



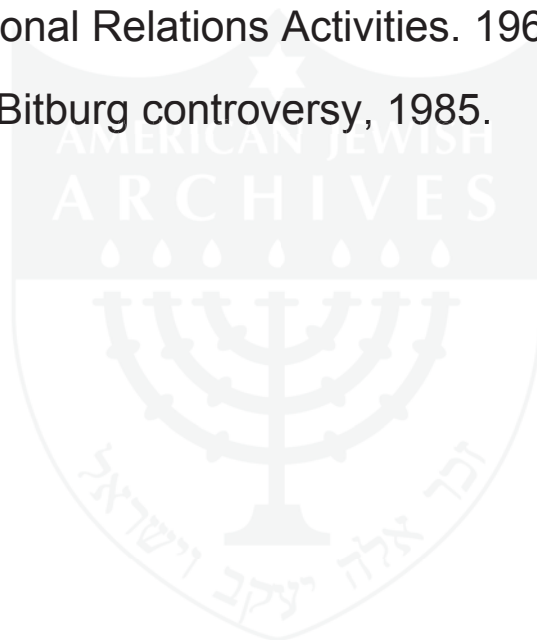
THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

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

Series D: International Relations Activities. 1961-1992

Box 56, Folder 2, Bitburg controversy, 1985.



München, Freitag, 15. März 1985

### **US-Botschafter Burns vermißt deutschen Patriotismus**

Bonn (AP)

Die Bundesbürger könnten nach Ansicht des im Mai dieses Jahres scheidenden amerikanischen Botschafters in der Bundesrepublik, Arthur Burns, mehr Stolz auf die Errungenschaften des deutschen Volkes und mehr Patriotismus an den Tag legen. Vor amerikanischen Journalisten erklärte der 80jährige, es gebe sehr viel in der deutschen Geschichte, auf das man stolz sein könne. Die Deutschen müßten sich an ihre „tragischen Fehler“ erinnern und dürften sie nie vergessen. „Aber sie sollten auch ihre großen Errungenschaften in der Literatur, der Wissenschaft, der Musik, der schönen Künste in Erinnerung behalten.“ Burns bezeichnete es als „eines der politischen Wunder dieser Welt“, in welcher Weise die Demokratie in den vergangenen vier Jahrzehnten in der Bundesrepublik Wurzeln geschlagen habe.



STATE OF NEW YORK  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
ALBANY 12224

MARIO M. CUOMO  
GOVERNOR

March 25, 1985

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to you as an American, a Governor and a member of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council.

Mr. President, I am afraid that your explanation on Thursday evening for not visiting Dachau may suggest an insensitivity that is not appropriate to your high office. Your remarks can be seen as an affront to the memory of the victims of the Holocaust and an insult to the survivors. One would hope that your remarks were inadvertent and that you will correct them.

It is difficult to believe that you intended the obvious impact of the words to the effect that there are "very few alive that remember even the war, and certainly none of them who were adults and participating in any way," while the United States government has deportation proceedings pending against scores of Nazi war criminals, the French government is preparing to try Klaus Barbie and an active international search continues for the infamous Dr. Mengele.

Your comments about "a guilt feeling that's been imposed upon" the German people only serves to aid the cause of those who have spent the years since 1945 attempting to expunge the memory of the Holocaust and to deny its reality.

Many of the survivors record in their memoirs that what gave them the courage to survive amidst the bestial and inhumane conditions of the extermination camps was their desire to bear witness. They wanted to be able to record these atrocities, not prompted by hate or a desire for vengeance, but as a warning to the world of the legacy of centuries of anti-Semitism. Your comments I'm afraid, have made it more difficult to explain to young people the necessity of remembering the events and meaning of the Holocaust. Those who counsel forgetting the Holocaust and its lessons expose humanity to a very serious danger.

I urge you, most sincerely, to reconsider the words you chose last week, and restate your position at your earliest possible opportunity.

Respectfully,

/s/ Mario M. Cuomo

Governor



STATE OF NEW YORK  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
ALBANY 12224

MARIO M. CUOMO  
GOVERNOR

March 26, 1985

Dear Friend:

I know you will be interested in the enclosed letter which was sent by Governor Mario M. Cuomo to President Ronald Reagan.

This letter was sent in response to a recent statement by the President during a White House Press Conference, explaining his decision not to visit the Dachau Concentration Camp.

With best wishes for a Happy and Kosher Passover.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Israel Mowshowitz".

Dr. Israel Mowshowitz  
Assistant to the Governor  
for Community Affairs

Johann Waltenberger  
Oberstudiendirektor i.R.  
Irisweg 4  
8039 Puchheim  
Tel.: 089/803633

Puchheim, den 2. April 1985

Seiner Exzellenz  
dem Botschafter der  
Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika  
Arthur Burns  
Deichmannsaue  
5300 Bonn 2

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

Besuch der KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau durch den Präsidenten  
der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika während seines Auf-  
enthaltes in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland Anfang Mai 1985.

Exzellenz,  
sehr verehrter Botschafter,

in der Ausgabe der Süddeutschen Zeitung vom 15. März 1985 wird  
auf Seite 1 über Grundeindrücke berichtet, die Sie von einem  
/ Teil der Bundesbürger haben (Anlage I). Ihr offenes, freimüti-  
ges Wort vor der Presse gibt mir die Hoffnung, bei Ihnen Ver-  
ständnis und Unterstützung zu finden in einem sehr wichtigen  
Anliegen, das letztlich uns alle betrifft. Es handelt sich um  
den Besuch einer KZ-Gedenkstätte, speziell der KZ-Gedenkstätte  
Dachau, durch den Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten bei seinem  
Aufenthalt in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland Anfang Mai 1985.

Exzellenz, sehr verehrter Botschafter, Ihre Sicht deckt sich zum Teil auch mit meinen Beobachtungen, Gedanken und Empfindungen. Der Befund, der Ihrem Eindruck zugrundeliegt, bereitet mir große Sorge. Er ist ein Teil des psychologischen Trümmerfeldes, das der NS-Terror der Welt hinterlassen hat.

Der Aufbau unserer Städte und unserer Wirtschaft ist gelungen, aber ich bin der Überzeugung, daß das Bemühen, mitzuwirken bei der Lösung von Problemen der jüngeren Zeitgeschichte und endlich einen umfassenden psychischen Heilungsprozeß einzuleiten, nicht hinreichend war und ist. Unter anderem erscheinen mir die von Ihnen angesprochenen Daseinsbezüge vieler Menschen in diesem Land bedenklich und alarmierend. Eine innere Flucht vor dem Strom des Lebens und vor der Geschichte ist weder für den Einzelnen noch für ein Volk gut. Ist dies doch ein Merkmal einer unausgeglichenen Grundstimmung, ein Zeichen von Verdrängungen, ein Symptom von Unbehautheit und damit Desorientiertheit. Von der Geschichte, aber auch von unserer persönlichen Lebenserfahrung wissen wir, daß Menschen, die diesem Labilitätstypus angehören, besonders anfällig für Demagogen sind.

Nur wer dem kontinuierlichen Strom der Vergangenheit mit seinen lichten aber auch düsteren Abschnitten kulturell verbunden ist, sich mit diesem Strom - soweit wir von ihm zu wissen glauben - in einem Integrationsprozeß auseinandersetzt, ihn in seiner Ganzheit als historisches Faktum akzeptiert und aus ihm lernt, steht als Person fest in der Gegenwart. Dies gilt entsprechend auch für die Völker. Nur aus einem solchen Fundament der Gegenwart können dann humane, ausgewogene Visionen der Zukunftsgestaltung erwachsen.

Meine Beobachtungen und meine Folgerungen hieraus werden zum Teil bestätigt durch Äußerungen, die der Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika auf einer Pressekonferenz in Washington in der Nacht zum 22. März 1985 gemacht hat. Auf die Frage, weshalb er auf seiner bevorstehenden Europareise anlässlich des

40. Jahrestages der deutschen Kapitulation sich gegen den Besuch eines ehemaligen Konzentrationslagers entschieden habe, nannte er, u.a. folgende Erwägungen:

1. Es sei unnötig, die Erinnerungen und Emotionen jener Zeit wieder zu wecken.
2. Die Deutschen hätten ein Schuldgefühl, das ihnen aufgebürdet worden sei, was ihm unnötig scheine.

Dazu habe ich folgende Gedanken:

Zu Punkt 1:

Ich finde es geradezu alarmierend, wenn durch den Besuch einer KZ-Gedenkstätte Erinnerungen hochgespült werden, die schon längst in das Geschichtsbewußtsein eines Volkes mit einer Geschichte von über 1000 Jahren integriert sein müßten. Vier Jahrzehnte hat das deutsche Volk hierzu Zeit gehabt und diese Zeit offensichtlich nicht hinreichend genützt, obwohl alle Welt seit Sigmund Freud, C.G.Jung, etc. um die Gefahr von Verdrängungen wissen könnte. An sich wird eine Massenneurose diagnostiziert, wenn befürchtet wird, daß durch den Besuch einer KZ-Gedenkstätte durch den Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika Emotionen und Leidenschaften wieder geweckt werden würden.

Zu Punkt 2:

Den Deutschen ist kein Schuldgefühl aufgebürdet worden. Ein Mensch, der persönlich kein Unrecht getan hat, hat keinen Grund, Schuldgefühle zu haben. Schuldgefühle entstehen auch aus Verdrängungen, in diesem Fall aus der unterlassenen geistig-emotionalen Auseinandersetzung mit der NS-Zeit.

In Israel haben sich im Vergleich zur Bundesrepublik Deutschland zum Teil komplementäre bzw. symmetrische Phänomene entwickelt. So können zum Beispiel viele junge Israelis nicht verstehen, wie es während der NS-Zeit zu dieser Massenvernichtung kommen konnte, ohne daß ein ebenso massenhafter Widerstand

entstand. Und weil sie es nicht verstehen können, weil sie es als unrühmlich für die Geschichte ihres Volkes betrachten, verdrängen sie es (Frau Professorin Anat Feinberg aus Tel Aviv, 1985). Ein Problem, das ja - aus verschiedenen Beweggründen - bei vielen Völkern bekannt ist, nicht zuletzt in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Nach Professor Alexander Carmel aus Haifa (1985) ist die Unkenntnis der jungen Generation in Israel über "Vorgänge und Tatsachen, die mit dem Holocaust verbunden sind, erstaunlich und zugleich erschreckend".

Das Volk, dem die Täter angehören, und das Opfervolk hätten die Möglichkeit, sich gegenseitig aus den Verstrickungen des Kain-Abel-Komplexes zu befreien und zu erlösen. Diese Chance sollte genutzt werden. Ich habe dies in meinen beruflichen Verantwortungsbereichen und Wirkungsmöglichkeiten stets nach Kräften versucht (als kleiner Hinweis mögen Anlagen II und III dienen).

Aus den dargelegten Gründen halte ich den Besuch einer KZ-Gedenkstätte durch den Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika für unverzichtbar. Eine weltweite Verdrängung würde andernfalls zusätzliche Impulse erhalten.

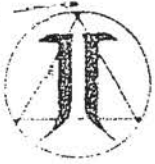
In einem Schreiben vom 28. Februar 1985 habe ich dem Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika meine Ansichten skizziert. Ich informiere Sie über diesen Brief, um Sie in diesem Anliegen, das sicher viele Menschen bewegt, um Unterstützung zu bitten. Beifolgend übersende ich Ihnen eine Kopie dieses Schreibens mit Anlagen (Anlage IV).

Exzellenz, sehr verehrter Botschafter, ich hoffe, daß ich Ihr Verständnis für meine Aktion gewinnen kann.

In Erwartung einer Nachricht bin ich mit dem Ausdruck meiner vorzüglichen Hochachtung  
Euer Exzellenz  
sehr ergebener

Johann Wallenberg





# JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

*The City University of New York*  
444 West 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019  
212 489-3500

*Office of the President*

April 15, 1985

The New York Times  
229 West 43 Street  
New York, NY 10036

To the Editor:

President Reagan's plans for his visit to Germany seem to amount to rewarding the criminal and ignoring the victim. He has apparently decided not to visit the graves of the millions who died as victims during the horrors of the Nazi regime nor to visit the graves of the American and allied forces who stopped the terror from reaching Hitler's "final solution," but to visit the graves of those who were the enemy, the invaders, some of whom were war criminals as defined at Nuremberg.

We should, of course, foster the best possible relations with the people of the Federal Republic of Germany, but not by ignoring the crimes and horrors of the Nazi period. There are some Germans eager to do that but there are many others who genuinely want to know, understand, and grieve for that period in their country's history and prevent its recurrence.

President Reagan could aid this process by dealing directly and constructively with the realities of Hitler's terror. Instead he suggests a cover-up which frustrates and infuriates those who remember the victims while he actually honors the perpetrators of these crimes.

Can this President, who so persistently speaks out against criminals and supports the rights of victims in this country, be reneging on this long-standing conviction as he looks to Germany and the goals he is seeking to achieve there? If not, why this dramatic reversal between victims and criminals when it comes to Germany? Aside from the proximate political advantage of wooing some German sentiment to forget the Nazi era, there is the irresponsibility of appealing to the very

human tendency to repress the ugly and difficult side of history and replace it with the brighter unrealities.

Santayana reminded us well when he said:

"Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness...those who cannot remember the past are condemned to fulfill it."

Mr. Reagan is participating in the collective forgetting of what was the greatest crime against humanity in all history.

Sincerely,



Gerald W. Lynch  
President



# NEWS

FROM THE

# COMMITTEE



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

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

*MORTON YARMON, Director of Public Relations*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NEW YORK, April 16 ... The following statement has been issued by Howard I. Friedman, President of the American Jewish Committee:

"We deeply appreciate that an appropriate commemoration of the Holocaust is now being considered by the White House as part of the plans for President Reagan's visit to Germany. The President has often spoken eloquently and movingly of his deep feelings about this tragic event and of the importance for the world never to forget. This commemoration therefore will be most fitting.

"We earnestly hope that as part of the review of the President's program, the visit to the military cemetery at Bitburg will be reconsidered as well. There must certainly be some more appropriate way to pay tribute to those who have fallen and to express the commitment to peace and reconciliation."

The American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. Founded in 1906, it combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people everywhere.

A EJP R Z

4/16/85:tp

85-960-80

Howard I. Friedman, President; Theodore Ellenoff, Chair, Board of Governors; Alfred H. Moses, Chair, National Executive Council; Robert S. Jacobs, Chair, Board of Trustees;

David M. Gordis, Executive Vice-President

Washington Office, 2027 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 • Europe hq.: 4 Rue de la Bienfaisance, 75008 Paris, France • Israel hq.: 9 Ethiopia St., Jerusalem 95149, Israel

South America hq. (temporary office): 165 E. 56 St., New York, N.Y. 10022 • Mexico-Central America hq.: Av. Ejercito Nacional 533, Mexico 5, D.F.

CSAE 1707

→ BITBURG

ROBERT S. RIFKIND  
ONE CHASE MANHATTAN PLAZA  
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10005

April 19, 1985

Dear Leo:

I do not know what, if anything, the AJC has underway in response to the President's incredible performance with respect to his trip to Germany. I assume that we are participating in the chorus of protest. There is, however, another aspect of this affair that I hope we will not lose sight of.

However badly the President has behaved, he presumably was acting in response to the request of the German government and in the hope of pleasing them. I think we must ask why Mr. Kohl and his colleagues wanted the President to visit Bitburg and didn't want him to visit a concentration camp. Whatever the White House knew or thought about, the gentlemen in Bonn knew who was buried at Bitburg. Their desire to paper over the past, to turn a blind eye to Dachau, and to give the graves of fallen SS men the symbolic status of Arlington or the Cenotaph seems to me to represent a profound and ominous change in the cultural climate of post-war Germany. I cannot imagine Mr. Adenauer taking such a course.

Given the lengths we have gone at the AJC to cultivate channels of communication with leaders of opinion in Germany, it seems to me important that we explore this matter with our now numerous German contacts and manifest our grave concern about what this development portends.

With warm regards.

Sincerely yours,



Leo Nevas, Esq.,  
Nevas, Nevas & Rubin,  
246 Post Road E,  
P. O. Box 791,  
Westport, Connecticut 06880.

Y

Copies to Dr. Marc Tannenbaum,  
American Jewish Committee,  
165 East 56th Street,  
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dr. David Gordis,  
American Jewish Committee,  
165 East 56th Street,  
New York, N.Y. 10022



Johann Waltenberger  
Oberstudiendirektor i.R.  
Irisweg 4  
8039 Puchheim, W.Germany  
Tel.: 089/803633

Puchheim, den 19. April 1985

The American Jewish Committee,  
Institute of Human Relations,  
165 East 56 Street,  
New York, N.Y. 10022,  
USA

Besuch der KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau durch den Präsidenten  
der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika während seines Auf-  
enthaltes in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland Anfang Mai 1985

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

im Februar 1985 sind öffentlich diskutierte Unsicherheiten ent-  
standen über den geplanten Verlauf des Besuches des Präsidenten  
der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika in der Bundesrepublik Deutsch-  
land Anfang Mai 1985. Zu diesem Problem habe ich am 28. Februar  
1985 ein Schreiben an den Präsidenten gerichtet. Am 4. März 1985  
habe ich Ihnen eine Kopie davon mit Anlagen zugesandt und Sie  
zugleich um Unterstützung in meinem vorgetragenen Anliegen gebeten.

Die weitere Entwicklung der Diskussion über den Ablauf dieses  
Besuches hat mich veranlaßt, mich auch in einem Schreiben vom  
2. April 1985 an seine Exzellenz den Botschafter der Vereinigten  
Staaten von Amerika Arthur Burns zu wenden. Zu Ihrer Information  
lege ich eine Kopie dieses Schreibens meinem Brief bei.

Die unterdessen publizierte Äußerungen in Washington und in Bonn  
zu vorgenanntem Besuch haben meine Betroffenheit und meine Sorgen  
über den derzeitigen unentwickelten historischen Bewußtseinszu-  
stand in unserer westlichen Gesellschaft, insbesondere in der  
bundesrepublikanischen, noch wesentlich vermehrt. Ich bin zutiefst  
bestürzt und beschämt über den seelisch-geistigen Entwicklungs-  
stand eines großen Teils der Menschen, der durch die Diskussion  
um den Besuch des Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika  
und um die Gestaltung des 8. Mai 1985 besonders offenbar wird.

40 Jahre sind vergangen, seit es den Alliierten gelungen ist, dem NS-Terror ein Ende zu setzen:

Zeit genug zur Besinnung, zur Selbstbesinnung, zur emotionalen und intellektuellen Auseinandersetzung mit den nationalsozialistischen Gewaltverbrechen,

Zeit genug, um Bedeutung, Warnung und Chance des 8. Mai 1945 als der vielleicht schärfsten Zensur der neueren Geschichte einigermaßen zu erkennen.

Nur das wäre Fundament für einen tatsächlichen Neubeginn.

Nach meinem Empfinden wurde bisher diese Chance des 8. Mai 1945 nicht erkannt und wahrgenommen. Der himmelschreiende Skandal heute ist, daß offenbar seit 1945 im Gesamtergebnis nicht hinreichend genug an menschlicher Reife und innerer Würde hinzugewonnen worden ist.

Die vergangenen 40 Jahre sind vom Schicksal gezählt. Wir wiegen uns selbst durch unser Verhalten, durch unsere Unterlassungen und Taten. Hoffentlich sind wir nicht zu leicht befunden.

Dies alles ist Grund genug, sich noch intensiver und gezielter für eine Erweiterung des historischen Bewußtseins einzusetzen. Wir dürfen nicht verzagen.

Der geschilderte Befund weist verstärkt darauf hin, daß von dem Besuch der KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau wie er in meinem Schreiben vom 28. Februar 1985 an den Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika vorgeschlagen worden ist, unter keinen Umständen abgewichen werden dürfte.

Das KZ-Dachau, eingerichtet am 22. März 1933, war das erste Konzentrationslager in Deutschland. In den ersten fünf Jahren wurden in ihm ausnahmslos Deutsche festgehalten. Anfangs war es ein Instrument des NS-Terrors, um die deutsche Bevölkerung einzuschüchtern und den deutschen Widerstand auszuschalten. Zugleich sind in ihm SS-Wachmannschaften für andere Konzentrationslager "ausgebildet" worden. Das KZ Dachau war eine "Schule" zu Gewalt und Terror.

Mit dem KZ Dachau ist der Beginn einer Blutspur verbunden, die sich durch ganz Europa zieht:

800.000 nichtjüdische Deutsche fielen dem NS-Terror unmittelbar zum Opfer. Viele weitere Millionen Menschen wurden in den Konzentrationslagern und Gefängnissen von NS-Schergen systematisch vernichtet. Der Wahnsinn der NS-Ideologie und der Wahnsinn des zweiten Weltkrieges mußten insgesamt mit etwa 55 Millionen Toten bezahlt werden.

Auf dem Weg in eine gute Zukunft können wir diese Toten nicht übersehen.

Überdies haben die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika noch eine besondere Beziehung zum KZ Dachau:

In den letzten Tagen des Krieges beim Heranrücken der US-Armee wollte die SS das KZ mit seinen 30.000 Insassen vernichten oder alle diese Häftlinge auf einen Todesmarsch schicken. Aller Leben war also in höchster Gefahr. Die US-Armee konnte von einem Häftling namens Karl Riemer auf das drohende Massaker aufmerksam gemacht werden. Einem Kampftrupp der US-Armee gelang es, die Pläne der SS-Wachmannschaften zu vereiteln.

Ein dem Sinn nach gleiches Schreiben werde ich wiederum an B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL, 1640 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, senden.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

*Johann Waltenberger*

(Johann Waltenberger)

Anlage





Suite 303 East, Pan Am Building  
200 Park Ave., New York, NY 10017  
Telephone 212-362-1193

April 20, 1985

Dr. Jacquelyn G. Wexler  
President  
National Conference of Christians and Jews  
71 Fifth Ave.  
New York, NY 10003

Dear Jacquelyn:

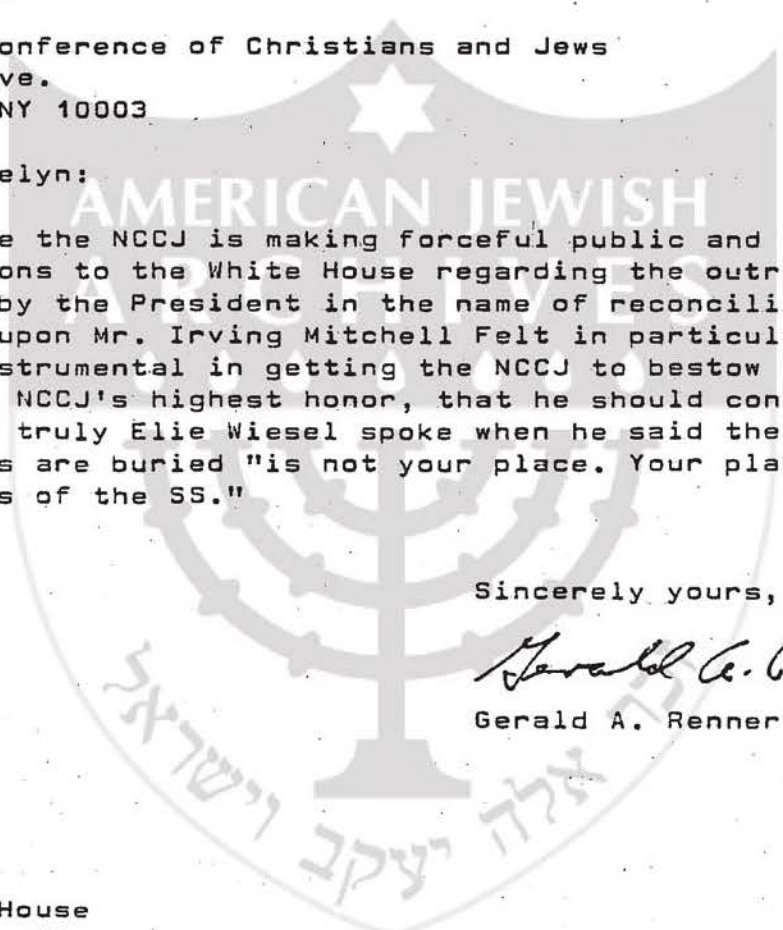
I hope the NCCJ is making forceful public and private protestations to the White House regarding the outrage being committed by the President in the name of reconciliation. It is incumbent upon Mr. Irving Mitchell Felt in particular, having been so instrumental in getting the NCCJ to bestow upon Mr. Reagan the NCCJ's highest honor, that he should convey to his friend how truly Elie Wiesel spoke when he said the cemetery where Nazis are buried "is not your place. Your place is with the victims of the SS."

Sincerely yours,

  
Gerald A. Renner

pc:

The White House  
NCCJ leadership



April 21, 1985

CHANCELLOR KOHL HOLDS KEY TO PRESIDENT REAGAN'S  
DILEMMA OVER VISIT TO GERMANY

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
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It was Elie Wiesel's finest hour in his long and anguished service as witness to the Nazi holocaust. In the splendor of the Capitol Rotunda, before members of the Cabinet, numerous Congressmen, and hundreds of Americans, he stated the moral issue clearly and movingly:

"Auschwitz was conceived, structured, elaborated, perfected, built, organized and implemented by the SS. They were the killers of Jews primarily, but not only of Jews. They butchered Poles and Czechs, French and Dutch, Norwegians and Danes, Yugoslavs, Ukrainians, Greeks, gypsies and gays. Auschwitz was a universe and the SS were its gods. Why, then, should anyone visit, and by doing so, honor their cemetery as though they had been nothing but patriotic soldiers who died for their homeland?"

The day before, on Tuesday, I stood beside President Reagan in the White House offices and I could see his despair. He understood the moral logic of what Elie Wiesel was saying for all of us. The President tried to respond by announcing then that he planned to visit a concentration camp and honor the memory of the victims of the Nazis.

White House aides told me that the President wants not to go to the Bitburg cemetery and its SS graves. But Chancellor Kohl is adamant and insists on it. The German Chancellor's decision is unwise, for he will transform reconciliation into alienation.

I am now persuaded that President Reagan will do everything possible to minimize Bitburg, and maximize his identification with the victims, rather than the perpetrators, of the Nazi horrors.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is director of the international relations department of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

# Statements & Speeches



Federal Republic of Germany

Editor: Hans Wiessmann

Vol. VII No. 11, April 22, 1985

Address  
by Dr. Helmut Kohl,  
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany,  
During the Ceremony Marking the 40th Anniversary  
of the Liberation of the Concentration Camps  
at the Site of the Former Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp

April 21, 1985

ARCHIVES



**GERMAN INFORMATION CENTER, 950 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022 (212) 888-9840**

Reprinting Permitted

"O earth, cover not thou their blood" - these words, taken from the Book of Job and inscribed on the Jewish memorial over there, have today summoned us here to mourn, to remember, to seek reconciliation. We are gathered here in memory of the many innocent people who were tortured, humiliated and driven to their deaths at Bergen-Belsen, as in other camps. This site's admonition to us must not go unheard or be forgotten. It must be heeded by us as we define our basic political principles and requires each of us to examine his own life and way of thinking in the light of the suffering sustained here. Reconciliation with the survivors and descendants of the victims is only possible if we accept our history as it really was, if we Germans acknowledge our shame and our historical responsibility, and if we perceive the need to act against any efforts aimed at undermining human freedom and dignity.

For twelve years, the light of humanity in Germany and Europe was concealed by ubiquitous violence. Germany under the National-Socialist regime filled the world with fear and horror. That era of slaughter, indeed of genocide, is the darkest, most painful chapter in German history. One of our country's paramount tasks is to inform people of those occurrences and keep alive an awareness of the full extent of this historical burden. We must not nor shall we ever forget the atrocities committed under the Hitler regime, the mockery and destruction of all moral precepts, the systematic inhumanity of the Nazi dictatorship. A nation that abandons its history forsakes itself. The presence of history is illustrated in a particularly cogent manner by the survivors of Bergen-Belsen who are here today at the invitation of the Central Jewish Council.

We recall above all the persecution and murder of the Jews, the pitiless war which man, in the final analysis, waged against himself. Bergen-Belsen, a town in the middle of Germany, remains a mark of Cain branded in the minds of our nation, just like Auschwitz and Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor, Chelmno and Majdanek and the many other sites testifying to that mania for destruction. They epitomize what man can do against his fellow beings out of hatred and blindness. We do not know exactly how many people perished here at Bergen-Belsen. They numbered more than 50,000. But what does this figure tell us about how death befell every individual, his next of kin, his family? Vicariously for them all I name Anne Frank. She was 15 years old when she died here a few days before the liberation of the camp. We do not know exactly how her life was extinguished. But we know what awaited people here, how they were maltreated, what pain they suffered. Their lives, their human dignity were wholly at the mercy of their tormentors.

Despite their own great suffering, many inmates found the strength to stand by others, to turn to their fellow beings and offer them solace and consolation. An old Jewish saying goes: "Whoever saves a human life saves the whole world." A few known and many unknown detainees afforded their fellow beings strength at that time of great agony. We also recall those courageous people who, in their everyday lives under the Nazi dictatorship, gave the persecuted a refuge at the risk of their own lives. They all helped to save our conception of man as God's image on earth.

Forty years ago, Bergen-Belsen was liberated. But for thousands of people in this camp, salvation came too late: too drained were their bodies, too

deeply scarred their souls. The National-Socialist despol of mankind was demonstrated not only in the concentration camps. It was ubiquitous, just as the dictatorship was totalitarian. Violence prevailed everywhere, and everywhere people were shadowed, persecuted and abducted, they were incarcerated, tortured and murdered. They were people from all walks of life, people of many nationalities, faiths and creeds, and with highly different political convictions. From the very outset, the terror of the totalitarian regime was directed against the Jews in particular. Envy and crude prejudice, nurtured over the centuries, culminated in an ideology of manic racism. The mass graves here show us where that led to.

Today, forty years later, it is still our duty to ask ourselves how a culture could disintegrate, to whose development and maturity German Jews in particular made an outstanding contribution. Many of them clearly professed themselves German patriots. Throughout the world they were representatives and ambassadors of German and Western culture. When the forces of evil seized power in Germany, the Jews were deprived of their rights and driven out of the country. The regime officially declared them "subhumans" and condemned them to the "final solution". Those have become Nazi terms in the German language - In the language of Goethe and Lessing, of Immanuel Kant and Edmund Husserl, of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Leo Baeck. That misanthropic regime also violated our language.

But even before that it poisoned the spirit of the nation. The rulers were the henchmen of anarchy. With their arrogant use of power and their unbridled demands, they blinded the nation and then plunged an entire continent into misery. The deepest cause of this destruction was the accelerating disintegration of values and morals. In the final analysis, the totalitarian State was the product of the renegation of God. The Nazi regime's hypocritical invocation of "godly providence" merely served to gloss over their own arbitrariness. That was and remains indeed the gravest perversion of religious faith: contempt for the living God professed by the great religions.

This darkest chapter of our history must always serve as a reminder to us, not because of the question of why those who risked their lives in opposing the terror ultimately failed in their efforts. The decisive question is, instead, why so many people remained apathetic, did not listen properly, closed their eyes to the realities when the despots-to-be solicited support for their inhumane programme, first in back rooms and then openly out in the streets. The intentions of the National-Socialists were apparent well before 9 November 1938, when 35,000 Jews were abducted to concentration camps. We ask ourselves today why it was not possible to take action when the signs of National-Socialist tyranny could no longer be overlooked - when books regarded as great cultural works of this century were burned, when synagogues were set on fire, when Jewish shops were demolished, when Jewish citizens were denied a seat on park benches. Those were warnings. Even though Auschwitz was beyond anything that man could imagine, the pitiless brutality of the Nazis had been clearly discernible. At the Barmen Synod in 1934, Hans Asmussen clear-sightedly warned of the designs of the new rulers:

"They claim to be redeemers, but prove to be the tormentors of an unredeemed world."

The truth of this utterance is clear to us today. Millions of Jews fell victim to the National-Socialist terror. The horror of this occurrence is still with us today. In view of such depravity, one could use the words of St Augustine who once said:

"To myself I have become a land of misery."

Like the Jews, many other innocent people fell victim to persecution. We cannot separate the ashes of the murdered. Let us here remember those victims, too. The racial hatred of the National-Socialists was also directed against gypsies. In the mass graves before our eyes lie countless Sinti and Romany gypsies. The inscription here at Bergen-Belsen reads: "Their violent death exhorts the living to oppose injustice." We mourn all those who lost their lives under the totalitarian regime because of their unswerving faith - among them many who refused to render military service on religious grounds.

A totalitarian State claims to possess the absolute truth, to be alone in knowing what is good and what is bad. It does not respect the individual's conscience. It seeks to provide its own answers not only to the penultimate questions, those of politics, but also to the final questions, those concerning the meaning and value of our lives. Only in this way could there arise the demonic official dogma that certain lives are not worth living. Only in this way could Mengele and others perform horrifying experiments on living people.

We recall the persecution of the mentally handicapped, of those people who were branded as social outcasts, and of the many others who, for highly different reasons, were slaughtered - some of them simply because they expressed doubts about the so-called final victory.

