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AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

*Preserving American Jewish History*

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

Series D: International Relations Activities. 1961-1992

Box 58, Folder 17, Germany, 1982-1985.



## LEST WE FORGET §185

A prominent West German leader, himself active in the resistance to Hitler during the Third Reich, once commented that in attitude to government the Germans' sense of timing was off. Each response was a generation late. During the Weimar Republic, the Germans were devoted to the vanished Kaiser; during the Third Reich they gave the dictatorship the support that could have saved the Weimar Republic; and in the post-World War II period they showed the government - whether headed by Konrad Adenauer or Helmut Schmidt - the passive or active resistance which they should have directed against Hitler.

There is an arrow of truth in this quiver of generalization. The "Peace Movement" in the German Federal Republic has, exploiting a justified popular fear of nuclear "omnicide," seriously threatened the very foundations of liberty and self-government. They have abused liberty, deliberately turning the liberal restraint of the Bonn government into opportunities for street-fighting, breaking and entering, and verbal and physical abuse of persons of other opinions. The delicate fabric of self-government cannot be maintained without a measure of civility, without a fundamental consensus in maintaining both the substance and the style of informed public debate. Is it too much to demand that a "peace movement" shall conduct itself peacefully - with neither violence nor intimidation?

The German "Peace Movement," with its demagogues shouting to evoke hysterical antiphonies by skillful use of "buzzwords" and slogans, ~~hysterical~~ with its ecstatic mass meetings disturbingly reminiscent of the Hitler period, has also coalesced into a political party popularly called "the Greens." Back of this symbolism too there is a sound ecological concern, an awareness that the nuclear threat somehow gathers up all of the threats to the earth, the atmosphere, pure food and unpolluted water, and to life itself. But this widespread concern about a rampant pollution of the environment, coupled with a general feeling that the politicians of the great powers are insensitive to the implications of swelling nuclear stockpiles and the proliferation of nuclear powers, has been mobilized by "the Greens" into an assault on republican principles and practices.

In recent elections in Hamburg, the home town of Chancellor Schmidt and the largest city in the German Federal Republic, the CDU gained 53 seats and

the SPD took 52 seats. The "Greens" took 7 seats, and set out to bring the city to its knees - by the same manipulation of parliamentary tricks in disregard for the public good which, for example, brought Germany into the hands of Hitler and El Salvador into the hands of d'Aubuisson. The leading public orator of "the Greens", skilled at playing upon the resentments and anxieties of mobs, cried out in triumph: "We have made Hamburg ungovernable!"

A considerable number of the leaders of the so-called Peace Movement are Communists. Their Point 1 of program is to capitalize upon public fear of nuclear catastrophe in order to reduce the military confrontation to conventional terms. This is of course also the Soviet program: in conventional terms, without nuclear warheads or the neutron anti-personnel bomb, Soviet Russia has a superiority of 10:1 over the NATO forces in the west.

But there are also persons prominent in the demonstrations who mean well, even if they help to give credibility to a suspect - even dangerous - political 5th column. Among them are people like Church President K. Scharpf and Professor H. Gollwitzer, revered by German youth and students for their opposition to Hitler and Nazism. The "Peace Movement" is also supported by Aktion Suehnezeichen und Friedensdienste, one of the most admirable youth programs to emerge among Christians since World War II. And here the moral ambiguity of political action like that of the German "Peace Movement" and "the Greens" becomes painfully clear. For "Action Repentance and Service for Peace" has in later years sometimes slid into fellow-travelling and spiritual blindness.

Item: Aktion Suehnezeichen was initiated by a Protestant churchman who believed German volunteers should serve abroad, serving peoples grievously wronged by Germany during the Third Reich. He was especially anxious that Christian/Jewish reconciliation be sought; to that end many teams have been sent to Israel, public collections were taken up for a Christian memorial at Auschwitz, volunteers rebuilt the old synagogue at Lyons, etc.

Later, the organization's voluntary service was approved by the government as alternative service for conscientious objectors to duty as military conscripts. Among these these who were no longer idealistic volunteers but half-conscripts there has arisen a strong political twist - toward the New Left, toward anti-American politics, toward newer expressions of antisemitism, and from time to time toward simple pro-Soviet politics. An overt member of the Communist SED is now a member of their national executive committee.

Item: as lively as ~~Aktion~~ Aktion Sühnezeichen is in the west, it has not shown similar vigor in the east. In Communist-controlled East Germany, for instance, conscientious objection to military service is not allowed. Refusal to serve in uniform, either in armed units or support troops, is penalized by 7 years at hard labor. When the C.O. survives and gets out, he is again confronted with the choice between military service or 7 years in prison.

Why has Aktion Sühnezeichen shown such courage in the west and such reticence in the east - in support of what is called by them "rights of conscience"? This query raises a more important question: is Aktion Sühnezeichen still primarily a Christian witness, or has it been penetrated and turned toward a political offensive which serves anti-democratic interests?

In the highly volatile European situation, the so-called Peace Movement and its political effects must be considered increasingly dangerous. President Reagan's opposition to the pipeline Siberia-West Europe has raised the ~~max~~ level of anti-Americanism in the business community; it was already high among those infiltrated by Soviet agents or susceptible to New Left/Third World enthusiasms.

The situation with the "Peace Movement" in the USA is different. Here the initiative of Roman Catholic bishops like Hunthausen of Seattle and Krol of Philadelphia, along with some prominent leaders of the Protestant denominations, has served to keep most of the rallies and organized efforts on the central subject: averting nuclear catastrophe. Nevertheless, some on-line Communists and fellow-travelers are in prominent positions at rallies. More dangerous yet to America internally and externally, liberal antisemites and professional haters of Israel are prominent and vocal.

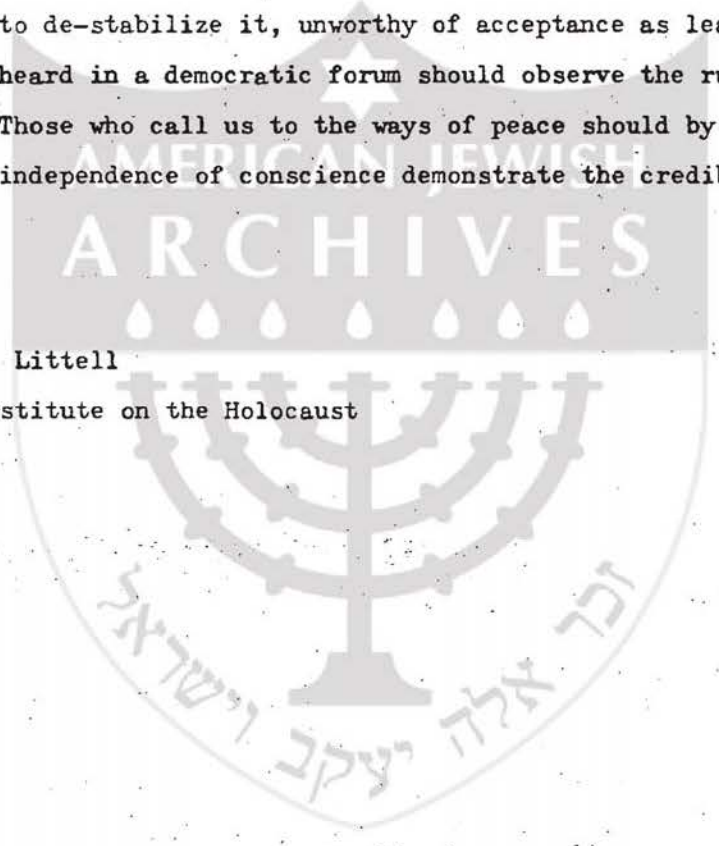
In Europe, even prominent leaders of government crawl shamelessly to beg favors of sheikhs whose stranglehold on energy is used as a weapon against Israel... and they fear might be used against them if they take a principled stand against terrorism. In America, which has great energy reserves, the danger of appeasement comes rather from the power of international cartels. In Europe, oil shortages turn "statesmen" into "worms" - as Adolf Hitler once quite correctly termed those who crawled to Munich in 1938. In America, the President has shown considerably more understanding of the Operation "Peace for Galilee," for instance, than have business interests (including mass media).

On the left, however, the formations are approximately the same. And

in both situations, Europe and America, we must look to the credentials of the leaders - and to the style of politics practiced, and not only to the goals presumably sought after. For my part, the West German and American "peace movements" make me nervous because I see at their centers some persons with records as liberal antisemites. And I remember that one of the chief spokesmen at the American rallies was, just a couple years ago, addressing us over national TV to win our confidence in Khomeini as a democratic hero (!). The prominence of Communists and fellow-travelers, in both Europe and America, makes the "peace movements" even more suspect.

Those who seek to make a free society ungovernable are, like the terrorists who strike to de-stabilize it, unworthy of acceptance as leaders. Those who wish to be heard in a democratic forum should observe the rules of civil discourse. Those who call us to the ways of peace should by their peaceful stance and independence of conscience demonstrate the credibility of their appeals.

Franklin H. Littell  
National Institute on the Holocaust



PRESENT ATTITUDES IN GERMANY TOWARDS JEWS AND ISRAEL

BY PROF. DIETRICH GOLDSCHMIDT

Director of the Max Planck Institute for Education  
and Human Development in West Berlin,  
Federal Republic of Germany

before the National Interreligious Affairs  
Commission of the American Jewish Committee

76th Annual Meeting, New York City

---

Session Chairman, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
AJC's National Interreligious Affairs Director

Wednesday, May 12, 1982

Professor Dietrich Goldschmidt, born in 1914, is one of the directors of the "Max Planck Institute for Education and Human Development" in West Berlin (founded in 1963) and professor-adjoint at the Free University of Berlin. His father was of Jewish descent, and emigrated from Germany before World War II, as did his brother and sister. His brother has now lived in Colorado, U.S.A., for many years.

Dietrich Goldschmidt, however, stayed in Berlin and during the final months of World War II he was put into a forced labour camp. Originally trained as an engineer, he turned to social sciences at the University of Goettingen after the war and became also one of the editors of the Goettingen University Newspaper, founded in 1945. In 1956 he returned to Berlin to teach sociology at the Teachers Training College, until he took up his present post in 1963.

Dietrich Goldschmidt takes an active interest in recent German history, particularly in antisemitism and in the persecution of the European Jews during Hitler's regime. He was the editor of the first comprehensive German history on Nazi crimes and trials to which he contributed a sociological essay "A Nation and Its Murderers" (cf.: R. Henkys: Die nationalsozialistischen Gewaltverbrechen - Geschichte und Gericht. Stuttgart 1964).

Dietrich Goldschmidt is a member of the Protestant Church, particularly active in some national church Committees dealing with education and politics. He is one of the early members of the "Working Group Jews and Christians" linked with the German Evangelical Assembly (Arbeitsgemeinschaft "Juden und Christen" beim "Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchentag") and was responsible for its first publication, "The Unbroken Covenant", dealing with a new approach between Jews and Christians in Germany (D. Goldschmidt, H.J. Kraus: Der Ungekündigte Bund. Stuttgart 1962).

