place of Israel of old. as the Christ, continues to be the people of God, as regards divine election beloved by Him, for God is not infaithful to those whom He has chosen (cp. Rom. 11). If this would be otherwise, there would be good reason to doubt his faithfulness now to us who time and time again do not listen to his voice but rebel against Him.

Further, the Crucifixion of Jesus should not be presented so as to point to a special depravity of those who crucuified him; the very witness of Scripture points out that in their guilt the guilt of all mankind has been made manifest. Neither are we allowed to speak of a particular hardening of the hearts of the Jews in that they still today do not accept Jesus as Christ. stated by the Assembly of New Delhi ... (quotation from document).

Also, special care should be given to the fact that certain New Testament passages should not be used - biblicistically - in such a way that they further anti-In our interpretation of such passages we should never forget the particular context in which they are situated. In the past such passages, which reflect internal Jewish polemics of the first century, have often been misused as weapons in later 'Christian' anti-Jewish polemics. In particular, great harm has been done by a wrong interpretation of Matt. 27:25, as if the Jews had called upon themselves eternal divine curse. was Phan sees

Finally, traditional oversimplification should be avoided, e.g. Judaism as a religion of law over against Christianity as a religion of love. of this kind in no way do justice to what Judaism really is. It will be clear that if the above misrepresentations and misunderstanding which further 'Christian' antisemitism (mostly more by thoughtlessness than on purpose) are to be counteracted, a critical review of all church teaching, preaching and liturgy is demanded.

- 6. Correcting wrong trends in theology and biblical interpretation, important as this is for combating 'Christian' antisemitism, is no substitute for Christians meeting Jews and getting to know them as fellow human beings and to understand them in their distinctiveness as Jews. Such knowledge and real understanding might well be the best safeguard that such terrible things as pagroms and holocaust never happen again.
- 7. Question II: In what sense can Christians identify with the right of the Jewish people to statehood?
  - Repeatedly and on several occasions the WCC has explicitly affirmed the right of existence of the state of Israel. In particular we recall the Canterbury statement, 19 ..., which says ... (quotation from document). We recall also the strong protest by the General Secretary when this state was called a racist state, This recognition of the state of Israek can be based upon the consideration that, after the decimation of the Jews during World War II this people have a place where they belong and are safe and which can be a haven for those Jews who in the present or in the future are discriminated against or even persecuted. This recognition can also be based upon the 1947 partition plan of the United But our recognition is also demanded by our respect of the Jews in their identity and self-understanding: in the self-understanding of the great majority of the Jews there is an undissolvable bond between the Jewish people. with its particular Jewish tradition and the land of Israel (Palestine). bond is a major factor in the consciousness also of those Jews, be they religious er not, who are citizens of states other than the state of Israel. centuries-old longing for the land has in our time been realized in the establishment of the state of Israel.
- 8. Our acceptance of the state of Israel should not be misinterpreted as unqualified approval of all what this state does. It also leaves many unresolved questions. Just as we respect the right of self-determination of the Jews according to their identity we respect the right of the Palestinians of self-determination according to their identity. There are still many unsolved questions about the ways and means by which a just and durable peace in the Middle East should be achieved and how Christians and the WCC possibly could play a role of reconciliation, but these questions and considerations do in no way minimize our initial statement that we fully recognize the right of the Jewish people to statehood.
- 9. Some of us want to be more explicit. On the basis of their understanding of the Bible they believe the Jews to be a people called and chosen by God and they look upon the special relation of this people to this land as a God-given relationship. They further believe that the state of Israel is under present-time conditions the only form in which this indissolvable tie between people and land can be realized. But in this respect there is no unanimity among us and much study and mutual clarification of views and opinions will be needed for a consensus on these issues to emerge.
- 10. Question III: What assurances can Christians give against proselytizing of Jews?

  In the WCC statement at ... (place and year) the following definition of proselytism was given ... (quotation from document). Thus proselytism as distinct from mission or witness is rejected in the strongest terms by the WCC. It is true that the above statement is dealing with relations and attitudes of the Churches among each other. But what is valid there is also valid where men of other

faiths are concerned. Cp. the statement of Chiang Mai, April 1977 (\$ 12), which puts dialogue among the Churches in juxtaposition to the dialogue which reaches across differences of faith.

- Besides this the world in which we live is a world of religious pluralism; this 11. demands from us that we treat these who differ from us with respect and that we strongly support the religious liberty of all men (cp. Chiang Mai, §...).
- This rejection of proselytism and our advocacy of respect for the integrity and the identity of all peoples and communities of faith is the more urgent where Jews are concerned. For - as stated above - our relationship to the Jews is of a unique and very close character. Moreover, the history of 'Christian' antisemitism and forced baptisms of Jews in the past should make Christins especially careful where Jews are concerned. All Churches should be continuously conscious of this and understand that Jews are extremely sensitive towards all religious pressures from outside and all attempts of proselytizing.
  - While rejecting proselytism both in its gross and its more refined forms we believe that we are called upon to witness to God's love to and claim upon all men in Jesus Christ. In most cases this witness can best be given in the ferm and in the spirit of dialogue, as was stated at Chiang Mai (\$ 20). Moreover, all triumphalism and every kind of manipulation should be carefully avoided. However, our witness to Christ as Lord and Saviour of all men is particularly difficult where Jews are concerned. We have compromised our witness to them so often by our past behaviour that our words tend to suffer from a credibility gap. In many cases our witness to them can best be given by a life of devoted service and solidarity with them (cp. Faith and Order Document, Bristol, 1967, \$ ...).
- Many of us believe that whatever from our witness to the Jews should take today - we have to bear witness before them of Jesus Christ being sent to all men and in the very first place to the Jews. Some among us, however, believe that Jews are faithful and obedient to Gcd wien they remain Jewish, (i.e. when they do not accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savi ur. Many maintain that as a separate and specific people the Jews are an instrument of God with a specific God-given task and as such a token of God's faithfulness to all men, a token > 500 also of the not-yet of ultimate redemption.
- These differences or opinion among us demand further theological study and show 15. that in our thinking about Israel and the Jews very important, and vital tenets of our Christian faith are at stake. But apart from all theological considerations, we should not make the Jewish people a pawn in our Christian theological system but have to meet them as actual, present-day people who have an identity of their own.

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## GROUP REPORT A: CHRISTIAN-JEWISH-MUSLIM RELATIONS

(Report of Chiang Mai, Thailand, April 18-27, 1977)

## I. CHRISTIAN JEWISH RELATIONS

## 1. The Present Situation

While there are Jewish communities in all continents, formal dialogue between Christians and Jews has taken place primarily in North America, Western Europe and Israel. Often these dialogues were initiated by the Jews, and the Jewish participants are selected by organizations of our Jewish partners (e.g. International Jewish Committee for Inter-Religious Consultations (IJCIC)). The choice of topics require mutual acceptance. Through the Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies (DFI) there has also been Jewish participation in multilateral dialogues (Colembo), and our Jewish partners have expressed great interest in broadening the contact with Christians beyond the Western orbit.

# 2. On the Specific Nature or Relationship

- (a) The historic relationship between Jews and Christians is unquestionably unique as Christianity emerged from within Judaism. The Jewishness of Jesus and the Apostles is a historical fact, and the Bible of the Jews became the Old Testament of the Christian Bible. Christian liturgy and theology have historic roots in the Jewish community. We thus have much in common.
- (b) This unique historic relationship has marked the history of Jewish Christian relations. At times it has expressed itself in mutual respect and even calling, as in the Jewish medieval scholar Maimonides' vision of Christianity (and Islam) as the bearer of Torah (Instruction) to the Gentiles, and in peaceful co-existence of Jewish and Christian communities, especially during long periods of Muslim rule and also, for example, in India and now in secular societies.
- (c) The position of majority rule of one of the two parties lead, however, more often than not to various forms of suppression. The pre-Christian phenomenon of Anti-Semitism (in the sense of anti-Judaism) became part of church history, especially in Europe, and found intensified forms in cultural and national histories, culminating in events like the Crusades, the Inquisition (spiritual genocide), and the Nazi Holocaust (physical genocide).
- (d) To many Western Christians this record makes it the first priority for Jewish Christian relations to seek ways of eradicating once and for all the Anti-Semitism that has plagued the churches and the cultures in which they witness, and to warn other churches lest they fall prey to the sin of Anti-

<sup>1.</sup> See Jewish Christian Dialogue, Geneva 1975

<sup>2.</sup> See Towards Werld Community: The Colembo Papers, Geneva 1975

Semitism. This calling of Western Christians has intensified their need for dialogue, and lead some of them to forms of identifying with Israel that may be questioned by other Christians, who should seek to give their own answers to the relationship between Jews and Christians.