When this camp was set up, Russian prisoners-of-war were first brought here. Their accommodation and treatment amounted to no less than torture. Over 50,000 died alone in this region around Bergen. This we must also remember today and in future: Of the almost 6 million Soviet soldiers who were captured by the Germans as prisoners-of-war, far less than half survived. Hence at this hour we also reflect on the suffering inflicted in the name of Germany on the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe. We commemorate the 20 million people from the Soviet Union who died during the war. We remember the crimes perpetrated against the Polish nation. And we also mourn those people who suffered from Nazi injustice being repaid with new injustice, those Germans who fled their home regions and perished during the flight. But we would not have learned anything from history if we were to set off atrocities against each other.

Germany bears historical responsibility for the crimes of the Nazi tyranny. This responsibility is reflected not least in never-ending shame.

We shall not let anything in this context be falsified or made light of. It is precisely the knowledge of guilty involvement, irresponsibility, cowardice and failure that enables us to perceive depravity and nip it in the bud. The totalitarianism that prevailed in Germany from 30 January 1933 onwards is not an unrepeatable deviation from the straight and narrow, not an "accident

of history". An alert and sensitive stance is needed above all towards any views and attitudes that can pave the way for totalitarian rule:

- belief in ideologies which claim to know the goals of history and promise paradise on earth,
- the failure to exercise freedom responsibly, and
- apathy about violations of human dignity, basic rights and the precept of peace.

Peace begins with respect for the unconditional, absolute dignity of the individual in all spheres of life. The suffering and death of people, the victims of inhumanity, urge us to preserve peace and freedom, to promote law and justice, to perceive man's limits and to follow our path in humility before God.

What Konrad Adenauer said here at Bergen-Belsen in February 1960 remains valid:

"I believe we could not choose a better place than this one to give a solemn pledge to do our utmost so that every human being - irrespective of the nation or race to which he belongs - enjoys justice, security and freedom on earth in the future."

The collapse of the Nazi dictatorship on 8 May 1945 was a day of liberation for the Germans. It soon became apparent, however, that it did not mean freedom for everyone. We in the free part of our fatherland have, following the experience of Hitler's dictatorship, made it a rule that especially in central political questions man must decide on and for himself. We have established a free republic, a democracy based on the rule of law. The founders of our democratic country perceived and took advantage of the moment which Werner Nachmann spoke of. By possessing the strength to face up to the responsibility imposed by history, they restored for us the value and dignity of freedom that is exercised responsibly. For this reason, we have also linked ourselves irrevocably to the community of free Western democracies based on shared values and entered into a permanent alliance with them. This was only possible because those nations - and not least former concentration camp inmates and the relatives of victims of the Nazi dictatorship - reached out their hands to us in reconciliation. Many of those nations directly experienced Nazi terror in their own country. There was bitter hatred for those who had come to subjugate and maltreat them - hatred which ultimately was directed against the entire German nation. We in the free part of Germany realize what it means, following Auschwitz and Treblinka, to have been taken back into the free Western community. Those nations did so not least with the justified expectation that we will not disown the crimes perpetrated in the name of Germany against the nations of Europe.

Today, 40 years later, we continue to acknowledge that historical liability. Precisely because we Germans must never dismiss from our minds that dark era of our history, I am today addressing you and our fellow countrymen as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. We have learned the lessons

of history, especially the history of this century. Human dignity is inviolable. Peace must emanate from German soil.

Our reconciliation and friendship with France is a boon to the Germans and the French, to Europe and the world as a whole. We also wish to attain such a peaceful achievement in our relations with our Polish neighbours.

We are grateful that reconciliation was possible with the Jewish people and the State of Israel, that friendship is again growing particularly among young people. And we respectfully pay tribute to those men and women who, looking to the future, were prepared to surmount the strength of hatred with the force of humanity. We are especially thankful to eminent representatives of the nation of Israel like Nahum Goldmann and David Ben Gurion. We are also grateful to Konrad Adenauer. They all sought reconciliation.

Reparations were paid to secure a homeland for the Jews and to assist the survivors of the holocaust. However, today we know just as we did then: suffering and death, pain and tears are not susceptible to reparations. The only answer can be collective commemoration, collective mourning, and a collective resolve to live together in a peaceful world.

In his memorial address at the Cologne Synagogue on 9 November 1978, Nahum Goldmann recalled the creative mutual influence of Jews and Germans and spoke of a "unique, historical occurrence". This co-existence of Jews and Germans in particular has a long, eventful history. It has been examined only little until now and is scarcely known to many people. For this reason we intend to promote the establishment of an "Archive for the study of Jewish history in Germany". We want to trace German-Jewish interaction through history. Over many centuries, Jews made decisive contributions to German culture and history. And it is an accomplishment of historical import that, even after 1945, Jewish compatriots were prepared to assist us in building the Federal Republic of Germany. We wish to preserve this memory, too, in order to strengthen our resolve to live together in a better future. It is therefore essential to make it clear to the upcoming generation that tolerance and an open-minded attitude towards one's fellow beings are irreplaceable virtues without which a polity cannot survive. Emulating each other in the quest for humanity is the most pertinent answer to the failure of an era marked by intolerance and the abuse of power. At Yad va-Shem, the words of a Jewish mystic of the early 18th century became firmly impressed upon my mind:

"Seeking to forget makes exile all the longer; the secret of redemption lies in remembrance."

For this reason, the exhortation expressed here at Bergen-Belsen rightly is

"O earth, cover not thou their blood".





## THE BITBURG AFFAIR

### An American Jewish Committee Background Memorandum

In the more than four eventful years of the Reagan presidency, no Administration stance has generated as much criticism as the White House announcement that the President would visit the military cemetery at Bitburg during his trip to Germany to commemorate the end of World War II. The decision to honor the German war dead, which came shortly after an earlier announcement that the President's plans did not include a visit to the German concentration camp at Dachau, brought protests from American veterans' groups, religious and ethnic leaders of all faiths and, of course, the American Jewish community, which was especially pained by the insensitivity inherent in the President's selected itinerary. The protests grew into a firestorm, however, when it was revealed that some four dozen members of the Waffen SS -- the Nazi elite guard feared and hated throughout Nazi-occupied Europe, and particularly implicated in both the "Final Solution" (the plans for the total extermination of Europe's Jewry) and the massacre of American soldiers during the Battle of the Bulge -- were buried at the Bitburg cemetery.

In the days that followed, the White House sought to contain the damage by announcing that the President would, after all, visit a concentration camp; but some of President Reagan's efforts to explain why the Bitburg cemetery visit would not be cancelled added further fuel to the fire. As American Jewish Committee President Howard I. Friedman explained in a statement issued on April 18:

We had hoped that the President's welcome announcement that he would visit a concentration camp, and the equally welcome indication that a more appropriate memorial than the Bitburg cemetery might ultimately be selected, would put this matter behind us. But the President's statement today -- that those in Bitburg cemetery are just as surely the victims as those who were in the concentration camps -- constrains us to express our deep disappointment. Soldiers die in all wars. That is always a human tragedy. But there is no parallel in human history for the genocide attempts against the Jewish people. Surely those victims of the Holocaust cannot be viewed, in moral terms, to represent the same kind of tragedy as befell soldiers acting on behalf of Nazi Germany. There is simply no parallel between genocide and the tragedy of lives lost in war. The President of the United States, as the leader of this country, should understand this elementary distinction.

Over the next few days, pleas for the President to change his itinerary reached the White House not only from representatives of virtually every major veterans' group and every national American Jewish organization, but also from leaders of many important Christian, ethnic and racial groups as well. When it became clear that the decision would not be reversed, the rhetoric in some quarters became sharper, shriller and more extreme.

As one of the first groups to call upon the President not to visit the Bitburg cemetery -- and later to applaud his decision to visit the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where Anne Frank died -- the American Jewish Committee is deeply saddened by the failure of the White House to understand fully the moral anguish this episode has caused millions of Americans, Jewish and non-Jewish. But whatever the ultimate decision regarding the President's itinerary might be, the Committee is convinced that the larger task is to put the Bitburg experience in perspective, and to help the American people and its leaders to comprehend clearly the issues behind the protest.

### The Moral Imperatives

The Holocaust was, in many ways, a disaster unique to Jews. As Elie Wiesel so movingly explained to President Reagan, in his White House speech on April 19 accepting the Congressional Gold Medal of Achievement: "Not all victims were Jews. But all the Jews were victims." For the major purpose of that grim, demonic exercise was to search out and destroy Jews because they were Jews. The lessons of the Holocaust, however, are not unique to Jews; they are lessons for all of mankind: Lessons about a common humanity. Lessons about a common risk when inhumanity triumphs. Lessons about the importance of remembering.

President Reagan has a laudable record of friendship to Jews in this country and abroad; of support for Israel; of concern for Soviet Jewry; of direct involvement in the rescue of Ethiopian Jewry. The lapse in judgment evidenced in the Bitburg decision, serious though it be, does not reveal, as some have declared, a latent anti-Semitism in the White House. It does, however, indicate a shocking insensitivity as well as a surprising failure to fully appreciate the symbolism which surrounds every Presidential action.

The President of the United States sets a moral example not only for the American people, but for men and women the world over who look to this country for leadership. Forty years after a conflict in which more than 45 million men, women and children died -- 6 million of them Jews, over 400,000 of them Americans -- the President of the United States ought not to be perceived as confusing reconciliation with forgetfulness.

### Working for Reconciliation

Nineteen years ago, at the AJC's Sixtieth Anniversary celebration in May 1966, Jacob Blaustein, then President of the Committee and Senior Vice President of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, spoke of the criticism the AJC had faced for its "pragmatic position toward postwar Germany, and our insistence that 60,000,000 Germans could not be kept forever beyond the pale of world society..." Mr. Blaustein was describing the American Jewish Committee's involvement in the successful efforts to gain restitution from Germany for the victims of Nazism and their heirs in Israel and other parts of the world. But AJC involvement with postwar Germany predated the restitution agreements. A project initiated by its Executive Vice-President, John Slawson, in 1960 and sponsored by the Committee for more than a decade, brought groups of German educators to the United States each year for first-hand experience in how American democracy functions, and for training in how to teach democratic values to a younger generation whose parents had so disastrously lost their way.

More recently, under the joint sponsorship of the American Jewish Committee and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, an annual German-American Jewish Exchange Program has brought young West German leaders from academe, government, and other fields to the United States, and young American Jewish leaders to Germany, in an extraordinary program of cultural exchange and enhanced understanding. A similar program, in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, sponsors biannual exchanges of senior German and American Jewish leadership. In cooperation with the American Jewish Committee's Interreligious Affairs Department, German universities and religious centers have studied the roots of Nazism and anti-Semitism. And when political differences have surfaced -- such as the German sale of arms to Arab countries -- the American Jewish Committee has not hesitated to make its representations to the German Government with anticipation that its words and its views would be carefully weighed.

In July 1984, AJC President Howard I. Friedman, the only representative of a Jewish organization ever to address a commemorative gathering of West German and world leaders, spoke at the Berlin observances marking the 40th anniversary of the effort to assassinate Hitler and overthrow the Nazi regime. Hailing the "new Germany" for its commitment to "upholding the sanctity of human life, defending constitutional democracy... and building a world order based on mutual respect among all members of the human family," Mr. Friedman took the occasion to stress the AJC's efforts to promote understanding between Jews and Germans. This is reconciliation without compromise and without forgetting.

Welcoming Germany back into the family of free nations and promoting increased understanding between Germans and Jews, does not, and cannot, mean forgetting the Holocaust. The AJC's officers, its Washington Representative, who is a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, and other AJC leaders have all spoken out repeatedly and eloquently in opposition to President Reagan's Bitburg visit. The AJC has worked ceaselessly to assure that young people the world over learn about the Holocaust in their schools, their churches and their synagogues, so that they can come to appreciate the universality of its lessons. AJC pamphlets and study guides have provided background for teachers, columnists, dramatists, television writers. Always the moral drawn is the same: that while the suffering of the Jews was unique, the tragedy belongs to all mankind, as does the responsibility for seeing that it does not happen again.

\* \* \*

The overwhelming criticism that greeted the White House announcement of the President's plan to visit the Bitburg cemetery is evidence that the American people have taken the lessons of the Holocaust to heart; for it indicates that the White House decision goes against the grain of what Americans of all faiths feel is right and proper. In the long run, this closing of ranks and refusal to remain silent, even at the risk of offending the most important leader of the most important nation in the world today, is perhaps the most important outcome of the Bitburg affair.

April 24, 1985

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# NEWS

FROM THE

# COMMITTEE



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

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

*MORTON YARMON, Director of Public Relations*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NEW YORK, April 24. . . A score of non-Jewish religious and ethnic groups have joined veteran and Jewish organizations in protesting President Reagan's plan to visit the German military cemetery at Bitburg, where 47 Waffen SS soldiers are among its 2,000 dead.

Commenting on the numerous expressions of support by Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Italian, Black, Hispanic and Asian national and local organizations, Howard I. Friedman, President of the American Jewish Committee, stated that "reactions over the last few days from Americans of many backgrounds and faiths have reinforced our conviction that the Bitburg cemetery cannot be an appropriate symbol for reconciliation."

Mr. Friedman cited a number of messages sent by leaders of the non-Jewish groups to President Reagan, including one from Arie R. Brouwer, general secretary, National Council of Churches of Christ, USA:

"We view with dismay your decision to make an official visit to Bitburg Cemetery. A visit to the cemetery where Nazi war criminals are buried exacerbates wounds rather than heals them. We ask you to reconsider this unfortunate decision so that the world may know this nation's total disdain for the policy that produced the Nazi Holocaust."

Dr. Eugene Fisher, director of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops Secretariat for Christian-Jewish Relations, praised President Reagan's decision to commemorate the Holocaust during his trip to West Germany, but added the decision did not resolve "the real question: Why is he going to go and pay tribute to the Waffen SS?"

"These were not just kids drafted into the army," Dr. Fisher said, "but an elite corps whose ideology was to kill the innocent."

He added that the Waffen SS "not only butchered Jews but also killed unarmed American prisoners of war. The Nuremberg court declared them a criminal association."

Aloysius A. Mazewski, President of the Polish American Congress, Inc., told President Reagan:

*/more/*

Howard I. Friedman, President; Theodore Ellenoff, Chair, Board of Governors; Alfred H. Moses, Chair, National Executive Council; Robert S. Jacobs, Chair, Board of Trustees;

David M. Gordis, Executive Vice-President

Washington Office, 2027 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 • Europe hq.: 4 Rue de la Bienfaisance, 75008 Paris, France • Israel hq.: 9 Ethiopia St., Jerusalem 95149, Israel

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"Americans of Polish descent are dismayed by your announced decision to attend ceremonies in memory of German soldiers, including members of the notorious SS division, killed in World War II, while declining to pay tribute to the countless victims of the Nazi-German Holocaust."

Matthew G. Nizza, Chairman of the Commission for Social Justice of the New York Order of Sons of Italy in America, stated that "to honor the graves in which Nazi SS officers are buried is to pay homage to those who willingly participated in the most infamous act of genocide in the history of our planet."

Mr. Friedman also quoted the following message of support the American Jewish Committee had received from the Rev. Gardner Taylor, pastor of the Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn:

"Along with great number of black people we join you in outrage at the planned visit of President Reagan to the Bitburg Nazi cemetery containing the graves of barbarous mass murderers and criminals against our common humanity."

Mr. Friedman also quoted part of a joint telegram to President Reagan in which leaders of a coalition of white ethnic, Black, Hispanic, and Asian ethnic groups told the President: "We feel that your visit to the military cemetery at Bitburg would insult the memory of the Americans, Europeans and North Africans who died at the hands of the Nazis."

The joint statement continued: "We add our united voice to the chorus of the Jewish people, American veterans organizations, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, a majority of the United States Senate, including leaders of your own party, and thousands of American families who continue to mourn for fathers, husbands, brothers and sons slain by the Nazis during World War II, in urging you to cancel your visit to the cemetery."

Among other leaders of national groups who protested President Reagan's visit were Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director, NAACP; Raul Yzaguirre, President, National Council of La Raza; Joseph M. Trevino, Executive Director, League of United Latin American Citizens; S. Andrew Chen, National President, Organization of Chinese Americans; Joseph Tateishi, Redress Director, Japanese Americans Citizens' League; Le Xuan Khoa, Executive Director, Indochina Resource Action Center; John Kromkowski, President, National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs; and Fred Rotondaro, Executive Director, National Italian American Foundation; Andrew Athens, National Chairman, United Hellenic American Congress; Joaquin Avila, President and General Council, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund; Dr. Myron Kuropas, Supreme Vice President, Ukrainian National Association, National Ethnic Liaison, Americans for Human Rights in Ukraine; Anthony J. Fornelli, Past President, UNCIO National; Julian E. Kulas, member, Board of Directors, Ukrainian Congress Committee of America

Among the local signatories were Stanley Balzekas, Jr., President, Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture; Edwin Cudecki, former Chairperson, Illinois Consultation on Ethnicity in Education; Ross Harano, Chairman, Mayor's Advisory Council on Asian Affairs, City of Chicago, former Midwest District Governor, Japanese American Citizens League.

Others were Mitchell Kobelinski, President, Copernicus Foundation, former President, Polish American Congress; Winston Liang, President, Greater Chicago Chapter, Organization of Chinese Americans.

Also joining in the statement were Edward Marciniak, President, Institute for Urban Life, Loyola University, former President, National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs; Rev. Herbert Martin, President, Chicago Southside Branch, NAACP; Ray Romero, Chicago Regional Director, Associate Counsel, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Connie Seals, Chairperson, Illinois Consultation on Ethnicity in Education; Maria Medina Seidner, Chairperson, ASPIRA Inc., of Illinois, Past President, National Association for Bilingual Education; Rev. Vilis Varaberga, President, Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Speaking for the American Jewish Committee, Mr. Friedman stated:

"Let it be clearly understood: there can be no reconciliation with the unspeakable horrors perpetrated by the SS. The SS were the chief agents of Hitler's war against the Jews; they manned the ramparts of the Holocaust kingdom. It would be morally obscene for the President of the United States -- however well-meaning his intentions -- to lay a wreath at a cemetery containing SS graves."

Two other AJC officials, Rabbi A. James Rudin, National Director of Religious Affairs, and Irving M. Levine, Director of National Affairs and Director of the AJC's Institute for American Pluralism, issued a joint statement:

"It is heartwarming that such a diverse group of American ethnic and religious leaders have declared themselves so emphatically as being opposed to President Reagan's Bitburg cemetery visit. It is an issue that has touched deep emotional chords among all sections of the American public whose memories of why we fought against Nazi brutality have not been extinguished by time. Their voices heard now will make it more difficult for their children to forget the Holocaust and its meaning to all mankind."

The American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. Founded in 1906, it combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people everywhere.

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## Dole, Wick Join Critics

### Of Trip 4.25.85

By Lou Cannon  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-Kan.) and U.S. Information Agency Director Charles Z. Wick yesterday joined the critics of President Reagan's scheduled May 5 visit to a German military cemetery, but White House chief of staff Donald T. Regan said, "We are going to Bitburg, period."

Regan said, however, that the ceremony in the cemetery where the graves of 47 troops of the Nazi SS are among 2,000 was "still under discussion," indicating for the first time that the president might do something other than lay a wreath.

Wick, a longtime Reagan friend, stopped short of urging the president to call off the Bitburg ceremony but called the trip "a tragedy" that the Soviets would exploit for propaganda advantage. Dole said it would be "a mistake" for Reagan to go to the ceremony, but also did not ask him to cancel it.

Wick told reporters at a breakfast meeting that "the Russians are going to have a field day" recounting Reagan's visit to the cemetery. Later in the day, he told The Washington Post that

See TRIP, A6, Col 2

# Dole and Wick Join Critics Of Reagan Trip to Cemetery

TRIP, From A1

he is preparing a summary of foreign press reaction, much of it critical, for the president to peruse.

"Obviously, what set out to be a very positive undertaking is now very negative," Wick said.

While Republican strategists have been searching for an escape hatch that would enable Reagan to avoid the embarrassment of being photographed in a cemetery with SS graves, Regan and other officials reiterated that Reagan intends to keep his commitment to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and go to the cemetery.

"In the absence of some further development, Helmut Kohl believes that his reputation is now dependent upon Ronald Reagan going through with this thing," said a senior administration official.

In Bonn, West German government spokesman Peter Boenisch confirmed that U.S. officials had tried to persuade Kohl to

cancel the visit in a letter written before Reagan reaffirmed his commitment to the trip in a telephone conversation with Kohl last Friday.

Boenisch said that U.S.-German relations could be harmed if Reagan called off the trip and said his government found it "difficult to understand why the president cannot visit a German cemetery that Allied soldiers have visited for the last 25 years."

"Let the dead rest in peace," he said.

In New York, former West German chancellor Willy Brandt, an underground opponent of the Nazis during the war, said that it was well known in Bitburg that the cemetery contained graves of SS men who massacred U.S. prisoners of war, and added that he was "astonished" this information was not passed on to Reagan.

At the White House, officials privately expressed frustration at Kohl's unwillingness to end the controversy by selecting an alternative site.

One official said that Reagan's "long un-

derstanding of the significance of the Holocaust and his support for Israel" was being "almost totally obscured" by the controversy. He said that Reagan had given his word to Kohl and didn't want to "disappoint someone he considers a friend."

"It is crystal clear that Kohl is unlikely to change his mind," said another official familiar with the U.S.-German negotiations on the visit. "Reagan is even more unlikely to change because he has given his word."

Meanwhile, a score of non-Jewish religious and ethnic groups added their voices to the chorus of protests against the Reagan visits. Howard I. Friedman, president of the American Jewish Committee, said that the protests of black, Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Hispanic and Asian national organizations "have reinforced our conviction that the Bitburg ceremony cannot be an appropriate symbol for reconciliation."

White House officials confirmed that Marshall Breger, the administration's liaison official for Jewish affairs, had tried in advance to soften Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel's criticisms of the visit moments before Wiesel spoke at the White House last Friday.

They said Breger had asked Wiesel to make a private appeal to Reagan to cancel the visit rather than a public one. Wiesel rejected the suggestion.



CHARLES Z. WICK  
... refers to projected trip as "a tragedy"



SEN. ROBERT J. DOLE  
... says it would be "a mistake" to go

TELEGRAM

April 24, 1985

President Ronald Reagan  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

As a coalition of leaders in white ethnic, Black, Hispanic and Asian ethnic communities, we feel that your visit to the military cemetery at Bitburg would insult the memory of the Americans, Europeans and North Africans who died at the hands of the Nazis.

Thus, we add our united voice to the chorus of the Jewish people, American veterans organizations, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, a majority of the United States Senate including leaders of your own party, and thousands of American families who continue to mourn for fathers, husbands, brothers and sons slain by the Nazis during World War II, in urging you to cancel your visit to the cemetery.

We feel that, because such a cemetery visit would honor those who fought for principles repugnant to Americans, it would run counter to the compassion and democratic values of our nation. We believe the American people want to remember and commemorate the events of World War II which stand out against the landscape of human tragedy.

We accept your statement that the trip to West Germany is designed to show respect for the evolution of the Federal Republic into a truly democratic society. But laying a wreath at the graves of those who sought to destroy democracy and other values Americans cherish serves only to diminish respect for the United States and its presidency.

Perhaps it is true that many teenage Nazi soldiers buried at Bitburg were conscripted against their will. We are sorry for that. But they became part of a system that acted in a consistently brutal pattern until the very end of the war. The army they joined was responsible for the slaughter of American prisoners of war, the destruction of European Jewry and the murder of Christians in every nation that Germany invaded.

The United States and, today, the Federal Republic of Germany, are two of the world's great democracies. Both nations can save face only by remaining faithful to the values and traditions that distinguish them from Nazi Germany.

We strongly urge you to cancel your visit to the cemetery at Bitburg.

Institute for American Pluralism  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, N.Y.



NATIONAL SIGNATORIES

Raul Yzaguirre, President  
National Council of LaRaza

Joseph M. Trevino, Executive Director  
League of United Latin American Citizens

S. Andrew Chen, National President  
Organization of Chinese Americans

Joseph Tateishi, Redress Director  
Japanese American Citizens' League

Le Xuan Khoa, Executive Director  
Indochina Resource Action Center

John Kromkowski, President  
National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs

Fred Rotondaro, Executive Director  
National Italian American Foundation

Aloysius Mazewski, President  
Polish American Congress

Joaquin Avila, President & General Counsel  
Mexican American Legal Defense &  
Education Fund

Andrew Athens, National Chairman  
United Hellenic American Congress

Anthony J. Fornelli, Past President,  
UNICO National

Julian Kulas, Board of Directors,  
Ukrainian Congress Committee of America

Myron Kuropas, Supreme President,  
Ukrainian National Association

Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director  
NAACP

Mathew Nizza  
Chairman, Committee on Social Justice  
New York Order, Sons of Italy

LOCAL SIGNATORIES

Stanley Balzekas, Jr., President  
Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture

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Illinois Consultation on Ethnicity  
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Ross Harano  
Chairman  
Mayor's Advisory Council on  
Asian Affairs, City of Chicago;  
former Midwest District Governor  
Japanese American Citizens League

Mitchell Kobelinski, President  
Copernicus Foundation;  
former President  
Polish American Congress

Dr. Andrew T. Kopan  
National Ethnic Liaison  
United Hellenic American Congress

Winston Liang  
President  
Greater Chicago Chapter,  
Organization of Chinese Americans

Edward Marciniak, President  
Institute for Urban Life  
Loyola University;  
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National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs

Rev. Herbert Martin  
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Maria Medina Seidner  
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ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois;  
past President  
National Association for  
Bilingual Education

Rev. Vilis Varsbergs  
President  
Latvian Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America

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SUCCESS THEY CALL ME CAN YOU GET A GORDON W. FRIEDMAN  
LETTER THANKING MAZEWSKI

ELEGRAM

APRIL 15, 1985

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

APR 18 1985

AMERICANS OF POLISH DESCENT ARE DISMAYED BY YOUR  
ANNOUNCED DECISION TO ATTEND CEREMONIES IN MEMORY OF  
GERMAN SOLDIERS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE NOTORIOUS SS  
DIVISION, KILLED IN WORLD WAR II, WHILE DECLINING TO PAY  
TRIBUTE TO THE COUNTLESS VICTIMS OF NAZI-GERMAN HOLO-  
CAUST.

SOME SIX MILLION JEWS, POLES AND CHRISTIANS ALIKE,  
WERE MURDERED BY THE GERMAN INVADERS IN A CALCULATED  
PROGRAM TO EXTERMINATE THE JEWS AND DESTROY POLAND AS  
A VIABLE NATION.

WHILE WE RECOGNIZE EFFORTS OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC  
OF GERMANY TO EVOLVE INTO A TRULY DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY AND  
BECOME MEMBERS OF THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITY OF FREE NATIONS,  
WE CONTEND THAT THE REALITY OF WORLD WAR II TRAUMA AND ITS  
LESSONS, MUST BE FULLY COMPREHENDED BY ALL TO ENSURE THAT  
IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN.

THE POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS  
OF POLISH DESCENT STRONGLY URGES YOU TO RECONSIDER YOUR  
DECISION.

ALOYSIUS A. MAZEWSKI, PRESIDENT  
POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS



# POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS, Inc.

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## NEWS RELEASE

April 15, 1985

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In a telegram sent to President Ronald Reagan, the President of the Polish American Congress, Aloysius A. Mazewski, stated: "Americans of Polish descent are dismayed by your announced decision to attend ceremonies in memory of German soldiers, including members of the notorious SS Division, killed in World War II, while declining to pay tribute to the countless victims of Nazi-German holocaust.

"Some six million Jews, Poles and Christians alike," Mazewski continued, "were murdered by the German invaders in a calculated program to exterminate the Jews and destroy Poles as a viable nation.

"While we recognize efforts of the Federal Republic of Germany to evolve into a truly democratic society and become members of the Atlantic Community of Free Nations, we contend that the reality of World War II trauma and its lessons, must be fully comprehended by all to ensure that it will never happen

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telegram to reagan. - add one and last

again.

"The Polish American Congress on behalf of Americans of Polish descent strongly urges you to reconsider your decision," Mazewski concluded.

- 10 -



TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN  
April 22, 1985

Polish Americans regret your plans to honor the Nazi dead.

Nowhere else did the Hitlerites unleash the insane fury of their bestial rage and hatred as in Poland. They drenched Polish soil with the blood of innocent people.

We mourn the death of six million Polish citizens, most of whom were mercilessly butchered by the type of primitive barbarians who lie in the graves of the German cemetery you will visit. Their goal was to forever destroy everything Polish, be it Christian or Jewish. In the genocide of Europe's Jews, at least half were Poles.

Measured by the numbers who died, Polish Jews and Polish Christians perished almost equally. Measured by percentage, Poland lost more of her population to the Nazis than any other country.

As Christians, we feel compelled to forgive them. As their victims, we find it inconceivable to honor them.

Michael Preisler  
President  
Polish American Congress  
Downstate New York Division  
Roman Catholic survivor of  
Auschwitz #22213

*Statement by Sons of Italy on Reagan's Visit  
to Germany  
April 19, 1985  
the Anti Defamation League*

The Commission for Social Justice of the New York Order Sons of Italy in America called on President Reagan today to cancel his planned trip to a West German Military Cemetery.

Matthew G. Nizza, Chairman of the Commission, stated, "Although we have the highest degree of respect for the President, we strongly feel that such a visit would be an insensitive and unfortunate action. To honor the graves in which Nazi SS Officers are buried is to pay homage to those who willingly participated in the most infamous act of genocide in the history of our planet. Though we believe the President's intentions to be noble, the results would be a grave dishonor to those brave Americans who sacrificed their lives in the name of freedom as well as to those victims of the holocaust who suffered the inhuman atrocities inflicted upon them."

Ronald P. Quartararo, First Vice Chairman of the Commission added, "We believe as does the President that we should continue to improve upon our positive relations with West Germany, but we cannot now nor should we ever close the book on this repulsive chapter of human history. We strongly suggest that the President reconsider his plans.

We suggest as an alternative that the President consider visiting burial sites of the thousands of Italian soldiers and officers who disobeyed orders and saved tens of thousands of Jewish lives from annihilation at the hands of the Nazis.



Let us honor those who put humanity before blind obedience."



**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** April 22, 1985  
**to** Sonya Kaufer  
**from** Irving Levine  
**subject** Themes for Backgrounder on President's German Visit

I would suggest the following themes for development of a backgrounder on AJC and the President's visit to Germany:

1) Reconciliation - reconciliation does not depend upon forgetfulness of evil nor does reconciliation demand forgiveness. Reconciliation in fact depends upon an acceptance of responsibility. All the substance and symbolism of the President's visit must then be in keeping with an accuracy of memory and an assertion of mourning and respect for victims and an acceptance of remorsefulness and even shame by victimizers.

2) Anti-semitism and insensitivity - since the holocaust is the principle symbol of the evil of anti-semitism, it is natural that victims of the holocaust and others might impute anti-semitism to any insensitivity to the memories of the dead even when anti-semitism was not the motive of the insensitivity. All the more reason why the AJC takes this opportunity to remind others that the lessons of the holocaust are deep and profound, affect all mankind and if the lessons are not learned, especially by the leadership of nation's, they are bound to stumble into a morass of contentiousness, a loss of prestige and even make themselves subject to accusations of callousness from which they may never extricate themselves.

3) The Jews and others - While the issue of the President's visit to Bitburg Cemetery has been represented most dramatically by the statements made by such holocaust survivors as Elie Wiesel and other representatives of Jewish life here and abroad there are also important sentiments of outrage at the President's proposed action by leaders of veterans, ethnic and religious groups. Editorials, columns and cartoons have been derisive. Americans from many walks of life are properly regretful at the loss of prestige to the American presidency and still hopeful of a change in the President's plan. When so many important voices are critical and hopeful of a last minute change, the President who has already admitted blame for mishandling this issue should take a few further steps and satisfy both conscience and common sense. In the end he will rescue the prestige of his high office and will be rewarded by history.

IML:vs

Karl-August Hennicke  
Beuttenmüllerstr.17  
757 Baden-Baden

25.4.1985

American-Jewish-Committee

New York NY

Ich glaube, daß mir die Mehrheit der in diesem Lande Lebenden zustimmt, wenn ich Sie bitte, zur Kenntnis zu nehmen, daß Herr Kohl nicht für uns spricht, daß wir uns nicht im geringsten für die Untaten schämen, die nicht wir, sondern die Verbrecher begangen haben, denen auch Herr von Weizsäcker als Offizier treu gedient hat.

Wir lassen uns damit auch nicht erpressen, die Kinder der toten Soldaten denen als Kanonenfutter auszuliefern, deren Haß nicht einmal vor den Gräbern ihrer unschuldigen Väter haltmacht, deren Vertreter trotz der Morde von Dresden und Hamburg in Bonn empfangen werden.

*Karl-August Hennicke*



# THE HAMLIN INSTITUTE

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22 April 1985

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Ms. Marcia S. Littell  
*Director*

Dear Colleague:

Since 1980 there have been more cases in the American courts involving serious challenges to Religious Liberty than in the entire history of the USA before that year (1789-1979).