At the most recent assembly of the "Kirchentag" in Hamburg, June 1982, he gave a comprehensive report on the proceedings of this working group from 1961 to 1981 and its impact on present day Christian thinking in Germany.

On the suggestion of the late Professor Max Horkheimer, Dietrich Goldschmidt was a member of the first group of German educators to be invited by the American Jewish Committee for a study tour of the U.S.A. in 1960.

Prof. Dietrich Goldschmidt

What are Present German Attitudes Towards the Jews and  
Towards the State of Israel?

How are those topics dealt with by education?

Professor Goldschmidt will speak about the present attitudes of Germans towards the Jews and towards the State of Israel. He will deal particularly with education in the Federal Republic of Germany about the Jews, antisemitism, nazism and the holocaust. Special attention will be devoted to traditional Christian attitudes and recent developments in a new Christian-<sup>religious</sup> Jewish dialogue. Main points are:

1. Jews in West- as well as in East Germany are met with a peculiar mixture of uneasiness, respect and curiosity - depending on age and education of those whom they encounter. Because of the holocaust many older people are embarrassed when they deal with Jews. Young people are very often puzzled when they meet a Jew first time in their life: To their surprise, he or she looks just like any other human being.
2. Open antisemitism is rare and punishable by law. However, there are signs of old or new antisemitism in the FRG, partly disguised as antizionism, - a position taken by both some right wing radicals and by left wing political activists supporting the Arabic case in general or the PLO in particular. Furthermore, the recently growing hatred of foreign workers and their families (over 2 mill. people) is opening a path for a partial re-emergence of anti-Semitism



3. For a long time public opinion was very much in favour of the State of Israel. This became most obvious at the outbreak of the Jom Kippur War of 1973. However, this sympathy was partly still due to feelings of guilt because of the holocaust: Germans were relieved that the Jews were no longer victims but on the contrary victors, and wouldn't have to suffer further aggression and persecution. This attitude has changed more and more since Begin became prime minister. Now, many Germans are concerned that Begin is becoming too radical, too nationalist. The critics of Israel are not only people who may have waited for this situation to express their antisemitism in the guise of antizionism. <sup>Some</sup> strong friends of Israel also feel that Begin is acting unwisely and that - under economic and external pressures - he is radicalizing his people. On the other hand, as more time passes, the more a post-nazi-generation takes over the political, economic and cultural lead in Germany, and the more a tendency can be observed in the FRG to put an end to Israel's standing as a "special case" in German foreign policy and to seek balanced relations with Israel and the Arabic states.
  
4. As more and more time passes since the ordeal of the period from 1933 to 1945, as new generations continue to replace the old, an ever growing part of the public is opening up and willing to learn at least the historical facts of the period of National Socialism, of World War II, of the Jews and other people, and of the Holocaust. Television, radio and some important national newspapers like the FRANKFURTER

RUNDSCHAU, the FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG, the SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG, and weeklies like DIE ZEIT, DER SPIEGEL, DEUTSCHES ALLGEMEINES SONNTAGSBLATT are dealing with these topics time and again. The TV series "Holocaust" was seen and discussed by an extremely large audience. No doubt, many supporters of today's peace movement will point to the past sufferings as well as to the genocide first of all of Jews but also of gipsies, Poles, Russians and others when they protest against war preparations which could lead again to genocide, supported by Germans.

5. However, two tendencies can be noticed which make the observer wonder how much the attitudes of the majority of the Germans are really changing, in the sense that people are becoming more sensitive to present day social and political problems:
- In general, there is little understanding of the causes which brought Hitler to power; i.e. of the political developments and the ideological interpretations of events from World War I until the 30th January, 1933.
  - In particular, a considerable part of those people who were driven out of their homelands in East Germany after the war, i.e. out of those regions which have become Polish or Russian, is still arguing that their suffering - including the destruction by air raids of cities like Dresden towards the end of the war - was similar to that of the Jews. Therefore, there is no need to give special attention to the fate of the Jews or to deal with this subject more than with their own losses.

6. School curricula and textbooks have recently been analysed and some empirical research on the actual teaching is also going on at present. The results show that serious attempts are being made to come to grips with the past, but one notices that there is still a considerable lack of deeper understanding, sometimes a certain helplessness of the authors. The most important conclusions can roughly be summarised as follows:

- There is an honest effort to overcome antisemitism in the teaching of Christian Religion. However, traditional religious convictions have so far not been brought to abandon the old teaching that through Jesus a new covenant was founded between the Lord and the followers of Jesus, whereas the Jews had broken and lost their covenant by denying that Jesus was Christ, the son of the Lord. The question is not raised whether the Holocaust could convey any religious meaning and what this meaning might be. In this respect so far nearly no effect can be ascertained of the promising Christian-Jewish dialogue which has been developing for over twenty years and particularly of some profoundly new textbooks which were written by Christians in consultation with Jews (cf. below: point 7).
- In the teaching of history, antisemitism is explained and deplored mainly as hatred of Jews. This usually leads to discussions of the role of Jews in Germany since the beginning of the 19th century and of erroneous race ideologies preached by Houston Steward Chamberlain and others. There

is hardly any reflection on roots of Antisemitism in Christian antijudaism, and little attention is devoted to the phenomenon of Antisemitism as a product of social conditions, or to the manipulation of antisemitism by specific interest groups to increase their political strength, or to find scape goats for their shortcomings.

- In teaching the history of Nazism facts such as Hitler's and his party's rise to power, armament, concentration camps, war, Holocaust are described but "Hitler and the Nazis" remain strangers who descended upon Germany like a thunderstorm. The defeat of 1918, the inflation in the early twenties, the world economic crisis are reported but relatively little attention is given to the importance of the fact that Germany was turned into a parliamentary democracy in 1918, a decision that was strongly opposed from the time it was made until 1933 by the former nobility and the bourgeoisie. There is - as was mentioned in point 5 - lack of thorough analysis of the causes of Nazism's success; instead of such an analysis the churches and the army are belittled for their reactionary outlook and for their lack of support for the young Weimar republic, but praised out of all proportion for their later actions of resistance. The interests of industry, the role of nationalist university professors and students etc. are also often overlooked etc.

7. New dialogues between Protestants and Jews, and between Catholics and Jews, and occasionally also between all three of them were started rather soon after the end of Nazi period. The first ones to be active were people like the late protestant clergyman Dean Heinrich Grüber and the catholic laywoman Dr. Gertrud Luckner who had been in concentration camps because they organized <sup>support</sup> for Jews. The contacts were first established on a mainly humanitarian basis by local "Societies for Christian-Jewish Cooperation", which rather soon became loosely linked together by a "Council for Coordinating Societies for Christian Jewish Cooperation". But since the end of the fifties meetings of Christians and Jews were also held, and pamphlets and books were published to start a new religious dialogue, step by step: Confessions and discussions of guilt, analyses of the past, revision of traditional Christian teaching and dogmas, renunciation of the Christian intention to convert Jews, a more open-minded Christian reading of the Tora and a new critical approach to the New Testament, particularly to the letters of Paul and their traditional interpretation, dialogue about "faith and hope after Auschwitz". The tide began to turn with the publication in 1962 of "The Unbroken Covenant", an account of the first public discussions of the "Working Group Jews and Christians", which was linked with the German Evangelical Assembly (Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag). Since then more meetings and annual conferences have been held, and more books have come out. Official pronouncements of the Catholic Church,

and their National Council,  
of regional Evangelical churches, are showing growing respect and understanding of Jews and their religious convictions. Yet they are not going as far as the working group I mentioned and its affiliates which are cooperating as - to use a Christian term - an ecumenical community. However, early in 1980 the Synod of the Evangelical Church of the Rhineland agreed to a major revision of its traditional teaching about the Jews. This resolution has led to an intense controversy in theological periodicals amongst Lutheran and other Protestant professors of theology at the West German universities. This could be the beginning of a major breakthrough on the part of the Evangelical churches because only acceptance of new findings by the professors of theology might lead to their dissemination, first amongst parish ministers and teachers and subsequently among their parishoners.

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

165 East 56 Street  
New York NY 10022  
(212) 751-4000

Date: 10-20

To: Marc Tanenbaum

From: Eugene Du Bow, Director  
Community Services & Membership Department

For Your Information

If you don't already know,  
Ben Lowenstein has been  
invited by Howard  
Friedman and Bill Trachten  
to give a report at the  
Advisory & Int'l. Affairs  
Comm. meeting in  
Philadelphia.

Jane

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D. ARTHUR MAGAZINER

PHILIP STERLING, 1910-1972  
SIDNEY LOEWENSTEIN, 1910-1976

CABLE ADDRESS  
"CONSHAIT!"

MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE  
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NORRISTOWN, PA. 19401  
(215) 277-7700

October 17, 1983

Howard I. Friedman, Esquire  
Room 1600  
One Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Dear Howard:

The AJC leadership mission to Germany was simply wonderful except for the fact that we were too hectic for the age of Eleanor and me. Never have I had such an exciting trip. Thanks so much for the opportunity and especially of serving as the Leader.

I am looking forward to reporting to the Board of Governors at the NEC in Philadelphia if that fits the agenda. Otherwise, to the proper Commission meeting should that be preferred. This is once when I believe the story of our trip should be heard by the largest number of our leadership.

Please know that Gene DuBow was tireless, efficient and the perfect managing professional. He really was essential to the success of the trip and our enjoyment of it. There is no doubt Bill Trosten with his background was a big help in setting things up in advance and Shula Bahat made good arrangements. They deserve a commendation in their personnel files for sure.

We had a wonderful group of manageable size and everyone performed in outstanding fashion. I took the liberty of sharing the leadership role in many of our meetings and conferences which I think was appreciated and you could be proud of all participants. On a few delicate appointments, I kept the lead for myself and feel comfortable that I did not make any goofs. The problems were minor stemming in part



Howard I. Friedman, Esquire  
October 17, 1983  
Page 2

from our travel agency and from too tight a schedule. Will tell you much more in person, but just wanted to get this off even before we get rested.

Best to Wilma as well as yourself.