- (e) We noted that oppressed people have found much strength by identifying with the experience of Israel as a chosen people. For example; in Africa, among American Blacks, and in contemporary liberation theologies the Exodus is central to the faith, and suppressed people have so found in the very Bible brought by their oppressors the Word of God which gave them dignity and identity. Such an appropriation through Jesus Christ of Israel's experience is at the same time an affirmation of God's history with Israel.
- (f) We want to consider in more depth how Jews and Christians are jointly, yet distinctly, participating in God's mission to his creation toward the 'Hallowed by Thy Name' (mission dei/qiddush ha-Shem) (see 3, b, ii)

## 3. Recommendations for Issues in Further Christian-Jewish Dialogue

- (a) In all dialogues with Jews the following unavoidable questions will be present. Christian may give different answers to them, but the questions must be faced and recognized as valid in any dialogue.
- (i) What assurances can Christians give as to the eradication of the Anti-Semitism known in Christian history?
- (ii) In What sense can Christians identify with the right of the Jewish People to statehood?
- (iii) What assurances can Christians give against proselytizing of Jews?
- (b) Three Issues may be recommended for future Christian Jewish dialogue.
- (i) In what sense are the Christian Old Testament and the Bible of the Jews the 'same Scripture'?
- (ii) Is there a mission and are there concerns that Jews and Christians have in common?
- (iii) How can our two communities contribute the world-wide community through dialegue?

## II. CHRISTIAN MUSLIM RELATIONS

## 1. The Present Situation

There has been increasing contact between Christians and Muslims, and in terms of formal meetings this has been partly in the context of WCC sponsored dialogues. Several meetings have been held on theological and religious issues as well as on the wider significance of the religious plurality, such as at

Ajaltoun, 1 Broumana, 2 Colombo, 3 Chambósy 4 and Cartigny. 5 All this is in addition to several regional 6 and local conferences. Sometimes Christians' and Muslims' concern with political and social issues have pointed in the direction of attempts to reconcile the tensions of a given area. Under these circumstances we have had to proceed with each other at the pace and in the manner that seem particularly relevant to the situation.

## 2. Specific Aspects of the Relationship

- (a) We are aware of the many values we share with Muslims, and our meetings have been facilitated by this common ground. But we would not wish to minimize differences, such as the sometimes negative views whereby Islam sees itself as fulfilling and superceding Christianity or whereby Christians dismiss Islam as a heresy or false prophecy. Somewhat going beyond these points of controversy is the more open attitude of, on the one hand, Muslims who have a sense of Abrahamic kinship with Jews and Christians and, on the other hand, Christians who see Islam as a critical judgement upon the Church and then as endowed with its own sense of faith in one God and obedience to Him.
- (b) We Christians recognize that Islam claims to possess in its sacred Scriptures a revealed knowledge of Christ some of which does not accord with our own understanding. Not only do Christians and Muslims differ as to their understanding of the authenticity of Christian, Islamic (and Jewish) Scriptures, but they are also unreconciled in their assessment of the significance of the Cross or of the Trinity. It is just as unrealistic to refuse to acknowledge these facts as it is unproductive to insist on them; for example, our past attempts to minimize the religious or moral stature of the Qur'an and Muhammad are unhelpful.
- (c) Historically also there has been tension and rivalry from which we are still recovering. The whole history of our relationship in the Middle Ages and beyond and of Western colonial expansion in Muslim lands is steeped
- 1. See Dialogue between Men of Living Faiths, Geneva 1971
- 2. See Christian-Muslim Dialogue, Papers from Broumana 1972, Geneva 1973
- 3. See Towards World Community: The Colombo Papers, Geneva 1975
- 4. See International Review of Mission on "Christian Mission and Islamic Da'wah", Vel. LXV, No 260, Oct. 1976.
- See <u>Study Encounter</u>, "Present and Future Patterns of Christian-Muslim Encounter", Vol. XII, No 4, 1976.
- 6. See Study Encounter, "The Unity of God and the Community of Mankind:
  Cocperation between African Muslims and African Christians in Work
  and Witness" and "Muslims and Christians in Society: Towards Goodwill, Consultation and Working Together in South-East Asia", Vol.
  XI, No. 1 1975.

in this tradition of mistrust and misunderstanding. Even our understanding and practice of mission has fostered a spirit of competitiveness and rivalry.

- (d) Muslim concern with politics in many parts of the world, not least the Middle East, is sometimes coupled with a sense of religious vocation in which Christians may be invited to participate. For example, some of us have been approached to join Muslims to ward off atheism and secular ideologies. While by no means wishing to form a common religious front against others, we are deeply conscious of the need to allow our Muslim partners in dialogue to suggest what agenda they would like to adopt for discussion, and we welcome the potential contribution to the unfinished debate of the critique of religion and ideology among people of many faiths and ideologies.
- (e) Another aspect of our relationship with Muslims is characterized by a keen interest in religion and theological issues, and this is especially the case in black Africa and Southeast Asia. Some of us are aware of a lively exchange of theological views in Indonesia, for example, where literary works are devoted to this theme. In various parts of Africa Muslims have shown an initiative in discussing questions of theological substance concerning the nature of revelation, the Person of Jesus and inspiration of Scripture. This means that what could appear as stumbling blocks in rival theories of the supremacy of one tradition against another in fact turns out to be a motivation for deep-level contact and encounter.
- (f) A more recent aspect of our relationship related to the increasing appearance of Muslim communities in the West. The growing awareness on the part of the Church of this phenomenon is leading to increased contacts with Muslim organizations and representatives. Quite often these Muslims are concerned with acquiring a new self-confidence in their religious culture, with the result that they are more conservative in outlook. Yet some of us can testify of a real spirit of openness and sharing with such Muslims. For example, there are joint Christian-Muslim projects in various parts of the world in addition to several meetings and consultations in other places. At the international level both the WCC and the Vatican have been involved in discussions. There is also the hope of creating co-ordination between the Churches in Europe in their approach to their Muslim neighbours.

## 3. Recommendations for Issues in Further Christian-Muslim Dialogue

Yet precisely because of such overlapping experiences and inter-involvement we are encouraged to build our relationships on a more positive footing, to re-direct our energies towards a new sense of inter-dependence in dialogue. Our resources to meet this new challenge are enormous, ranging from our understanding of the work and teaching of Jesus Christ to the special role which Arab Christians can play. Certain tentative issues may engage our attention in this respect:

(a) An attempt on our side to acknowledge the special esteem and honour in

which Muslim tradition holds Jesus and the Holy Family.

- (b) An awareness of the separate claims of Islam to the divine status of the Qur'an and the Prophet's definitive role.
- (c) An appreciation of the difficult stages through which we have all passed but which, if approached properly in the context of dialogue can provide a fresh motivation for sustained inter-involvement.
- (d) An acceptance of a common challenge and a common task in living in the worli as it is while seeking to change it: we both seek to elevate people's sense of meaning and purpose of life; for our part as Christians we are acutely conscious of the <u>missio dei</u>, and in addition acknowledge our inescapable responsibility in seeking deeper understanding of God's work in the world; we are convinced that not only is our inter-dependence crucial for the health and improvement of the communities we happen to share, but it is in the long term an essential part of our understanding of God's demands upon us.
- (e) A mutual recognition that our respective religions accept a missionary calling and the responsibility of bearing witness to our faith: such a common understanding of God's work in the world should encourage us to seek greater collaboration in dialogue in mutual recognition of this fact.
- III. ISSUES FOR TRILATERAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN JEWS, CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS
- 1. The historical and theological relationships between these three communities call forth the hope for trilateral relationships. We welcome and encourage local, regional and non-institutional initiatives such as the Standing Conference of Jews, Christians and Muslims in Europe. We also hope that the work of the DFI with other units of the WCC on Human Responsibility for Nature will serve as an appropriate theme for such a dialogue
- 2. We believe that our understanding of our Christian faith will receive new perspectives if it were to be more fully informed by the questions raised in dialogue with Jews and Muslims concerning Scripture, the Trinity, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, Mission and obedience to God.
- 3. The increasing presence of Muslims in many parts of the West (Great Britain, Continental Europe, the U.S.A., including Black Muslims) make trilateral dialogue there both possible and urgent.
- 4. Out of such dialogue, and in preparation for a deeper mutual understanding we urge the churches to make sure that textbooks on all educational levels give an authentic picture of Judaism and Islam, more acceptable and sensitive to the Jewish and Muslim communities.
- 5. We believe that the present tensions in the Middle East call for the encouragment of informal and personal contacts between the three communities until such a time as a more formal dialogue can take place. Much care must be taken in the choice of place for such a hoped for venture.