Religious Liberty involves, whatever fine print may later develop, (first) the free exercise of religion and (second) the prohibition of government sponsorship of a preferred religion. In the academic language, religion is to be voluntary and government is to be secular. In the religious language, it is affirmed that God loves the service of a willing heart (not the formal obeisance of conscripts) and that good government is that government that exercises restraint on matters of ultimate importance.

In what is left of European Christendom, where the old style of coercion has generally collapsed and Ersatzreligionen of both Marxist and fascist type have severely eroded both faithful Christianity and practicing Judaism, a fitful toleration sometimes obtains. But that toleration is very fragile: recent actions of government against "cults and sects" show how readily the crusaders pick up the sword against those who think and act differently in religious matters.

In America too the attack on "cults and sects" has led to widespread justification of government intervention in religious affairs. Beyond that, precedents are being set through judicial and legislative proceedings against minority religions than will in time be available to politicians in attacking the larger and more accepted religions. On many issues, during the last two decades, the only effective areas of opposition to Federal government policies have come from the campuses and from the congregations. It hardly seems accidental that the government actions to bring the colleges and the congregations under control - and there have been several hundred cases involving the campuses as well as several thousand involving the churches - have increased so greatly in recent years.

The Hamlin Institute was founded to further studies in Religious Liberty and persecution, and some of its activities come under the rubric "action research." If you are interested to learn more about it work, please write.

Sincerely yours

Franklin H Littell

POB 2147 - Philadelphia PA 19103

In the first volume of Scholder's monumental Die Kirchen und das Dritte Reich there is a significant citation of a statement by a Nazi official which shows the way the Party in the earlier years appealed to the religious establishment against "sects and cults."

The Roman Catholic hierarchy and the Protestant leaders were nervous about the influence of the German Faith Movement, the German Church Movement, Rosenberg's philosophy, and other hybrid and populist ideological trends within the Party. Article 24 of the Party Platform, which spoke of a "positive Christianity" divorced from sectarian and dogmatic particularities, seemed to threaten the internal government of Catholicism and the internal doctrines of Protestantism. The statement that such discrete items must not threaten the morality or sensibility of the "German Volk" seemed even more ominous.

The Nazi spokesman, Dr. Buttman of Bavaria, an old-timer in the Party, explained in a speech - which at the time attracted much attention and was thereafter often quoted - that the limiting phrases in Article 24 were not aimed at the Catholic or Protestant state-churches. Those churches would certainly not be examined. Rather the phrases expressed the Party's intention to inspect carefully the new communities of faith, and - as he said - to take an approach quite different from the toleration provided in Article 137 of the Weimar Constitution. (pp. 242-43)

Later, one after another of the "newer religions" and smaller religious associations ("cults and sects") were de-registered and de-legitimized by the Third Reich. It was Reinhard Heydrich, infamous as an enemy of the Jews, who in July of 1937 put into effect the policy of using registration and de-registration against "sects and cults" - the policy still used in Soviet Russia today against dissident Baptists, Pentecostals, Jews, etc. Back of this practice, and back of the theory that the state has the right to denominate some religions for approval and others for suppression, is a monochromatic and monolithic model of the Ideal Society. In contrast to political and religious philosophies that affirm the temporal values of pluralism and treasure the transcendent values of inter-religious dialogue, governments that operate on the monolithic model cannot tolerate those who walk out of step with the majority. Sooner or later, every measure is used to bring them to conformity, from synchronization (Gleichschaltung) of those permitted to remain as individuals to liquidation (Endloesung) for those groups defined out of the Ideal Society altogether.

The problem of the suppression of "sects and cults" is not limited to the Third Reich, the Soviet Union, and Khomeini's Iran. In both America and Europe there has been within the last decade a tremendous increase in governmental intervention in religious affairs - beginning, of course, with the groups more unpopular in the public eye. Precedents are being set by which government action to control larger and more difficult targets can be effected. For example, Rev. Sun Myung Moon was sent to prison - and

recently denied parole - for doing exactly what major religious leaders, including all Roman Catholic bishops since the struggle with "Cahenslyism" and local vestries over a century ago, have done for generations: holding in trust for his church membership the finances of the institution. On one front or another, there are more cases presently before the American courts involving threats to Religious Liberty than in the entire history of the American republic from 1789 to 1980!

Partly this flood of Religious Liberty cases is due - like the flood of matriculation and disciplinary campus cases that are winding up in civil courts - to the abandonment of the principle of judicial restraint by our activist courts. Partly it is due to the appointment of so-called specialists to combat "sects and cults," especially in the Jewish Federations and Community Relations Councils, some of whom have failed to make the basic American distinction between appropriate measures in combatting "error" (preaching, teaching, church discipline, etc.) and inappropriate measures (court suits, legislation, administrative decrees, etc.). In good part the problem in America has grown to ominous proportions because the major denominations have ignored it, not feeling involved in the hurts suffered by Mennonites, Independent Baptists, sannyasins, "Moonies," and so on. Of the 12 major Protestant denominations, which comprehend 84% of all American Protestants, not one has in its extensive bureaucracies one fulltime trained specialist in Religious Liberty. Joint action, if and when it comes in a case such as Wisconsin v. Yoder, is put together ad hoc.

In Eastern Europe the smaller religious groups commonly suffer the same problems as larger religious communities, although there is the traditional tendency of the rulers to try to use them to help fragment the religious front. In Western Europe, too, there has been a marked rise in attacks upon "youth religions," "newer religions," "sects and cults." A year ago the European parliament, in an action of which the leftwing Social Democrats and the French Catholic hierarchy were the chief public supporters, sent a resolution ("Cottrell Resolution") to the 14 member governments calling for legislation to suppress the Unification Church ("Moonies"). In Europe, with its tradition of legally enforced "Christendom" and suppression of minorities, the restraints imposed by post-Enlightenment toleration and post-World War II declarations of human rights are evidently still very fragile. Suppressive legislation is in process of preparation in several countries and extraordinary police and administrative actions have been launched in a number of cities against the Bhagwan, Scientology, Unification Church, Hare Krishna...

The situation in West Germany, the German Federal Republic, is especially sensitive. On the one hand the constitution of the Bonn Republic has an excellent statement on Glaubensfreiheit (actually not Religious Liberty, but a broad guarantee of toleration, with a system of tax-supported established churches). On the other hand, several of the established churches have officers (Sektenbeauftragten) whose function is to maintain files of information and take the initiative against "cults and sects." One of these officers, representing the Lutheran Church of Bavaria, has been very active in encouraging police "special actions" (Sonderaktionen) and urging that the "youth religions"/"newer religions"/"cults and sects" be suppressed by legislation and/or decree.

In Germany, as in America, few remember how a few decades ago (even before Hitlerism) the same charges were brought against Methodists and Baptists and others now considered respectable. As one German professor wrote in response to my inquiry as to what was going on, "Although we are in Germany not exactly in the Middle Ages, the prevailing opinion is that the only ones with rights are Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists." This caught your editor's eye because in the Eisenach Convention of the established Protestant churches of Germany about a century ago "sects" were officially defined as "religious fellowships which... are in concert with none of the churches officially recognized in the Peace of Westphalia." At the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which followed on the Thirty Years' War - one of the most dreadful of Europe's wars of religion, the Calvinists were added to the two churches previously approved at Augsburg (1555).

To the specialist in Religious Liberty, the charges and rumors are familiar. Item: One charge against the "Moonies" is that they lead the young astray. Has no one heard of the son of Admiral Thomas Penn, who at the age of 15 was converted to a "crazy sect" whose members wore strange clothes, spoke words of intimacy to strangers, interrupted services in state-church chapels and cathedrals and were jailed for public disorder, refused military service and rejected the oath, kept their hats on in the presence of royalty, saluted the king as "James Stuart" and the humble carpenter also by his full name, observed the Jewish weekly calendar, and claimed an association with the Holy Spirit that sober heads had long since limited to popes and councils? Item: One charge against the sannyasin is that their guru teaches unconventional relations between the sexes. Has no one heard of the "Mormons" (Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints), whose prophet and his brother were murdered by a righteous lynch mob, whose members were hounded out of the USA into the territories, who were the objects of harassment by several branches of government (including police, army, courts and state governors) because (among other aberrations from the prevailing social norms) they practiced polygamy in imitation of the Biblical patriarchs? Today the LDS are among the most respectable of American religious communities. Item: One charge against Scientology is that it is a business, because of the sale of equipment and training procedures used in its program of spiritual self-examination and improvement. Has no one read the great masses of material in which Protestant nativists have charged "the papists" with running a financial racket through the confessional?

And more... much more... There is not a charge brought against contemporary "sects and cults" that was not brought against earlier "heretics," dissenters, "sectarians" and Free Churches - and with about the same proportion of truth and untruth, confused compassion for distraught parents and officially sanctioned cruelty and sadism by persecutors.

There was scheduled for 18-20 March 1985, at the Arnoldshain Conference Center near Frankfurt (perhaps the leading center of inter-religious dialogue in the Bundesrepublik), a conference on Religious Liberty. In addition to lecture/discussions of the history, philosophy and legal status of Religious Liberty, a session was planned to give attention to concrete problems and conflicts. Representatives of groups which have been in recent months the objects of both governmental interventions and free-lance agitation - the Church of Scientology and the Unification Church - were invited to participate in a panel.

The Religious Liberty Conference had to be postponed because of an intensive campaign of letter-writing, telephone calls and semi-official interventions - a campaign apparently organized behind the backs of the Arnoldshain director and his committee by two state-church representatives whose zeal and methods are disturbingly reminiscent of the Taeuferjaeger of the 16th century, not to mention the ideological heresy-hunters of the more modern devotion to Gleichschaltung.

But the recent experience in the German Federal Republic is not alone in symbolizing the thin veneer of toleration which overlays the law of the jungle even in civilized countries. The conference at Arnoldshain was originally one of three, the other two being scheduled for Jerusalem and America. The Jerusalem Conference too has been delayed, in part due to the power of the rightwing Orthodox - whose latest depredations include the burning of the Baptist Church on Narkis Street in Jerusalem and a plot to blow up the Muslim Dome of the Rock (the so-called "Mosque of Omar").

A survey of the world scene indicates that in most countries, without any tradition of either protection for human rights or toleration (and most of them have never even heard of Religious Liberty!), there are no counter-vailing forces at all to persecution. In America, the German Federal Republic and Israel there are at least some leaders and centers which can be mobilized to defend liberty. But the general picture is grim. A breakdown of governments represented in the UN Assembly indicates how few are the countries with any articulate forces against persecution and for liberty of conscience. The score of governments runs approximately as follows:

Marxist dictatorships	26
Muslim dictatorships	17
Military dictatorships (junta type, frequently allied with traditional Roman Catholicism and antisemitic)	29
Old-fashioned despotisms (usually with coercive traditional religion)	14
Republics, new and precariously situated (i.e., easily blackmailed by Arab League oil cartel or terrorists)	30
Constitutional monarchies (established churches, but tolerant)	9
Republics, stable (established churches, but tolerant)	12
Republics with Religious Liberty	13

This breakdown goes far to explain the political-philosophical level of a "world forum" whose members in recent years cheered Idi Amim and Yasser Arafat and passed the infamous "Zionism is racism" resolution.

It also makes graphic the reasons why those in the free world who have not forgotten the lessons of persecution and genocide - especially in the hounding of "heretics", "sects and cults" and Jews in Christendom and of the Jews and Baha'is and Christian minorities in Islam - need now to gird up their loins to do battle for liberty and against Gleichschaltung (whether German or American or Israeli!).

- F. H. L.



# SIGNS OF RECONCILIATION

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF ACTION RECONCILIATION / SERVICE FOR PEACE  
A WEST BERLIN BASED ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATION AND NATIONAL PEACE GROUP  
IN WEST GERMANY

SPRING 1985

## DEFEAT — LIBERATION

### MAY 8th, 1945

In the year 1985 - 40 years after the end of World War II and the collapse of the Nazi State - people in the Federal Republic of Germany discuss whether the 8th of May 1945/1985 is a reason to celebrate or not, and whether the Chancellor of the Federal Republic should speak to the assembly of the union of people expelled from Silesia.

The 8th of May, first of all, reminds us of the path, that led to mass-killings, persecutions and war, and of what we can learn from it. To be reminded of the path which led to the-mass expulsion helps us from getting cause and effect mixed up. The expulsion of 12 million Germans would not have taken place, if it had not been preceded by the war, by the 20 million dead people in the Soviet Union, by the Holocaust against the Jews, by political persecution and concentration camps.

The expulsion, which some experienced as a catastrophe, is not the catastrophe. The expulsion is the effect of the catastrophe which bears the date of January 30, 1933

The 8th of May 1945: Defeat - Liberation. The combination of these two notions provokes us to differentiate between the two, because this combination suggests an 'either or' decision which was in many cases in 1945 not given to Germans. For a very small part of Germans this date means 'Liberation' - and nothing else. The defeat of the 'Third Reich', the end of the war with these victorious allies had been longed for intensely and was cheered at. All hopes for life and freedom were connected to this new beginning. But in regard to Germans, this was only true for a minority.

For another section of Germans, which was significantly larger, this date stands for 'defeat' - and nothing else: apparently Germany had just lost another war. Selfcompassion developed: how much did we suffer - what did we sacrifice ! And fears: how would the victorious enemies take revenge ! For a third part, probably the largest part, fear was mixed with hope, relief with desperation. Defeat and liberation were experienced by those who realized that they barely got away, but also realized - very often not fully aware - that this liberation was an inevitable liberation, a liberation they could never achieve by themselves.

The immediate post-WWII German history was mainly influenced by the demeanour of this third group. The first group was forgotten very soon, it was widely believed that this could be afforded easily with the help of reparations and 'make-good' payments, which were given often too late, only half heartedly and after long fights. The second group withdrew. While the Germans 'who got away' drew adequate consequences out of the fact of the defeat, they did not deal with the fact of the inevitable liberation. The never fully internalized discernment of one's own failure and guilt turned into repression of the past. Large parts of the German population developed an inability to mourn.

cont'd on page 2



For the others, non-Germans, former enemies and victims of the 'Third Reich' this phenomenon resulted in the conviction (combined with adequate behaviour and prejudices) that Germans are quite abnormal people. People are wondering about us, getting angry, annoyed or disgusted about our lack of awareness of history. A lack of awareness of history which need not necessarily be identical with one's own period one is responsible for. The Chancellor of the FRG, Helmut Kohl, is a sad example for this lack of historical awareness. While on a visit to Israel in January 1984 he declared: 'I myself was only 15 years old when the war was over (....) The young German generation refuses to confess guilt of the deeds of the fathers.'

Out of our own lack of sensitivity and historical awareness it does not suit us to condemn our parents' and grandparents' generations.

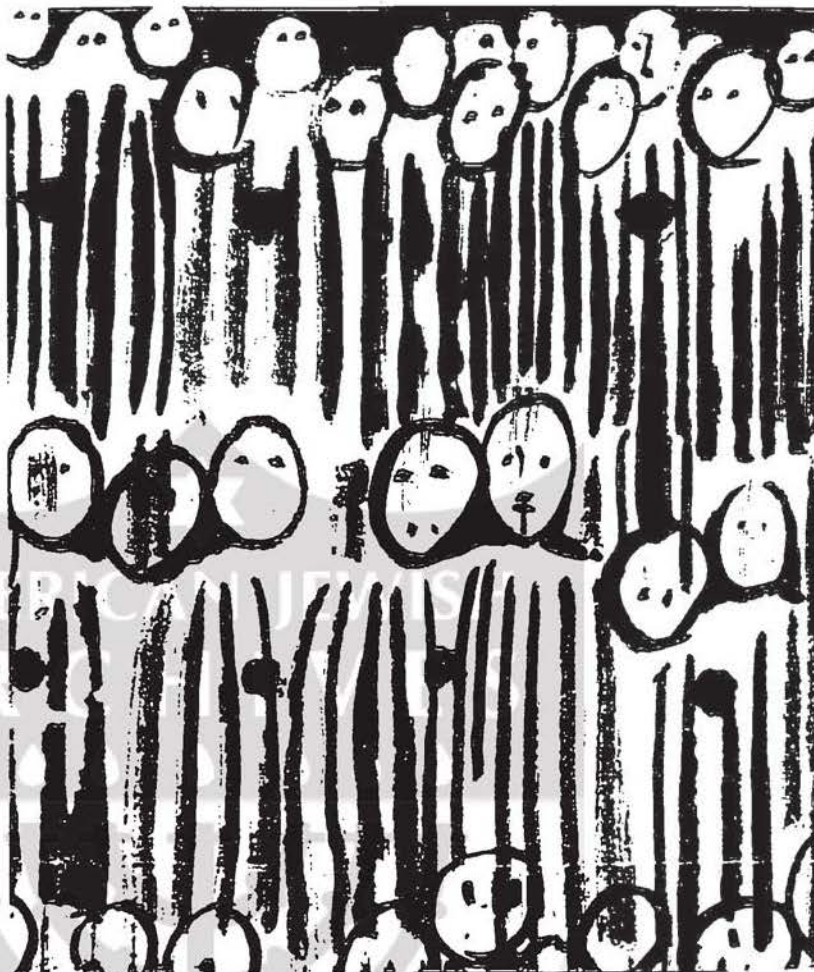
What would we have done if we were twenty or forty years older; or were grown up during this period of German history?

Today we say: we would have resisted. But at that time? Would we be able to recognize evil as such? Why did not our parents, whom we love and honour, resist? Would the same thing have happened to me? Join in or remain silent?

Only if we allow these questions we will be able to realize how deep the crisis is, which is marked with the name 'Auschwitz'. Only then will we be able to realize what human beings can do to their fellow-human beings under certain political conditions. It is important for us to question, to inquire, to collect the remnants. The 8th of May is no reason to celebrate, but a reason to remember, to mourn, for compassion and learning.

A society which represses what happened, which tries to forget what burdens us, is morally sick. A nation always has a history, continuities are effective and a society is always tied to its nation's history. We have to realize that the Nazi state and its injustice had not to be pushed through by a handful of Nazis against a majority by means of violence; it all worked with a prevailing loyalty of the masses:

- lawyers wrote the comments on laws which regulated the persecution;
- a functioning administration organized everything effectively and properly;



- chemists developed the killing gas;
- shareholders of certain companies enjoyed profits;
- railroad men elaborated train schedules according to the 'Final Solution';
- architects built camps and barracks
- factories exploited cheap slave labor;

In short: in one way or another the entire society in Nazi Germany participated, except the ones who resisted by means of risking their lives.

Encounter with our own history and embarrassment helps to overcome forgetfulness and repression. If we do not come to terms with the past we can not understand the present. And if we do not understand the present, we will be weak and faltering when encountering the temptations of the past.

1945 was the year of liberation from Fascism, from inhumanity and total war. Without the defeat, liberation could not have been gained. Only the confession that defeat meant liberation at that time and this confession can mean liberation today: liberation to human, changing behaviour.

In striving for the following: through the knowledge of immeasurable guilt, the attempt to overcome the past, the search for reconciliation, the fight for peace, we hope that the testimony of the murdered millions will be heard so that an order will come about which will prevent a new inferno\*

# May 8th, 1945 A Day of a Chance

Werner Holftfell, a Social democratic state representative from the state of Niedersachsen, sent a letter to the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany: Helmut Kohl. The letter deals with the meaning of May 8th, 1945. We translate the letter and print excerpts.

Dear Mr. Chancellor;

On January 3rd, 40 years ago, the counter attack of the Allies began in the Ardenné Forest, followed soon by breakthroughs of the Soviet Army at the River Vistula and in Eastern Prussia. This was unavoidably the beginning of the collapse of the 'Third Reich'.

I urge you, Mr. Chancellor, to leave the representation of our republic on occasion of the 40th anniversary of the collapse of the Nazi Regime to the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, and I urge you to restrain your opinion in this matter.

In January 1984 you declared in Israel: 'I myself was only 15 years old at the end of the war; a young German generation does not receive German history as a burden, but as a task for the future. (...) The young German generation refuses confessing guilt about the deeds of the fathers.'

These words of yours were criticized, you were accused of superficiality. probably many think that way; according to this way of thinking the terrible, horrible Nazi regime was an accident; at most one generation had failed, the successors of this generation have nothing to do with that. But everybody who speaks for the FRG and in the name of her citizens, at least this person should stay away from indulgence and self-delusion of that kind.

I, who is ten years older than you, am part of this guilty generation. We were manipulated, seduced by a wrong perception of collectivism, which was created by several generations of political and historic failures.

I left school - not yet 18 years old - to join the 'Reichsarbeitsdienst' (Reichs Labor Service) out of an alleged patriotism and without deeper reflection. Interrupted only by several wounds I was fighting as a soldier the entire war time for this terror regime.

I am not a resistance fighter, I did not save a victim, I rather remained silent, when the synagogues burned during that horrible pogrom, which is still called euphemistically 'Night of Broken Glasses'. (However I never used the excuse that, despite this pogrom and despite the yellow star Jews were forced to wear on their clothes, one did not know about all this; or the other excuse that 'one withdrew into inner emigration'.)



Nevertheless soon after the end of the Nazi state our collective guilt was denied with a 'quick tongue' and out of our deepest conviction. A handful of major war criminals were sentenced by allied courts in Nuremberg and a few hundred 'scapegoats' by courts of the Federal Republic of Germany. Nearly exclusively executing riflemen and concentration-camp guards: 'little people', who had the finger on the trigger. There were only a few exceptions: as usual, the devil takes the hindmost.

All this served as a relief, which made it possible to integrate fully into West German society those who had served Hitler's regime from their desks. The verdict of guilt only for those who pulled the trigger, this all made it possible to let forerunners, propagandists, political leaders and so on to climb up to positions as ministers and secretaries of state, as

prime ministers of state; at a time when they should have withdrawn from public life quietly in shame.

Others may reject my assumption of collective guilt; I am not going to argue with them. But collective shame seems to be the appropriate thing for everybody; also for the ones who were only 15 years old at that time; even for the ones not yet born, who have to carry their nation's terrible heritage. An appropriate behaviour not only for the generation which is guilty.

I assume that you, Mr. Chancellor, are not going to repeat literally the declaration you made in Israel, after you were criticized so hard. But in whichever idiom are you going to speak on the defeat of Hitler, everyone at home and abroad will remember well those sentences, which so strongly pointed out towards an inability to mourn.

That's why I repeat my above request, that you leave the representation of the Federal Republic of Germany on occasion of this 40th anniversary to the one person who has the right to do it, according to our basic law: the President of the Federal Republic.

Sincerely,

Werner Holftfell

# "When the two talk again....."

Statement by Peace Movements in the Netherlands (IKV), Belgium (VAKA and CNAFD) and the Federal Republic of Germany (Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace) on the possibly forthcoming negotiations about disarmament and arms control between the United States and the Soviet Union.

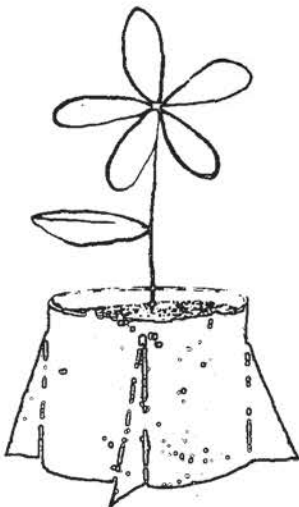
Negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union about arms control and disarmament must be viewed not only in the light of their significance for the general political climate, but also in the light of their potential to promote arms control and disarmament. The fact that the two powers are talking again is as such not sufficient.

As peace movements, we warn against false illusions among politicians and public opinion, because such illusions may hamper serious efforts by others for arms control and disarmament. Talks by the strongest military powers and independent initiatives by others should in a process not be seen as mutually exclusive but as mutually reinforcing too: Talks without independent initiatives by the parties themselves will under present conditions not have any credibility.

Instead we fear that the new negotiations will be used again to 'discipline' others, preventing them from making independent steps, while at the same time for the foreseeable years these negotiations themselves will not yield any significant results.

Therefore we propose the following approach:

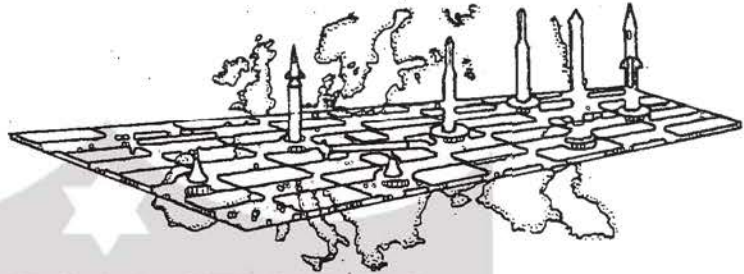
1. When the two talk again, the rest of the world should not be condemned to silence.



As peace movements, we have reason to warn against the use of negotiations as a disciplining instrument to keep the allies in line. For two years, the talks in Geneva about intermediate range nuclear missiles have been surrounded by false hope and wrong perceptions. During those two years, public opinion has been made to believe that it would depend on the outcome of 'Geneva' whether the new US missiles in Western Europe would be deployed. This was an illusion. In a common statement of november 1981, when the INF-talks began in Geneva, IKV and ASF warned that these talks were incapable of preventing the deployment of new missiles, that the 'Zero-option' was 'an attempt to guarantee their stationing', and that the road to a nuclear free Europe would even be blocked by these negotiations. Unfortunately, this assessment has turned out to be correct.

As many peace movements in the West have also said repeatedly during those talks, the outcome of the INF negotiations could only be deployment. In the case of no agreement, deployment would begin because there was no agreement. The negotiation approach chosen by the USA and supported by NATO excluded in practice any other outcome.

As peace movements we have consistently criticized both the negotiation approach of the West and of the Soviet Union, because both were aiming - in different ways - at a separate Eurostrategic balance, which in our opinion was not in the interest of Europe. However, during those two years it was virtually forbidden to criticize these talks. Doing so was seen as undermining them. Eventually, at the end of 1983 all those who had let themselves be disciplined by the



talks or who had sincerely hoped for the success of 'Geneva', had to recognize that the outcome was extremely negative.

After two years of negotiating there were more Soviet SS-20s than before, the deployment of a new generation of Eurostrategic US missiles had begun and new 'counter-measures' by the Soviet Union followed.

Public opinion and many politicians in our countries were (to some extent) appeased by the talks. The result was that the talks were stopped not the missiles.

The two great powers start talking again, this time on the basis of a two-sided quantitatively and qualitatively more dangerous level of armament and on a sharpened level of confrontation. We urge others now to actively voice their own concerns, formulate their demands, and pursue the goals of arms control and disarmament in their own ways.

In our view, this also applies to those Third World countries who will participate in the 1985 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We expect that, despite the fact that bilateral talks between the United States and the Soviet Union have been resumed, they will criticize the nuclear weapon states for not adhering to their legal obligation to work seriously for a speedy cessation of the nuclear arms race and for (nuclear) disarmament.

2. Stopping and reversing the new nuclear arms race in Europe cannot wait for the 'new' Geneva.

First, because the aim is to first seek a common understanding as the subject and objective of such new negotiations. Then talks will follow

about the agenda. Only after that the real negotiations will begin. These will take years.

Second, because it is unclear if an agreement about the agenda is possible at all. As peace movements we have often argued that integrating START and INF would avoid the creation of a separate Eurostrategic balance. The answer of our governments was always that this was a bad idea, because it would make the negotiations so complicated as to exclude results. Now that the two are combined - and even further complicated by adding space weapons under the same 'UMBRELLA' - our governments suddenly voice their happiness. We fear that this is saying more about the servility of smaller allies than about the subject matter. Third, because it has become clear during both START and the INF talks that through their negotiation approach the two superpowers pursue very different political goals which can not be reconciled: superiority vs. parity, and reconfirming the unity of NATO versus weakening the link between Western Europe and the United States. It is to be expected that adding the issue of space weapons will only refuel these political contests.

Fourth, because it has been widely reported that the 'UMBRELLA' approach has been chosen because no consensus exists within the US administration about the policy to be pursued. We fear that here also mechanisms which we know from recent years will be simply repeated, frustrating whatever possibilities for East-West compromise may exist.

While for these reasons the new talks can be expected to drag on for many years, in the meantime the new race in Europe will continue. For Europe, East and West, it is not enough when calling names makes way again for talking. We need an active policy of disarmament and detente. We can not wait again for many years. Therefore:

3. The new talks should be accompanied by independent steps of arms control and disarmament.

Starting a process of genuine arms control and disarmament does not have to wait many years for the first fruits of the new talks. Simple measures can be taken right at their beginning.

- a) We propose that for at least as long as the new talks will go on an independent moratorium should be declared on both sides on:
  - further deployment of Pershing II, cruise missiles, SS-20, -21, -22 and -23 in Europe;
  - all testing of nuclear weapons (in anticipation of a Comprehensive Test Ban);
  - further development and testing of space weapons.
- b) Independent from such steps by the superpowers, two other kinds of first steps are urgently needed:
  - a freeze of all nuclear weapon developments in France and in Great Britain;
  - a decision by the government of Netherlands and Belgium against the deployment of cruise missiles in these countries.

Only when the new talks are combined with a relevant moratorium and when they allow room for independent steps, in anticipation of their results, rather than waiting again for years in silence, we can invest hope in this new phase.

#### 4. No 'trade-offs'

It is to be expected that in the new talks the 'European' problem will get less attention than before. On the part of the United States consultation with its allies will probably be less intensive, in spite of what is promised now, because it wants greater secrecy. Therefore we state now: no 'trade-off' that would rubber-stamp the new arms race in Europe will be acceptable to us. Just as in the past we opposed a 'walk in the woods'-like outcome for Europe, we will now oppose any outcome in which parts of the new world-wide arms race would be legitimized in exchange for curbing others. We do not want the Pacific to pay the price for the inability of Europeans to solve their own problems. We do not want to see a European nuclear arms race to be accepted in exchange for preventing or postponing the militarization of space just like we do not want to see the missiles removed from Europe if doing so means accepting 'Star Wars'.

5. Peace movements can accept a step-wise process, but only if such steps can be seen as steps in a real progress towards disarmament and detente. We see the gradual denuclearization of Europe as an important element in such a process. We favour a combined approach of freezing the nuclear arms race by the nuclear arms producing countries. This would be a step toward a denuclearized Europe in East and West and to similar nuclear free zones elsewhere in the world. Freeze and withdrawal of nuclear weapons must then be followed by dismantling them without substituting them by other weapons with similar military and political effects (chemical weapons, emerging technology weapons, etc.).

We will evaluate measures and steps proposed or agreed upon by the negotiating powers in this perspective and will exert constant pressure to combine such proposals with concrete initiatives in the same direction.

(Winter/Spring 1985)



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# RACISM

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## From the Nuremberg Laws to Apartheid

It was in Nuremberg, Germany in 1935, that for the first time in history racism was declared the official policy of a state and legalized by laws, the so called 'Nuremberg Laws'.

These laws declared that only a citizen of 'German blood' or of 'naturally related blood' can be a citizen of the German Reich, in order to 'secure the German nation for all times'. The Nazis devised formula to determine what percentage of 'non-German blood' made a child of 'mixed parentage' a 'non-German'!

But this was only the beginning. Soon it became evident that 'the protection of German blood' meant the destruction and extermination of all 'non-German' people. This belief inevitably led to Auschwitz. Racism does not only mean to mark off people who are declared to be 'of a different kind'. Racism also means: to curtail the others' civil liberties + human rights; and ultimately it means to deny to the other the right to live.

The official government comment on the 'Nuremberg Laws' declared that by 'law of nature' human beings are all different and unequal. Out of this conviction the Nazis concluded that there are differences and inequalities in regard to rights and duties of human beings. This was anti-Semitism (Racism against Jews) at its height, and a preview of what was yet to come in the Holocaust.

The 'Nuremberg Laws' consisted of seven paragraphs, which dealt with the Jews in Germany as if they were not human beings. The situation in South Africa is in many ways parallel to that in Nazi Germany. The blacks and 'coloreds' who are subjugated to the 27 laws in question in South Africa are treated

in a racist way, too. If we talk about the racism of the Nazis, we cannot exclude the racism practiced in South Africa. And it is the same racism, even though ideological differences might exist. Apartheid is the racism of the Nazis - in another form, another era. In South Africa the Holocaust is only gradual.

Today the government of South Africa consists in part of men who were detained during WWII, because they expressed openly and clearly their sympathy for the Nazis. And now they use Nazi arguments to justify their racist theories. Of course they change their arguments slightly, because after the Holocaust the public of the world is not likely to be hoodwinked by that kind of argument.

But the psychology behind the arguments of the South African government stays the same: the racist superiority of the white settlers, called by God to keep the race pure and save Western civilization from the savages.

People in Western Europe and in the US benefit economically from the racist society, from the exploitation of black and 'colored' people in SA. It is our task to refute the arguments and supremacist theories of the racists in South Africa. We have to press our governments and companies to change their policies. We have to educate our fellow citizens, who too often accept the arguments of the South African government.

In this regard, the civil disobedience campaign at the South African Embassy and consulates in the US and the divestiture movement have special significance\*



# In the Year of Yalta

Recently the conference in Yalta (February 3 until February 11, 1945), its meaning and consequences, have been discussed intensively by the public and experts.