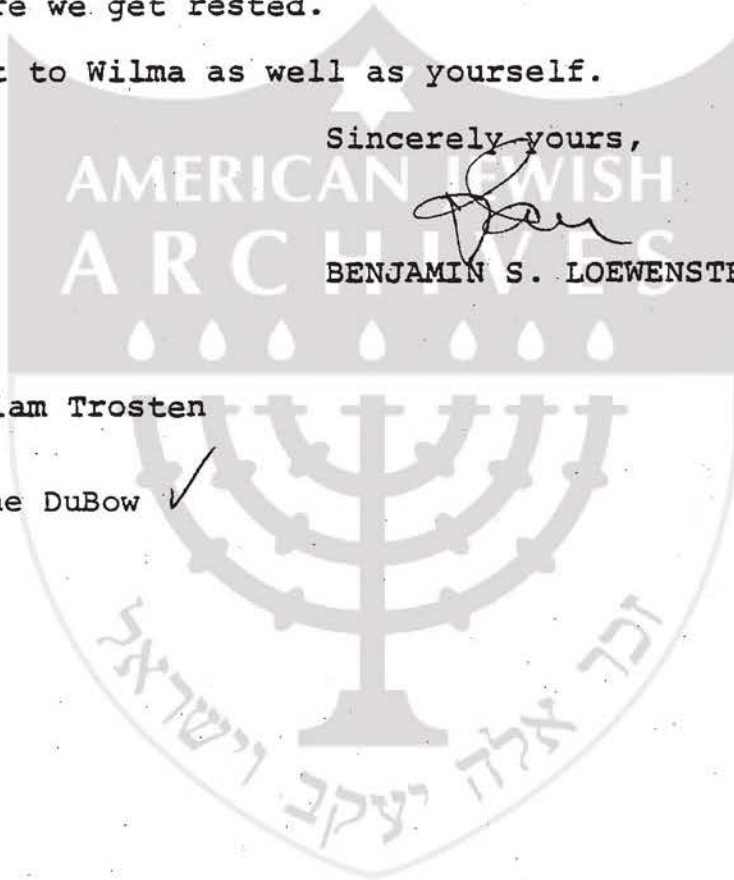
Sincerely yours,

  
BENJAMIN S. LOEWENSTEIN

BSL/kds

cc: Mr. William Trosten

bc: Mr. Eugene DuBow ✓



# 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, March 16....A group of young West German adults will learn firsthand about American Jewish life, history, culture, and communal activity during a two-week visit to the United States sponsored by the American Jewish Committee and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, a West German research and educational agency.

The tour will begin April 17 and end April 30, and will take the participants to New York, Washington, Chicago, Seattle, and Los Angeles. It is part of a three-year-old exchange program under which young American Jewish community leaders and young West German leaders, mostly non-Jewish, visit each others' countries.

This year's German group includes 15 men and 5 women, all born after World War II. The 1983 American group will leave for West Germany in June.

Discussing the purposes of the program, Richard L. Weiss of Los Angeles, AJC National Chairman of the German-American Jewish Young Leadership Program, said the exchange was "designed to provide non-Jewish groups from the Federal Republic of Germany with insights into the American Jewish community's position in the United States, and to provide young leaders of the American Jewish community with an objective view of the 'new Germany,' in order to help the two develop an understanding of each other's cultural, socioeconomic, and political life."

Among the themes to be stressed during next month's mission, said Mr. Weiss, were: America's religious and cultural pluralism; Jews and the political system; Jews and other ethnic groups; American Jewish communal and philanthropic history and current activities; Jewish cultural and educational institutions; Jews in the civil rights movement; Jewish contributions to the trade union movement; the immigrant experience, and the development in America of the three major branches of Judaism — Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform.

Highlights of the tour will include:

- # Visits to the Statue of Liberty, the Lower East Side, Wall Street, and other major New York sites.
- # Meeting in Washington with Jewish Congressmen and their aides.
- # Meeting at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- # View of Chicago's government, and its relation to the city's ethnic groups.
- # Visit with the Seattle Jewish community, founded by German Jews.
- # Visits to the Jewish Federation-Council of Greater Los Angeles and the Hebrew Union College-School of Jewish Communal Service in Los Angeles.
- # Visits to Jewish museums and other cultural centers.
- # Meeting with the Organization of Second Generation Holocaust Survivors.
- # Services at a Reform temple and a Conservative synagogue.

-more-

Maynard I. Wishner, President; Howard I. Friedman, Chairman, Board of Governors; Theodore Ellenoff, Chairman, National Executive Council; Robert L. Pelz, Chairman, Board of Trustees; Donald Feldstein, Executive Vice President

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CSAE 1707

In addition, the group will have Sabbath dinners and home hospitality with AJC leaders and members; meet with young Jewish community leaders, including past and future participants in the German-American exchange program; sightsee, and meet with representatives of AJC and other American and American-Jewish organizations to discuss the issues related to their visit.

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

# # # # #

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3/15/83

A, CP, EJP, FOR, GER, PP, REL, Z



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

**date** April 1, 1983  
**to** Abraham Karlikow  
**from** David Geller  
**subject** Anti-Semitism in Germany

*Moore*  
*Bell*  
*2,*  
DR. D. FELDSTEIN

APR 7 1983  
*[Signature]*

I met with a teenaged Jewish girl from Germany, now vacationing in the U.S. She was accompanied by a close friend of her parents. The girl was born in Romania and at the age of four emigrated with her parents to Israel. At the age of eight (1974) the family moved to Germany. Apparently her parents were born in Bukovina and were German-speaking. Furthermore, they learned that if they went to Germany, they would receive back payments for work that the father had done when living in Romania. The father is an architectural engineer and the mother a dentist.

The girl described a series of experiences through which she has lived which indicate the pervasive anti-Jewish feeling that still exists in Germany, even among the younger population. She related that when she first arrived there and entered school in the third grade, the teacher made her feel welcome and made special efforts to create friendship between children in the class and the young girl. But in the fourth and fifth grades, as the children learned a little about the Holocaust, they did not develop a sympathetic attitude toward her but began to treat her as an outsider, alien and "victim." Since that time in many ways she has been the victim of anti-Semitic verbal abuse, with occasional threats of physical violence. Sometimes when she approached students she would be told that "We don't want to have anything to do with Jews." At other times, in her presence, she would hear statements such as "Do you smell a gas oven? There must be a Jew burying somewhere." One day she noticed that students were pointing at her and laughing and she realized that someone had put a yellow star with the word "Jew" on the back of her sweater.

Understandably, these events have been terribly upsetting and she has on several occasions berated her parents for having left Israel to live in Germany. She said that she is aware that the German Government is opposed to these kinds of manifestations and does what it can to stop it but she believes that most people are simply not aware of what goes on at recess time or before and after school. She also claims that the frequency and the magnitude of the incidents have increased in recent months as a result of the media coverage

which she described as particularly vicious at times of the war in Lebanon. She confided that she has informed her parents that she has decided to return to Israel when she finishes her high school studies in a little over a year.

One other point: she lives in Hanover where there are only about 300 Jews. She wondered whether the situation is much different in cities like West Berlin or Munich which have larger Jewish populations. She said that many of their friends in Hanover have been cowed by recent incidents as well as the anti-Israel press, and have begun to hide their identity as Jews.

DG/es

cc: Milton Ellerin  
Donald Feldstein/  
Milton Himmelfarb  
Marc Tanenbaum  
William Trosten  
Nives Fox



# Statements & Speeches



Federal Republic of Germany

Editor: Hans Wiessmann

Vol VII No 15, September 21, 1984

THE DEFENSE COMMITMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY  
INTERVIEW WITH DR GUENTER JOETZE,  
CONSUL GENERAL OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY IN LOS ANGELES,  
IN THE SAN DIEGO UNION

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## AMERICAN JEWISH

West Germany's commitment remains constant, Dr. Guenter Joetze, Germany's Consul General in Los Angeles, told San Diego Union editors. He said the country's defense budget has increased by 3 percent every year during the '70s. Here is the interview.

Question: Let me get the ball rolling by suggesting that Sen. Sam Nunn has asked for a reduction of 90,000 American troops in NATO, of the 326,000 we have there. Is this a good idea?

Answer: Well, first of all it's an old idea, and of course we would regret it very much if it ever was realized, even partially. American troops are in Europe, first of all because we have an alliance and we defend common interests. But second, also in the interest of the United States, to weaken the conventional forces of the alliance in Europe would of course enhance the danger of nuclear war, would lower the nuclear threshold. We have negotiations on this issue, the MBFR negotiations in Vienna, and it would of course be a prejudice to these negotiations if the United States unilaterally withdrew troops without an equivalent on the Soviet side.

Q: Well there's thought that it's 35 years after the war and why do we need 326,000 troops there. Wouldn't 50,000 do, or 100,000 or some lesser number?

A: As I say, by weakening the number of conventional forces, you would lower the nuclear threshold and you would raise the danger of a nuclear confrontation. The strategic thought which we favor goes in the opposite direction and is represented in a very articulate way by Gen. Rogers, the supreme commander of NATO. That is, to increase the conventional forces of the alliance in Europe.

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

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Q: Well the whole thought behind Sen. Nunn's proposal - as the Mansfield Amendment before it - is that Western Europe is not doing enough in its own behalf. Do you think it is?

A: Well, when this thought first was expressed, as you say by Mr. Mansfield, our army was a third weaker than it is now. We have increased our defense budget during the entire time of detente, i.e., the entire '70s, by 3 percent every year - 3 percent in real value, inflation deducted - which means today the Bundeswehr is 30 percent stronger than it was at that time. And we are, in spite of serious budget difficulties, striving hard to keep that record. We will this year have a real augmentation, inflation deducted, in real terms, of about 2.5, 2.6. This is what a European nation can afford. Most European nations do much less. I don't want to quote names of countries. It should be noted that in a Western European nation, especially in Germany, two-digit budget increases for defense would be impossible. It could not be done given the social and financial structure of our budgets in our country and other societies.

Q: Do I understand you to say that you feel Western Europe is doing enough and does not need to do any more?

A: I can't speak for Western Europe. I can speak for my country. We are all in favor of a constant reinforcement of our common military endeavors and we think we are contributing as much as we can. I quoted the figures. And we are devoted to going on in this direction.

Q: How do you characterize the health of NATO?

A: NATO has issued a declaration on East-West relations to which we fully subscribe, which we are very happy with. And it has shown us that between the major allies, especially between the United States and us, the political course is clear. There are some less encouraging aspects - one, for instance, the mood of the present Greek government, which constantly adds asterisks to the communique which say that they distance themselves from everybody, from every text which is there. And there is of course the compromise the Dutch government had to reach on stationing cruise missiles in that country, which some people feel might reopen the issue in my country. I, however, am confident that as far as the deployment issue in West Germany is concerned, it is over and it cannot be put in question by events in the Netherlands. So on the whole, despite some problems, the alliance is in good shape.

Q: How are West Germany's relations with the Soviet Union?