6. We look forward to the day when the City of Jerusalem, the City of Peace and Blessing (Shalom/Salaam) for our three faiths, will be not only the symbol but a fuller manifestation of our common bond in history and in God.



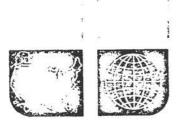
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# MATIONAL COUNCIL DE TUIS CAUNCALES DE DINTEUS.A.

# OFFICE ON CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027 (212) 870-2229 William P. Thompson, President Claire Randall, General Secretary

July 6, 1977

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

Dear Marc,

I have just returned from my three weeks' journey to Berlin for the West German Church Assembly, the WCC Consultation in Jerusalem, and two days with Cornelius Rijk and his colleagues at SIDIC in Rome.

The summary of the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People is enclosed for you to look over. As soon as the final draft of the Guidelines adopted by the Consultation reaches me, I will send it along. The participation of African guests offered a refreshing dimension to our meeting, but it made demands on communication for us all.

I hope this finds you having a good summer.

Yours,

Enclosure: CCJP News Release

Presiding Bishop's Committee News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

World Council of Churches'

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People

Jerusalem, June 26 1977

Jerusalem was the site of the biennial session of the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People of the World Council of Churches. Previous meetings of the Consultation convened representatives from those parts of the globe where Jews are to be found in greatest number — Europe, the Siviet Union and North America. This Consultation, meeting from June 16 to 26, made a first effort to globalize the Consultation by inviting African Christian guests to join in exploring relationships between Christians and Jews.

Eighteen Europeans, six North Americans, and five Consultants from Israel were joined by thirteen Africans from Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. For the first time Jerusalem was chosen as the meeting-place of the Consultation, in order to strengthen the Christian presence in the Holy City and because of the centrality of Israel for Judaism throughout the world. The Jerusalem site made it possible to visit the Patriarchates of the Ethiopian, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian Churches, and the Russian Orthodox and Rumanian Orthodox Missions in Jerusalem. The host of the Consultation was the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel in the Dormition Abbey on Mt. Zion.

The delegates visited the Holocaust Memorial, Yad Va-Shem, Jewish-Christian reconciliation projects, the Ecce Homo Convent, and the Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Studies at Tantur. The delegates celebrated Shabbat in local Jewish homes.

In the Galilee and West Coast area visits were made to the Christian monastic community at Lavra Netofa (near Deir Hanna), the Ecumenical Committee of Nazareth, the Arab-Jewish Centre in Acco, Kibbutz Kfar Ha-Maccabi, the Christian village Nes Ammim, the United Christian Council in Israel, and the Afro-Asiatic Institute for Community Development in Tel Aviv. The members of the Consultation participated in Sunday worship at St. Andrew's Church of Scotland in Jerusalem and at St. John's Episcopal Church in Haifa.

Daily Bible studies were led by Dr. Hans-Ruedi Weber of the World Council of Churches, assisted by the Armenian Bishop Ajamian, Ethiopian Professor Yacob Tesfai, and the Jewish translator of the Bible, Professor André Chouraqui.

Professor Krister Stendahl of the USA and Professor D.C. Mulder from Holland addressed the topic, "Jewish-Christian Relations in the Wider Perspective of Dialogue with People of other Faiths and Ideologies." The theme, "How do African Christians Relate to Israel" was explored by Professor John Mbiti (Kenya). Other papers were submitted by Modupe Cduyoye (Nigeria), Solomon Aderi (Kenya), Temba Mafico (Zimbabwe) and Yacob Tesfai (Ethiopia). The delegates devoted a day to surveying existing guidelines for the relationship between Christians and Jews and made plans for ecumenical guidelines.

Area guidelines from Britain, Israel and the USA were received by the Consultation. Plans were made for use of these documents in the development of ecumenical guidelines.

European and North American participants, most of whom live in close association with Jewish neighbours, were interested in preventing antisemitism and in exploring the dimensions of witness and dialogue in their relations with Jews. The African Christians, who know Judaism chiefly through the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament and have little contact with a living Jewish community, focussed on the Jewish background of Christianity and the cultural parallels between Africa and Israel. The Africans found it difficult to accept the distinctiveness attributed to the Christian-Jewish dialogue as compared with dialogue with Islam and with people of other faiths. Moreover, the Africans felt no burden of guilt for the Holocaust, because during the same period black people suffered excruciating vilification from a triumpahnt West.

The Consultation was held as a part of the programme of Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, fostered by the World Council of Churches' Division on Faith and Witness. Recommendations toward guidelines for Christian-Jewish relations will be forwarded by the Consultation to its parent body of the WCC which convenes between the sessions of the World Council Assembly.

# memorandum

## THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date

July 11, 1977

to

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum

from

Rabbi A. James Rudin

subject

Enclosed please find the following press release stemming from the World Council of Churches meeting in Jerusalem last month.

IERICAN IEWISH

I am also sending the draft statement with Bill Harter's many notes and additions. The statement is in the process of being revised and he will share a copy with us as soon as it is out.

As you can see, a great deal of work needs to be done on this statement. It is clear that the old line missionaries still are active.

AJR:FM Encl.

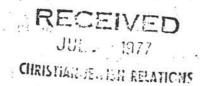
cc: Judy Banki Inge Gibel

Bernard Resnikoff

In a move toward strengthening relationships between Episcopalians and the Jewish community, Presiding Bishop John M. Allin has
appointed an Advisory Committee on Christian-Jewish relations. Its
responsibilities are to give council to Bishop Allin on this subject
and to maintain an overview of the wide field of relationships between Episcopalians and Jews in the United States and around the
world.

"God's revelation to the people of the Jews is the foundation of our ideas about God, and much of our Christian prayer and worship was shaped by the temple, the synagogue, and the family table of the Jewish people," Bishop Allin said. "Though we have important theological differences which we cannot expect to resolve, we owe so much to the Jews not only because of the past but because of their valued place in American life today. We need to find ways of understanding each other more deeply and working together more closely."

Cynthia Wedel, one of the six presidents of the World Council of Churches has been appointed chairman, and Bishop John H. Burt of



Ohio, and three priests active in ecumenical relations are also members. They are the Rev. Lee A. Belford, who chairs the New York Diocese's committee on relations with the Jews; Lawrence McCoombe, chairman of the commission on Christian-Jewish Relations of the Diocese of Long Island, and William L. Weiler, in charge of the Christian-Jewish office of the National Council of Churches. Peter Day, national ecumenical officer, will serve as staff for the committee.

Bishop Burt, who is chairman of the Church's Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, has long been concerned with Christian-Jewish relations, and is active in the diocese of Ohio and his see city of Cleveland in promoting relationships with the Jewish community.

The new committee will not be involved in developing programs, but will serve as a channel for reporting activities that have been effective and are worth attempting in other places. The National Council of Churches will also be a source of programs and contacts with which the Episcopal Church is urged to cooperate.

## GUIDELINES FOR

CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

(a collection of proposals)

AMERICAN JEWISH

A STUDY DOCUMENT, MARCH 1978

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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

## Guidelines for Christian Jewish Relations

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

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IV.	Dr. Flesseman van Leer in cooperation with Dr. von Hammerstein	16
٧.	Jerusalem Conference Paper	26
VI.	Summary of Rev. Peter Jennings at the request of the	31
VII.	Summary of Dr. F. von Hammerstein Moderator of CCJP	39

The Advisory Committee of CCJP meeting in Holland February 13 and 14, 1978, decided that all these documents should be made available to the DFI Commission meeting in Trinidad, to the members of CCJP and to interested study groups. All these contributions can help both in drafting regional as well as ecumenical guidelines. The latter should not be done without further consultation with Christians from Africa, Asia and South America, because ecumenical guidelines should not only be addressed to them but rather be drafted with them (cf Christian Jewish Dialogue in Ecumenical Perspective, edited F. von Hammerstein, Geneva 1978). We are grateful for all advice concerning future work on regional and ecumenical guidelines. The first four papers were prepared for the CCJP Conference in Jerusalem which then worked on a conference paper. Since the latter was produced quite hurriedly, the Moderator asked first Rev. P. Jennings to produce a summary which was sent to the consultants for comments. With the help of the comments

the last summary was produced. It proves rather difficult to produce true Ecumenical Guidelines, because there are controversial opinions and there are different levels of consciousness concerning the task. Therefore, further

ecumenical work is needed.