For example: the former National Security Adviser to President Carter - Mr J. Brezezinski - interpreted the Yalta conference as a remaining task. A task which should be taken on by the US and its Western allies. It would be important to cooperate with Eastern dissidents and dissident groups.

This view on the outcome of the conference implies a definition of this date as the date of the final East-West division of the world and the partition of Germany. This view is wrong and dangerous.

In fact a principal partition of Europe into spheres of political influence was agreed upon already at the conference of Teheran in 1943; specific ideas of how the partition could look like did not exist yet in 1943, but several ideas were discussed. In addition to that there were agreements in 1943 between Stalin and Churchill upon which the European countries were assigned to the various political spheres of influence.

In Yalta the major powers agreed upon a principal shift of Poland to the West and upon the expulsion of the German population from the area that Poland was supposed to take over. Discussions arose only in regard to minor details.

In Yalta a statement on the liberated Europe was issued, which contained as the most important principle the declaration of self-determination for the European nations to elect their own governments.

Nor in Yalta nor later in Potsdam did an 'iron curtain' fall down: the allies were in favour of joint decisions. The allegation that the Soviet Union was solely interested in a separated Germany has to be rejected in regard of the Soviet Union's economic situation after the end of WWII. The supply base of the Soviet Union was very bad, so bad that famines caused the death of thousands of people in the first years after the war. Not until 1957 'the daily bread' was secured. In the light of these and other domestic problems the reparation claims of the Soviet Union have to be looked at. The Soviet Union had a fundamental interest in a united Germany, out of which the Soviet Union would have gotten more reparations.

As late as 1952 Stalin issued a proposal for a united Germany with free elections. From the side of Western countries there were only allegations

that this proposal is a propaganda trick - the proposal itself was never examined.

A step towards the partition of Germany was the acceptance of France by the Allies as an occupation force in the defeated Germany. France had suffered in 1871, during WWI and during WWII from German intentions of expansion; therefore it had no sympathy for a united Germany.

After the first post-WWII years, a change of political intentions and commitments took place. In this particular context the change from Roosevelt to Truman was very important. Their different personalities contributed to political changes; but more important were the different tenets of world policy: Roosevelt was united with Stalin in the intention to defeat Hitler - Truman was eager to contain the Soviet influence in Western Europe. The conflict between

East and West became evident before the war with Japan was over. The dropping of the nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were in this political-historical situation a clear warning to the Soviet Union, which had no nuclear weapons at that time.

The change of commitments and of political intentions in occupied Germany became very evident after Yalta. For example: teachers - very often Communists - who were hired in 1945 were fired in 1947/48 in large numbers. Flick, who was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment and whose property was seized by the Allies, was released after two years. His property was given back to him.

The changes in the Western sectors of occupied Germany were, among other reasons, the result of the US concept of democracy, which equals democracy combined with capitalism. This outset was not acceptable for the Soviet Union.

## EUROPEAN WAR DEATHS



## AMERICAN WAR DEATHS



## SOVIET WAR DEATHS



 = 200,000 PEOPLE

# Study Trip on the Holocaust



## January 27, 1945:

Auschwitz, the major extermination camp established by the Nazis, is liberated by the Soviet army.

## May 8, 1945:

The surrender of the German army marks the defeat of Nazi Germany and the end of World War II.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The approximate cost of the study trip will be \$500. - 1000. This includes air fare, room, board and transportation.

There are no scholarships available.

The study trip is limited to 20 participants. The deadline for registration is May 31, 1985.

All discussions, workshops, literature, etc., will be in English.

The study trip will use selected literature, audio-visual resources, qualified resource persons, and discussion groups.

Accommodation will be in double rooms. There are no single rooms available.

## 40 YEARS AFTER - THE HOLOCAUST REMEMBERED

Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace (AR/SP) and the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation will conduct an interfaith study trip to Germany and Poland from August 3 - 24, 1985.

The trip is designed to provide the participants with a brief, yet thorough encounter with the origins, reality and political consequences of the Nazi holocaust for Europe.

Forty years after the liberation of Auschwitz and the defeat of Nazi Germany, the study trip will provide a unique opportunity for an international dialogue on the legacy of the Nazi holocaust. The seminar is designed to be a democratic group-learning process, through which people of different ages and backgrounds can discuss and meaningfully share

share their views on this complicated and emotionally charged theme.

Due to a generous grant from the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, the cost of the trip will be only \$500 (see: General Information).

The three-week trip is divided into three segments:

### August 3-8 PART ONE: THE ORIGINS OF THE HOLOCAUST

The main focus of the five-day seminar at the FEF conference Center in Bergneustadt will be the rise of fascism in the Weimar Republic (1918 - 1933), and the period of Nazi rule before the outbreak of World War II. The program will attempt to establish a solid overview of the crucial events and processes in Germany which made fascism possible. The seminar will be conducted mainly by FES staff, and will include visits to sights in the area.

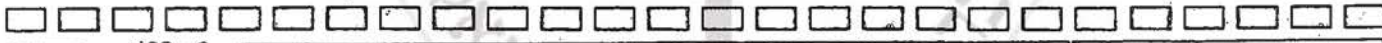
### August 9-17 PART TWO: THE HOLOCAUST

A nine-day stay in Poland with three day-long visits to the former extermination camp Auschwitz will be used to establish an understanding and awareness for the enormity of the Nazi holocaust. The stay will involve special tours of the camp and museum exhibitions, interviews with Polish survivors of Auschwitz, studies in the archives, and time for personal meditation and group sharing. Excursions to Warsaw, Krakow, Poznan and Wroclaw will provide opportunities to experience Polish life today.

### August 18-24 PART THREE: THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE HOLOCAUST

The last segment of the program, a week-long seminar in West Berlin, will focus on the moral and political consequences of the holocaust and German fascism for post-war Europe. Here again, the program will attempt to give a profound survey of major events and developments. In considering issues such as anti-semitism, racism and nationalism today, the seminar will seek to relate back to the Nazi holocaust in search of the historical legacies, and will discuss the significance of the peace movement in Germany.

For more information or registration contact: Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace



Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace  
4920 Piney Branch Rd., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20011

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### This Issue:

- \* May 8th 1945/1985
- \* In the Year of Yalta
- \* Racism - From the Nuremberg Laws to Apartheid
- \* Statement of European Peace Movements on the 'Geneva Talks'

Attn.: Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum  
American Jewish Committee  
165 E. 56th St.  
New York, N.Y.  
10022

RS



# NEW YORK POST

FRIDAY APRIL 26 1985

35 CENTS R

© 1985 News Group Publications Inc. Vol. 184, No. 136  
AMERICA'S FASTEST-GROWING NEWSPAPER

# BITBURG MAYOR BLAMES JEWS

THE MOUNTING FUROR: PAGES 4 & 5



# BITBURG MAYOR

## Mag's vicious charge: Jews are to blame

Post Wire Services

A POPULAR West German magazine has blamed the public outcry over President Reagan's Bitburg cemetery visit on the "influence of Jews" in the U.S.

Jewish leaders here reacted with outrage over the commentary in Quick magazine.

The Anti-Defamation League called it "straight-out anti-Semitism."

Quick, a picture magazine and one of the most popular in West Germany, said the Jewish influence in the U.S. is "supported by the power of the big media."

Accompanying the article was a picture of Reagan shaking hands with Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum.

Tanenbaum is the director of international relations for the New York-based American Jewish Committee.

The headline read: "Power and voices of the Jews."

Tanenbaum characterized Quick's comments as "classic anti-Semitism and scapegoating of the Jews."

"It appears that many of the German people have learned nothing from the Nazi Holocaust," he said.

Ed Leavy, director of the Washington office of the Anti-Defamation League, called the Quick article "straight-out anti-Semitism."

"There's no question in my mind that when you see someone talking about Jewish-owned media or Jewish influence, that is the kind of thing that . . . created the whole atmosphere that allowed the Nazis to do what they did to the Jewish people."

## Macht und Stimme der Juden

Reagans Plan, kein KZ, aber einen Soldatenfriedhof zu besuchen, brachte die sechs Millionen US-Juden gegen ihn auf. Ihre Lobbyisten und Repräsentanten in der Politik und in den Medien beschworen erfolgreich den Präsidenten, diese „erschreckend falsche Entscheidung“ zurückzunehmen



Reagan empfängt den einflussreichen Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum (r.) im Weißen Haus

30 QUICK

Headline in Quick magazine article, translated into English reads 'Power and voices of the Jews.' Photo shows President Reagan shaking hands with Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum.

IRD  
with memo

Adressé par Maître Théo Klein, Président du CRIF, à l'ambassadeur des Etats-Unis à Paris le 29 Avril 1985.

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur,

Au moment où vous allez recevoir une importante délégation d'organisations juives françaises, je tiens à vous faire savoir que l'émotion et la désapprobation qu'elles expriment traduisent la pensée de l'ensemble de la communauté juive de France. En poussant un peu plus loin le raisonnement des Conseillers de Mr le Président Reagan ne risquerait-on pas d'aboutir à la conclusion que Hitler et ses lieutenants ont été la victime de leur propre système! Ce même raisonnement pourrait aussi conduire à considérer les victimes des bombardements des alliés à l'égal des victimes des camps de concentration. Le pardon n'est pas l'oubli: voilà peut-être ce qu'il convient, aujourd'hui, de rappeler.

Veuillez croire, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, à l'assurance de mes sentiments distingués.

Translation

Mister Ambassador,

At a time you will be receiving an important delegation of French Jewish organizations, I should like to inform you that the emotion and disapproval they express represent the thoughts of the entire Jewish community in France. Were one to follow a bit further the reasoning made by President Reagan's advisers one would risk concluding that Hitler and his lieutenants were victims of their own system! This same reasoning might also lead to considering the victims of allied bombings as the equals of victims of concentration camps. To pardon is not to forget: perhaps this is what should more appropriately be recalled today.

Polite salutations...

Handwritten note by Théo Klein, President CRIF, to the US Ambassador in France, April 29, 1985.

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** April 29, 1985  
**to** Bernie Resnikoff  
**from** Marsha Turken  
**subject**

Thanks for your recent note. By the time you're here on May 17th, I'll have a detailed itinerary ready for your chapter visits. I've reserved seats for you and your wife on the three flights we've discussed.

Unfortunately, David Gordis will be out of town on the 17th. I'll be here by 9:30, and you're welcome to be my first appointment of the day. (I know that's not early by Israeli standards but, remember, I'm a spoiled American!)

As for using Yosef Goell, I'm afraid his speaking fee is too high for our chapters, particularly during this period of belt-tightening. In addition to that, four of the cities he'll be visiting have other programs featuring Israeli speakers planned within a month of his visit. Maybe we can work something out next time he visits the U.S.

See you on the 17th. Lehitraot.

*marsha*

cc: Shula Bahat  
Marc Tanenbaum ✓

750  
**Q**  
**QUICK**

Reagan-Besuch  
in Deutschland

**Die Macht**  
**der Juden**

Frauen vor der Kamera  
mit intimen Interviews

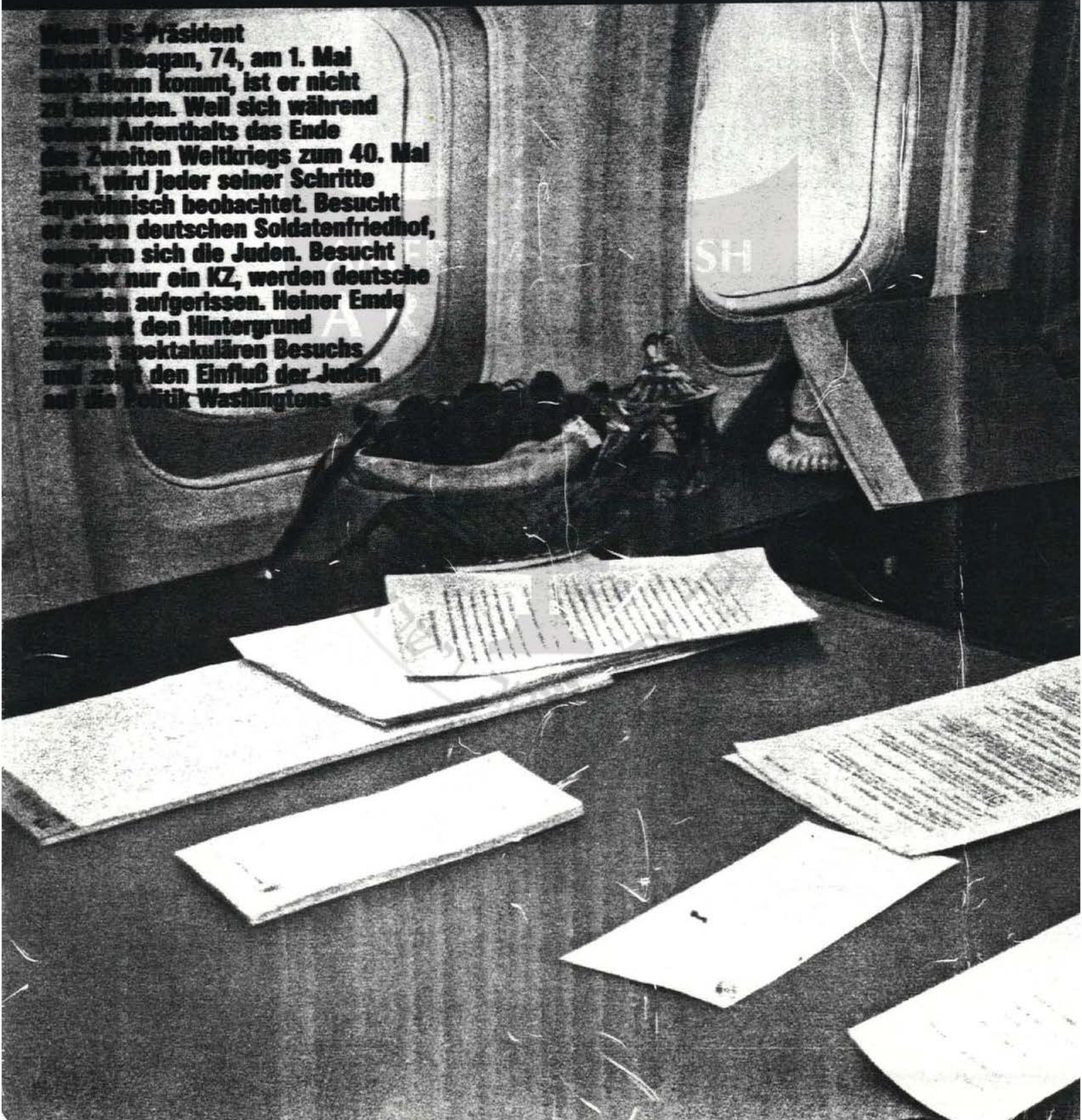
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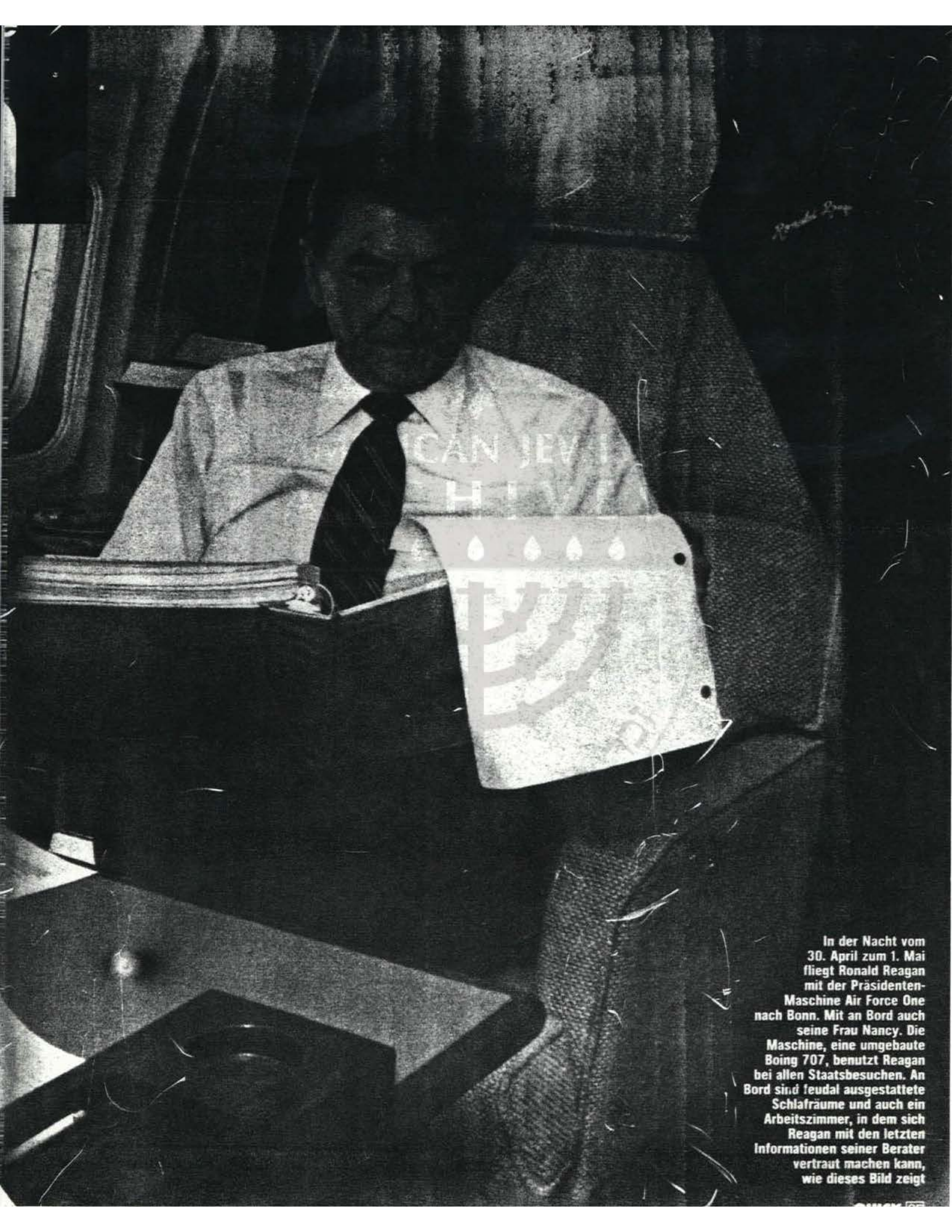
Guck mal, das bin ich  
Silke, 20, Singer, grüner

Nazi-Gespensst überschauter Reagans Deutschmann

# Der Besuch

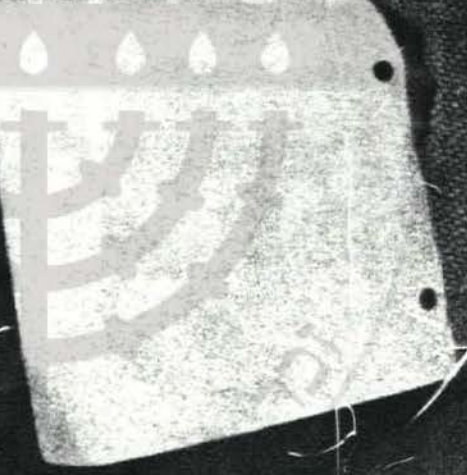
Wenn US-Präsident Ronald Reagan, 74, am 1. Mai nach Bonn kommt, ist er nicht zu beneiden. Weil sich während seines Aufenthalts das Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs zum 40. Mal jährt, wird jeder seiner Schritte argwöhnisch beobachtet. Besucht er einen deutschen Soldatenfriedhof, empören sich die Juden. Besucht er aber nur ein KZ, werden deutsche Wunden aufgerissen. Heiner Emde zeichnet den Hintergrund dieses spektakulären Besuchs und zeigt den Einfluß der Juden auf die Politik Washingtons





Ronald Reagan

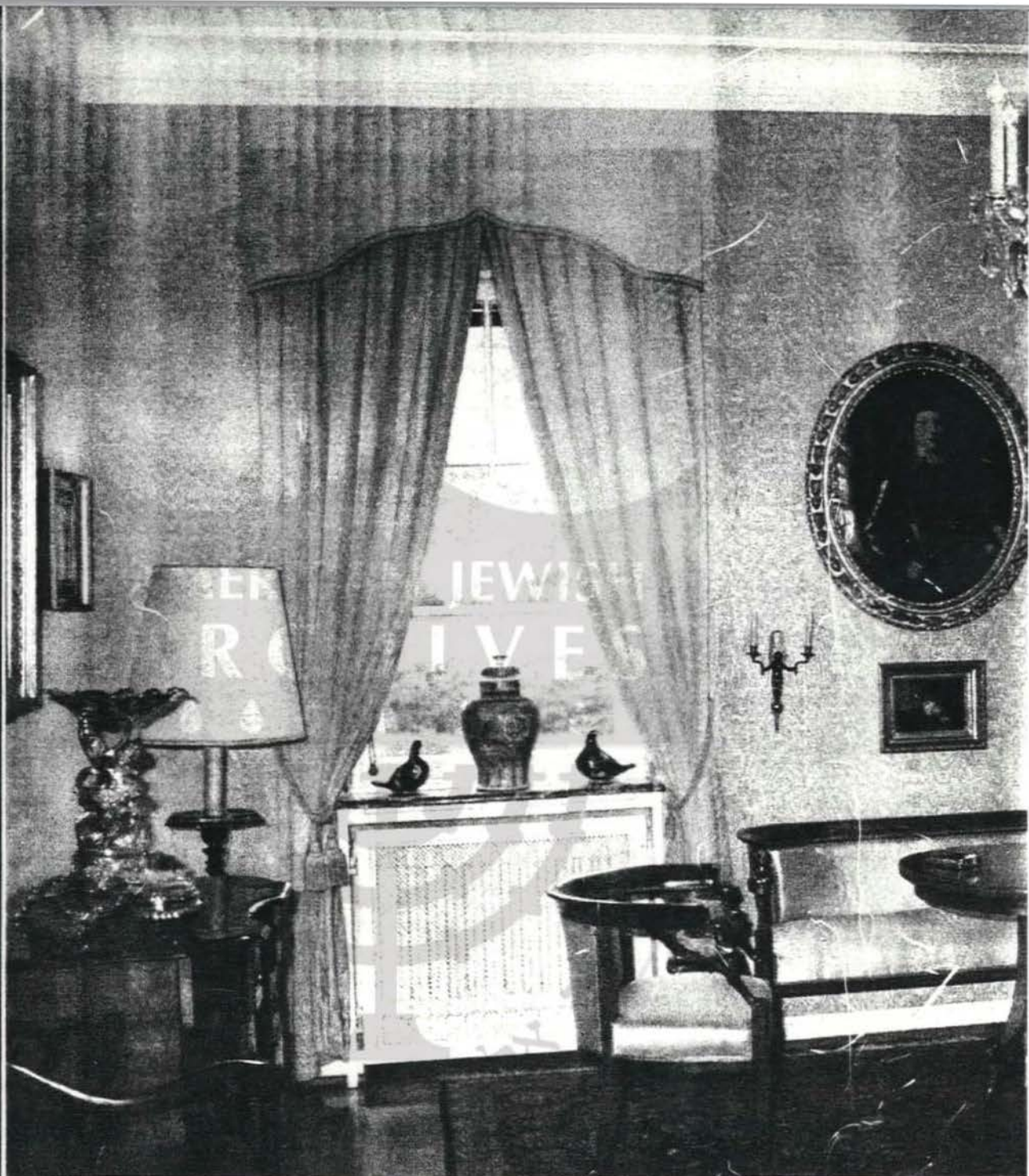
CAN JEV I  
H I W I



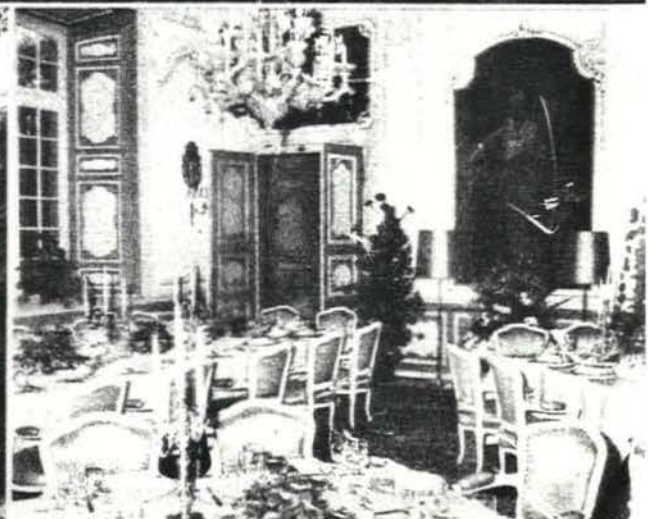
In der Nacht vom 30. April zum 1. Mai fliegt Ronald Reagan mit der Präsidenten-Maschine Air Force One nach Bonn. Mit an Bord auch seine Frau Nancy. Die Maschine, eine umgebaute Boeing 707, benutzt Reagan bei allen Staatsbesuchen. An Bord sind feudal ausgestattete Schlafräume und auch ein Arbeitszimmer, in dem sich Reagan mit den letzten Informationen seiner Berater vertraut machen kann, wie dieses Bild zeigt

# Schloß Gymnich – hier wohnt Reagan

Eine Oase der Ruhe für abgespannte Staatsgäste ist dieses 50 Kilometer von Bonn entfernt gelegene Schloß aus dem 14. Jahrhundert, das Ronald und Nancy Reagan vom 1. bis 6. Mai als Herberge zur Verfügung steht. Entspannung fanden hier schon viele berühmte Leute, beispielsweise Reagans Amtsvorgänger Ford und Carter, die KP-Chefs Hua Guofeng (China) und Breschnew (UdSSR), die Königinnen Englands und der Niederlande. Seit 1972 ist Schloß Gymnich Gästehaus der Bundesrepublik. Jedes seiner Zimmer, darunter 50 Schlafzimmer, ist vom Eigentümer Jörg Freiherr Holzschuher von Harrlach mit teuren antiken Möbeln, alten Gemälden und feinsten Teppichen ausgestattet worden. Zu den schönsten Räumen zählt der kleine Salon (großes Bild), in dem Ronald Reagan und Helmut Kohl ihre Gespräche unter vier Augen führen werden. Sie können ohne Scheu reden, denn das Schloß ist absolut abhörsicher. In diesem Nobelquartier ist der amerikanische Staatsgast auch vor Attentaten sicher. Schloß Gymnich ist von 280 000 Quadratmeter Park und von einem tiefen Wassergraben umgeben

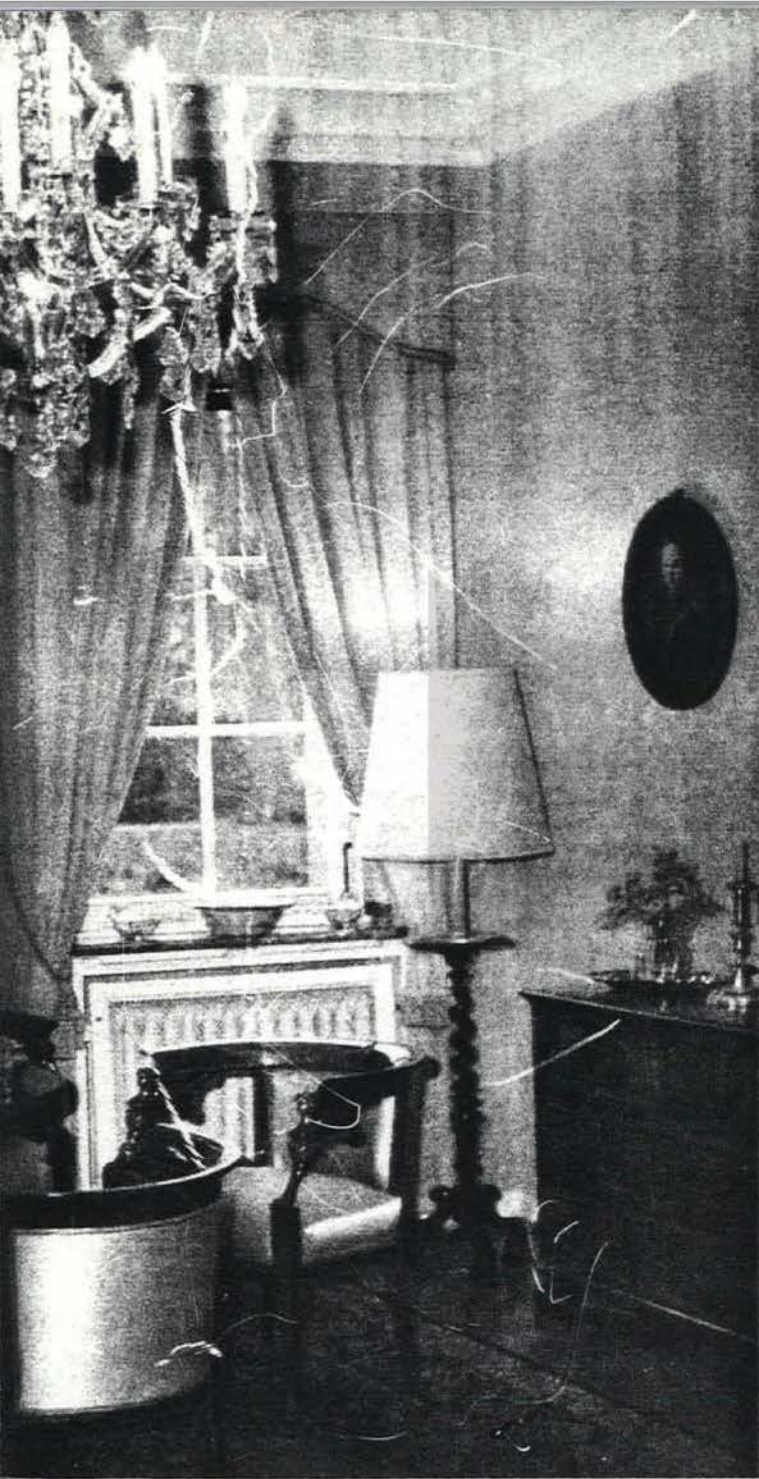


Schloß Gymnich, die malerische Herberge Reagans



Arbeitsessen und Empfänge finden im großen Salon statt





Schlafen Nancy und Ronald Reagan

Fotos: Wolfgang Kuehn

**R**eagan wird den Ermordeten salutieren und einen Kranz auf die Gräber der Mörder legen!" Mit dieser wütenden Schlagzeile drückte das israelische Massenblatt „Chadashot“ aus, wie die Bürger des jüdischen Staates im Nahen Osten die Absicht des US-Präsidenten Ronald Reagan sehen, bei seinem Staatsbesuch in der Bundesrepublik nicht nur ein ehemaliges Konzentrationslager zum Gedenken aufzusuchen, sondern auch einen deutschen Soldatenfriedhof.

Die Glaubensbrüder in den USA sprangen nicht schonender mit Reagan um. Ihre Proteste wurden von einer gigantischen Pressekampagne begleitet, in der nicht nur jüdische Kommentatoren an die Leiden der europäischen Juden unter den Nazis erinnerten. Die großen Fernsehsender strahlten antideutsche Filme aus, Theater setzten jüdische Leidens-Stücke auf ihre Programme. Nur der Direktor des „American Jewish Congress“, Harry Siegman, gab sich zurückhaltender: „Wir sind sehr traurig über die erschreckend falsche Entscheidung des Präsidenten.“

Dieser Entscheidung war ein monatelanges Hickhack vorausgegangen, das in den letzten Wochen vor dem Staatsbesuch zwischen Washingtons Capitol und dem Kanzleramt in Bonn peinliche Formen annahm. Mißtöne und Pannen belasteten die Diskussion. Und das alles im unmittelbaren Vorfeld eines unerhört nervigen Datums: des 8. Mai, an dem sich zum vierzigsten Male das Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges und die deutsche Kapitulation, aber auch der Beginn des deutschen Aufbruchs in die Demokratie der freien Völker jähren.

Reagans Staatsbesuch mit 450-Personen-Troß ist geknüpft an die Teilnahme am „Weltwirtschaftsgipfel“ vom 2. bis 4. Mai. Dazu finden sich bei Gastgeber Helmut Kohl die Staatschefs der größten Industrienationen der westlichen Welt ein: Japans Nakasone, 66 (130 Begleiter), Großbritanniens Margaret Thatcher, 59 (75 Begleiter), François Mitterrand, 68 (75 Begleiter), aus Frankreich und Bettino Craxi, 51, aus Italien, dazu Kanada-Premier Brian Mulroney, 46 (je 47 Beglei-

ter), und der Präsident der EG-Kommission Jaques Delors, 59. (Siehe auch unser Bericht „Der Bonner Gipfel“ auf Seite 32.)

Nie zuvor – und nicht zuletzt Reagan wegen – gab es in der Geschichte der Bonner Republik so gewaltige Sicherheitsvorkehrungen: Sicherheitsstufe 1 in Bonn für weit über 10 000 Bereitschaftspolizisten und Grenzschützer; ein weiträumiger Korridor rings um das Regierungsviertel mit dem Kanzleramt als Konferenzort; Flugbeschränkung über der Hauptstadt; verammelte Kanaldeckel und Kanäle, um Störern aus dem Untergrund jede Chance zu nehmen.