A: Well, just a couple of weeks ago, we had a visit by our foreign minister, Mr. Genscher, in Moscow. He was received by Mr. Chernenko and had conversations with Gromyko. In the international part of these conversations, Gromyko took a pretty negative attitude on the United

States, saying that their attitude in every major issue is totally sterile and negative, and it's their fault in every case if there is no progress in East-West relations, which Genscher rejected, both privately and publicly. He changed his luncheon speech at the very last moment without actually giving warning, so that it really made the maximum effect, and defended our American ally at both the Green and the White table with a pretty widespread public media effect also, at least in my country. Not in this country. And on bilateral issues, the Soviet attitude was a bit more forthcoming. For instance, they agreed to participate in a conference on environment, to which we invited European and North American states in June in Munich, which is, given the importance of environmental questions in Europe, quite satisfactory for us. We have the impression that the Soviet Union is interested in having a reasonable working relationship with us. We have nothing against this, again in the interest of stabilization of East-West relations, but we lose no occasion to make it plain to them that we remain firmly in the Western alliance.

Q: What is the West German government's assessment of why the Soviets are, at the moment at least, proving so intransigent?

A: I couldn't give you a government's assessment on that, but I can give you some expert views. There is, first of all, the explanation of a domestic stalemate. A second possible explanation is a serious deception with the politics of the Reagan administration or that they wait until they see what comes after the American elections. There is a third possibility, a third alternative, which is widely discussed in our media, at least, that it is an upsurge of the military, the rising importance of the military. I, speaking in my personal capacity, would discard the second possibility. The Russians are autocrats, but the ruling circle of the Soviet Union, the political rule, is a bunch of very tough-headed, also very chauvinistic, leaders who are not impressed by sentiments. They will do business with an administration headed by Mr. Reagan if they think it's fit. For the time being, they probably are not prepared to enter wide-ranging arms control discussions for two reasons. One, because they would like to have East-West relations not limited to arms control. They would at least also include the issue of the second basket of Helsinki, i.e., economic cooperation, and second, they will wait until the elections.

Q: Why would they wait after the elections, if they were dealing with any regime?

A: First, for face-saving. Face plays an important role in Moscow.

Q: How do you interpret the results of the European Parliamentary elections? It seems that there was an attitude of throw-the-rascals-out in every country. To what do you attribute this?



A: Well, it is a midterm election and a midterm election always has this use in most European countries - it's used to tell the government a lesson. This is true in England, in France and it surely is true for my country. Everybody knew that the French coalition parties would do badly in this election, so that was predictable. And we all know the reasons for it. Most people predicted that the Labor Party in Great Britain would do a bit better than last time. And in our case, the only outstanding features are, first of all, the 4.8 percent for the Liberal party and the 8.2 percent for the Greens. Now you may have noted that participation in the elections in the FRG was 56.8 percent, which in our terms is extremely low, given the old experience that young, radical voters who vote for a cause are more likely to go to the polls even on a nice Sunday. I would say this 8.2 percent for the Greens and 4.2 percent for the Liberals is not indicative for long-term trends, given this low participation.

Q: Well the Liberals, the Free Democrats, are sagging anyway, just barely making the 5 percent necessary to qualify for Parliament in the state elections, if they're getting that. And Genscher, who is their leading light, said he'll not seek re-election. Will the Free Democrats stop being a factor in West German elections?

A: Well, here again, of course, obviously I have to speak as a private citizen. I would say if at these European elections they got 4.8, it means that they will remain a decisive factor, because what normally happens at Federal elections is that a lot of people say, good heavens, we simply cannot abandon, we cannot dispose of that party, and then vote for it. And then they got 8 percent. So the Liberal party, as long as I can remember, and as long as I can track back my own voting behavior, has been constantly in danger and has been constantly saved. It is a courageous small party which appeals to the intellect, and it would be a pity if we lost it. Our political landscape would be poorer. And I'm sure it won't happen.

Q: Well, there's a new factor, however, that you did not mention. Two years ago they switched from the Social Democrats to Christian Democrats and aroused quite a bit of anger among some people. You don't think this is a factor?

A: Yes, it's a factor. It has, of course, scared away some of their voters, obviously.

Q: Conversely, the Greens got 8 percent plus in the European elections, and they're getting around 8 percent in the state elections. There are two thoughts that I picked up in Germany recently about the Greens: one they're not a factor anymore, and two, they're a rising factor. Which of the two do you accept?

A: Well, I would think that we have to reckon with them as a constant factor. And it will be the task of our democratic system to incorporate them, to get them used to the way the parliamentary system works, to get them used to compromises and to coalitions, and to transform them from a single- or two-issue party - because it really is a two-issue party, pacifism and environmentalism - to a responsible, maybe left-wing radical party. Mind you, the situation of the '50s and '60s where the Federal Republic of Germany was the only Western European country without any left-wing, democratic, radical party, was not in keeping with European traditions. And I think it's a healthy thing if radical thoughts that are normal in every Western European society - and it's not communist thoughts, not at all; it's radical democratic thought - can be expressed and can be channeled in the democratic process. I might add that the 8.6 percent of the vote that they have coincides - almost coincides - with the 9 percent of Germans who oppose German membership to NATO; 72 percent were for German membership in NATO in August '83.

Q: What worries a lot of Americans when they look at Western Europe and at the Atlantic Alliance is that, for example, the opposition parties in two of NATO's most important member states, Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany, seem to be drifting, or even in one case at least - the Labor Party in Britain - openly advocating a policy of unilateral disarmament, at least in a nuclear sense, and the Social Democrats in the Federal Republic are finally opposed to the deployment of new weapons in West Germany. Sooner or later, as Dr. Kissinger has argued, some of these parties are going to come to power, and if that happens, what sort of options does that leave for continued defense of the Atlantic Alliance?

A: I would find it difficult to answer for Britain. Frankly, I don't know the Labour Party well enough. As to the Social Democrats, I would say this. The last workshop I attended in Bonn before leaving was a workshop of the Social Democratic Party on security issues, with a big participation of American specialists and everything, and it was quite clear that party leadership continues to think in terms of responsibility for NATO. And in terms of continuation of the present security policy. The last convention of the Social Democratic Party - first of all we should start from that - brought a great majority for the continued adherence of West Germany to NATO. And it's very difficult to predict the behavior of a party which is in opposition for a future time when it will be in government. And I, of course, have to be careful because I have to steel clear of domestic politics. I just would limit myself to saying that in the history of that party it has proved to be a reliable party which always was up to its tasks when necessary.

Q: To ask this question in a simpler way, isn't it apparent that in a number of Western European countries there seems to be more interest in a future in which Western Europe would be less a member of the Western Alliance than a kind of neutral demilitarized region?

A: No sir, not in the case of my country. A poll conducted by the Atlantic Institute in Paris found 70 percent of our population for membership in NATO and 9 percent against. We now stand with the country the Germans would like to cooperate with most closely - 79 percent named the United States. These are decisive figures. And the image of Western Europe being scared to death before the Soviet threat, as sometimes conveyed by American media, is wrong. There was an opinion poll published in the last edition of the German weekly Die Zeit which asked what most worries the population of the countries they polled. As to the Federal Republic, when they were asked what worried them most, it was underemployment. Fifteen percent of our population replied it was atomic weapons. Fourteen percent replied that it was the danger of war. Whereas, in the United States, 28 percent of the population replied that what worried them most was atomic weapons, and 32 percent replied that it was danger of war. You can rely on us.

Q: But there is a revival of the Western European Union for no apparent reason, which is a drift away from the concept of the alliance in NATO. How do you explain that?

A: First of all, it's a French idea and we have to see what we can make of it. We find this idea interesting, first of all, for one reason: The revival of a Western European Union could provide us with a platform, a legal platform for enhancing industrial corporation in the armament field, which we badly need, given a tendency in your Congress to restrict cooperation in this field between the United States and us. Secondly, it is important that we agree amongst ourselves, as Europeans, on some basic lines of security issues in order to make our weight felt more heavily in Atlantic discussions. Thirdly, membership in the Western European Union is quite useful, because some states, which in NATO sometimes are difficult to persuade to go along, don't participate. But don't force me to elaborate on that. The membership really is the hard core of the European part of the Western Alliance.

Q: Why was it dormant all these years and suddenly revived?

A: The idea of reviving the Western European Union dates back to '61. Whenever there was a tendency to strengthen the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance, somebody talked of the Western European Union. It needed perhaps a new French government, and therefore new ideas and new persons, to simply get this idea prevailing.

A: Well, I would think that we have to reckon with them as a constant factor. And it will be the task of our democratic system to incorporate them, to get them used to the way the parliamentary system works, to get them used to compromises and to coalitions, and to transform them from a single- or two-issue party - because it really is a two-issue party, pacifism and environmentalism - to a responsible, maybe left-wing radical party. Mind you, the situation of the '50s and '60s where the Federal Republic of Germany was the only Western European country without any left-wing, democratic, radical party, was not in keeping with European traditions. And I think it's a healthy thing if radical thoughts that are normal in every Western European society - and it's not communist thoughts, not at all; it's radical democratic thought - can be expressed and can be channeled in the democratic process. I might add that the 8.6 percent of the vote that they have coincides - almost coincides - with the 9 percent of Germans who oppose German membership to NATO; 72 percent were for German membership in NATO in August '83.

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Q: Going back now, in response to a question about politics, you said Social Democrats are a responsible party, you said at their convention they voted to stay with NATO in firm support for NATO and so forth. That is true, except they want the NATO without nuclear weapons. They also made that very plain. You said earlier that Pershing IIs are in West Germany to stay. If one of your major parties almost equal in voting strength to a major party doesn't want nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons are going in, doesn't this create the basis of a dissension that will eventually fracture the German opinion?

A: Well, I can only refer to one observation I made and one experience. And the experience is that we are responsible parties, and we have to recognize that parties, as such, act differently in government than they talk in opposition and I'm sure this fact is known in American political life, too. Second, the observation I made in talking to responsible people in this party is that they are fully aware of the necessity of continuity and a security policy. We in our situation and every governing party in our situation at the borderline would be terrible fools if we switched the main issue of security policy from one day to another or even within the decade. I'm sure there is no possibility for any German government suddenly to change its stance in major issues of security policy. What it boils down to, then, is the possibility of long-term conceptual changes. But there we coincide. We all want to raise the nuclear threshold.

Q: But yet, I'm still a little bit perplexed, because in 1977 Helmut Schmidt, the leader of the Social Democrats, was for deployment of the Pershings. It was his idea that brought the Pershings into being. NATO approved it in December 1979 and in March '83, the West German election, the Social Democrats were still for it, but in November they were against it, and that's not long-range continuity. It's rather an abrupt change in a short time.

A. Right, but I'm not the spokesman of the party. I mean, I can only answer you as an outside observer, and these are my observations. I don't think you can deduce from that a danger of our change of policy. I would go even further. Given the figures I read to you earlier, I would predict that if our voters would get the definite impression that the Social Democratic Party intends to change radically the security policy of the country, they wouldn't win.

Q: Well, talking to leaders of both parties, the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats, I understand that neither party expects ever to have a majority of parliament in the foreseeable future. That leaves a vote to a minor swing party that could be a peace party. Could that alter the equation?