## WCC - CCJP meeting

From Israel Study Group, U.S.A.

(Guideline Proposal)

## I. COMPLEMENTARY VIEWS OF SALVATION

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

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

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

## II. THE COVENANT

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

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

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

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

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

## III. MISSION

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

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

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

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

#### IV. THE HOLOCAUST

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

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

## V. THE STATE OF ISRAEL

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

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

## VI. CHRISTIAN PERCEPTIONS OF JEWS AND ISRAEL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### VII. THE FUTURE

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

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

(May 1977)

#### I. INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Christian motivation of relating to Persons of Other Faiths

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

#### 2. The Phenomenon of Antisemitism

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

#### 3. Resurgence of the Jewish People

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

#### 4. Moving Forward to Dialogue

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

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

## II GUIDELINES OF THE NEW RELATIONSHIP

#### 1. About the Bible

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

#### 2. The Israel of God

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

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

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

#### 3. Jewish Self-understanding and Identity

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

#### III CHRISTIAN TEACHING, PREACHING AND LITURGY

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

#### IV PRACTICAL PROGRAMMES

- 1. Correcting points of theology in the past Christian-Jewish relationship is important but it is no substitute for being a good neighbour to Jews. Apart from a good human relationship it is necessary to have some understanding of the Jewish religion not only as it is expressed in the Jewish Festivals and observance of, for example, the Sabbath ('Shabbat') and the Jewish food laws; but also other aspects of Jewish practice, the laws of charity, hospitality, study, parent-child relationships and so on.
- 2. In these days of discussion groups which are part of most Parishes and congregations, much profit can be derived from the formation of a joint Jewish-Christian discussion group at a parish and congregational level with a synagogue congregation.

- 3. A special opportunity at the present is Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Group Travel is able to bring this within the reach of most people. Such Pilgrimages today are not only an opportunity of revitalising the Christian faith by direct contact with the places associated with the ministry of Jesus, but are also opportunities for witnessing the unique Jewish presence in the Land of Israel, as well as Arab Christian communities which form a link with the historic Eastern Churches.
- 4. Further to discussion groups at the parish level, some special dialogue groups have been arranged at leadership level, both nationally and internationally. Perhaps the best known are the 'Rainbow Groups' of Jerusalem and London which consist of groups of 20 to 30 participants equally divided between Jews and Christians. At this level some of the more difficult aspects of theology are being discussed.

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

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#### ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH FRATERNITY IN ISRAEL

P.O.B. 249, Jerusalem

Guideline Proposal

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

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

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

#### Summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### Summary

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

#### Jewish Faith

#### Christian Faith

a) The "channels" through which Revelation comes to us The Jew received Revelation through the Torah, the Prophets, the Sacred Writings; and through Oral Tradition (Talmud).

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

#### b) The essence of Faith

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

The confession of the Name of Jesus as Lord. And (for Cadeclarations and doctrinal assumptions.

#### c) Some essential articles of Faith

Trinity Incarnation

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

The Sacraments, as a means for encounter with God.

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

(for Roman Catholics): the Pope, his "infallibity", his role. (for Catholics and Orthodox):

The Virginal Conception of Mary.

Only one compulsory proclamation of faith: ONE GOD.

(for Catholic and Orthodox): Dogma.

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

(for Catholics and Orthodox): Priesthood.

d) The nature of the Messianic Kingdom
It cannot have come because nothing has It has already come.
changed the world.

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

e) The nature of the Messiah

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

- a) political and spiritual redemption of the people of Israel, through the ingathering of the Jews in Eretz Yisrael, and the restoration of Jerusalem to its spiritual glory;
- b) an era marked by the moral perfection of all mankind, and the harmonious coexistence of all peoples, free of war, fear, hatred and intolerance.

  (cf. Donin; To be a Jew, p. 14)

f) Atonement

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

g) Human effort and grace

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

- 3. This common, yet different affirmation on One God should impel Jews and Christians to engage in encounter and dialogue, in humility of mind and heart. Some guidelines for this encounter and dialogue between Jews and Christians may be suggested:
  - a) Seek what is common to both;

b) Respect the differences and rule out syncretism;

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

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

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

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

May 1977.

#### 1) Unique Basis for Mutual Understanding

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

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

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

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

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

#### 2) Dialogue

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

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

Because in the past this

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

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

of these churches are not called upon in solidarity to make themselves coresponsible with the guilt incurred by their brotherand sister-Christians. Digestion of past Christian guilt will open our eyes to the danger of present recurrent anti-semitism.

Warned by the past we cannot easily speak of an oversensitivity of the Jews in that respect. In this respect attention should be given to the following points: the crucifixion of Jesus should not be presented so as to point to a special depravity of those who crucified him. On the contrary, the very witness of scripture points out that even those who were in their times the most religious of men became guilty in their rejection of the Son of God; in their guilt the guilt of all men has been made manifest. Neither are we allowed to speak of a particular hardening of the hearts of the Jews in that they still today do not accept Jesus. As was said at the Assembly of New Delhi. (\*)

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

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

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

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

#### 3) Common Study

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### 5) Questions to be studied among the Churches

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

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

While the first described position is in itself more or less clear cut in the second position many questionmarks arise, e.g.

Should we think of a double covenant with God, one with the Jewish people and one with the Church of Jesus Christ? And if so, should Christian theology accept the view brought forward by Jews, that Jews are faithful to God, exactly if they adhere to their own covenant? But, so others ask, was not Jesus sent by God in the very first place to his own Jewish people, so that their non-acceptance of him cannot be considered as faithfulness to God?

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

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

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

  Certainly, there are still many unsolved questions about how a just and durable peace is to be reached in the Middle East and in what respect Christians and the

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

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

#### WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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

#### CCJP Contribution to DFI Guidelines

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

#### 1. PREFACE

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

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

- Because of their common roots Jews and Christians share some very fundamental convictions. Both worship God, as the One, who is Creator of all that is, who makes his will known to human beings and relates to them as Father, Teacher and Redeemer. Both believe that God created men and women in his image; that they are called to be holy, are given stewardship under God over his creation and are accountable to God for the way they exercise this stewardship. Both share to a large extent a common ethic, holding themselves responsible for their fellows, especially for those who are weak, poor or persecuted. Both have a common hope, looking forward to a renewed creation, where all suffering will be done away with and God's will shall be victorious in all realms and in every respect; inspired by this ultimate hope they are called to work for greater righteousness.
- 1.5 It is, however, precisely in the divergent interpretations of that which is held in common that the differences between Christians and Jews often find their sharpest focus. In the course of history, these divergent interpretations have led to tension between the communities and hostile attitudes on the part of Christians, especially in the West.

#### 2. ANTISEMITISM

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

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

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

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

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

#### 3. AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN WITNESS

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

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

- This rejection of proselytism and our advocacy of respect for the integrity and the identity of all peoples and faith-communities is the more urgent where Jews are concerned. For, as stated above, our relationship to the Jews is of a unique and very close character. Moreover, the history of 'Christian' antisemitism and forced baptisms of Jews in the past makes it understandable that Jews are rightly sensitive towards all religious pressures from outside and all attempts at proselytising.
- 3.3 We reject proselytism both in its gross and more refined forms. This implies that all triumphalism and every kind of manipulation are to be abrogated. We are called upon to minimise the power dimension in our encounter with the Jews and to speak at every level from equal to equal. We have to be conscious of the pain and the perception of the others and have to respect their right to define themselves.
- We are called upon to witness to God's love for and claim upon the whole of humankind. Our witness to Christ as Lord and Saviour, however, is challenged in a special way where Jews are concerned. It has become discredited as a result of past behaviour on the part of Christians. We therefore are seeking authentic and proper forms of Christian witness in our relations with the Jews. Some of us believe that we have to bear witness also to the Jews; some among us are convinced, however, that Jews are faithful and obedient to God even though they do not accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Many maintain that as a separate and specific people the Jews are an instrument of God with a specific God-given task and, as such, a sign of God's faithfulness to all humankind on the way towards ultimate redemption.