Im Personenschutz sind 260 BKA-Beamte mit 60 Wagen – zehn sind gepanzert – eingesetzt. Ein Heer von Leibwächtern aus Washington hatte die Reagan-Residenz Schloß Gymnich schon vor Wochen bis in alle Winkel durchgecheckt (aus einem Sicherheitsbericht: „Der Spiegeltisch ist mit einem Tuch zu bedecken, der Präsident könnte geblendet werden“ – „Die Matratzen im Schlafgemach sind zu trennen“). Hektik total.

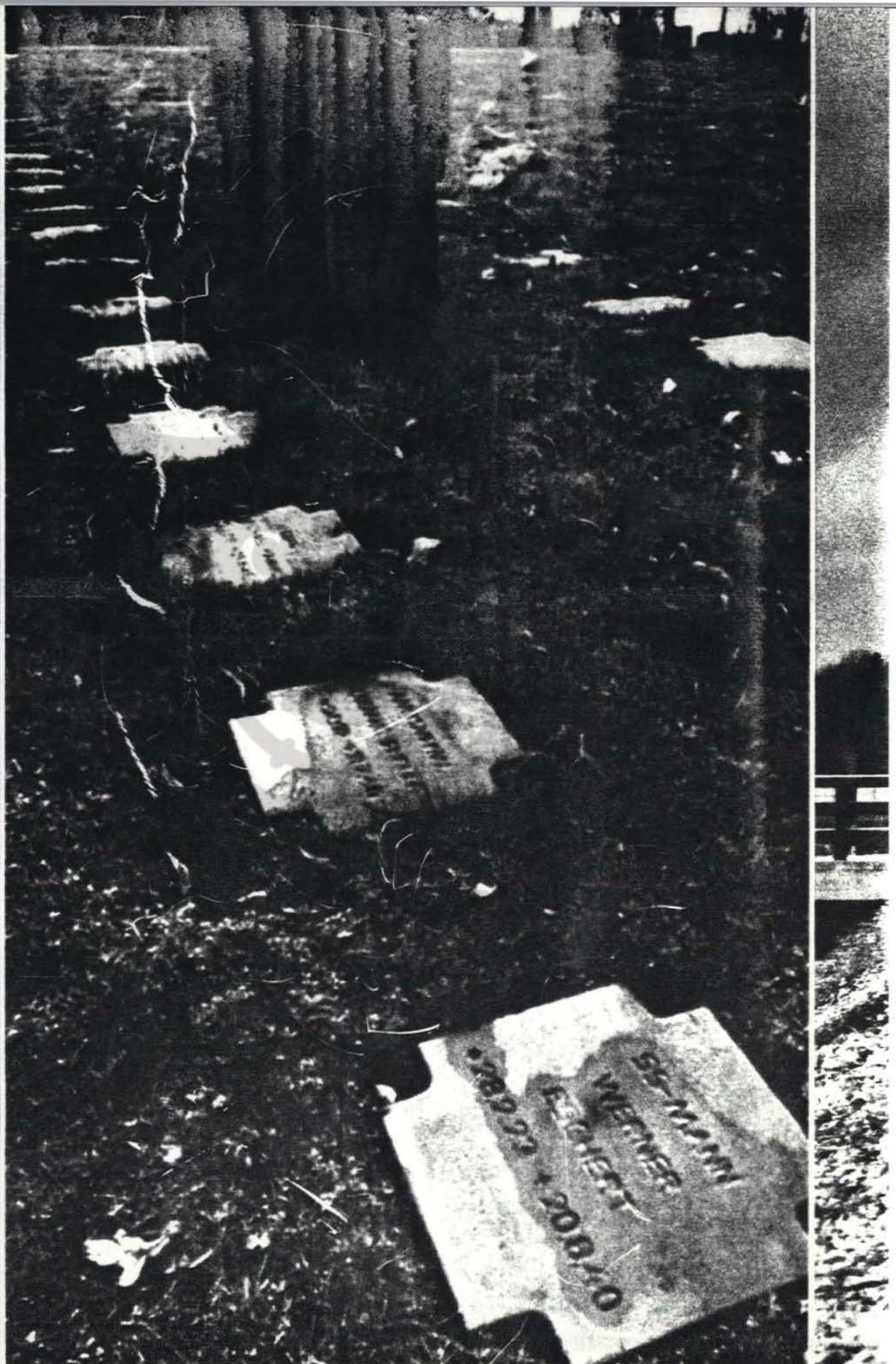
Und während die Deutschen Reagan feiern, feiern die Sieger von einst die deutsche Niederlage. Seit Monaten bereitet Moskau mit Riesenpropaganda eine Siegesparade alter Soldaten vor. England begeht den Tag mit Straßenpartys und offiziell mit einem Gottesdienst in der Westminster-Abtei. Skandal am Rande: Der deutschstämmigen Prinzessin Marie-Christine von Kent, 40, dem Königshaus verwandtschaftlich verbunden, wurde die SS-Mitgliedschaft ihres Vaters vorgeworfen. In Frankreich werden Orden verteilt, Kränze niedergelegt, wird auf den Champs-Élysées paradiert. Nur in den USA war bis letzte Woche nichts vorgesehen – bis der öffentliche Zank über KZ und Soldatenfriedhof neue Akzente für den 8. Mai setzte.

Dieses 8.-Mai-Fieber spürt auch die Bundesrepublik bis an den Rand des Überdrusses: Erinnerungen und Aufbereitungen quer durch alle Medien. Im staatlichen Fernsehen gerät sogar der Streifen „150 Jahre deutsche Eisenbahn“ zum finsternen Vergangenheitskapitel – denn per Reichsbahn hatten die Nazi-Mörder Millionen Juden in die Gaskammern transportiert.

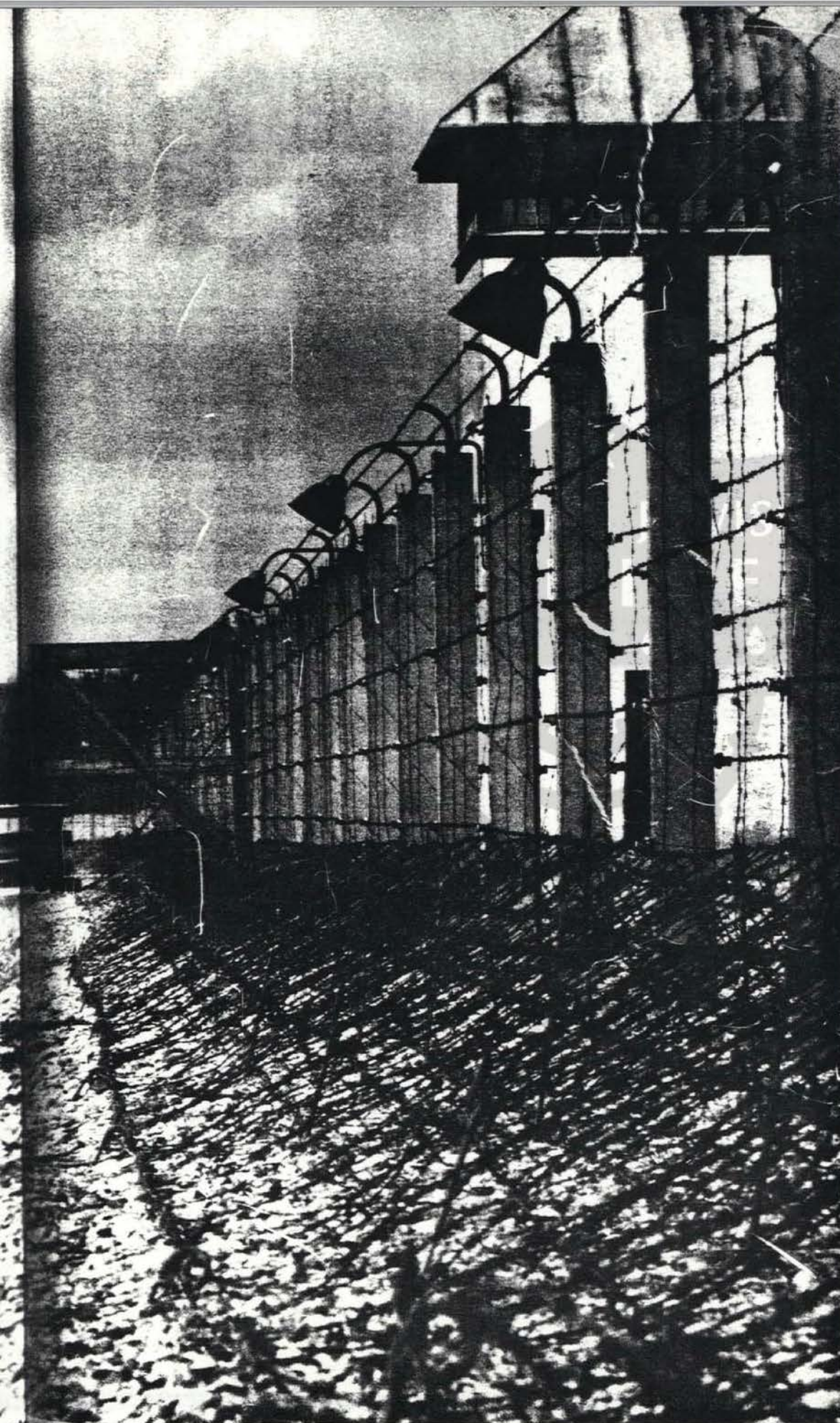
In einem derart emotionsgeladenen Umfeld lief die letzte Phase der Planung des Reagan-Besuchs. Eingeladen war er längst – da drang, im November, die Kunde nach Bonn und in die Presse, der

# Der Streit um die Ehrung der Toten

Selten ist bei einem Staatsbesuch so viel herumgestritten worden, wie jetzt bei Reagans Reise in die Bundesrepublik. Letztes Jahr hatte Kohl den US-Präsidenten eingeladen, die Reise zum Weltwirtschaftsgipfel in Bonn mit einem offiziellen Staatsbesuch zu verknüpfen. Als Reagan jedoch einen Besuch im Konzentrationslager Dachau ins Programm einbeziehen wollte, reagierte Bonn verschneift. Dachau wurde gestrichen. Daraufhin plante Reagan, den deutschen Soldatenfriedhof „Kolmeshöhe“ bei Bitburg zu besuchen. Es kam zu einem Sturm der Entrüstung auf jüdischer Seite. Fazit: Jetzt besucht er Soldatenfriedhof und KZ. In Bitburg ruhen die Überreste von 2022 deutschen Soldaten, darunter 50 Gefallene der Waffen-SS (rechts). In Dachau ermordeten die Nazis bis zur Befreiung durch Amerikaner 32 355 Häftlinge, unter ihnen Juden und NS-Gegner. Statt Dachau will Reagan nun allerdings das KZ Bergen-Belsen besuchen, wo seine Berater eine weniger emotionsgeladene Atmosphäre erwarten



Soldatenfriedhof Bitburg: Hier ruhen auch 50 SS-Leute



Präsident plane einen Besuch im ehemaligen Konzentrationslager Dachau. Entsetzen am Rhein: „An einer solchen einseitigen, auf die Judenvernichtung anspielenden Optik eines solchen Besuches können wir nicht interessiert sein“, warnte das Auswärtige Amt Kanzler Kohl. Der redete dann bei seiner Visite in Washington am 30. November 1984 dem US-Präsidenten den Dachauplan aus und statt dessen eine Kranzniederlegung auf einem deutschen Soldatenfriedhof ein.

Reagan sah darin eine willkommene Geste der Versöhnung zwischen den Nationen – wobei er fälschlich annahm, auf dem zum Besuch vorgesehenen Soldatenfriedhof bei Bitburg in der Eifel lägen auch gefallene GIs. Und Reagan sagte die KZ-Gedenkstunde ab, um nicht in der Bundesrepublik alte Wunden aufzureißen und die nachgewachsene junge Generation mit Nazi-Vergangenheit und Kollektivschuld zu belasten.

Er hätte besser beraten sein sollen. Ein Sturm der Empörung unter Amerikas Juden brandete gegen das Weiße Haus. Der mächtige „Jüdische Kongreß“ (50 000 Mitglieder) protestierte: Reagan wolle nicht der europäischen Juden gedenken, die in Konzentrationslagern ermordet worden seien. „Dafür will er gerade jene Soldaten ehren, die einen Krieg für ein Regime führten, das die Vernichtung der Juden angeordnet hat.“ Ein Trommelfeuer jüdischer Stimmen aus aller Welt fiel ein – darin ging fast unter, daß nicht allein Juden sich entrüsteten. 2,6 Millionen Mitglieder des US-Veteranenverbandes „American Legion“ urteilten über des Präsidenten Bitburg-Plan: „Deutsche Kriegstote zu ehren, während Tausende alliierter Gefallener und Millionen europäischer Juden, die dem Dritten Reich zum Opfer fielen, ignoriert werden, hat mit Versöhnung nichts zu tun.“ Davon, daß jeder Gefallene – gleich in welcher Uniform – ein würdiges Gedenken verdient, war nicht mehr die Rede. Statt dessen nannte „Legion“-Präsident Clarence Bacon die gefallenen Deutschen pauschal „Nazi-Soldaten“. Und als zwei Wochen vor der Reagan-Reise 53 US-Senatoren ihren Präsidenten harsch aufforderten, die deutschen Landsergräber zu meiden, trieb der Krach einem Höhepunkt zu.

Reagan disponierte um. Jetzt war das KZ-Gedenken wieder im Programm. Gleich kochte ein beliebtes Vorurteil hoch: Hatte mal wieder eine sagenhafte jüdische Supermacht den Kurs Washing-

tens und seines Präsidenten beeinflusst? Die alte Mär vom jüdischen Einfluß auf Politik, Geld und Wirtschaft, besonders in den USA, wurde wieder lebendig. Das ist die Wirklichkeit:

Von den 215 Millionen Amerikanern sind sechs Millionen Juden - rund 2,7 Prozent. Das ist der größte geschlossene jüdische Bevölkerungsblock auf der Welt außerhalb Israels (knapp drei Millionen Juden); in der Sowjetunion leben 2,6 Millionen, und in Deutschland sind es noch nicht einmal 30 000 Juden.

Nicht einmal drei Prozent Bevölkerungsanteil - und dennoch hielt sich auch in den USA immer hartnäckig die Behauptung: Juden sind Krämerseelen, Juden sind Händler. Juden beherrschen die Wallstreet, das Kapital.

Das blieb so, bis Juden 1967 im 6-Tage-Krieg der Welt vorführten, was sie heute - nach zwei Jahrtausenden Verfolgung und den Jahren des Völkermords - sind: Menschen nicht-katholischen, nicht-moslemischen, nicht-buddhistischen Glaubens, sondern einfach von jüdischer Religion, dafür ein wenig cleverer, sehr häufig erfolgreicher - und jetzt auch noch tapferer. Inzwischen sind sie, wie Israels Einmarsch im Libanon zeigte, allerdings auch überheblicher und rücksichtsloser bei der Wahrung ihrer Interessen. So ist das in Israel. Doch in den USA sind alle Juden Amerikaner.

Pumpt aber nicht Washington alle Jahre wieder Milliarden Dollar ins aufgeblasene Militärbudget Israels, das sich eine Inflationsrate von 500 Prozent leistet?

Dahinter steckt - argwöhnen viele - der mächtige Einfluß jüdischer Berater und Kabinettsmitglieder, wie etwa Verteidigungsminister Caspar Weinberger, um Reagan. Realistisch gesehen finanziert Washington mit Israel in erster Linie die einzige Ordnungsmacht im Krisenherd Nahost, den einzigen Staat, der dem Einfluß Moskaus in der Golf-Region und am Mittelmeer westliches Gegengewicht bietet. Und Amerikas Juden lassen sich ihren Nostalgie-Staat zusätzlich rund 300 Millionen Spenden-Dollar jährlich kosten.

Die Dollar-Milliarden aber, wie überhaupt das große US-Kapital - sind sie nicht von jüdischer Hand gesteuert, in jüdischem Besitz? Entgegen aller Klischees besetzen Juden weder in den größten Bankhäusern wie „Chase Manhattan Bank“ oder „First National City Bank“ entscheidende Machtpositionen, noch sitzen sie in den Etagen des Top-Managements von Schwer- und Automobilindustrie (Henri Ford I. war ausgeprägter Antisemit).

Wo mit Milliarden gerechnet wird, haben Juden keinen Zutritt - Grund: Amerikas „Country Clubs“, die maß- und tonangebenden Kungel-Treffs von Hochfinanz und Industrie, lehnen jüdische Mitglieder prinzipiell ab.

Aber auch in den Geld-Dynastien mit dem legendären Großkapital der USA sind kaum Juden. Die Guggenheims, mit Silber-, Kupfer-, Gold-, Zinn- und Diamanten-Minen reich geworden - sind die einzig jüdischen unter den Superreichen. Gleichwohl läßt sich ihr Wohl-

stand nicht mit dem Reichtum etwa der rein amerikanischen Milliardenärsdynastie von John D. Rockefeller messen, oder dem der Carnegies, des Öl-Milliardärs Getty, des Bankers John Pierpont Morgan. Sie alle liegen nach Geld, Macht und Einfluß weit vor der jüdischen Konkurrenz.

Wie also beeinflussen sechs Millionen amerikanische Juden 209 Millionen nichtjüdische Amerikaner? Natürlich sind in Präsidentschaftswahlen sechs Prozent aller abgegebenen Stimmen von jüdischen Wählern ein schwergewichtiger Posten. Und weil bei der letzten Wahl nur 37 Prozent der Juden für den Republikaner Reagan stimmten, tat er sicherlich gut daran, sie nicht noch mehr zu verprellen. Doch da sind auch die Stimmen von 14,6 Millionen sogenannter Hispanos, US-Bürger aus lateinamerikanischen Ländern; Millionen Iren, Millionen Italiener, Millionen Deutsche - alle großen Gruppen im Schmelztiegel Amerika machen Wählerstimmen aus.

Doch sie alle haben eben keine Interessenverbände und Organisationen. Amerikas Juden dagegen haben Tausende, darunter allein 14 große, etwa „B'nai B'rith“ mit 500 000 Mitgliedern. In Washington betreiben sie ein eigenes Büro, das „American Israel Public Affairs Committee“ (AIPAC). Es repräsentiert die sagenhafte jüdische Lobby. Von ihm kommt in Zeiten israelischer Not massiver Druck auf die Außenpolitik der amtierenden Präsidenten. Dieser Druck wird noch unterstützt durch die Meinungsherrschaft der großen Medien -

alle drei großen kommerziellen Fernsehgesellschaften ABC, CBS und NBC werden von jüdischen Vorstandsmitgliedern dirigiert. Auch manche Zeitungen, wie die New York Post, stehen unter jüdischem Einfluß.

Nicht mehr, aber auch nicht weniger steckt hinter dem immer neu beschworenen jüdischen Einfluß auf die Politik der USA.

Freilich: Amerikaner leben leichter mit einer unbefangenen Einstellung zu Judentum und Juden. Deutschen dagegen ist eine wirklich objektive, wertfreie Beschäftigung mit diesem Thema durch die Hypothek der jüngeren Vergangenheit verwehrt. 40 Jahre nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg haben Deutsche noch immer keine klare Haltung zwischen Scham und zeitgeschichtlichem Entsetzen in Erinnerung an den Holocaust der Nazis gefunden. Vier Millionen ermordete Juden - jüdische Quellen sprechen von sechs - sowie echte und geheuchelte Schuldgefühle belasten jede Diskussion.

Das alles bestimmte im letzten Vierteljahr die Vorbereitungen zum Staatsbesuch des US-Präsidenten am Rhein: Visiten in Dachau oder Bitburg, oder Bitburg und Dachau? Nun stehen Bitburg und das KZ Bergen-Belsen auf dem Programm.

Ansonsten wird die Reagan-Visite zum Super-Spektakel. Soll doch alles vom Feinsten sein, wenn das Weltwirtschafts-Theater mit Star-Gast Reagan am 2. Mai mit einem Festmahl auf Schloß Falkenlust beginnt. Von Porzellan aus der „Königlich Preussischen Porzellan-Manufaktur“ KPM wird geschlemmt: Coulibiak (Teigtaschen) mit Wildlachs und Sauerampfer, Entenkraftbrühe mit Petersilienklößchen, Kalbsmedaillon mit Lavendelhonigsaucen und als Nachspeise Surprise von Pfirsichen. Dazu werden Weißwein „'83er Wachenheimer Gerümpel“ (ohne Bezug zum Gipfel-Ergebnis!), Riesling Spätlese trocken“ sowie Rotwein „'83er Kappelrodecker Hex vom Dasenstein, Spätburgunder Spätlese trocken“ gereicht. Selbst der Sekt ist deutsch: „Schloß Vaux Steinberger Favorit 1981“, ein Rheingauer.

Ab diesem 2. Mai, dem ersten Wirtschafts-Tag, gilt Reagans Besuch dem Arbeitskongreß des Gipfels - ab 5. Mai ist wieder Staatsvisite. Bonn wertet sie als „Demonstration für Deutschland“ - sehr inoffiziell sind freilich alle froh, daß der hohe Gast schon am 6. Mai abends nach Madrid abfliegt. So bleiben am 8. Mai die Deutschen unter sich.

## Macht und Stimme der Juden

Reagans Plan, kein KZ, aber einen Soldatenfriedhof zu besuchen, brachte die sechs Millionen US-Juden gegen ihn auf. Ihre Lobbyisten und Repräsentanten in der Politik und in den Medien beschworen erfolgreich den Präsidenten, diese „erschreckend falsche Entscheidung“ zurückzunehmen



Reagan empfängt den einflußreichen Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum (r.) im Weißen Haus

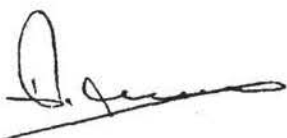
Foto: AP, dpa, Roland Renschberger, Sven Simen

Dokumentation: Othmar Kauck, Guy R. Ley und Paul Umbach

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date:** May 2nd, 1985

**to:** Marc H. Tanenbaum  
**from:** Sergio Nudelstejer



**subject:** Visit to the US Embassy in Mexico

Just as I told you over the phone, and by my suggestion, the Comité Central Israelita de México (Central Jewish Committee of Mexico) decided that a delegation representing the whole Jewish Community of Mexico, should meet with the U.S. Ambassador in Mexico, Mr. John Gavin, to let him know of the unrest and worry caused by the announcement made by President Ronald Reagan that he would be visiting the Bitburg Cemetery during his next visit to West Germany.

Ambassador Gavin accepted to meet with the delegation, but he advised beforehand that should any urgent matter arise, we would be received by his Chief Deputy, Mr. Morris Bosby.

The afternoon of April 29th, the Central Committee Delegation, formed by four people, among them myself, because I was personally and specially invited to accompany them, were met by Mr. Morris Bosby.

The meeting lasted half an hour and during it, the Central Jewish Committee transmitted its worry of what might mean for the world the fact that the President of the United States, whose army fought the Nazis during Second World War and many of its sons fell at the hands of Hitler's army, at a distance of 40 years after the ending of World War Two, should be visiting a cemetery where there are buried a number of SS members and which could mean a recognition or an act of reconciliation and forgiveness.

Mr. Morris Bosby said that, in his capacity as a diplomatic representative of the United States, he could do nothing else but transmit to the State Department the deep concern of the Mexican-Jewish Community, but, during our conversation, he made us feel that he was also worried because of this visit, but that neither he nor Ambassador Gavin could do anything to change President Reagan's attitude.

In spite of the fact that it was a cordial meeting, both parties felt that nothing could be done and that the decision taken by the President of the United States would be carried out.

As always, cordially yours,

copies: David Gordis  
 David Harris

# NATIONAL JEWISH COALITION

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WASHINGTON DC 20070-1020

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
BRUCE SOLL

May 2, 1985

Dear Friend:

We have all been deeply disturbed by the events surrounding President Reagan's visit to West Germany. The President's decision to visit Bitburg cemetery where 49 SS troops are buried has saddened us as Americans, as Jews, and as friends of a president who has consistently supported Israel and the interests of the American Jewish community.

As friends of the President, we offered to help him resolve the Bitburg controversy. We were asked by the Administration to recommend Jewish leaders for a meeting at the White House to advise senior presidential aides on the matter. At two meetings held at the White House, we explained why the decision to visit Bitburg has distressed American Jews and advised the Administration on how to correct its earlier mistakes.

The Coalition recommended several Jewish leaders, among them Ken Bialkin, the president of the ADL and the chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, Morris Abram, vice-chairman of the United States Civil Rights Commission and chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, Elie Wiesel, chairman of the US Holocaust Memorial Committee, Max Fisher, honorary chairman of the National Jewish Coalition and Gordon Zacks and George Klein, co-chairmen of the NJC. On April 15, we met with White House chief of staff, Donald Regan, political director, Ed Rollins, and communications director, Patrick Buchanan.

Our advice was and is that the President should not go to Bitburg. We explained the moral and ethical concern that the Bitburg visit raised among Jews, veterans groups and leaders from every walk of life. We also explained that a visit by the President to a concentration camp would not satisfy the

objections to his visiting the Bitburg cemetery. The Administration, however, declined to cancel the Bitburg trip but announced that the President would visit a death camp in addition to the cemetery.

On April 24, leaders of the National Jewish Coalition attended a second meeting with senior White House staff. We took this opportunity to repeat the concerns we had raised at our earlier meeting. They told us that the President would not cancel the visit without the agreement of the German chancellor, Helmut Kohl.

Although we are distressed by the President's decision, it is important to acknowledge that President Reagan is the best friend Israel has ever had in the White House and that he has been supportive of other Jewish concerns. During his Administration the amount of US foreign aid to Israel has doubled. At the same time, the Administration has converted the foreign aid package from a combination of grants and loans into all grants. President Reagan has worked with Israeli leaders to initiate a new era of strategic cooperation between the United States and Israel and has established a free trade zone between the two countries. The President has also intervened on behalf of Ethiopian Jews to help speed their evacuation to Israel and has worked to further the cause of Soviet Jewry. On the domestic front, the President has confronted the issue of quotas and has condemned anti-Semitism in all its manifestations.

On April 30, Israeli prime minister, Shimon Peres, commented on the President's decision to visit Bitburg. He said: "A friend is a friend, a mistake is a mistake. When a friend makes a mistake, it is still a mistake and a friend is still a friend. Mr. Reagan remains a friend."

The National Jewish Coalition appreciates the valuable friendship that President Reagan has shown to Israel and to Jews everywhere. We believe that the President has earned the support of American Jews despite our disapproval of the Bitburg visit. The National Jewish Coalition will, therefore, continue to actively support the President.

Yours sincerely,



Richard J. Fox  
National Chairman

May 3, 1985

BITBURG - METAPHOR FOR MORAL ABSURDITY

COMMENTARY

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM\* OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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This column was written on the Friday before the "Black Sunday" of the Bitburg visit. Whatever takes place during the "memorial visit" by President Reagan and Chancellor Kohl to the Bitburg military cemetery, the moral damage has been done - and it is profound.

The magnitude and extent of that moral wreckage is distressingly evident in the way that the Waffen SS Death's Head veterans have seized on President Reagan's stubborn determination to "honor" the German dead, including the 49 SS murderers buried in Bitburg.

"We were soldiers like all the soldiers, and I think that's what the president is trying to say," said one former SS general last week.

"I never committed a war crime, and I don't know anyone who did," said another.

Elie Wiesel's prophecy has come true. "The issue is not reconciliation. The issue is the difference between good and evil."

With all his pious rhetoric, President Reagan has proclaimed moral relativism as his theology for dealing with the Waffen SS butchers. These criminals who ran Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Mauthausen will now present themselves as German boy scouts, maybe even Peace Corps idealists.

If this moral absurdity is allowed to stand, we may soon expect Ayatollah Khomeini, Libya's Qadaffi, PLO's Arafat to be celebrated as the moral heroes of mankind.

President Reagan wants to be remembered as a man of peace. In this bumbling and irresponsible way, he will be hailed by every criminal, terrorist, and murderer as their liberator and moral defender.

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum is director of the international relations department of the American Jewish Committee.

rpr



From: Marc H. Tanenbaum

CONFIDENTIAL

AJC INVOLVEMENT IN BITBURG CEMETERY VISIT OF PRESIDENT REAGAN

As the controversy began to build over the news that President Reagan would join Chancellor Kohl in paying an official state visit to the Bitburg Cemetery with its 49 graves of Waffen SS soldiers, Dr. Billy Graham telephoned me from his home in Montreat, North Carolina, on Friday morning, April 19th. He told me confidentially that he had just spoken to President Reagan and to Nancy Reagan, and they were deeply upset over the furor unleashed in response to that news. Graham said that he had told the Reagans that he thought it was a mistake for the President to have acceded to Kohl's request to honor the SS soldiers, among the other German soldiers. He said he was concerned over this tragic episode's contributing to the undermining of the President's moral authority.

I told him that I shared his concerns. He then asked me if I might be able to help relieve this crisis in some way (as I had helped him in the past during his missions to the Soviet Union and other East European Countries). I said that, of course, I was prepared to help. He then said he would speak again with the President and Nancy to offer my help, and he would call me back.

The next morning Graham called me at my home and informed me that he had spoken with the President and Nancy; they were both grateful for my offer to be of help, and they asked if I would talk with Michael Deaver, who was organizing the President's visit. I said yes I would. Ten minutes later, Deaver called me and we talked for nearly an hour. I told him that the AJC and I personally believed the proposed visit to the Bitburg cemetery was a "major mistake," that it ought to be dropped. Deaver said that they would like to do that, but that he had spoken with Kohl last week in Germany, and Kohl was very emotional and adamant. I then said that I thought the trip had to be fundamentally reconceptualized. If the intention was to dramatize

reconciliation, the place to do that was at the gravesite of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, the architect of modern German democracy and a foe of Nazi tyranny and totalitarianism. He said the Adenauer idea was floating around, but now maybe they ought to consider making a decision about including that. He wanted to know why Adenauer was important, and I spelled out this record, including his role in establishing German-U.S. reconciliation, Franco-German reconciliation, Germany's entry into the European community, Adenauer's establishing a special relationship with Israel and the Jewish people.

Deaver said he had not been aware of "all that," but that information was certainly persuasive for including a visit to Adenauer's grave. We then discussed plans for the Bergen-Selsen visit and talk, and also the visit to the Bitburg U.S. military base and what the President might say there.

We also discussed the idea of possibly including a visit to the Remagen bridge as a symbol of German-American reconciliation.

During the week of April 22, Billy Graham and Michael Deaver and I spoke a half dozen times. On Friday, April 26, Deaver suggested that it might be useful if we met at the White House on the following Monday, the eve of his departure for Bonn. The President was scheduled to leave the next day for the European summit.

A meeting was set in the White House on Monday, April 29, at 11 a.m. Our delegation was headed by President Howard Friedman, and included David Gordis, Bill Trosten, Hy bookbinder and myself. Howard and Bill reported on their trip to Bonn, their meetings with Dr. Alois Mertes, Wolf Calibau, and Chancellor Kohl's representatives. They reported on the fact that Dr. Mertes said that the Bitburg cemetery visit could not be changed, but that the schedule could be changed to provide opportunities for emphasizing democracy and anti-Nazi commitments of modern Germany as the basis for reconciliation. They reported that Chancellor Kohl had agreed to these reformulations based

on the memorandum that Dr. Mertes had drafted in the presence of Howard and Bill and had sent by messenger to Kohl.

Deaver expressed appreciation for that helpfulness which he said made it easier for him now to make adjustments in the President's schedule. He said he would go to Bonn and try to work in the Adenauer visit probably as an unannounced surprise. He assured us that in light of our earlier conversations, the President had agreed to a plan to reduce the visit to the Bitburg cemetery to a minimum, "perfunctory ceremony," with General Ridgway and anti-Nazi General von Stauffenberg laying the wreath. The President would make no statement at the cemetery in order to minimize its importance.

We said it was important to emphasize certain themes in the SS's horrendous crimes against the Jews and others. At that point, Deaver called in the President's speech writer, Mr. Kachigian, and we made a number of points about Adenauer, democracy, totalitarianism, the importance of remembering the horrors of the holocaust and rejecting denial and evasion. The speech-writer took detailed notes of our conversation. As it turned out, almost all the themes we proposed were incorporated in the President's speeches at Bergen-Belsen, and at the U.S. military base in Bitburg. They also included the visit to Adenauer's grave.

At Deaver's request, I sent him by diplomatic pouch through the White House the next day a proposed text for the President on the moral and political legacy of Adenauer for modern Germany. The President visited the grave but apparently made no statement, although a brief background statement was issued to the press in Germany on the importance of the Adenauer visit along the lines that we suggested.

Deaver expressed gratitude for our helpfulness both in the U.S. and through the German visit.

He then walked out of the room and returned with President Reagan and Donald Regan, White House Chief of Staff. The President thanked us for our cooperation which he said he deeply appreciated. He then said that he was appalled by the horrors of the Nazi holocaust and wanted us to understand how he felt. He then tried out on us a line about how the dead, all the dead, in the Bitburg cemetery were being judged by the Supreme Judge. We were tempted to respond but did not because it would have meant a long metaphysical polemic. We decided to leave well enough alone.