A: Well, here we are again. Then the majority of the German voters thought, good heavens ... we have to save the Liberal Party. And a lot of those housewives - I know many of them - and sons of presidents of big companies who vote Green would think twice if voting Green would suddenly become a fatal security question. Don't forget, this is really the issue behind all the questions you are asking. Ours is a very solid country. We are not shaky. Our population knows what it wants and it is firm.

Q: Do you see any hope for human rights in the Soviet Union?

A: No. Not the way you define it. I see more hope for human rights in central and eastern Europe. Russia has a long history of repression which didn't start in 1918, and it will not be changed in the short or medium term. What could change in the medium and long term is more benevolent behavior of the ruling autocracy towards the broad masses.



# 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, March 1 ... Twenty West Germans due in New York City April 1 will be given an extraordinary introduction to Jewish life in America, in a two-week cultural exchange program sponsored by the American Jewish Committee and The Konrad Adenauer Foundation of West Germany.

"The purpose of the program," explains its chairman, Richard L. Weiss of Los Angeles, a vice president of AJC, "is to provide young German leaders with a clear insight into the Jewish community's position in the United States." The American Jewish Committee group will travel to the Federal Republic of Germany in July in the fourth consecutive year of the joint exchange.

Notes Mr. Weiss, "Most of the German participants born after the war have had little or no contact with Jews in their own country. For some, their exposure to Jews here is part of a life changing experience. It is something that they do not find at home, and it gives them an appreciation of the needs and concerns of modern Jewry both in and out of Germany."

In New York City, April 1-4, the group will visit Jewish enclaves in different boroughs, getting their first look at the distinctly American phenomenon of denominational sects within Judaism, visiting Reform, Conservative and Orthodox synagogues. At the AJC headquarters in Manhattan, the group will study the Jewish community's network of cultural, religious and educational institutions and its many philanthropic and social welfare organizations.

In Washington, D.C., April 5-7, the participants will meet with Jewish congressmen and lobbyists to learn how Jewish groups work within the American

more....

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

William S. Trosten, Acting Director

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CSAE 1707



political system. During a stopover in Chicago, April 9-11, the Germans will examine how Jews work together with other ethnic groups toward common objectives in the framework of a large pluralistic society. The ways in which Jews contribute to and participate in volunteer life in America is the emphasis of a visit to Los Angeles April 11-14.

In addition, the group will travel to Cincinnati, April 7-9, center of the Reform movement, which was transported to U.S. shores by German Jewish immigrants. There the group will learn firsthand about the unique achievements of German Jews in America and will attend a symbolic seder in advance of the Passover holiday.

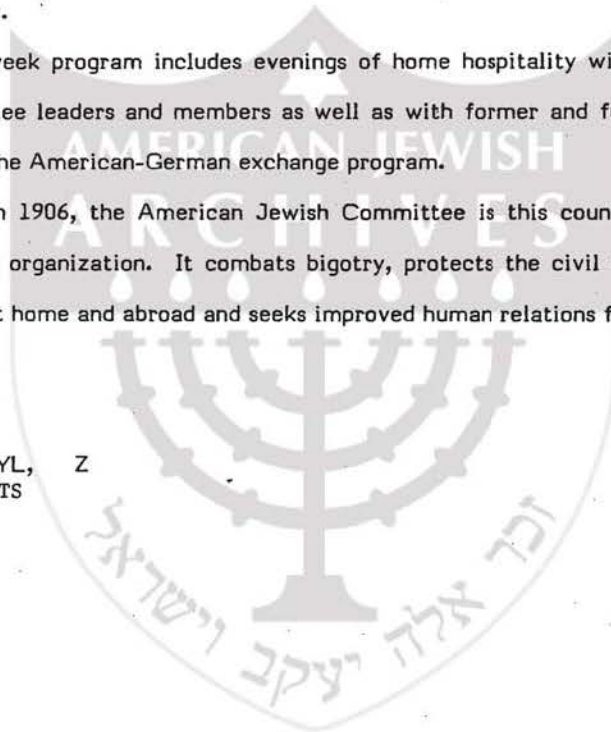
The two-week program includes evenings of home hospitality with American Jewish Committee leaders and members as well as with former and future Jewish participants in the American-German exchange program.

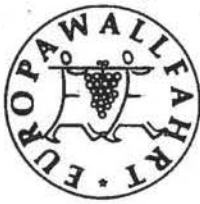
Founded in 1906, the American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. It combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews at home and abroad and seeks improved human relations for all people everywhere.

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# Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft zur Förderung europäischer Wallfahrten und christlicher Zusammenarbeit

(„Europa-Wallfahrt“) e.V.

Der Präsident

Herrn  
Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum  
Director of International Relations  
The American Jewish Community  
165, East 56Th Street

New York, NY 10022

EINSCHREIBEN

13. Juli 1984 L-r

Sehr geehrter, lieber Herr Professor Tanenbaum,

da ich morgen für einige Wochen in Ferien nach Spanien gehe,  
möchte ich vorher noch die finanzielle Seite Ihres Besuches  
in Ottobeuren regeln.

Herr Scheule und ich haben bis heute auf einen Brief von Ihnen  
gewartet. Auf meinen Brief an Sie vom 23. Juni habe ich  
ebenfalls noch keine Antwort erhalten. Ich hoffe, daß der Brief  
nicht unterwegs verlorengegangen ist. Sollten Sie diesen Brief  
nicht erhalten haben, bitte ich um entsprechende Nachricht.  
Denn ich hatte Ihnen einige Überlegungen wegen der Broschüre  
über die christlich-jüdische Begegnung in Ottobeuren unterbreitet.  
Ohne Ihre Antworten könnte ich die Broschüre nicht in Druck geben,  
die nach unserer Vorstellung im Oktober fertiggestellt sein sollte.  
Ich hoffe zuversichtlich, nach meiner Rückkehr aus den Ferien  
einen Antwortbrief von Ihnen vorzufinden.

Ich übersende Ihnen heute einen Bankscheck über US- $\$$  3.250,--  
als Erstattung der Flugkosten für Sie und Ihre liebe Frau -  
und zwar New York - München und zurück. Ein internationales  
Reisebüro hat mir diesen Betrag für die 2 Tickets business class  
angegeben.

- 2 -

Sollte Ihre Forderung jedoch darüber hinausgehen, bitte ich  
um entsprechende Nachricht.

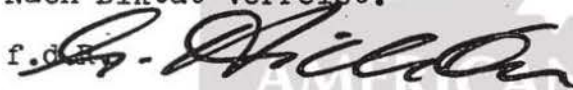
Mit allen guten Wünschen und sehr herzlichen Grüßen,  
auch an Ihre liebe Frau,

Ihr sehr ergebener

gez. Hans August Lücker  
Präsident

Nach Diktat verreist.

f. d. H.



Elfriede Richter  
Mitarbeiterin

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ADDRESS BY HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH  
COMMITTEE, AT OBSERVANCES MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE GERMAN GENERALS' PLOT TO ASSASSINATE HITLER

JULY 20, 1984, BONN, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

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Chancellor Kohl, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It <sup>is my</sup> ~~was a~~ genuine privilege to take part in these observances marking  
— the 40th Anniversary of the German Generals' Plot of July 20, 1944, to  
terminate the leadership of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime.

As President of the American Jewish Committee, I am particularly  
conscious of the significance of this occasion. For the past decade, the  
American Jewish Committee has pioneered in efforts to build new bridges of  
understanding between the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States  
of America, and between the German people and the Jewish people in the  
United States, Israel, and elsewhere. We sincerely trust that this  
commemoration today will contribute to the advancement of that shared  
objective.

In candor, we do not have first-hand information about the events,  
the personalities, nor the motivations that led to the July 20, 1944,  
— assassination attempts against Adolf Hitler and his brutal regime. Our  
primary sources of information come from history books, such as those of  
William L. Shirer (The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich).

It is of surpassing interest to learn that, while we today focus on  
the July 20th coup, there were according to historians "at least a half  
— dozen attempts to assassinate Hitler during 1943." The Gestapo recorded  
lists of some 7,000 arrests of conspirators against Hitler, and some 4,980  
Germans were killed as conspirators.

The Kreisau Circle is described by Shirer as "a cross-section of German society...that hated Hitler and all the degradation he had brought on German and Europe." Count Helmuth James von Moltke, a pillar of the Kreisau Circle, is reported to have written in 1943, "To us, Europe after the war is a question of how the picture of man can be reestablished in the breasts of our fellow-citizens."

That statement, I believe, is the crux of why we are met here today. The savage regime of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi cohorts was clearly a massive tragedy for Germany and the German people. For the Jewish people, it was an unspeakable trauma whose massacre of six million Jewish men, women, and children continues to affect the worldview of the Jewish people today.

In its ultimate meaning, Nazism was a pagan assault on the moral and spiritual foundations of Western civilization and of mankind at large. The keystone of Western society, from the first until the 20th century, has been the unshakeable conviction of the dignity of the human personality. Christians and Jews are bound together by the profound Biblical and democratic humanism that affirms the sanctity of every human life and the fundamental human rights that flow from that conviction.

Nazism, with racism at its core and its fanatic demonology of Jews and Judaism, was a radical perversion of everything sacred that sustained Western civilization at its best. This Anniversary should summon us to mobilize all our moral, spiritual and intellectual resources to recommitment to those fundamental values, ideals, and institutions on which a humane and civil democratic order depend.

Friedman/3

To that end, I would respectfully suggest that these difficult times call for our collaboration in the following areas:

First, Christians and Jews -- Germans, Americans, and people of good will everywhere -- must help engender a national and international consensus that rejects those who use violence or who advocate the use of violence. We must work to deromanticize all appeals to use violence and terrorism as means of liberation, since from a moral standpoint, no ends can justify such anti-human means.

Second, we must work to curtail the resort to inflammatory propaganda, especially from international forums, which have psychological impact on an international scale. As Prof. Gordon Allport of Harvard University concluded in his monumental study, "The Nature of Prejudice," there is an inevitable progression "from verbal aggression to violence, from rumor to riot, from gossip to genocide."

Third, we must work toward educational development and communications among peoples to reduce the abrasive effects of "differences." Differences, as we have learned in the pluralistic experience of America, can be a source of enrichment rather than a threat.

Fourth, we should engage in an urgent and sustained intellectual and educational effort to elaborate an ideology of pluralism which presupposes the right of each religious, racial, and ethnic group to define itself in its own terms and to be accepted unconditionally by its own self-definition. Christians and Jews have a decisive contribution to make to the building of the ideological foundations without which a stable world community cannot come into being.

And finally, we need to recognize the fundamental interdependence of all human rights and collaborate vigorously to assure that every nation -- East and West, North and South, implement fully their commitments to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

In particular, Christians and Jews should work for the completion of the judicial instrumentalities called for by Article 6 of the Genocide Convention in the form of an international penal tribunal for trying those who are accused of genocide attempts anywhere in the world.