#### 4. THE STATE OF ISRAEL

A.1 Repeatedly and on several occasions the WCC has explicitly affirmed the right to existence of the State of Israel. In particular, we recall the Canterbury statement of 1969, which says: "No lasting peace is possible... without effective international guarantee for the political independance and territorial integrity of all nations in the area, including Israel." We affirm also the strong concern expressed by the General Secretary of the WCC when, in 1975, Zionism was equated with Racism. Our recognition of the State of Israel can be based on several considerations but for us it is especially motivated by our respect for the Jews in their identity and self-understanding: in the self-definition of the great majority of Jews there is an indissoluble bond between the people and the land. Jews look upon the establishment of the State of Israel as the realisation of a centuries-old longing for a return to the land.

- 4.2 Our acceptance of the State of Israel should not be misinterpreted as unqualified approval of all which this State
  does. We recognise that through the ages the Jews shared
  this land with others. Just as we respect the identity and
  the right of self-determination of the Jews, we respect also
  the identity and the right of the Palestinian Arabs to selfdetermination. There are still many questions about the ways
  and means by which a just and durable peace in the Middle
  East should be achieved and how Christians could possibly
  play a role of reconciliation.
- 4.3 We believe that under present conditions the State of Israel is the form in which the indissoluble bond between people and land can be realised. Some of us, however, want to be more explicit. On the basis of their understanding of the Bible they look upon the special relation of the Jewish People to this Land as a God-given relationship and see the State of Israel in this perspective. But in this respect much study and mutual clarification of views will be needed before a consensus on these issues may emerge.

## 5. FUTURE WORK

- 5.1 We are aware that the questions dealt with in this statement do not cover the whole area of Jewish-Christian encounter. We therefore recommend that attention be given to such issues as were suggested, for example, in the Chiang Mai papers. We express our hope that contributions to work in the future will also come from Christians in Africa and Asia. We are very much aware that the differences of opinion among us demand further study.
- of our Christian faith are at stake. Is it too much to hope that Christians and Jews may live in creative tension, enriching and encouraging each other, despite the appalling record of the relationship between the two communities over the centuries?

## A CCJP CONTRIBUTION TO DFI GUIDELINES (drafted by the Rev.P.Jennings on the request of the CCJP Conference)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Antisemitism: Certainly not all Christians are equally quilty.

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

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

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

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

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

The WCC in the assembly in which it was constituted (Amsterdam 1948) condemned antisemitism: "We call upon all the churches we represent to denounce antisemitism, no matter what its origin, as absolutely irreconcilable with the profession and practice of the Christian faith.

Antisemitism is sin against God and man." This appeal has been reiterated many times. The Chiang Mai consultation, most recently, asked the churches to indicate what steps they were taking towards the eradication of antisemitism. In order to achieve this it is necessary that Christians face honestly the tragic history with regard to the Jews - a history which includes events like the Crusades, the Inquisition and the Holocaust. It is only by facing this history that Christians will come to understand the deep-rooted suspicion that many Jews up to today hold against Christians and Christianity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Our acceptance of the State of Israel should not be misinterpreted as unqualified approval of all which this state does. We recognise that through the ages Jews shared this land with others. Just as we respect the right of self-determination and the identity of the Jews, we respect also the identity and right of self-determination of the Palestinian Arabs.

There are still many questions about the ways and means by which a just and durable peace in the Middle East should be achieved and how - and whether - Christians could possibly play a role of reconciliation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Future Work and Practical Programmes: We are aware that the agenda to which this paper is written does not exhaust

the area of Jewish-Christian encounter. The experience gained from the years of dialogue has revealed the need for a place within the Church, specially charged with listening and providing good and accurate information so that we do not bear false witness against our neighbour. There is need of a "Court of Appeal" or of an "Ombudsman" for the checking of text-books and for the questioning of the inadvertent anti-Judaism which is still reflected in the litural and teaching of the churches.

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

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

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

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



#### WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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

#### CCJP Contribution to DFI Guidelines

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

#### 1. PREFACE

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

## I A R C H I V E S

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

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

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

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

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

#### 2. ANTISEMITISM

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

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

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

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

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

As long as Christians regard Judaism as a mere preparation

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

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

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

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

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

#### 3. UNDERSTANDING AND POSITIVE PRESENTATION OF JUDAISM

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

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

- Dialogue is a programme for relationships. Christianshave to listen to Jews defining themselves listening as equal partners in a conversation from which the power dimension has been removed. The disputations of mediaeval times between Christian and Jewish theologians, which were organised from time to time, were never held on a footing of equality; the Jewish partners were not taken seriously.
- development of Judaism in post-biblical times. Between the first century and today there has been an enormous output of Jewish religious and philosophical literature and commentary. European Jewry was virtually destroyed by the Nazis; it is little short of miracuous that the destruction of six million Jews should have been followed by the reconstruction of Jewish life with its special points of focus in Israel, America and, to a certain extent in Western Europe, not least in France that has now a population of more than 500.000 Jews.
- The negative image of the Pharisees found in Christian preaching and writing is one of the gravest distortions of Judaism prevalent in Christianity. The correction of this injustice is absolutely necessary for honest dialogue with the Jews as well as for Christian self-renewal in itself. To disparage Pharisaism is in a real sense to disparage modern Judaism, for all modern forms of Judaism basically owe their existence to the Pharisaic-Rabbinic movement which produced such a far-reaching revolution in Second Temple Judaism.

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

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

- There are numerous NT texts which might be interpreted as reflecting negatively on Jews and Judaism. In reading and interpreting such texts we must constantly remember that Jesus was a Jew. His forebears were Jews. He lived and taught among the Jews. His dress, his manner of speaking, his mode of life, his teaching reflected the Judaism of the time. Therefore, conflict and controversies must be seen as taking place within a framework which he not only shared with fellow-Jews, but which he and God affirmed.
- OT in a positive light. Christian preaching employs negative as well as positive examples, images and experimental analogies. Preachers must guard against any tendency to portray Jews or Jewish groups as negative models. The truth and beauty of Christianity should not be enhanced by setting up Jews or Judaism as false and ugly. Likewise the OT witness should not be portrayed as less authoritative, less normative, or superseded. It is central to the tradition which our Lord accepted as his own and which he reaffirmed as He interpreted it in his life, work and thought. The Judgment and the redeeming love of God should be presented as existing from the beginning to the end of both Testaments. (cf. the new study paper of Faith and Order, The Significance of the Old Testament in its Relation to the New, 1978).
- 3.7 We both believe in the one God. Creator of all what is, who in his free grace has bound Himself to man, who loves man, has made his will for man known to him and who wants that all men should turn to Him, know Him and worship Him.

and women

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

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

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

However, we are separated through a different interpretation of Jesus Christ. A growing number of Jews look at him as a member of their people, perhaps as a prophet, but not as their Messiah, while Christians look at him as their saviour and redeemer. The dialogue between Christians and Jews about this basic difference has scarcely began, but will be of increasing importance.

As Christians we witness to God the creator, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel, who in and through Jesus Christ has called us to be a fellowship in the name of Jesus and in the Holy Spirit, to live in faith, hope and love. This messianic fellowship, the Church, is for the coming of God's Kingdom, for the redemption of the whole creation. Thus, as Christians, we glory in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

### 4. AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN WITNESS

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

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

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

#### 5. THE STATE OF ISRAEL

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

### 6. FUTURE WORK

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

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

# DFI WORKING GROUP COMMITTEE MEETING Mt. St. Benedict / Trinidad - May 17-24, 1978

GROUP REPORT : CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS.

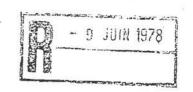
(Excerpt)

### Guidelines

The group agreed on the importance of working toward clarification of a single set of guidelines, and to this end recommends that the Christian-Jewish desk be authorized to gather comments both from Christian Churches and Jewish partners, as part of a process to reach its conclusion in 1981. Within that year, there would be the first meeting of the consultants of the CCJP according to the CCJP structure now before us. This meeting of consultants would have as its agenda the finalizing of guidelines submitting them to DFI for further action. For this purpose the meeting would be augmented by other representatives of the churches deemed significant for the finalization of the guidelines of the DFI in this area.

It is recognized that there is an additional need for national guidelines which focus on specific situations.





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#### WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

PROGRAMME UNIT ON FAITH AND WITNESS

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People Geneva, June 5, 1978 FVH/IM

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS P.O.Box 191 1211 GENEVE 20

Dear Dr. Riegner,

The DFI Working Group - a Commission of the Churches to direct the work of the Dialogue Sub-Unit - made the following recommendation concerning Christian-Jewish dialogue:

1) Guidelines for Christian-Jewish relations. The IJCIC is asked to comment on the proposal V and VII of the enclosed guidelines. The other proposals included in the booklet may serve as background material.