Donald Regan and Deaver again thanked us. As we left, Deaver said he would be glad to meet with us when the President returns from Germany. We have written to the President today, expressing our views, and asking for a meeting with him as soon as he returns.

Howard and David have discussed our work with the White House with Max Fisher who was grateful for our helpfulness. He said he would arrange a meeting for all of us with the President on his return. Billy Graham called me on Monday, May 6, to say that the President and Nancy were deeply appreciative of our constructive efforts. He then asked for help in preparing his own statement for May 7 before the American Association of Newspaper Editors in Miami Beach.

May 6, 1985

MHT

# COMMUNAUTÉ ISRAËLITE DE STRASBOURG

LE PRÉSIDENT

STRASBOURG, Le 6 mai 1985  
1A, RUE DU GRAND RABBIN RENÉ HIRSCHLER  
TÉL. 35.61.35 - C. C. P. 469.62

Mr. Robert HOMME  
Consul General of the United States  
of America  
15 Avenue d'Alsace

67000 STRASBOURG

Sir,

I would kindly request that you submit to President Ronald Reagan the text of the following declaration which the Jewish Community of Strasbourg and the Council of Jewish Institutions of the eastern part of France, intend to publish, following the announcement of President Reagan's visit to the Bitburg cemetery :

" Together with the entire Strasbourg population, the jewish community of this city welcomes wholeheartedly the first visit of a President of the United States to the European Parliament and the European organisations in Strasbourg, thus demonstrating the solidarity of the démocratic community in the world.

Nevertheless at a moment when European and Strasbourg jewish communities are celebrating the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps where somme 6 million of their brethren perished, we learn with an utmost consternation that President Reagan has decided to include both the Bitburg cemetery and the Bergen Belsen death camp in his visit to the Federal Republic of Germany, while knowing that a number of Waffen SS, who are among the most evil war criminals in history, are burried in Bitburg. Such an amalgamation of bully and victim arises among our communities a feeling of profound indignation.

Furthermore this gesture appears to us as particularly shocking, when emanating from the President of the United States, the greatest democracy in the world which has always actively supported the cause of the jews as well as the State of Israel.

Whatever the inspiration of this move might have been, it cannot but encourage those who have undertaken to banalize the holocaust or falsify hystory itself.

The jewish communities of Strasbourg and Europe deeply resent the insult thus inflicted upon their martyrs who are at the same time martyrs of democracy as a whole, trampled on by nazi tyranny".

Yours sincerely,



Jean KAHN

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** May 9, 1985  
**to** AJC Leaders  
**from** Howard I. Friedman  
**subject** The AJC Response to Bitburg

On May 5, 1985, President Ronald Reagan, in keeping with a promise he made to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in November 1984, joined the Chancellor in a formal wreath-laying visit to the German military cemetery at Bitburg. The 10-minute silent stop, far less elaborate than the ceremonies originally planned, was carried out despite ever-widening dismay, in the U.S. and abroad, over the planned Bitburg visit. The criticism, which began when the White House announced that the President would not stop at the Dachau concentration camp during his German trip, exploded into a firestorm when it was revealed that the Bitburg cemetery included the graves of some four dozen members of the Waffen SS -- the Nazi elite guard implicated in wanton atrocities against U.S. prisoners of war and innocent civilians in Nazi-occupied countries, and directly involved in carrying out Hitler's "final solution" for European Jewry.

Jewish and veterans' groups were understandably the first to raise objections to the President's itinerary (the AJC's Washington representative, Hyman Bookbinder, protested to the White House immediately after the plans were officially announced on April 10). But it did not take long for Americans of every religion and background to grasp and express how insensitive and inappropriate to the intended theme of reconciliation they felt the Bitburg visit to be.

How that broadened understanding evolved, and how the White House was ultimately persuaded -- when all efforts to convince the President to cancel his visit to Bitburg had failed -- to reduce the significance of that stop, must remain largely untold. But I do want to share with you, to the extent possible, the AJC's role in these momentous events.

Our earliest efforts, both public and private, concentrated on education and interpretation. As soon as the Presidential plans were made known, I and our Executive Vice President, David Gordis, and other senior members of our national staff -- as well as some of our chapter leaders and area directors -- were called upon by the media to respond. (An extensive backgrounder was prepared and distributed to help "front-line" lay and staff spokespersons around the country discuss the issues knowledgeably and effectively.) As the only American Jewish organization that has been engaged in fruitful dialogue and educational programs with West Germany for years, we were in a unique position to explain -- in dozens of newspaper stories and on countless radio and television programs in the days that followed -- why the Bitburg visit was not an acceptable signal of reconciliation.

Our emphasis on the importance of remembering the horrors committed by the Nazis, even as we extended the hand of friendship to the democratic Germany that has grown out of the ashes of World War II, found echoes in the statements of prestigious Americans in every walk of life. Indeed, many religious, black and ethnic leaders with whom we have worked closely over the years called Marc Tanenbaum, Director of International Relations and Jim Rudin, Director of Interreligious Affairs -- both of whom have worked closely with the Christian community for years -- and Irving Levine, Director of National Affairs, to ask how they could help make the issues clear to the President and to America as a whole. Our Washington office was inundated by calls from political leaders and other public figures, and similar calls also came in to our area offices. Seldom have our efforts to rally public support been more enthusiastically received.

As early as April 12, the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, the Executive Secretary for Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the pastor of one of America's leading black congregations had categorically condemned the plans for the Presidential visit to Bitburg. In the days that followed, other Christian leaders, representing the widest possible religious and political spectrum, spoke out with equal clarity, both in individual statements and in newspaper ads in The New York Times, and other major papers across the country. The same gratifying response came from the black and ethnic communities. A letter to President Reagan urging him to cancel the Bitburg visit was signed by the heads of organizations representing Polish, Ukrainian, Hispanic, Italian, Hellenic, Chinese and Japanese Americans, as well as the head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and statements and newspaper ads featuring these and other ethnic and black leaders appeared in Chicago, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Seattle, and other cities.

Because the AJC's Annual Meeting took place during the weekend of the President's Bitburg visit, and because one of the featured speakers of our meeting was Dr. Alois Mertes, Minister of State in West Germany's Foreign Office, the AJC's views got even wider coverage than they might have received otherwise. Dr. Mertes' speech was heavily covered by the media; there was an impromptu press conference with him and myself immediately afterwards; and the two of us appeared on WCBS-TV's "Heart of the Matter." Hyman Bookbinder, who had earlier appeared on NBC's Donahue Show, the CBS Morning News, and several other radio and TV programs, was featured on ABC's David Brinkley program and ABC's "Good Morning America." Marc Tanenbaum, our widely quoted Director of International Relations, was interviewed by Tom Brokaw on the NBC Network News; and there were many, many other opportunities to get our views before the public. Even when we were not there to speak for ourselves, reporters and commentators often singled out the AJC position to cite and commend.

If these broad-based programs of clarification and consciousness-raising were all that we did, many of you, I am sure, would say Dayenu. But there is another element of our involvement in the Bitburg affair which could not, and still cannot, be publicized. Those of you who were at our Annual Meeting heard me tell part of that story in executive session. The rest of you will have to read between the lines. It is a tale of relationships in Washington and in Bonn that were long in the making, and of intercessions that were possible only because those relationships existed.

During the escalating public debate over Bitburg, we at AJC were hearing also from friends in high places, in this country, and in Germany, who knew they could trust both our discretion and our advice. These contacts involved a number of us, separately and together. For example, Marc Tanenbaum received a call from the Rev. Billy Graham, who is a close confidant of the President and Mrs. Reagan, to inquire if he were willing, if asked, to help relieve the crisis in some way -- and of course Marc said he was. A day later, he received a call from Michael Deaver, the man arranging the President's tour, and spoke with him at length, then and in subsequent days, about substituting more appropriate symbols -- the Adenauer gravesite, Remagen Bridge, etc. -- for the Bitburg cemetery. Arrangements were made for Mr. Deaver to meet with an AJC delegation at the White House on Monday morning, April 29, on the eve of his departure for Bonn.

At the same time, Hy Bookbinder was meeting with members of Congress and others to see that the issue was put into proper context, and that Mr. Reagan's long record of friendship for Jews here and abroad was not overlooked. Bookie, who is a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, also worked to convince Jewish leaders, in Washington and elsewhere, to stress the Jewish anguish over the White House decisions, rather than to orchestrate angry responses that would make Jewish reconciliation with the Administration and the Federal Republic of Germany far more difficult after the event.

I alluded earlier to our long-standing relationships with the West German Government. One of the principal architects of that relationship, both with the present government and its Social Democratic predecessor, is our Associate Director, William Trosten. On April 24, Bill Trosten and I flew over to Bonn, to meet with Alois Mertes, the Minister of State, and others close to him. There, too, we urged, most strongly, cancellation of the Bitburg visit; but we also stressed that regardless of that decision it was essential to add symbols that would underscore the new Germany's rejection of Nazi totalitarianism and commitment to democratic values and human rights. Konrad Adenauer, we pointed out, was the first postwar leader of a democratic Germany, and a visit to his gravesite might be one such symbol. A ceremony at the Remagen Bridge, with American and German troops meeting where Americans and Germans had killed one another 40 years earlier, might be another way to stress reconciliation. We also urged that both Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan underscore, at their visit to the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen, that the Holocaust must be a lesson for the ages for all who cherish human liberty. Before we left Dr. Mertes' office, he dictated a letter to the Chancellor repeating and endorsing our recommendations. And before we left Germany for the States we got word that our suggestions had been well received by the Chancellor himself.

On April 29, David Gordis, Bill Trosten, Marc Tanenbaum, Hy Bookbinder and I met with Michael Deaver and others at the White House. We reported to him on our meeting with Minister Mertes, and again urged that the Bitburg trip be cancelled -- or, failing that, be downplayed sharply, with emphasis on other, more appropriate symbols. We also suggested certain themes that we felt should feature prominently in the President's speeches -- especially the importance of remembrance, a rejection of evasion and forgetting, a condemnation of the Nazi crimes, but also a rejection of collective guilt. The President's speech writer



was present at this discussion and took copious notes -- and many of the themes we discussed found their way into the President's remarks at Bergen-Belsen and at the Bitburg Air Base.

Before we left, we were joined for a short while by President Reagan and his Chief of Staff, Donald Regan. The President stressed that he was appalled at the horrors of the Holocaust, and upset that this was not clear to everyone. He thanked us for our cooperation, and Mr. Deaver and Mr. Regan echoed those thanks after the President left us.

This, in essence, summarizes our Bitburg-related activities. We did not succeed in convincing Bonn or Washington to cancel the ceremony at Bitburg (the President and the Chancellor did go to the Adenauer gravesite). But I am convinced we played an important role in helping to contain the damage, and in setting the stage for the on-going process of education, here and in Germany, that must be pursued.

Paradoxically, there has been some positive fallout from this event. The entire world has been reminded of the unremitting Jewish anguish over the Holocaust; and we have seen a heightened recognition that the lessons of that horror are universal. This education-in-depth is certainly welcome. The rallying of our friends, Christians, blacks, ethnics; the unprecedented resolution adopted by the U.S. Senate and the unequivocal letter signed by a majority of the House of Representatives; the outpouring of statements and letters challenging the most important leader of the world's most important nation on a moral issue of such importance to us are also important pluses. And the sensitization of the Administration, the Federal Republic and of the media will, I think, stand us in good stead in the months ahead.

I don't want to close this letter without paying tribute to all those who made what we did possible -- not only those I have named, but others, lay and staff, nationally and in our chapters, who mobilized support, said what needed saying and refrained from saying what was better left unsaid. The AJC is a remarkable team. You have reason to be proud of being part of it.

MAY 12, 1985

DEAR RABBI TANENBAUM,

IT WAS A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU AGAIN AT THE CHRISTOPHERS CELEBRATION AT THE PLAZA. I AM SENDING YOU THE COPY OF THE SPEECH I GAVE LAST APRIL 23<sup>RD</sup>. AT KENT STATE AT THE FOURTH CONFERENCE ON THE HOLOCAUST. IT WAS FOR ME A DEEP HONOR AND PRIVILEGE TO BE ABLE TO EXPRESS PUBLICLY MY LOVE AND REVERENCE FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

I HAD BEEN INVITED BY DOCTOR SAUL FRIEDMAN; YOU PROBABLY READ HIS BOOK ON THE OBERRAMERGAU PASSION PLAY IN WHICH HE GIVES FIVE PAGES OF EXCERPTS AND COMMENTS ABOUT MY PASSION PLAY AND CALLS IT "A HYMN OF RECONCILIATION". I THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SEEING THIS WORK OF MINE AND TO READ THE COMMENTS BY SAUL FRIEDMAN.

I KNOW YOU ARE A VERY BUSY MAN AND GIVE HUNDREDS OF SPEECHES EVERY YEAR. BUT PLEASE DO KNOW THAT I WAS VERY MOVED BY YOUR WORDS AT KENT STATE; THEY CAME FROM YOUR HEART AND TOUCHED MINE. THANK YOU.

WITH ADMIRATION AND RESPECT I AM

SINCERELY YOURS

Catherine de Vinck

CATHERINE DE VINCK

672 FRANKLIN TURNPIKE ALLENDALE N.J. 07401

Send MT paper of History of Passion Plays, March  
with note -



# The American Jewish Committee

Institute of Human Relations - 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 - 212/751-4000 - Cable Wishcom, N.Y.

DATE: May 16, 1985

TO: AJC Overseas Offices:

Jerusalem - Dr. M. Bernard Resnikoff  
Paris - Nives Fox  
Mexico City - Sergio Nudelstejer  
Buenos Aires - Dr. Bernardo Fain, Jacobo Kovadloff

FROM: Marc H. Tanenbaum

RE: Public opinion and editorial response to Bitburg episode

David Gordis has proposed that we gather whatever data is available in your countries on public responses to the Bitburg events. Milton Himmelfarb and David Singer are coordinating the research projects in this area.

We should like to have whatever information you can comfortably gather in the following areas:

- a) Public opinion polls;
- b) Editorials, news-articles, important letters-to-the-editor in major general, Jewish, and Christian publications;
- c) Reports on radio-TV coverage, commentators, panels, etc. -- if these are available.

In sending us us this raw data, we would also appreciate having your brief evaluation of what you think the fall-out has been in your country - on government circles, opinion molders, media, Christian leaders, other racial-ethnic groups.

We would like to have this impressionistic data, before we make any decisions about sponsoring more scientific research. Since there are time factors involved, we would appreciate your giving this priority attention.

Best wishes!

MHT:RPR

cc: David Gordis  
Milton Himmelfarb  
David Singer

85-550-49

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The American Jewish Committee  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
PLaza 1-4000

Date May 20, 1985

TO: Marc Tanenbaum

FROM: Milton Himmelfarb

- For approval  
 For your information  
 Please handle  
 Please talk to me about this  
 Read and file  
 Returned as requested  
 Your comments please  
 No need to return

Remarks:

# **CBS NEWS POLL** **The New York Times**

For Release: CBS May 7, 1985  
6:30 p.m. EDT

**CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES NATIONAL SURVEY**  
**BITBURG**  
**May 6, 1985**

## **AMERICAN JEWISH**

Americans are divided about President Reagan's visit to the German military cemetery at Bitburg. As many think he should have gone to the cemetery as think he should not have gone there, a remarkable reaction in light of the public and bipartisan outcry against his visit. What had been called the biggest public relations blunder of his presidency may not have been as damaging as had been widely suggested.

Opponents of the visit thought the President should not honor soldiers who were responsible for the death of American soldiers. Supporters thought it was time to forgive and forget and improve relations with the Germans.

The President was criticized strongly by Jewish leaders and veterans' groups before the visit. Reagan receives about the same degree of support for his visit to the cemetery from veterans as he does from the public as a whole. They too are about evenly divided on whether he should have gone.

About three per cent of Americans are Jewish, and because this poll represents a cross-section of the population, there are very few Jews in our poll. It is still worth noting that almost all of them (21 out of 22) believe the President should not have gone to Bitburg.

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This poll was conducted by telephone among a nation-wide random sample of 692 adults May 6, 1985. The error due to sampling could be plus or minus four percentage points. This poll conforms to the standards of disclosure of the National Council of Public Polls.

For more information please contact the CBS Election & Survey Unit at (212) 975-1535.

Respondents to this poll were divided on their support for leaders of Jewish organizations. They were as likely to believe that Jewish leaders protested too much as to think that they had not. Veterans were less likely to support the protests of Jewish leaders than the public as a whole.

The visit doesn't seem to have had much effect on the President's job rating. It is only slightly lower now than it was in February.

	NOW	Feb. '85
Approve	56%	59%
Disapprove	32	29

President Reagan said he was making the visit to the Bitburg cemetery because he and West German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, thought it would improve relations and bring the American and German people closer together. Even though it is too soon to make a final assessment of the visit's long term success, Americans are optimistic about the prospects. Only a handful thought that the controversy surrounding the visit would make things worse.

The last minute addition of a visit to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp was made following the protest in this country to Reagan's Bitburg visit. Presumably, the extra stop was added to off-set what some Jewish leaders called a lack of sensitivity to the victims of the Nazi holocaust. And while it may have dampened the criticism, almost twice as many people thought it did not make up for the visit to Bitburg as thought it did.

CBS News/New York Times Bitburg Cemetery Survey  
 May 6, 1985

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job?

	ATTENTION TO BITBURG				MIL VETS	FEB85
	TOTAL	A LOT	SOME	NOT MUCH		
APPROVE	56%	54%	65%	48%	56%	59%
DISAPPROVE	32	38	30	30	34	29
NO OPINION	12	8	5	22	10	12

2. Ronald Reagan visited a German military cemetery in Bitburg yesterday. How much attention have you been paying to this subject--a lot, some, or not much?

	TOTAL	MIL VETS
A LOT	32%	41%
SOME	36	34
NOT MUCH	31	23
NO OPINION	1	2

3. Do you think President Reagan should have visited the Bitburg cemetery, or not?

	ATTENTION TO BITBURG				MIL VETS
	TOTAL	A LOT	SOME	NOT MUCH	
SHOULD HAVE	41%	45%	48%	29%	45%
SHOULD NOT HAVE	41	50	40	33	42
NO OPINION	18	5	12	38	13

4. What is the main reason you feel this way?
5. Other people feel that the President should not have visited the Bitburg cemetery. What do you think is the main reason they feel that way?

	TOTAL FAVOR REAGAN'S VISIT TO BITBURG	
	REASON FAVOR	REASON OTHERS OPPOSE
IMPROVE RELATIONS	19%	US SOLDIERS DEAD 7%
REAGAN THINKS OKAY	16	S. S. BURIED THERE 6
FORGET	15	NO REASON TO GO -
FORGIVENESS	12	ANTI-REAGAN 2
HONOR SOLDIERS	12	OPENS OLD WOUNDS 10
NO REASON NOT TO GO	5	PUBLIC OPINION CONTROVERSY -
KEEP REAGAN'S WORD	4	US SOLDIERS AND JEWS DIED 2
GOOD POLITICS	3	IGNORES US VETS -
FOREIGN POLICY	3	JEWS/HOLOCAUST 16
JUST MY OPINION	2	CAN'T FORGIVE OR FORGET 2
LESSONS OF WAR/HISTORY	1	BAD POLITICS 3
OTHER	2	PAY ATTENTION TO U. S. -
NO OPINION	6	ANTI-JEWS 2
		ANTI-PRESS 2
		NO REASON TO OPPOSE 2
		JUST THEIR OPINION 4
		HOLDING GRUDGES 9
		OTHER 2
		NO OPINION 31



4. What is the main reason you feel this way?
5. Other people feel that the President should have visited the Bitburg cemetery. What do you think is the main reason they feel that way?

TOTAL OPPOSE REAGAN'S VISIT TO BITBURG			
	REASON <u>OPPOSE</u>		REASON <u>OTHERS FAVOR</u>
US SOLDIERS DEAD	21%	IMPROVE RELATIONS	13%
S.S. BURIED THERE	9	REAGAN THINKS OKAY	3
NO REASON TO GO	9	FORGET	8
ANTI-REAGAN	9	FORGIVENESS	8
OPENS OLD WOUNDS	7	HONOR SOLDIERS	5
PUBLIC OPINION CONTROVERSY	7	NO REASON NOT TO GO	1
US SOLDIERS AND JEWS DIED	7	KEEP REAGAN'S WORD	2
IGNORES US VETS	5	GOOD POLITICS	3
JEWS/HOLOCAUST	7	FOREIGN POLICY	2
CAN'T FORGIVE OR FORGET	2	JUST MY OPINION	4
BAD POLITICS	2	LESSONS OF WAR/HISTORY	-
PAY ATTENTION TO U.S.	2	ANTI-JEW/PRO-NAZI	2
OTHER	1	TOO YOUNG	1
NO OPINION	12	IGNORANCE	1
		UNFEELING	2
		NO ONE FAVORED	1
		JUST THEIR OPINION	4
		OTHER	1
		NO OPINION	39

6. Do you think the Jewish leaders in the United States protested too much over his visit, or not?

	TOTAL	ATTENTION TO BITBURG			MIL VETS
		A LOT	SOME	NOT MUCH	
PROTESTED TOO MUCH	38%	43%	45%	23%	49%
NOT TOO MUCH	39	47	38	32	33
NO OPINION	23	10	17	45	19

7. Among the other things Ronald Reagan did in Germany was to visit the site of the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. Do you think this visit made up for his going to the German cemetery, or not?

MADE UP FOR	27	24	33	23	25
DID NOT MAKE UP FOR	46	58	38	44	46
NOTHING TO MAKE UP (VOL)	2	3	2	1	5
NO OPINION	25	15	27	32	24

8. All in all, do you think Ronald Reagan's visit to Germany will bring the United States and Germany closer together or has it driven them apart or hasn't it made much of a difference?

BRING CLOSER	39	42	45	27	45
DRIVEN APART	7	10	3	7	5
NO DIFFERENCE	44	38	43	53	42
NO OPINION	10	10	9	13	8

CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES BITBURG SURVEY

	WEIGHTED	UNWEIGHTED
SIZE OF SAMPLE	692	692
Pay attention to Bitburg		
A LOT	223	244
A LITTLE	246	255
NOT MUCH	216	183
VETERANS	152	139
Should Reagan have gone to Bitburg		
SHOULD HAVE	284	282
SHOULD NOT HAVE	284	281



DRAFT #1  
5/20/85

## LEST WE FORGET

Now, 40 years after the greatest conflagration in the history of mankind, where more died not only as soldiers fighting for their respective causes, but as innocents led to slaughter in a fanatical genocide, the anniversary brings us full up to recognition of these terrible events in the past.

To forget is not the message of this time, for in remembering there is hope that mankind has learned from these terrible events, the need to bring God and love into our lives, a God that was all too absent during those frightful moments. In fact, if we have forgotten that, then there is a purpose and a meaning to the events that have brought much anguish to Germany, as well as America, in recent weeks.

For those of us who now recall these events, we must see that those who died did not die in vain, but rather find a purpose and a meaning to the history of that time, a time of horror and tragedy in World War II. Only in their remembrance can we find hope that love will replace hate, that mankind as the Bible predicts in Isaiah, will beat his sword into plowshares and cultivate the seeds of war no longer.

President Reagan, in a sincere attempt to bring about a reconciliation with the German people, has unilaterally brought into focus the wounds of the most barbaric aspects of the great war, World War II. In focusing attention on the Holocaust of Nazi Germany, where six million of God's children were slaughtered, mainly Jews, the world must remember the barbarity of man when religion dies. If there was ever a moment in the history of mankind, when God's ways were totally eclipsed, when a blackness descended all over Europe, when the last drop of humanity was drained and Hitler's hoards ruled supreme, then that moment was a moment of World War II which must not be repeated and which must be remembered. Lest we forget the concentration camps, 11 in number (the Jewish stations of the cross), a roll call of man's bleakest moments and seeing full well Bergen-Belson brings to mind.

While all mankind suffered in World War II, no people suffered like those of the Jewish people. They alone were singled out for a final solution, total extermination. Now, the moral outrage of the Jewish people is justified by the President's visit to the Bitburg cemetery. We, in the Christian community, can never really understand their suffering, but only be sympathetic to their outrage and know it is justified by the recall of the gruesome history of those days. But as these terrible events, brought back into mind now, lest we forget, I extend my hand to share the suffering of the Jews, a reminder of the Holocaust. As President Reagan said, it is as if "we are all Jews" in the same sense of the moral outrage they share, that moral outrage should be shared by all mankind.

-2-

What we must remember as Christians is that the Holocaust was an evil directed against Christianity as well as the Jews of Europe. They attacked and destroyed the very love that Jesus taught, and took away from Germany the essence of Christian brotherhood. Like the Children of Israel recall at their Passover services, it is as if we were all slaves of Pharaoh and gained our freedom with God's help, led by Moses. Now as we recall, 40 years later, it is as if we were all victims of Nazi persecution, Christians and Jews alike, and we must remember, all of us, as the distinguished philosopher, Emil Fackenheim so poignantly points out "we must always remember so as to not grant Hitler a posthumous victory". Yes, I urged President Reagan, like so many others, not to go to Bitburg, for in the voice and cry of Elli Weisel, he was associating with evil, an evil hopefully forever in the past. But God works in mysterious ways, ways that we little understand. Perhaps there is a higher meaning to his visit, one that compelled him to go, and so through his eyes we could all see again the horrors of Bergen-Belson and recall for all the world, the sordidness of those frightful moments. For those who falsely speak out and try and deny the Holocaust as being real, and the suffering of the Jews being a true event, let them remain forever silent for their shameful perfidy.

Reconciliation, yes, not only with the new Germany whose conscience must ever be mindful of what man can become when the voice of God is drowned out by a dictator's chant.

Reconciliation, yes, in a larger sense to the suffering of the Jews, chosen to bring the word of God to our world, but who from their midst, came our Lord Jesus, the Son of God, brought into this world only to die for our sins. To them, above all, we owe a reconciliation and understanding in the true spirit of Christian brotherhood and love.

For, like Jesus, the Jewish people too have suffered for our sins, the sins of a Germany, the most Christian of all European nations, whose Christianity failed to stamp out the evil of Hilter, a Hitler who was bent on the extermination of those Jewish people. Our President's visit, as painful as it was for him and all of us, has in it's wake reopened the old wounds, painful memories, but should make us ever mindful, ever vigilant, that no such crime should ever again be allowed to blot out God's love on this earth. Too often history has shown persecution more than peace has filled the pages of history and the persecution of the Jews, the Armenians, the Vietnamese, are often repeated in far too many chapters.


-3-

This is a moment for our great country to renew its faith in God, and let all God's children, Christian, Jew and Moslem, replace mistrust with love and understanding. Let the voices of the anti-Semite once and for all be stilled by the moral outrage of all Americans, stirred by the recall of the atrocities of the Holocaust. Let us pray together that in our great land, a new tide of good will will sweep forth. Good will that will say "never again" to wars and killings so we can all walk forth hand in hand in God's ways. Let us put an end to the build-up of nuclear arms, frightening weapons of destruction which if they become uncontrolled, can bring about terror and killing beyond even the fiercest recollections of World War II.

For in the suffering of the Jews, we learn a message, the message of Jesus, that a new bond must be forged between people and their God. The grim reminder of the Holocaust must keep us ever vigilant lest we forget. Let the memory of those moments make the bonds of love and brotherhood stronger now that they have been recalled.



**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

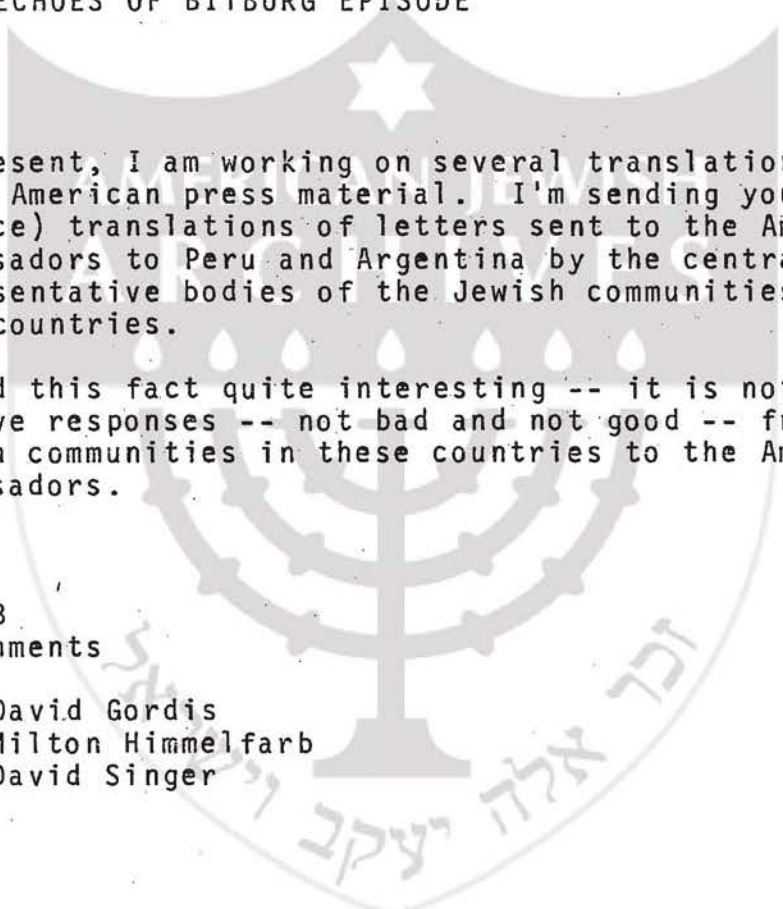
**date** May 21, 1985  
**to** Marc H. Tanenbaum  
**from** Jacob Kovadloff   
**subject** ECHOES OF BITBURG EPISODE

At present, I am working on several translations of South American press material. I'm sending you (in advance) translations of letters sent to the American ambassadors to Peru and Argentina by the central representative bodies of the Jewish communities of both countries.

I find this fact quite interesting -- it is not usual to have responses -- not bad and not good -- from the Jewish communities in these countries to the American ambassadors.

JK/BJB  
 attachments

cc: David Gordis  
 Milton Himmelfarb  
 David Singer



(Translated from the Spanish)

INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT

D.A.I.A. - DELEGATION OF ARGENTINE JEWISH ASSOCIATIONS

1985/No. 17

Monday, May 6, 1985

DAIA LETTER TO U.S. AMBASSADOR. Below is the verbatim text of DAIA's letter, signed by Dr. David Goldberg, president, and Lic. Edgardo A. Gorenberg, secretary, addressed to Frank V. Ortiz, U.S. Ambassador to Argentina:

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

We feel it our duty to address this letter to you in behalf of Argentine Jewry, greatly distressed over President Ronald Reagan's decision in connection with his forthcoming trip to the Federal Republic of Germany, to visit the Bitburg military cemetery, burial site of members of the Nazi SS who fell while fighting against the Allied democratic forces.

We cannot conceal the sadness and bitter disappointment which the American President's decision has stirred among the community represented by us, a community which is part and parcel of the destiny common to Jews the world over, a community zealous of the custodians of the lofty principles of freedom and human dignity.

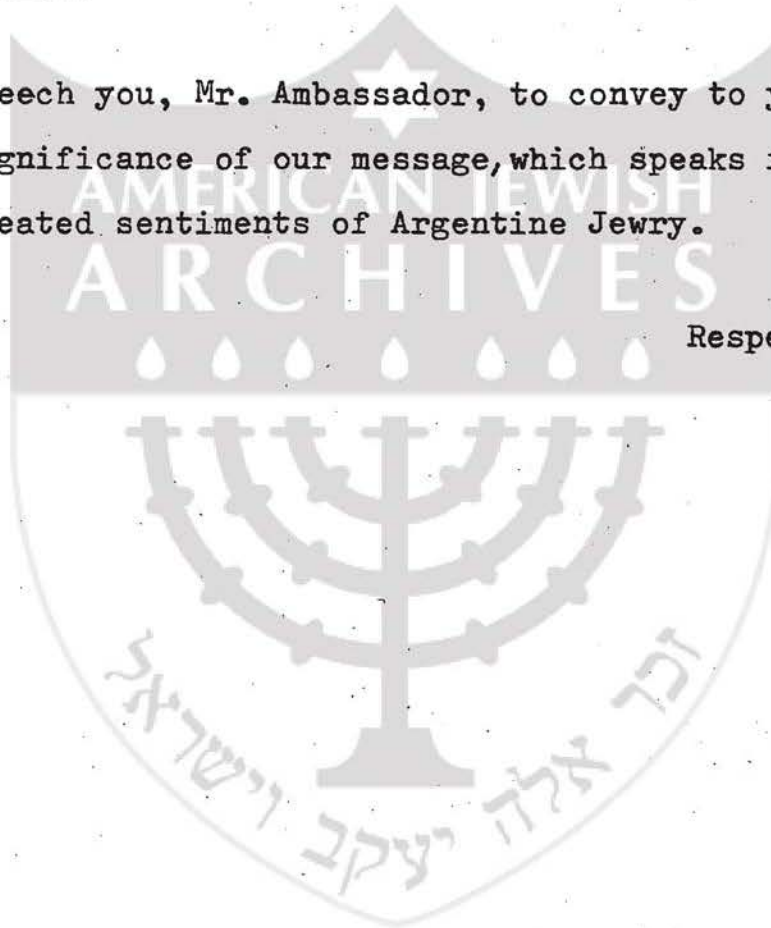
These principles are jeopardized when the President of the world's greatest democracy, which paid its generous due by giving



young lives in order to crush Nazism, takes a step which is to be considered as righting the wrongs of the genocide of six million Jews--during the most ghastly Holocaust history has ever known--and of the despotic régime which aimed at debasing human existence through death and cruel oppression.