In early July 1944, William Shirer writes, following the Allied landing in Normandy, the Generals who led the conspiracy against Hitler were thrown into confusion. Generals Stauffenberg, Beck, and Goerdeler reportedly wondered whether there was any point in going ahead with their plans to assassinate Hitler. They finally concluded that though a successful anti-Nazi revolt could not spare Germany from Allied occupation, it would bring the war to an end and save further loss of blood and destruction of the Fatherland. Above all, they felt, it would show the world that there was "another Germany" besides the Nazi one.

This Anniversary today, by the very fact of its taking place, is a demonstration of a conviction that many of us hold to; namely, that there is "a new Germany." A new Germany committed to upholding the sanctity of human life, of defending constitutional democracy, of opposing racism and anti-Semitism, of building a world order based on mutual respect and caring between all members of the human family. It is to that vision, a vision of history not as a hitching post to the past, but as a guiding post to a new future, that the American Jewish Committee extends its hand of fellowship, solidarity, and support.

ajc

JUL 24 1984

July 20,  
1984

בברכה

With our Compliments

To: M. Tanenbaum



FYI

The American Jewish Committee Israel Office

רחוב אתיופיה 9 ירושלים

הוועד היהודי האמריקני

9 Ethiopia Street Jerusalem Tel. 228862, 233551. טל.



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Tel Aviv, July 12, 1984

DER BOTSCHAFTER  
DER BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND

Dr. Niels Hansen

Mr. Bernard Resnikoff  
Director  
The American Jewish Committee  
Israel Office  
Rehov Ethiopia 9

Jerusalem 95 149

Dear Mr. Resnikoff,

this is to thank you cordially for your very kind letter of July 6. I am proud of your friendly words which I appreciate very much. The good relations between The American Jewish Committee and our Government are essential, indeed, - and helpful for my work here in Israel as well.

Hoping to seeing you again before long I am with best regards and wishes from both of us

Sincerely yours,

Niels Hansen

## Christian and Jew in Communist Germany

by

Leonard Swidler

There were 500,000 Jews living in Germany before the Nazis took over in 1933; today, in East Germany, out of a population of 17,000,000, there are 450 practicing Jews--and no Rabbi. Still, a small but growing number of Christians--theologians, clergy and lay people--are more and more coming to feel the need to be in dialogue with Jews. Partly this is because of a growing awareness of the past guilt and present responsibility for the horror of the Holocaust, and partly because of the swelling awareness among Christians in general of the need to enter into interreligious dialogue, and first of all into Jewish-Christian dialogue. There is of course precious little opportunity for East Germans to travel to the West, but the great majority of them can, and do, receive Western television broadcasts. Hence, for example, they were able to see the television production of "Holocaust" a few years ago, and this spring the television production of "Shoah."

But who can be the dialogue partners of these interested Christians in East Germany? There is no one other than this tiny handful of Jewish laity. In fact, Christian community has reached out to them in dialogue, but the scholarly, theological levels of the dialogue are beyond the reach of the Jewish community.

It is against this backdrop of need that a second Seminar on Jewish-Christian Dialogue sponsored by the Journal of Ecumenical Studies and the Religion Department of Temple University went to East Germany for two weeks of intense dialogues (March 7-23, 1986). The team that went was made up of seven persons, four Jews and three Christians. There were two Rabbis, one Jewish layman and one Jewish laywoman, a Catholic priest, a Catholic layman, and a Protestant laywoman, all of whom were trained scholars in various fields of religious studies. All were Philadelphians, most from the faculty or graduate student body of Temple University Religion Department, one from the University of Pennsylvania, and one from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

During our fifteen days in Germany (the beginning and closing weekends in West Berlin, and the rest of the time in East Germany) we held dialogues at a dozen different institutions. The welcome accorded us was warm, at times even touching. It often seemed that our hosts felt they could not do enough for us. We seemed to go from peak experience to peak experience, though at times individuals of our Seminar experienced personal "valleys." For instance, one member was Suzanne Heschel, whose father, Rabbi Abraham Heschel, one of the most revered Jewish

scholars of the middle twentieth century, did his Ph.D. in the University of Berlin in 1933. His doctoral dissertation is still sitting on the shelves of the university library today. Visiting that university (and later lecturing there), with the memory of Rabbi Heschel's deportation from Germany by the Nazis, his later escape, and the loss of much of his family in the Holocaust, was a deeply emotional experience for Suzanne Heschel--and also for all of us, both Americans and Germans who were with her.

One of the other members of our seminar, Rabbi Mordechai Liebling, is the only child of two Holocaust survivors. For him too, the coming to Germany was a searing emotional experience. But it was also the beginning of a deeply healing experience. In fact, even before his return to the United States, Rabbi Liebling began to think about the possibility of gathering a group of children of Holocaust survivors to make an extended visit to Germany, both West and East, to begin to build the bridge of future dialogue and collaboration to help rid the world of all future prejudice and fear of holocausts.

If nothing else but these two experiences had come from this Seminar, the whole project would have been more than justified. However, much more happened on a wide variety of levels:

Our first weekend was devoted to putting on a conference on Jewish-Christian dialogue in West Berlin, co-sponsored by the Protestant and Catholic Academies, the church-supported conference centers. That conference reached its high point and conclusion in a joint Protestant-Catholic-Jewish worship service on Sunday morning in a West Berlin Protestant church. The service had been worked out jointly by Protestant, Catholic and Jewish participants in the conference. Its center was the sermon preached by Rabbi Mordechai Liebling. He spoke of how "We Jews and Germans must work together to tell the world, from our experience as victim and victimizer, that we can not afford to stand by benumbed in the face of the possibility, and perhaps even likelihood, of other holocausts' occurring, especially the worst of all possible holocausts, a nuclear war." Standing by his side, translating for him into German, was a Protestant theological student, Katherine Koppe, who had spent a year as an exchange student in Temple University Religion Department and who is now back finishing her theological studies in West Berlin.

On Monday morning, March 10, we walked across the border into East Berlin, a somewhat unnerving experience for those who had never done it before. But, once across, we were warmly welcomed by Professor Heinrich Fink, the Dean of the Protestant Theological Faculty of the Humboldt University in East Berlin. After getting settled in our quarters, seeing the University and laying out our schedule for the rest of the week, we made our first formal presentation in East Berlin that night at the Protestant Church of Sancta Sophia (Sophienkirche), where a grass-roots Jewish-Christian dialogue group had gathered. There were over 200 people jammed into the hall, with the last twenty

standing around the edges. The first part of the evening was very serious, with Gerard Sloyan and Lester Dean conducting a Christian-Jewish dialogue on Paul.

This was very high-level, creative, theological thinking that was going on. Their initial statements were written out and translated into German ahead of time, but once they were presented, the real dialogue, asking questions and responding back and forth, began in earnest. New thoughts were thought. The edges of knowledge were pushed out. This dialogue was the real thing! Despite the fact that this was done at the highest scholarly and intellectual level, and despite the fact that it was done in English and then translated into German by two other members by our seminar, the audience was totally transfixed. And we had similar experiences the several other times that variations of the "Paul" dialogue were conducted the next two weeks of our sojourn in East Germany, whether the audience was largely lay, seminarians, or theological professors. Each time new ideas were created.

On the following day, Tuesday, March 11, we divided our forces, with some going to speak to senior-high-school-level women students, and others of us meeting with a group of Catholic leaders, chaired by Bishop Bernhard Huhn, the Bishop of Görlitz, which is on the East German-Polish border; he is also in charge of ecumenical affairs for the East German Bishops Conference. The exchange was extremely open and warm. Afterwards Bishop Huhn commented that this was the first time that he had sat around the table with a Jew (a comment that we were to hear many times in the ensuing days), and sincerely hoped that this would be only the first Jewish-Christian dialogue that we would be involved in together.

During the day on Wednesday and Thursday we were intensely involved in scholarly dialogues with students and faculty of the Protestant Theological faculty of the Humboldt University in East Berlin. It was they, through the leadership of Professor Fink, who issued the formal invitation to us and through whom the necessary permissions and visas were acquired which made the entire trip possible. We also were extremely warmly received by the pro-rector, or vice president, of the university within whose area of responsibility the theological faculties lie.

We also renewed our very positive relations with the Protestant church-supported seminary in East Berlin, the Sprachenkonvikt, where we had spent four delightful days in a similar seminar in 1984. This time, since their seminary was just beginning its semester, we had dinner and only a single full evening of dialogues. As before, the students turned out almost in toto and with great enthusiasm.

In some ways, the high point of our first week which was spent entirely in East Berlin came that following weekend when we put on a very intense, packed conference at the Protestant Academy in East Berlin. They were 300 participants! It seemed

that we were talking from early morning to late at night, and when we were not in formal session each of us was surrounded by groups of Germans who wanted to continue the discussions in a wide variety of directions. Besides individual lectures, we put on three planned Jewish-Christian dialogues, namely, the one on Paul, another one on Jesus, and a third one on feminism and religion. The one on Jesus was conducted by Rabbi Lewis Eron and myself, with the one on feminism and religion being done by Suzanne Heschel and Katherina von Kellenbach. Although it was late at night and everyone was told that those who felt they needed to leave in order to get home at a reasonable hour should feel free to leave immediately, all of the 300 persons stayed for the closing Protestant-Catholic-Jewish prayer service on Saturday evening. It included the lighting of candles and the singing of Hebrew prayers and songs, the recitation of Protestant prayers and German Bible reading, and the chanting in Latin of the Catholic night prayer, Compline.

On Monday, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day!--it seems that Gerard Sloyan and I were the only ones in the whole country who celebrated it), we began our second week in East Germany with a train ride south of Berlin through central Germany to the medieval town of Erfurt which contains the Augustinian monastery where Martin Luther first joined a religious order, became a Catholic priest and taught theology. Although we visited all those important historical sights, the reason why we were going to Erfurt was to conduct dialogues with the faculty and student body of the sole Catholic philosophical-theological seminary which trained Catholic priests for all East Germany. We all agreed that in many ways Erfurt was the high point of our whole trip. To begin with, it was a continuation of our meeting with Catholics which occurred the first week in Berlin with Bishop Huhn and his colleagues. I had not been able to arrange for dialogues with Catholics on our previous seminar trip in 1984, and so the warm response by Catholics this time was especially gratifying.

We stayed at a thirteenth-century Catholic convent run by Ursuline nuns in the center of the city. After having been banqueted and led on sightseeing tours by the rector of the seminary, Father Johannes Friemel, and his colleague Father Joseph Reindl, Professor of Hebrew Bible, we were told by the rector that a few of his colleagues were invited to meet with us that first evening. Hence, we expected an intimate, social gathering of a few professors. What in fact occurred was a gathering of practically all the present faculty members of the theological seminary, plus most of the emeritus faculty--about twenty of them. We all sat around a large table in easy chairs drinking wine and engaged in a free-wheeling, intense, sympathetic, open Jewish-Christian dialogue for several hours. Sometimes there were reminiscences by the priests about Jewish school chums, some of whom died later in the Holocaust, and some of whom escaped and whom they met again after the war. But, most of the time, the dialogue was on a very high scholarly and at the same time intensely personal level (their faculty includes a

number of world-known theological scholars, in some instances priests from West Germany who decided years back to give up the freedom and security of the West to offer their badly needed scholarly and pastoral talents to the East German Catholic Church--about 1,300,000 Catholics).