It is the intention to have a conference of the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People including Jewish participants probably in 1981, in order to finalize these guidelines.

2) Dr. S. Samartha and Prof. K. Stendahl will be grateful for a proposal on date and place of the next Liaison and Planning Committee meeting. The meeting should take place before the Jewish holidays of this year and discuss the procedures for guidelines, plan the larger dialogue envisaged for 1979 in Canada (on the background of the Preparatory Meeting at Harvard in April), etc. Prof. Stendahl is preparing a report on the above Preparatory Meeting.

Very truly yours,

Encl. Minutes (Excerpt)

Tu House J.

c.c. Dr. Samartha
Prof. Stendahl
Dr. Mulder
Prof. Boertien

Dr. Franz von Hammerstein

### WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

#### CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

#### CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

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GMR/ra.

Geneva, June 16, 1978

To: Rabbi Balfour Brickner

Dr. L. Ehrlich

Mr. Theodore Freedman Dr. Joseph Lichten Mr. Zachariah Shuster Rabbi Henry Siegmen Prof. Shemaryahu Talmon

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

From: Gerhart M. Riegner

Dear Friends,

- 1. I am sending you enclosed copy of a letter from Dr. von Hammerstein together with an excerpt of the Minutes of the Group Report: Christian-Jewish Relations of the DFI Working Group Committee meeting in Trinidad (May 1978) and a study document "Guidelines for Christian-Jewish Relations".
- 2. We have been asked to comment on the proposals V and VII contained in the study document enclosed and to suggest a date and place for the next meeting of the Liaison and Planning Committee, if possible before the Jewish holidays.
- 3. After having consulted with Rabbi Siegman and Mr. Shuster I have informed Dr. von Hammerstein that it seems to me doubtful whether a meeting of the Liaison and Planning Committee could take place before the Jewish holidays. Having been asked to comment on the texts contained in the study document, we will have to have a special meeting of IJCIC, during which we can prepare ourselves for a fruitful discussion with the Christian partners. It seems to me that we will not be ready before the end of October or so.

I also call your attention to the fact that Father Mejia will be back from South America only at the beginning of October and we will then probably need also a meeting of the Steering Committee with the Vatican. It seems to me we should try to combine these two meetings in order not to cause unnecessary travel.

?

- 4. We also need a full report on the meeting in Boston in April, and have to discuss this report amongst us before we can go to a Liaison and Planning Committee meeting. I hope a report on the Boston meeting will soon be available.
- 5. In the meantime I would be grateful for suggestions concerning the date of any new meetings between ourselves and for the date of a meeting with the World Council of Churches. I hope that meanwhile everybody will study the texts which are enclosed and it would be extremely useful if the various members of the Committee will put their ideas and comments in writing so that we can study them before the next meeting.



Encl.

### NOMINEES FOR

### IJCIC ACADEMIC RESOURCE COMMITTEE

Aug. 15, 1978

Alexander Altman	-	U.S.A.
Zevi Ankori	-	Israel
Shelomo Avineri	-	Israel
David Berger	_	U.S.A.
Saul Berman	-	U.S.A.
David Bleich Gerald Blidstein	Πa	U.S.A.
A D C II	- N	Israel
B. Blumenkrantz	- V	France
Ben Zion Bokser	7	U.S.A.
Eugene Borowitz	- III	U.S.A.
Gerson Cohen	4.	U.S.A.
Jack Cohen	-/	Israel
Martin A. Cohen		U.S.A.
Michael Cook	_	U.S.A.
David Daiches	-	U.Ś.A.
Emil Fackenheim		Canada
Zeev Falk	-);	Israel
Seymour Feldman	-	U.S.A.
Asher Finkel	-	U.S.A.
Marvin Fox	-	U.S.A.
Amos Funkenstein	-	U.S.A.
Libby Garshowitz	-	Canada
Robert Gordis	-	U.S.A.
Arthur Green	-	U.S.A.
Irving Greenberg	-	U.S.A.

David Weiss Halivni	-	U.S.A.
David Hartman	-	Israel
Arthur Hertzberg	-	U.S.A.
Sidney Hoenig	_	U.S.A.
I. Jacobovits	-	Great Britain
Jacob Katz	-	Israel
Steven T. Katz	-	U.S.A.
Leonard S. Kravitz	- 1 E	U.S.A.
Daniel Lasker		U.S.A.
Chava Lazarus-Jaffe	-	Israel
Sidney Leiman	- 6	U.S.A.
Nehemiah Levzion		Israel
Charles Liebman	57	Israel
Bernard Martin		U.S.A.
H. Merhavya	-	Israel
Jacob Petuchowski	-	U.S.A.
Charles Primus		U.S.A.
N. Rabinovitch	= <	Israel
Joel Rembaum	- ;	U.S.A.
Norma Roth	-	U.S.A.
Fritz Rothschild	_	U.S.A.
Norbert Samuelson	-	U.S.A.
Samuel Sandmel	-	U.S.A.
Steven Schwarzschild -		U.S.A.
Eliezer Schweid	-	Israel
Seymour Siegel	<u></u>	U.S.A.

	Michael A. Signer	-	U.S.A.
	David Wolf Silverman	_	U.S.A.
	Uri Simon	-	Israel
	Shlomo Simonsohn	-	Israel
7	Marshall Sklare		.U.S.A.
	Shubert Spero	-	U.S.A.
	Ezra Spicehandler	( <del>-</del> )	Israel
	Adin Steinsalz	J-E\	Israel
	Kenneth Stone	-1	Israel
	Uriel Tal		Israel
	Frank Talmage	- ,	U.S.A.
	Shmaryahu.Talmon	Ŧij	Israel
	Zevi Werblowsky	-5	Israel
	Walter Wurzburger		U.S.A.

### INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE FOR INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

Rabbi Ronald Sobel, Chairman POPE POTER PAUL I - Becher, Liter attended as personal questa

SEPTEMBER 21, 1978

### AGENDA

Talmon

Meeting with M. Boutton 1. The appointment of Prof. Maas Boertien as Franz

von Hammerstein's replacement von Hammerstein's replacement. Wo hustendam (good seaan)

The time and agenda of our next major consultation with WCC. Man of Mature- agreed in Jerusalem

3.√ An IJCIC response to the WCC collection of "Guidelines for Christian-Jewish Relations", particularly paragraph Nos. V and VII. (39-47 (26- WCC summany

WCC proposal for a meeting of the Liaison and Planning Committee in the Fall. Planning Jan., Fet.

Proposal for a meeting with Orthodox representatives to take place in Rumania.

representatives. TRegensburg- Fall 179, and of act. back 6. - Publication/ Hoenig. Bishop Huegel

Academic Resource Committee

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Feb-M 79

Orthodox

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### WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

25 July 1980

PROGRAMME UNIT ON FAITH AND WITNESS

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
The American Jewish Committee
165 Fast 56 Street

New York, N.Y. 10022 USA

#### Dear Marc:

I received your letter of 5 June (sic) with pleasure I shall be most happy to speak to the AJC National Interreligious Affairs Commission, in Cleveland, 23rd October In addition to pleasure of being with you and your Commission, I plan to arrange several other contacts in the United States that would have been all but impossible otherwise.

Though we will be able to speak about this at more length at Toronto, I would appreciate a word from you concerning the subjects or subjects that it would be most profitable for me to discuss with the Interreligious Affairs Commission in October.

A very practical matter: I have discovered that air fares from surppe to the United States need to be arranged far in advance in order to profit from the most reasonable rates. Should I make reservations from here? Or is it your policy to make such reservations in the States and forward the tickets? If otherwise it is agreeable, I would prefer to do it all from Geneva. But I know you will let me know. In any case, I need to make these arrangements prior to our Toronto meeting.

I will be in Toronto a couple of days prior to the convening of the consultation. Should you also happen to arrive on Saturday, perhaps we could visit then?