We beseech you, Mr. Ambassador, to convey to your Government the significance of our message, which speaks for the deep-seated sentiments of Argentine Jewry.

Respectfully,



(Transl. from the Spanish)

Lima, April 26, 1985

His Excellency  
David Jordan  
U.S. Ambassador to Peru  
Av. Garcilaso de la Vega 1400  
Lima

Your Excellency:

The Jewish Community of Peru is shocked and saddened to learn of President Reagan's resolve to visit a German cemetery on his forthcoming trip to Germany. It is a known fact that among those buried at Bitburg, are members of the Waffen SS, the Nazi élite guard which participated in the murder of millions of Jews, Christians, Gypsies, and Communists in the death camps.

At a time when the democratic world commemorates forty years since the end of World War II and the liberation of the scant survivors of Auschwitz, the most gruesome of death camps, President Reagan's visit is not only out of place, but represents an affront to human dignity.

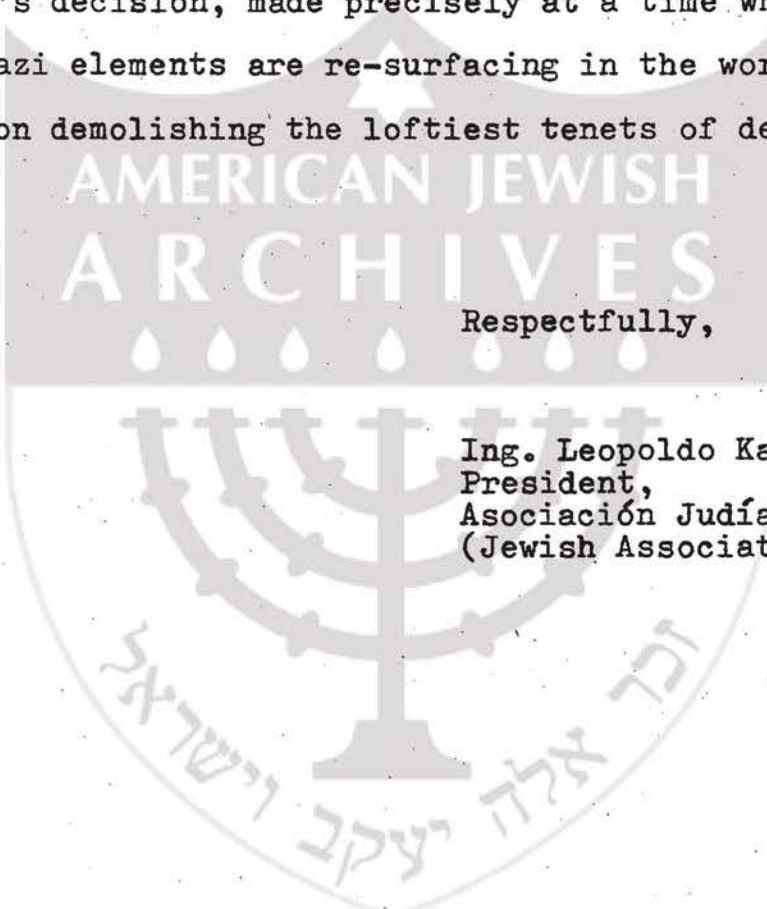
The havoc played by war cannot be erased by visits to burial sites of those who carried out the awesome "Final Solution," staunch enemies of freedom and democracy. In our opinion, the President's decision is not only an inept gesture of reconciliation, but it is unworthy, because it offends those of us who have always supported American democracy. The horror of the crimes committed by Nazi élite troops must be remembered generation

after generation, and not be sidetracked by degrading the victims, equating them with their base victimizers.

We trust that you, Mr. Ambassador, will convey to your Government the displeasure and concern of Peruvian Jewry over your President's decision, made precisely at a time when terrorist and neo-Nazi elements are re-surfacing in the world's shadows, intent upon demolishing the loftiest tenets of democracy and freedom.

Respectfully,

Ing. Leopoldo Kahn  
President,  
Asociación Judía del Perú  
(Jewish Association of Peru)



NATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL

MINUTES

May 22, 1985

POST-BITBURG ANALYSIS

ATTENDEES: Marcus Cohn, Ronald Goldfarb, Stephen Hess, Steve Kurzman, Leonard Garment, Peter Rosenblatt, Laurence Silberman, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Lee White, Ted Tannenwald, Jr., Ben Wattenberg

CHAIR: Alfred Moses

AJCommittee Staff: Hyman Bookbinder, Howard Kohr, Cynthia Green

Chairman Alfred Moses opened the session with an overview of what transpired over the past several months and AJC's role in responding to the President's trip to the military cemetery at Bitburg, W. Germany. Bookie noted some of the specific problems that developed and then asked the group to respond to the following areas of concern: First, the possible backlash developing in the U.S. over Jewish reaction to the trip. Second, the reaction in W. Germany to the trip and how it would affect U.S.-W. German relations and Jewish-German relations.

In response, the following comments were made by individuals Panel members:

- : Anti-semitism is a permanent in the U.S. It is like the disease, herpes -- it never goes away forever, flares up occasionally, but is not fatal.
- There should not be an over-reaction to the reaction created by the Bitburg affair. In the short-run, there should be efforts to cultivate relationships with key administration officials, particularly, Michael Deaver -- even though he is leaving the White House -- and Pat Buchanan.
- : The President does not want to constantly remind himself and the world of the horrors of the Holocaust. It was unfortunate that the Jewish community "hit" Reagan for his forgetting the Holocaust. If the community had understood the history of Bitburg and how the whole situation came about we might have tempered our reaction.
- Helmut Sonnenfeldt made the observation that the Administration would have been better served if it had done more to explain the history behind the Bitburg visit. Since the end of the war, the US has been following a two-track approach to W. Germany. One recognizes the German past and the other seeks to bring Germany back to the West as an ally.
- The Nuremberg Tribunal rejected the notion of collective guilt. It specifically exonerated those individuals of the SS who were conscripted and didn't commit crimes. All cemeteries in W. Germany have some SS buried among the other graves. This is because the

Germans made a conscious effort to integrate their cemeteries and not allow separate shrines to be built for the SS.

It was President Kennedy who first authorized the laying of a wreath at Bitburg. Since then, every November 11, the American military commander, his French counterpart and the local commander have laid wreaths at the Bitburg cemetery. An American flag flies over the cemetery. The city and its locally and nationally elected officials have a long history of being pro-American. Thus, from a German standpoint, a trip to Bitburg was nothing extraordinary. The city has won prizes for exemplary U.S./German relations. For some Germans there could be no better symbol of reconciliation. Another point to remember is that, in Germany, going to a military cemetery now is to honor a dead individual and does not symbolize patriotism or heroism as it does for us. From Kohl's viewpoint, the trip had to do with Germany's role in NATO, a reward for supporting the placement of American missiles in Europe and maintaining the credibility of the political center.

The greatest danger in the Post-Bitburg reaction is that it may have brought out some anti-semitism and anti-Americanism on the German right which had been quiescent. Whereas these attitudes have existed there on the political left and have been tolerated, now the elements of the right and left may join in a strange marriage to destabilize the German political process.

All of us must remember that the U.S. is not an anti-semitic country. Just because someone supported the President's decision to go to Bitburg, does not mean they are anti-semitic. The community has to recognize that you can be opposed to a specific issue on the Jewish agenda and not be anti-semitic. We must be careful not to trivialize the term anti-semitic.

In this regard Pat Buchanan received a "bum rap" because of the tendency to label opposition to our position as being motivated by anti-semitism. Several panel members agreed that Buchanan had received a "bum rap".

The Bitburg episode was puzzling and difficult to sort out. But if we are mad, we should say we are mad. The community should not have appeared to back down from the notion that Jewish pressure was being applied to try and change the President's decision. Doing so only supports the idea that somehow our power is being used illegitimately.

It sounds as if we have work to do in W. Germany in which AJC, because of its W. German connections, could play a significant role. (Chairman Moses responded that an AJC delegation led by Howard Friedman is planning to go to W. Germany).

The community and AJC were not reckless in its responses. This panelist was pleased that other groups -- veterans, church and ethnic leaders -- joined the Jewish community in speaking out. It was not just a Jewish issue.

: When asked a question about what affect this episode will have on Republican efforts to reach the Jewish community in the '86 campaigns, there were several responses. Some said no affect, while others said maybe yes, it might create some concern among Jewish voters. There was no agreement.

The consensus of the entire panel was that AJC should not dwell upon the "Bitburg" affair as such. Whether the anti-Jewish feeling generated by the controversy was episodic or more symptomatic of a larger problem, the "Bitburg" visit itself is not a continuing event and keeping it "alive" will only bring about the back-lash we want to avoid.

Several members expressed concern after Helmut Sonnenfeldt's analysis of the situation in W. Germany. The situation in W. Germany according to the analysis is far more serious than here in the U.S. and if he is correct there is a need for concerted efforts to repair the relationships damaged by "Bitburg."

Bookie closed the session by noting the truly historic event of Eli Weisel speaking to the President, on live TV, without fear of being silenced or harmed for saying the things he did. It is a tribute to American democracy.

Chairman Alfred Moses adjourned the session at 1:45 p.m.

Submitted by:  
Howard Kohr

cc: A. Moses  
D. Gordis  
M. Himmelfarb  
H. Bookbinder  
S. Bahat

JUN 3 1985



# The American Jewish Committee

European Office · 4, rue de la Bienfaisance, 75008 Paris · Tel. 522-9243 and 387-3839

NIVES E. FOX, European Representative

May 29, 1985

TO: International Relations Department  
From: Nives Fox  
Subj: Bitburg Reactions in Europe

As indicated, the request for Bitburg coverage in Europe came late, and retrieval is not altogether successful.

Airmailed, under separate cover, you will find a large number of clippings from France, Britain and Germany. Apart from an occasional doubling of International Herald Tribune pieces which probably appeared in The Times and Washington Post and a few US magazines, they reflect major press opinion in these countries.

Unfortunately, many Jewish communities did not bother to keep a file, and cannot be asked to put in the time and effort to retrace relevant articles. For the community leaders in general, too, the feeling here was that it was up to the Jewish organizations in the US to react. There was the hope too -- to some extent satisfied -- that Resistance and Veteran groups, and public at large protests would take place rather than a concentration of Jewish disapproval. Finally, as the Bitburg reverberations grew, a number of statements by Jewish leaders here were made in interviews, etc.

If one were to summarize European reactions in one phrase, be it press, other media, reputable personalities and government spokesmen it would be: appalled and shocked by the insensitivity of President Reagan's decision and his subsequent comments which only further compounded total incomprehension: it showed ignorance, a lack of historical perspective and understanding that contrasted sharply with West European perceptions; and patent negligence and clumsiness on the part of White House staff and advisors. Here was a great occasion lost to do something significant in terms of moral unity in the democratic camp, giving an opportunity to the dissonant elements in this camp to use the themes of "time to wipe the slate clean; what about allied 'crimes' (Dresden, Hiroshima, etc.)."

For, as you doubtless know, there were voices that went beyond the pardon plea and used the overwhelming protest and criticism as a vehicle to whitewash, dilute and banalize Nazi excesses.

While on the one hand there is agreement that the entire uproar brought on at least the benefit of a somewhat heightened understanding and knowledge of the past among new generations that tended to

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forget or ignore, there came also with it a renewed flurry of anti-Semitism: the Jews as the spoilers, the troublemakers, the unforgiving, professional weepers, lobbying power and press moguls. This especially in Germany, but with echoes from the extreme right press and personalities elsewhere.

Palpable, too, was the malaise created in Germany, very well described by Art Buchwald's piece "The Bitburg Backlash" (here in the International Herald Tribune of May 23). Explaining why Kohl had made the "worst political decision of his life," Buchwald writes: "Because everyone had forgotten what the Nazi regime had done until the chancellor announced he and the president were going to Bitburg to forget it....Instead of reconciliation, Kohl opened up every wound from the Second World War."

As mentioned, Jewish communities did not make official statements and did not save any material. From Spain, however, Sam Toledano tells me that the reaction was a good one (in the sense that Bitburg was a huge mistake) and without discordant notes.

In Italy (clippings were promised but have not yet reached me) while there was general criticism, the theme of pardon played more strongly than elsewhere. This is attributed to the Catholic influence in the country. And very likely, for you remember that the Church urged the pardon, several times, for the SS criminal in Marzabotto, Walter Reder; and the authorities finally gave in and granted pardon in spite of the fact that the population of this small town voted unanimously against forgiveness and for Reder to serve out his full term of imprisonment.

In Holland the Parliament officially condemned the Bitburg visit; and there was a good size delegation of Dutch (40-50, mostly Jewish but also non-Jewish) to protest in Bitburg. A great deal of attention was given by all the media to the Holocaust during the 40th anniversary commemoration; and no anti-Semitic fall out took place. Rather, one is told, the outcome was revived hatred against Nazi Germany, and this coupled with agreement that ties with the new Germany are important and to be encouraged, as well as those of Germany with the US.

In Britain too, many hours of radio and television programs were devoted to explain and remind people of what took place 40 years before, all very positive.

The Bitburg demonstration was organized mostly in France, spontaneously and independently by a number of Jewish organizations -- Zionist Federation, Mapam and Young Mapam groups here, SOS Racism, French Jewish Students, Human Rights League. The French were joined by some US citizens (coming from the US), Israelis, a German group of some 20-30 persons, the UK (15-20), Holland, Italy, Belgium Denmark. About 350-500 persons in all went to Bitburg, in rented busses, individual cars and by plane.

Of particular note was the fact that a few Arabs also participated within the French delegation, as members of SOS Racism, ~~unsubstantiated~~



founded by the French Jewish Student group and Arab groups, with the participation of personalities like Marek Halter, Bernard-Henri Levy, Harlem Desir, etc. This was the second time Arabs joined here on an issue with strong Jewish aspects. The first time was April 2, after the bomb at the Jewish movie festival theater, and shortly after SOS Racism was established this past February.

You have probably seen reports of the Bitburg manifestation: the group lined up on the sole street leading to the cemetery, through which the Reagan-Kohl cortege had to pass. They were pushed back and blocked at an access to this street by German policemen "following orders." The manifestation was silent and dignified, carrying slogans saying "Why?" and "We'll never forget!" There were Germans on the streets in Bitburg, not masses, however. The pervasive sense of German discomfort was apparent to those in the manifestation who tried to speak with them: they were not happy about the Bitburg commemoration, which they saw as just a means for bringing up issues causing guilt.

Finally, enclosed is the French text and translation of the letter Théo Klein, President of CRIF, addressed to the U.S. Ambassador to France, on April 29.

Enclosure - 1  
Clippings airmailed separately



Report from

~~Encounter~~ Duesseldorf: A New Dimension of Interfaith

Albert H. Friedlander

Every two years, the German Protestant Church assembles at a 'Kirchentag', a Church Conference attended by more than a hundred thousand delegates. Over the last decade, attendance figures have continued to rise: from Nuernberg to Hannover to Duesseldorf (where over 150,000 met from June 5 - 9), an increasing number of young people have given the impression of a Church in the process of renewal. Social and political issues have been at the center of these meetings, and the Biblical slogans of each Kirchentag were applied to contemporary issues. In Hamburg, the quote "Fear not" was used by the students as 'Be afraid--of re-armament, of war!' and Herr Apel, then Minister of Defense in Germany, was jeered off the platform. By Hannover, the Peace Movement had become a torrent carrying everything before it. Purple neckerchiefs were worn by most of the young and many of the older delegates, particularly after the Kirchentag organizers forbade the wearing of these scarves by those on the platform engaged in giving lectures or holding services. The passions abated; ~~Hannover~~ Duesseldorf was a much quieter, sober conference; but old and new purple scarves were still in evidence. And issues of current concern: disarmament, ecology, the Third World, guest workers, unemployment and work sharing, civil disobedience, the theology of revolution, and South Africa were major topics within a programme of more than 300 lectures and presentations given at Duesseldorf. Every day began with Bible studies and religious services, organized in the two years since the last Kirchentag by the permanent organization in charge; and the contents and structure of the Conference is a marvel of efficiency, from finding home and group accommodations to bringing orchestras and leading scholars from all over the world into that structure. And there are ancillary aspects to the Kirchentag, encouraged but not organized by the Church, which give a special dimension to this affirmation of Protestantism that moves beyond ecumenicism into the realm of religious dialogue.

The "Arbeitsgemeinschaft Juden und Christen" (Workgroup of Jews and Christians) has occupied a leading role within the Kirchentag for almost two decades. Sometimes this role has been criticized: they are at the Kirchentag, but not within it, totally independent, bringing a finished, packaged programme to these meetings. The organizers are grateful for more than twenty well planned presentations which have involved the workshops members in research, organization of chair people, writing of texts and prayerbooks, publicity, and all the minutiae which overwhelm the central office of the Kirchentag. Yet pressure exists now for the group to be absorbed or at least more closely associated with the central office; and that may be seen as a positive stage in this relationship. While there is some jealousy in viewing a programme featuring world known Jewish and Christian scholars, and a clear desire that the themes announced by the Kirchentag should be closely followed by the Christian-Jewish group, it is also clear that the Jewish-Christian <sup>contribution</sup> has been recognized by many as essential to the Kirchentag. At Hannover, the first stages of such an integration were already visible.

The Kirchentag <sup>began</sup> ~~opened~~ with seventy Opening Services on Wednesday, the 5th of June, accomodating over 100,00 worshippers. Some met in Conference halls seating 4 - 6 thousand, in squares and places of public assembly; others met in churches. The Jewish-Christian group had always presented its own inter-faith services, generally featuring a sermon by one of its best known religious leaders in this field, Landes-rabbiner Peter Levinson (ordained at HUC in Cincinnati). In Hannover and Duesseldorf, an experimental group service without sermon was introduced and generally appreciated. However, for the first time, a rabbi was asked by the Kirchentag to represent the group by speaking at one of its services, in a church and on the Conference text. The text was First Corinthians 8:6--totally christological; and it might be noted that the first cultural and religious shock for American visitors is often this encounter with a self-confident, sometimes triumphalist Christianity

which makes few of the interfaith 'concessions' considered elemental on the American scene. I accepted the task with some trepidation, and turned the text into a question asked of the congregation, demanding an authentic Christianity of them in their encounter with the Jewish tradition. The church was overcrowded; again, what is commonplace in the United States was new in Germany where there are only 30,000 Jewish residents.

The real programme of the Kirchentag started the next morning, with the participants thronging to the Bible study sessions. The text was Genesis 8 and 9--the Noachitic laws! The Jewish-Christian group offered two study groups, attended by over two thousand participants. The first group was conducted by Professor Rolf ~~Rendtorff~~ Rendtorff of Heidelberg, a leading German Christian scholar, and by Professor Michael Wyschogrod of New York whose sensitive and traditional approach evoked a warm response. The second group was led by Edna Brocke, an Israeli teacher living in Germany. After the Bible study, the group presented a special topic "Too Young for Responsibility: 40 Years after Auschwitz" where five well known panelists addressed themselves to an attitude visible in Germany and dramatized by the Kohl-Reagan visit to Bitburg. The large group attending this meeting applauded on many occasions, but it should be noted that in Germany itself the approach presented by the Jewish Christian group must be considered a minority view. Only one Jewish voice, that of Professor Pinchas Lapide--a member of the Jewish-Christian group--had been raised in firm approval of the Bitburg visit; and this has led to a visible strain between him ~~xxxx~~ and this working group.

The next presentation brought Michael Wyschogrod back to the podium, on the theme of ecology: "We Humans within Creation"; and his colleague was Professor Eberhardt Bethge, one of the most revered and respected theologians in Germany, whose life and work centers around the figure of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (his/ <sup>BONHOEFFER'S</sup> prison letters of resistance were written to Bethge, who was also in prison for his active

resistance against Hitler). Later that afternoon Pinchas Lapide, who favors New Testament texts, gave a scintillating lecture on "Do not Give Caesar that which Belongs to God: Jesus and Politics"; but the crowning lecture that evening, one of the high-lights of the Hannover Kirchentag, was Pesach Schindler's lecture on "Speaking of God Today". Dr. Schindler had been brought to the Conference from Jerusalem, one of the new voices which continually come into the Jewish-Christian group to make for continued growth and renewal.

The offerings of the first day were typical of the programme presented by the group throughout the Kirchentag. The rabbis who spoke included Rabbi Stein of Berlin and Jacob Posen of Zurich (Reform and Orthodox); and Rabbi Mark Tannenbaum of the American Jewish Committee, who gave the keynote presentation to the theme "What can we do for Israel towards a Near East Solution?". Another panel dealt with "A new Relationship between Jews and Christians"; and, to add a cultural dimension to our presentation particular to Duesseldorf, I ~~was xxxxxxxxxx~~ gave a paper on "Heinrich Heine's Journeys into Judaism". In that city, a suppressed dispute about Heine is still raging. Asked to express myself on the question as to whether this university should be renamed "Heinrich Heine University", I only had to begin by saying: "I do not really know whether this university/<sup>is worthy...</sup>~~of such a name...~~" to evoke a storm of applause. Other presentations, including music by the Jewish folk singer Dany Eober and services at the local synagogue, added to an atmosphere of appreciation for the Jewish presence. ~~and~~ The Kirchentag also features a "Market of Possibilities", where hundreds of stands vie for the attention of the K participants; the group's stand was always well attended, and many of the scholars within it took time off to ~~xxxx~~ serve in it and to have an opportunity of talking with visitors on a one-to-one basis.

Throughout the Kirchentag, the group meet, to discuss special statements,

problems arising out of the other aspects of the Kirchentag (should we join with the Sinti and Roma ("gypsies") in presenting their claims after Auschwitz; should we ~~join~~ meet with the Muslim group in some type of dialogue; have anti-Jewish or anti-Israel statements been made which need challenging; should there be a special statement from the Kirchentag after Bitburg; and related issues). And, a few months after the Kirchentag, the group will meet again to assess the successes and failures of ~~the~~ ~~the~~ Duesseldorf--and to plan for/<sup>the</sup> Frankfurt Kirchentag of June, 1987.


What new dimension, then, can be seen in Interfaith work after Duesseldorf, particularly when it must be said that the American interfaith dialogue is far more advanced in many areas? First of all, it is precisely because this meeting took place in Germany, part of a continuous development, that it offers new insights. Floating upon an ocean of guilt and rejection of guilt, of battles between older generations who want to forget and a younger group who have to learn what they have to remember, a very fragile vessel of religion moved carefully among hidden <sup>SHOALS</sup> hazards. At every Kirchentag, the landscape is there as a reminder of the tension between the groups. When we entered Nuernberg, we drove along the old stadium, with grass sprouting out of the cracked concrete; but the echo of Nazi rallies still filled the atmosphere. At Hamburg, the proceedings began with a silent march to the concentration camp memorial at Neuengamme. When we passed through the closed <sup>ST</sup> village, doors were slammed and shades were drawn in ~~the~~ <sup>they</sup> houses: ~~one~~ they did not want to remember what "no one had known" about the camp two miles from the village. And at Hannover I stood next to the bishop of Moscow, who had come to the Kirchentag to join a service at Bergen Belsen which also commemorated the murdered Russian soldiers. In Duesseldorf, no special area was needed: Bitburg had not yet been assimilated, the tension between the Jewish-Christian Work Group and the rest of the Kirchentag was clearly centered upon a ~~real~~ differing interpretation of the political events which had taken place a few days ago.

Judaism and Christianity here confront each other ~~upon~~ against a blasted, arid landscape of remembered suffering and guilt. The workgroup unites the best talents from both sides seeking to come to terms with the tasks of their religion; but the environment around them continues to be hostile. The Church is aware that their ablest Christian scholars are committed to this interfaith work: Eberhard Bethge, Friedrich Marquardt, Helmut Gollwitzer, Peter von der Osten-Sacken, Martin Stöhr, <sup>Heinz</sup> Kremers, Remndtorff and the occasional dialogues with Kung, Moltmann, and Soelle cannot be disregarded. Kirchentag participants flock to these sessions where the leading Jewish and Christian speakers have developed their own following which waits from one Kirchentag to the next to listen to dialogues on Auschwitz and on Peace Theology, on the problems of Israel and the problems of being Germans. The scholars in the group are backed up by an impressive group of lay-people: judges, authors, business leaders, journalists, pastors and rabbis. Important resolutions, articles and books follow each Kirchentag. The level of dialogue is high; and what is discussed at the Kirchentag emerges later in the synods of the Church, in the impressive network of Protestant and Catholic academies where many of the Christian and Jewish scholars meet and debate during the year.

Yet major problems remain. It is in the very nature of the Working Group to attract the more liberal Christians of Germany: old Social Democrats, new radicals, pioneers in Christian theology who want a post-Auschwitz approach which must challenge the status quo. And so the group is viewed with suspicion by many of the more traditional leaders who resent the challenge to missionary work, who cannot accept the Jew as a religious equal, who have listened to the new revivalist music and are committed to triumphalist Christianity. Indeed, it is remarkable that the group has maintained itself and has grown in strength when one examines the forces arrayed against it. It may well be that the support for this group comes from below rather than from above: from a new generation of young people who want religious slogans to have an existentialist foundation, who want help in dealing with the past. Anything Jewish attracts attention--more positive than negative, despite extremists of the right and left. The Duesseldorf Kirchentag had more of a Palestinian and Muslim attendance than previous conferences; but there were no major confrontations on the topic of Israel. Within a framework of sober re-assessment of the German and Christian tradition, the tasks of Jewish-Christian dialogue were announced. One can look towards the coming year with much interest and with some hope. There is much to do before Frankfurt, 1987.

.....

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

**date** June 6, 1985  
**to** Marc H. Tanenbaum  
**from** Jacob Kovadloff   
**subject** YOUR MEMO OF MAY 16TH RE: BITBURG EPISODE

Attached, please find the report sent by our correspondent in Buenos Aires, Mr. Bernardo Fain.

On May 21st, I sent you translations of the cables sent to the American ambassadors by the Jewish communities of Argentina and Peru. Later, I also learned that the Uruguayans did this as well as the Argentinian Zionist Youth Council. And, the Latin-American Jewish Congress -- a branch of the WJC with which all the Latin-American Jewish communities are affiliated, made a strong statement repudiating Reagan's visit to Bitburg.

CHILE

Jose Navasal is one of the outstanding journalists in Chile. He also hosts a TV news program. Attached herewith is an excerpt from his article. Also, excerpts from a piece by Ligia Flores from El Pais, as well as the editorial from La Palabra Israelita.

BRAZIL

In general, the newspapers carried cables from the U.S. and Germany without major editorials and the popular Manchete magazine owned by Bloch published several pages on this matter (excerpt attached). One week later Manchete again commented on the subject under the title "Reagan insists on a mistake to show that he is strong."

URUGUAY

The most important piece was written by Jose Jerozolimski in the weekly Semanario Hebreo. Let's say that this Jewish publication is also well read by non-Jewish people.

continued....



SPAIN

Attached is an excerpt from an editorial in El Pais -- the leading newspaper of Spain.

CUBA

An editorial in Granma was undoubtedly similar to the Soviet press language on this matter.

SPANISH PRESS IN NEW YORK

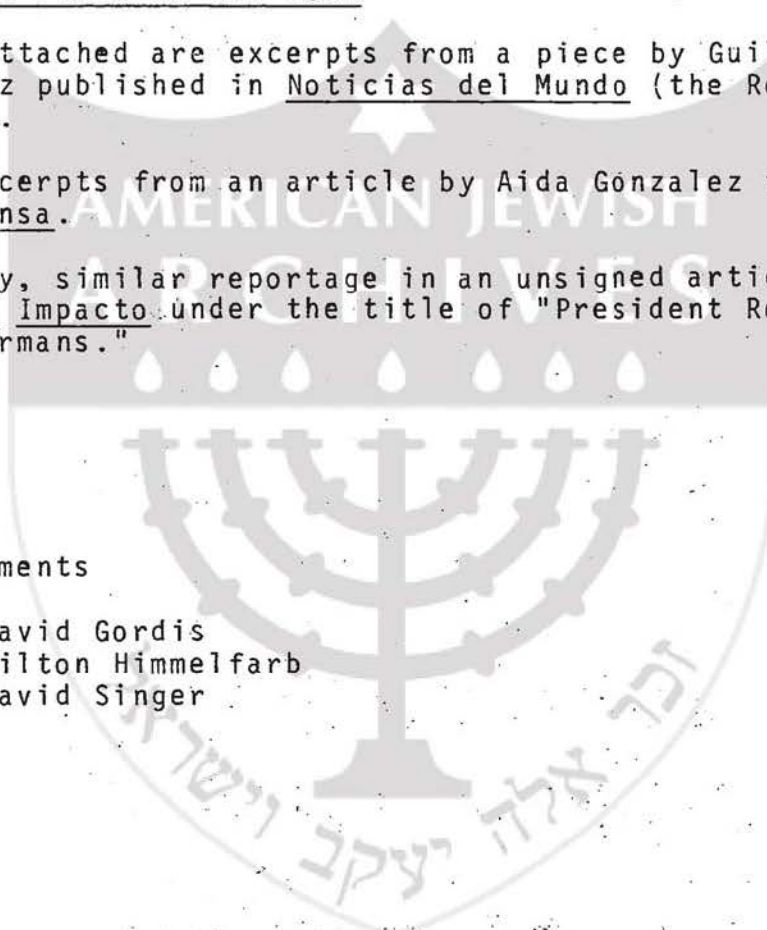
Also attached are excerpts from a piece by Guillermo Martinez Marquez published in Noticias del Mundo (the Reverend Moon's paper).

All excerpts from an article by Aida González in El Diario-La Prensa.

Finally, similar reportage in an unsigned article from the weekly Impacto under the title of "President Reagan Between Jews and Germans."

JK/BJB  
attachments

xc: David Gordis  
Milton Himmelfarb  
David Singer



DATE: May 23, 1985

TO: Jacobo Kovadloff, South American Affairs and Spanish Media

FROM: Bernardo Fain, Buenos Aires, Argentina

RE: Public opinion and editorial response to Bitburg episode

Although no polls were arranged in Argentina to evaluate public's opinion on the Bitburg events, there were instead and adequate press coverage on same. It must be taken into consideration that Argentinians were then and now under the pressure of domestic events such as hyperinflation, a confrontation between the President and the unions, closing of banks and the Juntas trial, which demand their preferential ~~amm~~ attention.

Nevertheless, general newspapers wrote a great deal on the issue, as it is reflected in following synopsis. As to the Jewish press, it certainly gave a preferent treatment, specially as subject of editorials and articles from contributors, and as to the radio-TV achievements, this correspondent does not recall any special feature on the matter.

#### General newspapers

"Clarín" is the most popular of the B.A. tabloids. Brings one editorial per day, mostly on domestic affairs. Extended news based on Washington Post and Los Angeles Times and international agencies releases.

- 4/17 "Reagan changes his attitude. A visit to a concentration camp in Federal Germany is announced" (full page)
- 4/21 "Between Jews and Germans. Reagan is criticized and praised" (two full pages).
- 4/23 "Reaction against Reagan grows".
- 4/30 "Reagan starts Europe journey. Will visit German ~~memorial~~ cemetery" (full page)
- 5/3 "Protests for the visit to the cemetery" (full page)
- 5/6 "Reagan: reconciliation does not mean oblivion". "Homage paid in Germany to the Holocaust victims and to the war dead" (full page)
- 5/8 "Israeli reactions. Hard critics" (3 col.)

"La Nación", the most important B.A. daily. Conservative. Brings three editorials per day. Supplied by main international news agencies. No editorial published on the issue.

- 4/26 "Reagan will visit German cemetery" (3 col.)
- 5/6 "Reagan honored fallen during War II. With Helmut Kohl visited the military cemetery of Bitburg and the Bergen Belsen concentration camp (Starting at front page covered half page 2).

"La Nación" (cont.)

Coverage includes an article from Rolando Riviere, its own correspondent in Europe, dated ~~mm~~ at Bergen Belsen: "Homage to German soldiers and victims from Nazism". He describes Reagan's visit to Bitburg: "Foggy night again, uncomfortable, overwhelmed he too by unavoidable recollections, he clearly shorted his stay..." By making reference to the wreath of flowers that Reagan, his wife Nancy and Kohl placed at Bergen Belsen, he closes his article ~~mm~~ with following reference: "At least, in Bergen Belsen's wreath there surely is a flower for Ann Frank".

5/7 "Reactions for visit to Bitburg" (3 col.).

5/10 Brings Flora Lewis' article for The New York Times, "Another forty years peace".