The next morning we began what had been declared by the seminary faculty a "Dies Judaicus." All classes were dismissed, and the students and faculty were invited--not mandated--to attend any or all of our dialogues and lectures, which began at nine in the morning and ran until eleven that night, stopping only long enough to eat and to catch our breath. Looking at the large lecture hall in front of us with my trained crowd-surveying eye, I quickly realized that out of the 107 students (all of whom save four were candidates for the priesthood), about 115 were present! Presumably others heard about our visit and joined in.

The Germans are obviously used to absorbing lectures in large doses, but they clearly were not sitting there passively. One could see by the attentive look on their faces, their feverish note-taking, the questions in the brief question period after the lectures, and the thunderous and extended applause afterwards that their minds were intensely engaged. The day closed in the evening with a huge free-for-all question-and-discussion period, which after it broke up formally was followed by the encirclement of each of us by eager, questioning students and faculty. We obviously could have profitably spent several days of intense teaching and exchange there. In fact, we all were individually invited back by the rector and faculty to teach whenever we would like--it is an intriguing prospect.

I must record one other happy fact about our visit to the Catholic Seminary at Erfurt. Some thirty years ago I went to study theology in Germany at the University of Tübingen where I studied under Professor Heinrich Fries, who later moved to the University of Munich. It turned out that the rector and the rector-elect, Father Johannes Bernhard, had also done their doctorates in theology under Professor Fries. We took the occasion for the three of us to send a written greeting to Professor Fries, emeritus, who has spent his whole theological teaching career in the scholarly and pastoral promotion of dialogue, from three of his "spiritual children" who were now also promoting dialogue, Jewish-Christian, American-East German.

After our two days in Erfurt we took the train to Leipzig, which turned out to be quite literally a crushing experience. The early morning train was absolutely jammed with people, all going to the Leipzig Fair, which happened was on that week. It was standing room only in the corridor alongside the packed compartments. One good thing was that when there was a sudden jerk in the movement of the train we couldn't fall down--there wasn't room!

For those of us who had been to East Germany two years before, coming to Leipzig was like coming back home. We had

spent a number of days there in 1984. This time we had only a day and a half (we did steal an afternoon to go and visit the book fair in the center of the old city). Our dialogues with the faculty and students of the Protestant Theological Seminary were on a much smaller scale than what we had experienced at Erfurt since the seminary was officially closed for the Fair. Nevertheless, the dialogues were intense and fruitful, often building on what we had begun two years before.

I also wish to recall a visit that Gerard Sloyan and I had with a number of the Catholic priests of the Oratory in Leipzig, where I had stayed when I was there two years before. All of the younger and middle-aged priests had studied at the Catholic Seminary at Erfurt and were now deeply involved in a wide range of pastoral work, which included social justice and ecological and peace issues. Gerry Sloyan and I agreed afterwards that we have rarely been together with a more vital group of Catholic priests. It was a most encouraging experience. We also had the additional benefit of hearing from one of the Oratory priests, who is also on the theological faculty at Erfurt, that from his direct knowledge the faculty and students at Erfurt were indeed extremely enthusiastic about our visits there. As veteran teachers, we have rarely experienced such intense, instant gratification from our teaching as we did on this trip, and so we indulged ourselves and shamelessly enjoyed it.

Taking the train back to East Berlin and being met by Pastor Graupner of the Protestant Academy of East Berlin and Oberkirchenrat Tschoerner (the official of the Protestant Church in East Germany who, together with Professor Heinrich Fink of the Hamburg University Theological Faculty, arranged our whole trip this time, and who alone arranged our whole trip in 1984) met us at the train station. It was again another homecoming for us. We had a farewell dinner, during which time we assessed the impact of our trip and speculated about future possibilities, one of which was a warm encouragement by an editor of the St. Benno publishers of Leipzig--the only Catholic publishing house in East Germany--for the four of us who had developed the two Jewish-Christian dialogues, the ones on Jesus and on Paul, to put our dialogues together in publishable book form--with no absolute promises of course, given the vagaries of the East Germany bureaucracy. We intend to follow up on the encouragement.

Now that our sojourn in East Germany was at an end, many of us suddenly began to realize that we had made many new and fast friends and that we had stored up a multitude of experiences and intense emotions. Some of us spoke aloud about our sudden reluctance to leave and the wish to return quickly. The fact of these emotions in us caught us by surprise and revealed something of ourselves to ourselves that we were perhaps not fully aware of before.

One other recollection of our visit to Germany must also be recorded here, namely, that in all three cities, Berlin, Erfurt, and Leipzig, we also met with members of the surviving Jewish



communities. They are tiny in number and shrinking, but nevertheless intensely committed to living as vigorous a Jewish life as possible, not in isolation but in openness and dialogue with their neighbors and visitors. Would that all religious communities were as committed and dialogic as these are. Would that these particular committed and dialogic religious communities had the replenishing resources of growing, young members rather than only older, dying ones. Nevertheless, their example is moving.

That afternoon we crossed over once again into West Berlin, experiencing our second-last homecoming--it is amazing how many new "homes" we had so quickly acquired. Some of us that night went to see a performance of "Salome" by Richard Strauss, a brilliant performance, and a quite fascinating subject for our Jewish-Christian dialogue group. (We had two weeks before been given tickets to a concert by the West Berlin Philharmonic, whose guest conductor was none other than Philadelphia Orchestra conductor Riccardo Muti, and the centerpiece of the concert was the Franz Liszt piano concerto played by the famous American pianist Andre Watts!)

On Saturday afternoon we were at the Catholic Academy in West Berlin where we were hosted by its director Laurence Ungruhe and the director of the Protestant Academy, Franz von Hammerstein. Our first session was devoted to the presentation of a Jewish-Christian dialogue on religion and feminism, and the second session was devoted to reflections by each of our group on the two weeks' experiences in East Germany. What you have just read in the previous pages and much more was expressed by each of us, one by one from our own perspective. The West Germans were intensely interested. The one criticism that was raised was that the next time we come we must spend more time in West Berlin.

With that clear invitation still ringing in our ears we were taken to the airport the next morning in West Berlin by our various hosts. (I must mention that on our last night in Germany several of us had dinner with Dr. Khalid Duran, a Muslim scholar from Hamburg, an old friend and leader in the Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogue, who came all the way to Berlin to visit us.)

To say that we all felt that our trip was successful would be to strain even British understatement. But, I'll leave it at that.

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DO JEWS HAVE A FUTURE IN GERMANY?

Anyone writing on this controversial subject ~~ought~~<sup>needs</sup> to submit his credentials first: Viennese-born in 1922, I was an inmate of a concentration camp in 1939. I lost seven relatives in Auschwitz and served in the Jewish Brigade of the British Army during World War II. Since 1975 I have been teaching as a visiting Professor in the fields of Jewish Theology, the Jewish background of the New Testament and Christian-Jewish relations at various universities in Western Germany and Europe. Last, not least, I am an observant Jew.

There are only two ways to face this world of ours--or, for that matter, a hunk of Swiss cheese:

Either you count the holes of your Emmenthaler, sadly reflecting upon their great size and number--or you are all eyes for the delicious cheese, enjoying its smell, its flavor and its taste.

Both ways only get to see half the truth, but the cheese-taster gets the fuller view.

When speaking of Jews in Germany today, the same rule of thumb applies. It entails a stock-taking of both realities, for the overall picture is, as always, a motley panorama of lights and shadows, like everywhere else. Speaking of the holes: It is true that there have been swastika-daubings on tombstones in Jewish cemeteries; now and then anonymous threats are ~~being~~ voiced; macabre jokes about the gas chambers are still being told behind the scenes; young neo-Nazis and old veterans of Hitler's campaigns hold private meetings from time to time, and the so-called "Auschwitz-lie" still finds customers and disseminators.

However, most of these occurrences, deplorable as they are, seem to gain in scope and weight, out of all proportions to their real impact, as soon as their echoes cross the Atlantic.

Thus, for instance, the following report appeared ~~in~~<sup>in</sup> May, <sup>1955</sup> in quite a number of American papers:

\*At Nesselwang in Southern Bavaria several hundred Nazi-SS-troupers assembled in celebration. They were members of the first tank-corps of Hitler's SS-Elite. They all wore their Nazi uniform with swastika armbands. A number of them drove up to the hotel in three World War II Tiger-tanks.

This was the press report--but what were the facts:

All in all some 85 veterans of the Waffen-SS, mostly bald-headed, paunchy die-hards and incorrigibles met at the village of Nesselwang, without uniform or swastika--behind closed hotel doors. Needless to say, no tanks of any vintage were used by anybody. Outside a demonstration of some 5000 young German anti-Nazis tried hard to break into the hotel. It took a reinforced contingent of police from all over Bavaria to avoid a lynching of the old Nazis. A sharp protest launched by the Mayor against the SS meeting was unanimously endorsed by the village council, the Labour Union of the county of Allgaeu and representatives of all three political parties.

In brief: A handful of SS veterans managed to weld a medley of political groupings into one solid front of public opposition against any display of fascist remnants.

The long and the short of it is that an overwhelming majority of Germans has come to support its elected government and smaller, but rising, numbers of Germans also support civil liberties in concrete cases. Neo-Fascist parties have declined to well below 2% of the vote in national elections, and Communist parties have not attained more than two percent of the vote since 1949. Popular antisemitism has progressively declined since the war and most competent studies of racial prejudice reveal the same pattern for age-groups and education as do American studies for the U. S.

On the other hand, there is an upsurge of new kinds of ideological antisemitism in fringe groups and new trends of thought--all in desperate search of scapegoats. Thus, some of the spokeswomen of the feminists blame "the Jews" as the purported inventors of patriarchalism, for male predominance in the Churches and in German society.

"Let your women be silent in the churches...they are to be submissive to their husbands!" (I Cor. 14, 34). This famous rule for female subordination <sup>was</sup> ~~has been~~ laid down by Paul, as the feminists reluctantly admit; but, to <sup>same</sup> ~~their~~ <sup>mind,</sup> it <sup>simply proves</sup> ~~just goes to~~ show how Jewish the Apostle to the Gentiles actually was.

The Green movement which crusades for the legislative protection of the national ecology, blames the Old Testament for its commandment: "Fill the earth and subdue it!" (Gen. 1:28) -- an imperative which has allegedly led to the

ruthless exploitation of Mother Nature. That this "subduing the earth" rests upon a mistranslation by Martin Luther is only slowly sinking in. Still, the true meaning of the commandment which calls upon us to govern all creation wisely and circumspectly is gaining gradual headway.