Cordially,

Affank. Brockway Christian-Jewish Relations

### PRELIMINARY LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### CHRISTIAN/JEWISH CONSULTATION

Dr. Peter Berger, Dr. Ulricke Berger, The Rev. Jim Boyles,

Rabbi Balfour Brickner

The Rev. Allan Brockway,
Dr. Margarethe Brown,
Dr. Burgess Carr
The R ev. B.P. Chavannes,
Prof. Emil Fackenheim
Dr. Ellen Flesseman van Leer
Prof. Michael Fishbane
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The Rev. Carol Hockbardt
Dr. K. Koyama,
Rabbi Allan Langner
Rabbi Bernard Mandelbaum
The Rev. Francis Manson
The Rev. Bruce McCleod

Prof. Albert Memmi Rabbi David Panitz Rabbi Jordan Pearlson

Prof. Pinhas Peli Dr. Chaim Plotzker

Rabbi Nahum Rabinovitch

Dr. John Raines,

Dr. Gerhard M. Riegner

Mr. Alan Rose

Rabbi Bernard Rosenzweig

Dr. Stanley Samartha
Dr. J. (Coos) Schoneveld

Canon Peter Schneider

Mr. Zacharias Schuster

Dr. Krister Stendahl
The Rev. R. Shepherd
Dr. Theodore Stylianopoulas,
Mr. Charles Silberman
Prof. Israel Singer

Prof. Shemaryahu Talmon

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Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum

The Rev. Lonnie Turnipseed

Dr. Paul von Buren Dr. Paul Warszawski Dr. William Weiler

Dr. Peter Gordon White

August 31 - September 3, 1980

Boston College

Berlin

Ecumenical Officer, AnglicanChurch of Canada (Toronto)

Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, Union of America Hebrew Congregation, N.Y.

W.C.C. Staff, Geneva

Presbyterian Church, Rochester, N.Y.

Harvard University, Boston

Colmar, France

University of Toronto

Amsterdam

Brandels University, Waltham, Mass.

World Jewish Congress, N.Y.

United Methodist Pastor, Wisconsin

Union Theological Seminary, N.Y.

Montreal

Executive Vice President, Synagogue Council United Methodist Pastor, Kansas City /Amer.

United Church of Canada, Toronto

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Temple Sinai, Toronto

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W.Z.O., N.Y.

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Secretary General, World Jewish Congress Executive Vice President, Canadian Jewish Congress

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES Central Committee Kingston / Jamaica January 1 - 11, 1979 Document No. 9 D

### WORLD COUNCIL OF CEURCHES

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies

#### PART III

### GUIDELINES RECOMMENDED TO THE CHURCHES FOR STUDY AND ACTION

From the experiences of Christians in dialogue with people of living faiths and ideologies and from the statement of the Central Committee on "Dialogue in Community" it is evident that dialogue has become urgent for many Christians today. The <u>Guidelines</u> which follow are built upon the Christian convictions expressed in the first two parts of this statement; the statement and the guidelines should be read together.

It is Christian faith in the Triune God - Creator of all humankind, Redeemer in Jesus Christ, revealing and renewing Spirit - which calls us Christians to human relationship with our many neighbours. Such relationship includes dialogue: witnessing to our deepest convictions and listening to those of our neighbours. It is Christian faith which sets us free to be open to the faiths of others, to risk, to trust and to be vulnerable. In dialogue, conviction and openness are held in balance.

In a world in which Christians have many neighbours, dialogue is not only an activity of meetings and conferences, it is also a way of living out Christian faith in relationship and commitment to those neighbours with whom Christians share towns, cities, nations, and the earth as a whole. Dialogue is a style of living in relationship with neighbours. This in no way replaces or limits our Christian obligation to witness, as partners enter into dialogue with their respective commitments.

These guidelines are offered to member churches of the WCC and to individual congregations in awareness of the great diversity of situations in which they find themselves. The neighbours with whom Christians enter into relationship in dialogue may be partners in common social, economic and political crises and quests; companions in scholarly work, or intellectual and spiritual exploration; or, literally, the people next door. In some places, Christians and the church as an institution are in positions of power and influence, and their neighbours are without power. In other places it is the Christians

who are the powerless. There are also situations of tension and conflict where dialogue may not be possible or opportunities very limited. In many places pecple of different living faiths interact not only with each other, but also with people of various ideologies, though sometimes it is difficult to make a clear cut distinction between religions and ideologies, for there are religious dimensions of ideologies and ideological dimensions of religions, Christianity included. The emergence of new religious groups in many countries has brought new dimensions and tensions to inter-religious relationships. With all this diversity in mind, the following guidelines are commended to member churches for their consideration and discussion, testing and evaluation, and for their elaboration in each specific situation.

## LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING IN DIALOGUE

# 1. Churches should seek ways in which Christian communities can enter into dialogue with their neighbours of different faiths and ideologies.

They should also discover ways of responding to similar initiatives by their neighbours in the community.

2. Dialogues should normally be planned together.

When planned together with partners of other living faiths or ideological convictions they may well focus on particular issues: theological or religious, political or social.

3. Partners in Dialogue should take stock of the religious, cultural and ideological diversity of their local situation.

Only by being alert both to the particular areas of tension and discrimination and to the particular opportunities for conversation and cooperation in their own context will Christians and their neighbours be able to create the conditions for dialogue. They should be especially alert to infringements of the basic human rights of religious, cultural or ideological minority groups.

### 4. Partners in dialogue should be free to "define themselves".

One of the functions of dialogue is to allow participants to describe and witness to their faith in their own terms. This is of primary importance since self-serving descriptions of other peoples' faith are one of the roots of prejudice, stereotyping, and condescension. Listening carefully to the neighbours' selfunderstanding enables Christians better to obey the commandment not to bear false witness against their neighbours, whether those neighbours be of long established religious, cultural or ideological traditions or members of new religious groups. It should be recognized by partners in dialogue that any religion or ideology claiming universality, apart from having an understanding of itself, will also have its own interpretations of other religions and ideologies as part of its own self-understanding. Dialogue gives an opportunity for a mutual questioning of the understanding partners have about themselves and others. It is out of a reciprocal willingness to listen and learn that significant dialogue grows.

### ARCHIVES

### 5. Dialogue should generate educational efforts in the community.

In many cases, Christians utilizing the experience of dialogue, must take the initiative in education in order to restore the distorted image of the neighbours that may already exist in their communities and to advance Christian understanding of people of other living faiths and ideologies.

Even in those situations where Christians do not live in close contact with people of the various religious, cultural and ideological traditions, they should take seriously the responsibility to study and to learn about these other traditions.

Member churches should consider what action they can take in the following educational areas:

- (i) Teaching programmes in schools, colleges, and adult education systems to enhance the understanding of the cultural, religious and ideological traditions of humankind; such programme should, wherever possible, invite adherents of those traditions to make their contribution.
- (ii) Teaching programmes in theological seminaries and colleges to prepare Christian ministers with the training and sensitivity necessary for inter-religious dialogue.
- (iii) Positive relationships with programmes in university departments and other institutes of higher learning which are concerned with the academic study of religion.
  - (iv) The review of material used and teachings customarily given in courses of instruction at all levels in the churches, including at theological colleges and seminaries, with a view of eliminating anything which encourages fanaticism and insensitivity to people of other faiths and ideologies.

- (v) The development of church school materials for the study of people of other faiths and ideologies.
- (vi) The provision of courses for people who may be sent to serve in other cultures or who may travel as tourists in such cultures to promote their greater understanding and sensitivity.
- (vii) Responsible reaction to school text books and media presentations which may prejudice the image of the neighbour.
- (viii) The creative use of the media, radio, television etc., wherever possible in order to reach a wider audience in efforts to expand understanding of people of other faiths and ideologies.

### SHARING AND LIVING TOGETHER IN DIALOGUE

### 6. Dialogue is most vital when its participants actually share their lives together.

It is in existing communities where families meet as neighbours and children play together that spontaneous dialogue develops. Where people of different faiths and ideologies share common activities, intellectual interests, and spiritual quests, dialogue can be related to the whole of life and can become a style of living-in-relationship. The person who asks a neighbour of another faith to explain the meaning of a custom or festival has actually taken the first step in dialogue.

Of course, dialogue between long-term neighbours may be frustrated by deeply engrained suspicions, and men and women will have to reckon not only with the communities they seek but also with the barriers between their present communities.

### 7. Dialogue should be pursued by sharing in common enterprises in community.

Common activities and experiences are the most fruitful setting for dialogue on issues of faith, ideology and action. It is in the search for a just community of humankind that Christians and their neighbours will be able to help each other break out of cultural, educational, political, and social isolation in order to realize a more participatory society. It may well be that in particular settings such common enterprises will generate interreligious committees or organizations to facilitate this kind of dialogue-in-action.