"La Prensa", traditional declining newspaper, considered till near past best friend of the Jewish people, publishes three editorials every day, also on foreign issues, and two well-read columns, one by Manfred Schönfeldt, a Jewish ~~mm~~ journalist. It surprises ~~m~~ its poor coverage of the Bitburg episode.

4/25 "Reagan's visit to Bonn" (2 col.)

5/5 "Reagan will visit the Nazi cemetery today" (3 col.)

5/6 "Reagan visited a concentration camp and the Nazi cemetery" (3 col.)

"La Razón", formerly an afternoon newspaper, it was transformed into a morning tabloid. Jacobo Timerman is its assistant editor. Various Jewish journalists in its editorial staff.

4/18 "Germans criticizes badly Helmut Kohl. For the storm that Reagan's schedule broke out".

4/20 "Choir of protests ~~mm~~ for Ronald Reagan's visit to Nazi cemetery. President image suffered hard damage due to such a decision" (Extended coverage including an article from Mario Diamant, its correspondent in New York, who reflects in ~~mm~~ detail U.S. public and press opinion on the ~~Bitburg~~ events). Diamant starts his full page story by saying: "During the last five years, since Ronald Reagan occupies the White House, few episodes damaged so badly his image like this debate around his planned trip to Federal Germany, next May".

4/30 "Washington confirms Ronald Reagan's visit to Nazi cemetery" (full page).

5/2 An article from Stanley Diamond, founder and former Dean ~~of the New School for Social Research and editor of Dialectical Anth~~ of the Department of Anthropology of the New School for Social Research and editor of Dialectical Anthropology: "Priority for 50 millions German-Americans in injury of the Jews". An ethnical policy prompted trip to Bitburg".

"La Razón" (cont.)

5/5 "Reagan visits the Bergen Belsen concentration camp today"

5/6 "Only official suite escorted Ronald Reagan to Nazi cemetery. While 2,000 guards watched over 500 demonstrators" (4 col.).

"Buenos Aires Herald", the sole Argentine daily in English, is inclined to a liberal position. Its editorials only discuss domestic issues.

4/24 "U.S. Jewish leaders pressure Kohl"

4/25 "U.S. poll opposes visit. Holocaust council may resign"

4/29 "Kohl urged to call off Bitburg".

4/30 "Morally right to do so. Reagan set on to S.S. cemetery" (3 col.).

5/2 "Reagan begins German visit" (3 col.)

5/5 "Protestors gather in Bitburg, for Reagan" (4 col.)

5/6 "Regan visit to cemetery sparks demo."

"Argentinisches Tageblatt", in German, now a weekly, is inclined to a conservative line.

5/4 "Reagan's visit to Germany" (front page, 5 columns)

5/11 "Reagan honors concentration camp victims and soldiers memory at Bergen Belsen and Bitburg". The news coverage includes an article from Peter Gorlinsky in his column "How I see it", "The horrible balance mentality" (I enclose clipping).

Jewish publications

"Di Presse", world's oldest Yiddish daily. A tabloid which appears five days a week.

5/4 In his column "Week after week", Moishe Raizas states in its paragraph "Reagan arrives in Bonn with a two division hump over his back": "The visit to Bitburg cemetery is, no doubt, a moral hump which he himself took ~~charge~~ charge of. Under no circumstances he will be able to wash off such strain with his Bergen Belsen visitation".

"Mundo Israelita". Weekly Zionist tabloid in Spanish.

5/11 Devoted two and a half pages to the Bitburg episode. An editorial on front page: "Only a little bit pregnant", expresses in one of its paragraphs: "One minute, eight minutes or one hundred minutes, the actual fact is that Reagan granted an absolution for those who ~~defended~~ fought to defend the most aberrant system ever known in latest times of human history".

Subsequently, "Reagan at Bitburg", a full page ~~story~~ story by its correspondent in Washington, reflecting U.S. public and press opinion on the matter.

Finally, a full page article by columnist Simja Sneh, "Memory and pardon", in which he states: "Bitburg' S.S., whose graves Kohl and Reagan ~~must~~ incline before, have not been soldiers but murderers, who were aware of the crimes they used to commit".

"Nueva Presencia", a radical weekly tabloid, partly Jewish and partly devoted to general human rights questions.

5/3 A letter-to-the-editor, signed by a Gerardo Goldansky, from Montevideo, Uruguay, states in a paragraph: "It is clear now: for the American government it is more important not to disturb Helmut Kohl's revengering Germany than satisfy Jewish people complaints.

5/10 An article from writer Ricardo Feierstein, "Good-by Misterix or the monster without make-up", where it says: "The ~~new~~ neo-fascist characteristics of Reagan's personality and policy are as enough disturbing as to make that Nazi mentality did really ~~new~~ win the war, even though in these days is commemorated the military defeat of the Axis powers.

"Semanario Israelita", weekly tabloid in German, devoted the German-speaking Jewish community.

~~4/23~~ 4/23 An article from editor, Werner Máximo Finkelstein, ~~the~~ "Turmoil over Reagan's visit ~~to~~ to Germany"(See clipping).

5/9 Leader from contributor Werner Kroll on front page: "No grounds for nostalgia -so why such alarm on nostalgia?" (I enclose clipping).

~~La Luz~~ "La Luz", fortnightly devoted the Sephardic community.

5/3 An editorial, "Bitter critics on Reagan", in which it states: "The announcement from White House that during his visit to West Germany, President Ronald Reagan will pay a visit to a former concentration camp, did not absolutely decreased the adverse feelings originated in his decision in placing a wreath of flowers at the German military cemetery were members of the infamous S.S. Waffen are also buried".

Buenos Aires, Argentina  
May 23, 1985

(Transl. from the Spanish)

Excerpt from an article which appeared in *El Mercurio*, Santiago, Chile, dated *May 6<sup>th</sup>* 1985, titled

EXCESS OF ANNIVERSARIES

by José M. Navasal

"...The picture becomes more confusing still, when adding to it the incident of Reagan's insistence on placing a wreath at the burial site of German soldiers, of whom several dozen had been members of the SS. Reagan means well, but he is naïve. He relies upon his close advisors, who told him that the finishing touch of a reconciliation between the U.S. and Germany would be paying tribute at a cemetery where soldiers from both countries lie buried.

" Later on, it was found that no U.S. soldiers were buried there. Instead, there were graves of the SS. The subsequent clamor, the comedy of errors, the attempt not to humiliate anyone, and the space devoted to this quite unimportant affair has completed the confusing picture. Protests over the Bitburg ceremony have dimmed the memory of Berlin in ruins, the bodies of Hitler and Eva Braun, <sup>of</sup> Mussolini and Claretta, and the arrival of the Russians at the banks of the Elbe, who came there to stay."

A spread which appeared in El País, Santiago, Chile (May 6), by Ligia Flores, deals with the story of Jorge Drapella, formerly a Pole, non-Jew, a Dachau inmate until the Allied liberation. Drapella himself discusses his years of trials and tribulations in Dachau, documented by personal notes and photographs (3, showing the crematoria, are reproduced).

On the subject of Jews, Drapella comments: "In the five years I spent there [in Dachau], I saw few Jews; mostly, there were prisoners of other nationalities...but I do believe there were Jews in adjoining, satellite camps."

On Bitburg: "This is political propaganda with some ulterior motive...Eisenhower, too, visited Dachau, and it was all political. After so many years, one sees things differently. You saw how Jews perished; today, they do business with the Germans." Then there are those who refuse to believe in the war atrocities, who would rather believe it is all a fabrication. "People believe what they want to believe, and that's it."

La Palabra Israelita, Santiago, Chile (May 10th),<sup>3</sup> carries an editorial chronicling the Bitburg affair: Wiesel's memorable plea addressed to President Reagan, the belated and offensive decision to visit a Nazi concentration camp; Kohl's share in the developments; the outrage of the American Jewish and non-Jewish leadership and community.

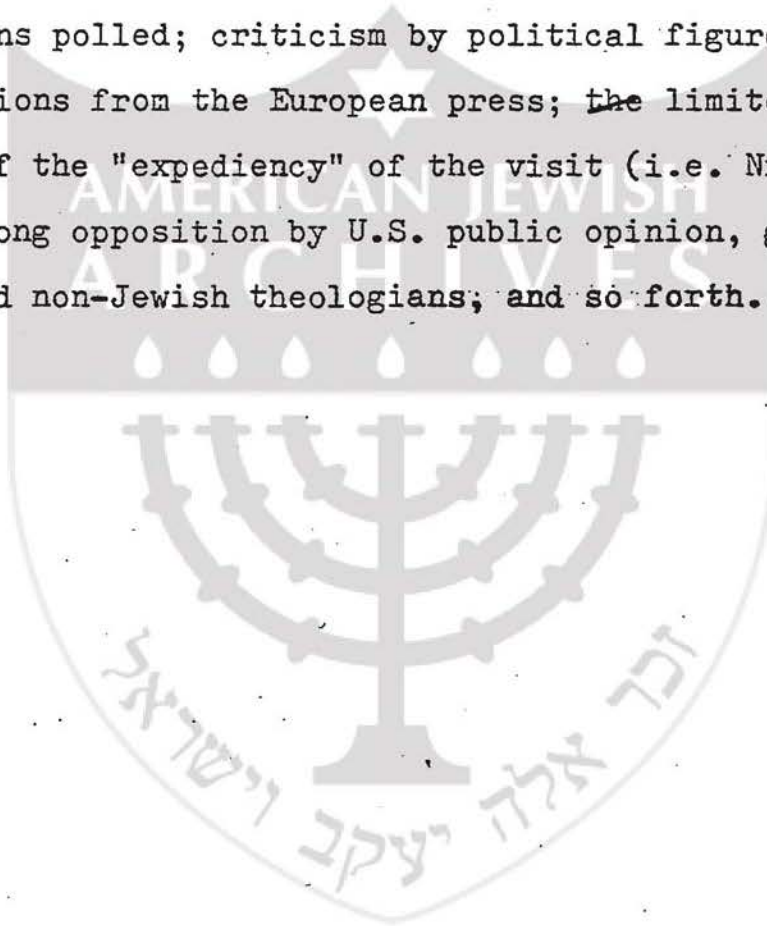
The article concludes, i.a., "...Reagan's people were deliberately deceived by the Germans... they simply failed to see what impact a few SS graves could have on U.S. public opinion."





(Transl. from the Portuguese)

A lengthy article published in Manchete, Rio de Janeiro (May 18), titled "The Effects of Gamma Rays on the Flowers of a Cemetery" quotes excerpts from Reagan's speeches at Bergen-Belsen, Bitburg, etc. The article also reports on Jewish outcries in the U.S., Europe, and Israel; Kohl's position and the support of the Bitburg visit by 72% of West Germans polled; criticism by political figures in Europe and quotations from the European press; the limited support in the U.S. of the "expediency" of the visit (i.e. Nixon, Kissinger), versus strong opposition by U.S. public opinion, government circles and non-Jewish theologians; and so forth.



(Translated from the Spanish)

Summary of Editorial in Semanario Hebreo, Montevideo,  
Uruguay, dated May 9, 1985 titled

A NEW BITBURG GRAVE: SOUND JUDGMENT

by José Jerozolinski

This extensive editorial comments on Reagan's dismal faux pas, the visit to Bitburg cemetery, and the even more shameful attempt to compensate for it by visiting a Nazi death camp. No matter who the first culprits were in this whole affair, the ultimate moral and political responsibility rests with Reagan. The analogy is that of a "chauffeur who, despite repeated warnings that a huge pit was at the end of the road, steps on the gas rather than putting on the breaks."

The President of the greatest power in the free world must not have impervious pride, but sound judgment. "The Talmud notes that teachers can learn from their pupils. Occasionally, it is wise to stoop down and heed some good advice...Reagan refused... and lost a good opportunity to rise to great moral heights."

As to the question of guilt, "we support friendship with today's Germans, and do not believe in collective guilt," certainly not from one generation to the next. But must 'reconciliation' take place with yesterday's Germans, with Nazis? Would it not have been "more dignified and purposeful to visit a German children's school?"

As to Reagan's argument that young German soldiers buried at Bitburg had also been 'victims,' the author notes that "... Nazi troops who took part in the most unprecedented destruction... with rare exceptions...invaded jubilantly, destroyed knowingly, murdered generously...not as 'Nazi victims,' but as rejoicing messengers, as proud gods..."

Had Reagan honored a specific soldier, it would not have been far-reaching; however, the cemetery as a whole was the symbol of 'reconciliation.' Were Reagan, Kohl, and their advisors not aware of the affront implied by the Bitburg visit and the belated decision to include the site where Anne Frank was murdered? This is tantamount to establishing a balance between the child martyr and its assassins.

Strengthening ties with German democrats is considered essential. Would democratic Germans have objected, had Bitburg not been included in the trip? Not very likely. "The only ones who rejoiced were...non democrats, anti-democrats, those nostalgic for Nazism. Are their numbers in West Germany so sizable as to prompt...Kohl to insist vehemently-- and to have Reagan insist-- on Bitburg? One would then conclude -- and Kohl himself has his share in this assumption -- that a substantial part of the Germans are less democratic in spirit than is generally believed."

Reagan should be the last one "to place pride above sagacity." But he is not alone. Others, too, have promised "not to forget,"

at cemeteries and museums, but inside their government offices and headquarters, maintain that 'political realism' must prevail. "Where does the first one end, and the second one begin? No one is explicit on this point...and so every mistake is made under the label of 'political realism'...leading to hypocrisy, callousness, destruction, and death."



Under the heading An Unfortunate Trip, J.L. Pérez Regueira, in El País, Madrid (May 6) comments as follows:

"U.S. President Ronald Reagan has set out on his European trip with enough absurdities to make one believe that the lack of agreement in Bonn over monetary policy was a logical and anticipated outcome.

"Before arriving in the Federal Republic of Germany, Reagan stirred outrage over his Bitburg cemetery tribute. European participation in "Star Wars" has mute points. Finally, the embargo against Nicaragua did not receive the desired support from Washington.

" Reagan's visit to Bitburg cemetery, where 49 ex-members of the Hitler SS lie buried, does not wrong Jews alone. Some of these troops participated in the killing at the French village of Oradour-sur-Glane. Reagan's best ally in Europe, Britain's Margaret Thatcher, ~~criticized~~<sup>denounced</sup> the visit as an attack against all those who confronted what Hitler stood for. Many Americans lost their lives in that battle."

GRAMMA (Weekly English Review) Havana,  
**HEIL, RONALDI!** May 12, 1985

● THE WORLD scandal over President Ronald Reagan's visit to a Nazi military cemetery in the Federal Republic of Germany grows by the hour.

Before, during and after the visit, many spoke up to ask that it be called off or to regret the fact that a U.S. president honor the ferocious storm troops of the 3rd Reich who brought grief to Europe more than 40 years ago.

In the front line of those protesting were congressmen, politicians and representatives of Jewish organizations in the United States, and survivors of the Nazi holocaust against the Jewish people.

To top it off, the U.S. press revealed that German troops responsible for the 1944 massacre of many U.S. soldiers in the Ardennes region of Belgium are buried there.

Jewish groups in the United States and elsewhere have interpreted President Reagan's gesture as the start of "a dangerous process of Nazi rehabilitation."

In spite of everything, Ronald Reagan spent the 40th anniversary of the defeat of the "brown plague" in Europe in the

enthusiastic company of Federal German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, honoring assassins rather than the millions of victims.

He speaks of a symbolic gesture of reconciliation with those in large measure responsible for the torment and suffering of millions of Europeans. Although four decades have passed, this claim is an insult to the intelligence of Europe and a shameful effort to justify the atrocities, crimes and destruction of German fascism.

In practice, Reagan is paying tribute to Nazi state terrorism, the most insane violence, arrogance, cruelty, racial hatred and mass extermination of nationalities and racial groups. Nobody anywhere can interpret it any other way.

Noted U.S. attorney Robert Jackson told the Nuremberg Tribunal:

"These defendants represent sinister forces that will continue to lurk in the world long after the bodies of these men have been reduced to dust."

The sinister forces to which he alluded have not disappeared. They have again shown their face at the Bitburg Nazi cemetery.

(Transl. from the Spanish)

"Has the time come to forget old wrongs, or are we about to reinforce the hatred which the destruction of a continent and the death of millions of human beings have not succeeded in abating?," asks Guillermo Martínez Márquez in El Mundo, (May 22).

The answer: "Forty years after the Nazi surrender at Reims, it isn't fair to revive the hatred of huge war devastation. The professional 'peace establishment,' in particular, should not condemn Reagan for a humanitarian task designed to ease tensions no longer justifiable. On the other hand, where is the 'Nazi danger?' Are the Nazis perchance the ones who jeopardize relations between countries? To recall the Nazis at this stage is nothing but a ridiculous excuse," one that "must have been set in motion from Moscow, by angry foes of free institutions, who waste no time in publicizing anything suspect of the natural and committed enemies of Soviet Communism."

(Transl. from the Spanish)

El Diario-La Prensa (May 3), New York Spanish-language daily, featured an editorial with strongly sarcastic overtones, titled: "Why Visit SS Nazi Graves," by Aída Gonzalez. The author quotes Himmler, back in 1943, when he referred to the Final Solution as a "glorious chapter in our history, never recorded thus far, and never to be recorded in future."

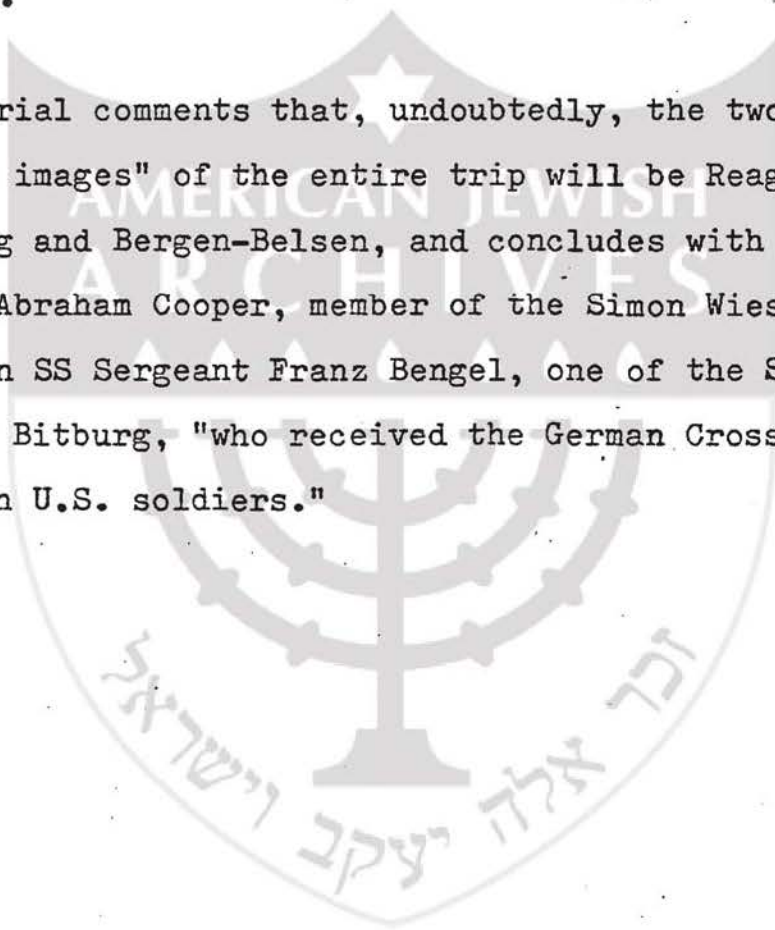
Gonzalez touches upon some of these "glorious chapters," particularly Auschwitz, where hopeless victims went to the gas chambers while an on-site orchestra played "The Merry Widow" and the "Tales of Hoffmann." Soon, another "glorious" chapter for the SS would be added, by Reagan's visit to Bitburg. "Let us remember," she notes, "that the gentlemen of the SS deserve to be complimented in their graves, because they were... efficient, disciplined...careful in their production... If we choose, we can also remember the harmless tunes of 'The Merry Widow.' Everything else, however, must be forgotten."



(Transl. from the Spanish)

Impacto (May 2 - 8), New York Spanish-language weekly, featured an editorial on Kohl's statements broadcast over West German television in connection with Bitburg, his appreciation of Reagan's decision to proceed as planned; also, his understanding of protests by Jews in the U.S. and elsewhere.

The editorial comments that, undoubtedly, the two "most indelible images" of the entire trip will be Reagan's visits to Bitburg and Bergen-Belsen, and concludes with a statement by Rabbi Abraham Cooper, member of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, on SS Sergeant Franz Bengel, one of the SS members buried at Bitburg, "who received the German Cross for having killed ten U.S. soldiers."



Dusseldorf, 8 June 1985

The Working Group of Jews and Christians  
of the German Evangelical Kirchentag

Dietrich Goldschmidt

The Working Group of Jews and Christians of the German Evangelical Kirchentag has carried out a series of Institutes at the Kirchentag. The objects of the lectures and discussions were:

- The responsibility of Germans 40 years after Auschwitz,
- The self-understanding of Israel,
- The meaning of the Maidenek trial,
- The question of what we are able to do for Israel toward the solution of the Near East conflict,
- The consequences for theology and church of the new relationship between Jews and Christians.

The participants in the events heard the speech of Richard von Weizsacker on 8 May with relief and agreement. Nevertheless, they were alarmed afterward, as they were before. The "spiritual-moral renewal," proclaimed for the Federal Republic, threatens to suppress an honest treatment of the events from 1933 to 1945 in Germany and their pre-history. The commemorations in Bergen-Belsen and Bitburg on the occasion of 8 May in terms of the way they came about and the discussions pertaining to them let this be clearly known. To want to honor the murdered in the same breath as those who covered Europe with war and annihilation denies their sacrifice any worth. In the comparison there lies at the same time a falsification of history which leads the German people to a dishonest relationship with their own past and attaches heavy shadows to them.

We are ashamed that the church leadership and the synods let the Jews who demonstrated against this development go it alone; the Jews who were carried away by police from the doors of former concentration camps. Representatives of the Protestant and Catholic church did not show solidarity with them, rather they took part -- in contrast to the Jewish representatives -- in the ceremony at Bergen-Belsen. Their appearance and their presence were incorrect in the eyes of both victim and survivor. In view of the silence

Kirchentag/2

of the church organs and the behavior of the church representatives, we ask ourselves whether the Synodal Declarations on a new, positive relationship to the Jews of the synods in the Rhineland, in Baden, in Berlin and of the Reformed Church in northwest Germany were formed to remain paper documents instead of to lead to acts of solidarity with Jews in daily life.

Similarly, we are unsettled about the law over the so-called "Auschwitz-lies" and about the relevant discussions concerning it. The equation and with it the equality of treatment, of the offense of denying the crimes of Auschwitz with the offense of denying the crimes against Germans caused by the war; the legal treatment of these two offenses under the same category and deserving the same punishment illustrates a shameful, calculating mentality. This incident is a further proof that broad sections of our people seek still to close their eyes against the horror of past crimes and refuses to draw the necessary consequences.

Under the anxiety of the unstable, contradictory situation in the Federal Republic, all efforts to find at this moment an open and understanding relationship to the state of Israel and its citizens suffer. Indeed, Israel finds itself in an especially difficult economic, political and above all spiritual crisis at this time.

We expressly demand therefore:

1. That the government of the Federal Republic use all the ways and means at its disposal to further the peace process in the Near East to secure the right and possibility of the existence of the state of Israel, to which belongs especially:
  - a. Furthering of direct trade with Israel as well as direct trade between the EEC and Israel;
  - b. No sale of arms to the Arab nations or to Israel;
  - c. Strengthening of cultural exchange with Israel, e.g. academic study in Israel, adult education in Israel and planned youth exchange by German subvention of the Israeli's travel tax.
2. The government of the Republic, the states and cities; the church and its communities; the mass media; the trade unions and the associations

Kirchentag/3

of trade and industry should do all that lies within their ability to insure that balanced and complete information about events in Israel and in the neighboring countries is broadcast. This means that antagonism toward Israel, anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, newer designations than the classic "Jew hatred" must be countered with all available force.



Translated by  
Dr. Allan Mittleman

rpr

# SCA NEWS

SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA



327 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016 • (212) 686-8670

From: Gunther Lawrence

For Immediate Release:

NEW YORK, NY--The Synagogue Council of America today called for a national outpouring of protests from both Christians and Jews to President Reagan in order to persuade him to cancel his visit to the Bitburg cemetery in Germany.

"It is clear that the hoped for goodwill which this symbolic act was to have engendered, has already produced only anguish and hurt among millions of Jews and Americans", asserted Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, Great Neck, NY, President of the Synagogue Council of America.

Rabbi Waxman said further, "This proposed visit to the graves of German soldiers and members of the SS insults the memory of the millions of Holocaust victims including the American and allied soldiers who, as prisoners of war, were killed in cold blood by the SS just prior to the German surrender."

The SCA, representing the six congregational and rabbinic organizations of Conservative, Orthodox and Reform Judaism in America, sent the following telegram to President Reagan:

"On behalf of the congregational and rabbinic bodies of Conservative, Orthodox and Reform Judaism in America, representing 3,500 rabbis and four million American Jews, we urge you to cancel your visit to the Bitburg cemetery in Germany where killers of millions of Nazi victims are buried.

We believe that conciliation and cooperation with the Federal Republic of Germany is a necessary part of American Foreign Policy, essential to security and peace. These goals will be thwarted unless you change your itinerary.

Rabbi Mordecai Waxman  
President  
Synagogue Council of America

Rabbi Henry D. Michelman  
Executive Vice President

SCA is the national coordinating agency for the Conservative, Orthodox and Reform rabbinic and congregational organizations.

#### CONSTITUENT AGENCIES

Conservative:	RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY	UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF AMERICA
Orthodox:	RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA	UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA
Reform:	CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS	UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

TO: HOWARD KOHR - PLEASE RUSH IMMEDIATELY BY MESSENGER  
FOR: MICHAEL DEEVER (PLEASE FORWARD) - WHITE HOUSE  
DR. MARSHALL BREGER

CONFIDENTIAL

SUGGESTED NOTES FOR STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT REAGAN

BEFORE GRAVESITE OF CHANCELLOR KONRAD ADENAUER

FROM: RABBI MARC TANENBAUM, AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT I BEGIN THIS OFFICIAL STATE VISIT TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY STANDING SIDE BY SIDE WITH CHANCELLOR HELMUT ~~KOHL~~ KOHL IN JOINT TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY AND MORAL LEGACY OF KONRAD ADENAUER, THE FIRST CHANCELLOR OF WEST GERMANY.

I REGARD THIS OCCASION AND OUR PILGRIMAGE TO BERGEN BELSEN AS THE HIGHLIGHTS OF MY VISIT TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC.

CHANCELLOR ADENAUER WAS A GREAT PUBLIC SERVANT, A POLITICIAN OF CONSCIENCE, AND A TOWERING STATESMAN WHO DECISIVELY CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY FOR GERMANY AND EUROPE. DEPOSED BY THE NAZIS IN 1933 AS ~~XXXX~~ MAYOR OF COLOGNE, HE SUFFERED PERSECUTION BUT STOOD UP COURAGEOUSLY AGAINST THE NAZI ~~THREATS~~ THREATS TO HIS LIFE.

THROUGHOUT HIS ENTIRE POLITICAL CAREER, HE FOUGHT VIGOROUSLY AGAINST THE NARROW NATIONALIST IDEOLOGY OF THE NAZIS, THEIR ARROGANCE, AND THEIR CRIMINAL ACTIONS.

FROM THE TIME OF HIS ELECTION IN SEPTEMBER 1949 AS THE FIRST CHANCELLOR THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, DR. ADENAUER WAS AN INDOMITABLE DEFENDER OF DEMOCRACY IN GERMANY. HE MADE THE DECISIVE CONTRIBUTION OF ANCHORING DEMOCRACY IN THIS NEW GERMANY, BASED ON UNSHAKABLE MORAL VALUES. HIS POLITICAL VISION WAS FOUNDED ON THE CONVICTION OF THE FREEDOM AND DIGNITY OF THE ~~XXXXXX~~ INDIVIDUAL, THE RULE OF LAW, AND COMMITMENT BY ALL CITIZENS TO FUNDAMENTAL CIVIL LIBERTIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS. ADENAUER CONCEIVED OF THIS NEW GERMANY AS STANDING IN TOTAL REPUDIATION OF EVERYTHING THAT THE NAZI REGIME OF TERROR AND VIOLENCE REPRESENTED. LIKE MOSES OF OLD, HE SOUGHT TO LEAD HIS PEOPLE OUT OF BONDAGE FROM NAZI TYRANNY AND TOTALITARIANISM.

FROM 1949 TO 1953, CHANCELLOR ADENAUER LED THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY OUT OF THE WILDERNESS OF ISOLATION INTO FULL AND RESPONSIBLE MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY OF NATIONS. HE WAS AN ARCHITECT OF FRANCO-GERMAN RECONCILIATION, AND PURSUED ENERGETICALLY THE DEVELOPING OF A SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP AND SOLIDARITY WITH THE UNITED STATES. THAT PATTERN OF LOYALTY TO EUROPEAN UNITY AND OF STRENGTHENING BONDS WITH THE UNITED STATES BASED ON SHARED DEMOCRATIC VALUES HAS BEEN FOLLOWED EVER SINCE BY HIS SUCCESSORS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO HIS LARGE AND HUMANE VISION.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF HIS BELIEFS AND PRINCIPLES, CHANCELLOR ADENAUER FACED FORTHRIGHTLY THE TRAGIC DESTRUCTION THAT NAZI GERMANY INFLICTED ON THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY THAT GERMANY ~~HAS~~ <sup>HAS</sup> TO THEIR SURVIVORS AND TO THE STATE OF ISRAEL. IN SEPTEMBER 1951, DR. ADENAUER ADDRESSED THE BUNDESTAG AND DECLARED HIS FIRM INTENTION OF PROVIDING "RESTITUTION" TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE FOR THE ABOMINABLE CRIMES AGAINST THEM BY THE NAZIS. HE SHOWED HIS PERSONAL SENSE OF SHAME FOR THE NAZIS' CRIMES BY ATTENDING THE OPENING OF A NEW SYNAGOGUE IN COLOGNE, TO REPLACE THOSE SYNAGOGUES DESTROYED THERE BY THE NAZIS, AND BY LAYING A WREATH AT THE JEWISH MEMORIAL IN THE FORMER NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMP AT BERGEN-BELSEN. WITH GREAT TACT AND SENSITIVITY OF CONSCIENCE, CHANCELLOR ADENAUER FORGED A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE STATE OF ISRAEL WHICH THANKFULLY CONTINUES TO THIS DAY.

IN PAYING TRIBUTE TO THIS GIANT STATESMAN, CHANCELLOR KOHL AND I WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR COMMON INDEBTEDNESS TO THE GREAT MORAL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL ~~LEGACY~~ LEGACY HE HAS BEQUEATHED TO MODERN GERMANY, AND TO ALL FREE MEN EVERYWHERE. ON THIS HALLOWED GROUND, WE RECOMMIT OURSELVES TO THE PRINCIPLES WHICH GOVERNED HIS EXTRAORDINARY LIFE

- THE IDEALS AND VALUES OF CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY, LIBERTY, FREEDOM,  
AND HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH ARE THE FOUNDATIONS TODAY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS  
BETWEEN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





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Dear Mr. President:

You will recall that on the eve of your historic trip to Germany last week, you met with a group of us from the American Jewish Committee at the end of a long session with Michael Deaver. We are most grateful to you for giving us that opportunity to offer our counsel about how best to utilize the forthcoming trip for the two purposes we shared with <sup>you</sup> -- remembrance and reconciliation.

We want now to concentrate on the days ahead. But before doing so, Mr. President, permit me to say that we have had mixed reactions to the events as they unfolded. First, we were most gratified that you did accept the ~~my~~ suggestion that a trip to the Adenauer gravesite be added to the itinerary. As we have repeatedly insisted, it is the Germany represented by that great architect of German democracy with which we seek reconciliation, not the Germany responsible for the greatest crimes in human history. Secondly, Mr. President, even as we watched and heard the eloquent words you spoke at Berge-Belsen and the Bitberg base, we ~~remained~~ continued to believe that the visit to the Bitberg center was wrong. We cannot ~~pretend~~ pretend, and you would not want us to, that our ~~feelings~~ deep feelings have been ~~erased~~ erased by the positives that we did see in parts of your pilgrimage.

My principal reason in writing today is contained in the words I spoke to hundreds of our delegates at our Annual Meeting <sup>in New York</sup> only two hours after you completed ~~the~~ Sunday's events -- words which we then issued as a public statement. "Our lingering sadness over Bitburg," I said, "must not be allowed to interfere with our determination to look ahead. We never challenged the President's sincerity, and we pledge that we will renew our co-operative relationship with the Administration in pursuit of common goals and in the struggle against oppression and totalitarianism everywhere."

I assure you, Mr. President, that we are indeed ready to start the healing process and to resume our co-operation.

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We had recommended, and still do, that the Adenauer visit take the place of the proposed Bitburg ceremony. But the Adenauer visit is an appropriate American recognition of the new Germany and stands on its own merit. We welcome the news that it is now part of the President's itinerary, while continuing to express regret over the Bitburg ceremony.