### 8. Partners in dialogue should be aware of their ideological commitments.

Dialogue should help to reveal and to understand the ideological components of religions in particular situations. When Christians find themselves in communities with neighbours of other living faiths they may have common or diverse ideological convictions. In such situations partners need to be sensitive to both religious and ideological dimensions of the ongoing dialogue. Where Christians find themselves in communities with people of secular

ideological convictions, the dialogue will at least expose shared contributions in a common search for the provisional goals of a better human community. Here dialogue may begin as a kind of "internal dialogue" seeking to bring to explicit reflection and discussion, issues in the encounter of the Gospel with ideological factors in various communities where Christians find themselves and with the ideological assumptions of Christians themselves.

### 9. Partners in dialogue should be aware of cultural loyalties.

Dialogue and sensitivity to neighbours need to be developed in the area of relating Christian faith to cultures. This applies especially to those places where traditional and popular culture has been unduly despised and rejected by the churches. A culture should not be romanticized or made into a false absolute but it may often challenge and enrich the expression of the Christian faith. After careful interpretation and discrimination local cultures may make meaningful contributions in symbols and liturgy, social structures, relations, patterns of healing, art, architecture and music, dance and drama, poetry and literature.

### 10. Dialogue will raise the question of sharing in celebrations, rituals, worship and meditation.

Human communities draw together, express, and renew themselves in ritual and worship, and dialogue presumes an attitude of respect for the ritual expressions of the neighbours' community. Dialogue at times includes extending and accepting invitations to visit each other as guests and observers in family and community rituals, ceremonies, and festivals. Such occasions provide excellent opportunities to enhance the mutual understanding of neighbours.

Working together in common projects and activities or visiting in homes and at festivals will eventually raise the very difficult and important question of fuller sharing in common prayer, worship or meditation. This is one of the areas of dialogue which is most controversial and most in need of further exploration.

Whether or not any such activities are undertaken, dialogue partners will want to face squarely the issues raised, sensitive to one another's integrity and fully realizing the assumptions and implications of what is done or not done.

#### PLANNING FOR DIALOGUE

### 11. Dialogue should be planned and undertaken ecumenically, wherever possible.

Member churches should move forward in planning for dialogue in cooperation with one another. This may well mean that regional and local councils of churches will have a separate commission on Dialogue.

### 12. Planning for Dialogue will necessitate regional and local guidelines.

As the member churches of the WCC consider, test and evaluate these guidelines they will need to work out for themselves and with their specific partners in dialogue statements and guidelines for their own use in particular situations. The WCC can best assist the member churches in their specific dialogues by itself concentrating upon the world-wide features of the Christian dialogue with people of particular religions and ideologies. The WCC, for this purpose, will gather appropriate consultations at the world level.

### 13. Dialogue can be helped by selective participation in world interreligious meetings and organizations.

There are now many organizations linking world religions and seeking to enable them to cooperate for various purposes, such as the struggle for peace and justice in the community and among the nations. Christians involved in dialogue need to be selective in their participation in the meetings arranged by such organizations. Christian representatives should guard the mutual recognition of and respect for the integrity of each faith. On occasion it may be necessary for Christians to make clear that

their participation does not necessarily signify acceptance of the underlying assumptions of a particular meeting or organizzation. Christians will normally avoid being identified with alliances against other religions or against ideologies as such. The WCC will be willing to provide consultants—observers for selected meetings of this kind but will not at present take a direct official part in the organisational structure of world inter-religious organisations.

To enter into dialogue requires an opening of the mind and heart to others. It is an undertaking which requires risk as well as a deep sense of vocation. It is impossible without sensitivity to the richly varied life of humankind. This opening, this risk, this vocation, this sensitivity are at the heart of the ecumenical movement and in the deepest currents of the life of the Churches. It is therefore with a commitment to the importance of dialogue for the member churches of the WCC that the Central Committee offers this Statement and these Guidelines to the churches.

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November 11, 1980

FOR THE PRESS - IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dr. Carl McIntire, president of the International Council of Christian Churches, issued the following statement in reply to the National Council of Churches' action, so vigorously opposed by the Jews in the United States, calling for the acceptance of the PLO in present Middle East negotiations. The statement reads:

The call of the National Council of Churches for the recognition of the PLO as spokesman for the Palestinians and their acceptance by Israel as a party to present negotiations is hereby repudiated and should be rejected by all Biblebelieving Christians. It is not a question of the PLO's recognizing Israel's right to exist on some yet undefined territory. Israel is already there and has title by a divine grant to the land of Canaan. This is confirmed by everything that the Bible says about the Holy Land.

The PLO will build a Communist state, subservient to the Soviet Union inside Israeli territory. Let the Palestinians, descendents of Esau, go to the place God assigned to them in His peace arrangements between Jacob and Esau and their descendants. Their land is Edom, called also Mt. Seir, Petra, and its glory exceeded that of Jerusalem. God gave the two their geographical separation which if the nations will follow now, order and peace will be restored. The Bible still has the right answer. The God of Jacob has His good hand upon the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in an eternal covenant. Woe be to mankind who refuse to recognize God's program for peace. In fact the prophecies of the Bible do indicate that Edom is to be restored. The immense territory, including Petra, southeast of the Dead Sea is lying there ready to be developed. Christians and Jews together should press the United Nations and the United States to consider seriously this geographical and practical arrangement. From an economic standpoint, money already expended would have built a glorious city.

(over)

# Church board wants PLO in on talks

By George W. Cornell
Associated Press

NEW YORK - The Palestine Liberation Organization is the "only organized voice of the Palestinian people" and should be a party to peace negotiations in the Middle East, says the National Council of Churches. 29 201

But the PLO should make an "unambiguous statement" recognizing Israel's right to exist, the council urged in a policy statement adopted Thursday.

The 9.000-word statement, which

evaluates the problems of the Middle East and tries to balance the interests \ council president conducted the of Arabs and Jews, was adopted at the semi-annual meeting of the council's governing board. The agency represents most major Protestant and Eastern Orthodox denominations in the United States.

Jewish organizations expressed alarm at the statement.

The National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council called it "a major disservice to the cause of peace." The American Jewish Committee said the statement endorsed the "concept of a PLO state" on Israel's borders, which would add "another explosive powder keg" to an already strife-torn region.

However, council officials, while saving saying that the PLO "appears to be the only body able to negotiate a settlement" on behalf of the Palestinians, did not recommend a PLO state.

The Rev. William Howard, who as meeting of 250 church representatives, said acknowledging that the PLO exists as the dominant voice of a people does not necessarily endorse its behavior.

"It's just trying to find a way to come to grips with reality," he said.

To make negotiations possible, the council urged certain conditions on both sides as "steps toward peace":

- Official action by the PLO, either amending its 1968 covenant pledging ' destruction of Israel or making an "unambiguous statement" recognizing Israel's right to exist as a sovereign Jewish state.
- · An official declaration by Israel of the right of Palestinians to selfdetermination, including the option of a sovereign state apart from Jordan and acceptance of the PLO as party to peace negotiations.

The policy replaces one adopted in 1968 and was framed after two years of research, hearings, a fact-finding tour and comments from local churches, the council said.

The 18-member Rpiscopal Church delegation tried repeatedly but unsuccessfully to modify the statement to uphold more strongly the steps toward peace outlined in the Camp David accords and to remove the focus on the PLO.

George McGonigle, a Houston lawyer and an Episcopal delegate, offered an amendment to eliminate the description of the PLO as the "only organized voice" of Palestinians, but it was voted down.

Memorandum to Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum, American Jewish Committee, November 11, 1980, presented by Dr. Carl McIntire, president of the International Council of Christian Churches, and Dr. Lynn Gray Gordon, chairman of the Commission on International Affairs of the International Council of Christian Churches.

- 1. Request your co-operation in seeking the return of radio station WXUR to Faith Theological Seminary, which your committee and other major Jewish groups were a party to in having it silenced and removed from the air.
- 2. Request conference with representatives of all Jewish groups that joined in killing radio station WXUR.
- 3. Request statement that any and every religious group may have their views on prayer and that such views are not and should not be made political campaign issues.
- 4. Request that a recognition of Bible Christianity is not anti-Semitic and that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were produced by Jews and that Jesus Himself was a Jew born of a Jewish maid.
- 5. Request a repudiation of all denial of equal rights and civil rights to Fundamentalists and a declaration of a respect for the rights of any and all religious minorities to be treated equally with liberty and justice for all.
- 6. Request recognition that the Fundamentalists of the International Council of Christian Churches champion the right of Israel to the entire Holy Land, that the unity of the land secured in the six-day war was not taking occupied territory, and that the city of Jerusalem is by all rights their national capital by God's grant forever.