The Peace Movement, whose adherents come from all parties and walks of life, is being told by some of their leaders that the Hebrew God of Vengeance and His cruel Talion-Law "an eye-for-an-eye; a tooth-for-a-tooth" lies at the root of the armament race between East and West. For good measure its members are reminded that Jews like Teller, Oppenheimer and Cohen were instrumental in the development of atomic warfare and the neutron bomb.

Still, this is by-and-large platonic anti-judaism, which is prepared to argue with us, to listen to counter-arguments and rarely transcends the realm of academic controversy.

A look at Germany's neighbor countries helps to establish a sense of proportion. In Holland today an evangelical sect vociferously preaches that Auschwitz was God's just punishment for Jewish guilt in the crucifixion of Jesus. Amsterdam's Jewish mayor has been physically attacked by illegal squatters and publicly called "a dirty Jew".

In France synagogues were repeatedly the targets of terrorist bombings and anti-Zionism is frequently ~~being~~ used to incite Arab settlers from North Africa against local Jewish communities. In Switzerland a "National-Socialist Party" (NSP) ~~was~~ recently ~~was~~ founded which organizes parades of youngsters in black uniforms and distributes racial propaganda pamphlets.

In sum: West Germany today has considerably less militant anti-semitism than most countries in Western Europe. And although there is no denying the holes in the Emmenthaler, there is a great deal of sound and solid cheese around them. A few examples may help substantiate this point:

Fifty-five Societies of Christian-Jewish cooperation spread all over the country organize lectures, round-tables, radio talks and TV shows on a whole gamut of Jewish subjects and initiate periodic youth exchange visits with Israel.

"The Fatherland's ingratitude"--this was the official title of an itinerant exhibition, organized by the German Ministry of National Defence, as belated homage to those 100,000 German Jews who fought in German uniform during World War I -- 35,000 of whom were distinguished for bravery, while 12,300 fell for

Germany. Also on display by the government in eighteen of the major cities was a whole shelf of German patriotic literature written up to 1918.

← Hard to believe, but indubitably genuine, are the fulsome paeans of praise all written by Prussian poets, which extoll the Jews of Poland and Russia as the champions of Germanic culture—furnishing scientific proof that Yiddish was a legitimate offspring of medieval "Minnesang", topping it all by declaring all of East-European Jewry to be the spiritual kith and kin of the German elite.

How these noble paladines of all German virtues, barely fifteen years later, could be officially degraded to the scum of the earth--that is a question many young visitors ~~to~~ the exhibition are now asking their parents.

Still, German sympathy for Jews, some 70 years ago, did not remain unrequited. Typical for hundreds of Jewish leading articles, monographs and essays of the time, is a poem of Morris Rosenfeld, published in New York late in 1916. It says in Yiddish:

Ich bin ganz fremd zu dem Teuton  
es ist der Jid in mir wos redd  
doch wuensch ich Segen Deutschland's Fohn  
wos flattert ueber Russland's Stedt.  
Mein Lied der deitschischen Nation  
Hoch - for dem Kaiser und sein Land,  
Hoch - for sein Mut und seine Fohn!  
Und Hoch for sein geseget Hand.

← I am quite alien to the German;  
It is the Jew in me who speaks.  
I ~~do~~ wish blessings ~~to~~ the German flag  
which flutters over Russia's towns.  
My song is devoted to the German nation.  
Hail - for the emperor and his land  
Hail - for his courage and his banner  
And hail for his blessed hand!

Last, not least, a book was recently published in Mainz, which is dedicated to those Germans who rescued Jews from certain death during the Nazi years. It makes a lie of the rumor that "hardly anybody helped the Jews in their hour of direst need." So far, "Yad Vashem" in Jerusalem has officially

honored some 2000 of these "Righteous of the Nations," as they are called in Rabbinic parlance, who constitute a mere fraction of all those who risked their own lives for Jewish neighbors. Only God knows how many of them were put to death for saving Jews. In the course of investigations it soon became clear that things like devotion and selflessness cannot be measured by mathematical yardsticks. "Two thousand decent people-- including many foreigners--what is that in a nation of 80 millions!" So sneared many young people in Israel. In the meantime the memoirs published by many survivors have made them change their minds.

Thus, it gradually transpired that several thousand Jews could survive in hiding throughout the war years in Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich and elsewhere--thanks to the succor of German friends who supplied them with shelter, food and the moral stamina to outlive the years of wrath. Take a couple of average Jews by the name of Krakauer, for instance, who were cared for during 29 months by 66 pastors and parish priests, smuggled from one hideout to another, with the active aid of dozens of other Germans who wittingly endangered their very existence in order to obey God more than the brownshirted tyranny.

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the late Chief Rabbi of Israel, has taught us that it is better to light one single candle than to curse the darkness. In this sense we have learned that that long and ghastly night of the great God-eclipse was an abyss of destruction and despair--but that many small candles lit up to pierce the darkness here and there. When mercy was a crime and hatred became the law of the land, many thousands of German citizens, including high ranking officers, bishops and clergymen, defied all threats of violence in order to follow the voice of their conscience. Some of these people will remain forever nameless, as they refuse all signs of recognition. For, as a taxi driver in Berlin ~~said~~, who had hidden a Jewish orphan for two years in his garage; <sup>said</sup> "I only did what was right and proper; for that I don't deserve a medal!"

I sometimes wonder, whether we Jews, under the same whiplash of ruthless brutality, would have behaved more nobly or would have produced more heroes of rescue and resistance.

And if God was willing to spare Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of ten righteous <sup>ones</sup> ~~men~~, should we not bear in mind these thousands of life-savers?

← Anyone speaking of Auschwitz today must not forget the greatness of of all these little folks of whom our sages have said: "He, who rescues a single human life, it is reckoned unto him, as if he had saved the entire world."

All these facts, enhanced by the reality that West Germany has now caught up with the rest of the West in civil liberties, in tolerance and democracy, have begun to influence Jewish life in the new Federal Republic.

← The "packed-suitcase-syndrome," which pretended that every Jew was ready to leave Germany at a moment's notice, is perceptibly waning. Young Jews are now voluntarily joining the West German military forces, although German law grants them an overall exemption.

← The steady trickle of over 2000 young Israelis immigrating annually into Germany has helped heal the stigma other Jews once felt about living in the land of the Holocaust.

Not to be forgotten is the unprecedented and still ongoing flow of payments to the State of Israel and to hundreds of thousands of Jews on all five continents--reparations which Nahum Goldmann, as president of the Claims Conference, has called "unique in human history." It has recently been defined by an Israeli court, ~~the court~~ "as not constituting an obligatory repayment of a legal debt, but a voluntary gift; for it is self-evident that there is no international law which might oblige the German post-war government to make payments to holocaust survivors for sufferings inflicted by the Nazis." So far the verdict in Jerusalem.

The conclusion was drawn by Salo Baron, the great American-Jewish historian as early as 1966 when he told the plenary session of the World Jewish Congress in Brussels:

"I am convinced that.....Jews will again settle down in Germany and take an active part in the economy and cultural life of this country..... In a world which lives increasingly in a state of interdependence, a modus vivendi between Germans and Jews is of paramount importance--not only to both peoples concerned but to all humanity."

Salo Baron is right. German Jewry numbers today some 30,000 souls, but semi-official estimates put their number closer to 60,000, since many returnees and newcomers fail to register as Jews for a variety of reasons.



Mainly because of the Synagogue Tax, amounting to one-tenth of <sup>the</sup> Income Tax, which is, like Church-Tax, levied by the government on behalf of the Jewish communities but can be dodged by declaring oneself as religiously unaffiliated.

The second generation of Jews in Germany is founding families who speak German as their mother tongue; they study and teach at German universities and take an active part in the economic, municipal and political life of the country. Some of them hold leading positions in town councils, the judiciary, the arts, the press and in government service. They represent Germany at the World Jewish Congress, in the Keren-Hayessod-Israel-Appeal, The World Zionist Organization, and at the recent worldwide Maccabi-Sport-Games in Israel they openly competed as "the German team." In addition to the 51 synagogues now in use, five new ones are about to be inaugurated while a Jewish College, affiliated to the University of Heidelberg, is educating cantors, teachers and community workers. Berlin is proud of its Jewish Adult Education Center, while an interdisciplinary Institute for Research into the root-causes of antisemitism has recently been opened at Berlin's State University.

Frankfurt, for instance, <sup>is</sup> <sup>in</sup> <sup>the</sup> final preparations for the opening of a Jewish Museum in the famous Rothschild Palace, while a new ten million dollar <sup>Jewish</sup> community center is being built. The local <sup>Jewish</sup> Home for the Aged, now in its third stage of expansion, is considered to be one of the best and most modern in Europe.

If we add that a steadily growing number of universities offer graduate courses in Judaism and Jewish history, that classes in Hebrew and Hebrew Bible studies belong to most adult education curricula, that annually over 200 new books are published on Jewish subjects and that all radio and TV stations dedicate regular programs to the Jewish festivals and aspects of Christian-Jewish relations, one cannot help but conclude that cautious optimism is fully justified.

Take three grass-root events, standing for many hundreds, which betoken the new spirit in Germany nowadays.

-- On Good Friday <sup>1954</sup> ~~last year~~ I was invited to deliver a sermon in a Catholic church at Heidelberg about the fatal question:

"WHO WAS TO BLAME FOR THE DEATH OF JESUS?"

For the first time ever, it was Christians who took the initiative to explode the murderous myth of Deicide.

- On Reformation Day, October 31~~st~~, 1985, I was asked to give the keynote address in a packed hall of 5000 Lutherans in the city of Essen--on Luther and the Jews, and how to avoid his errors.
- In Viernheim, a small town in Hessen, an annual contest was recently inaugurated entitled "AGAINST OBLIVION!!". Its purpose: to animate high school children to detect the traces and the whereabouts of Jewish survivors who had once been citizens of their town, to write essays on Jewish contributions to the development of Viernheim, and to collect materials for a Jewish Museum, as a living memorial for the defunct community. This idea of combatting oblivion by awarding prizes at school competitions is catching on and may soon become a nationwide institution.

Should we not encourage such initiatives?<sup>↑</sup>

Are we not duty-bound to lend a hand in this process of learning from the lessons of the bitter past?

Needless to say, a great deal still remains to be done. Antisemitism, under a variety of disguises, both new and old, still rears its ugly head sporadically; anti-Jewish clichés still need purging in many Christian school books and Church liturgies; some age-old prejudices dating back to the Middle Ages, still prove their stubborn longevity. After all, 1800 years of accumulated bias and defamation cannot be gotten rid of within a single generation. The task ahead of us is still tremendous and will require a lot of groundwork at the grassroot level, much patience and perseverance.

It goes without saying that all Jews of my generation still bear the scars of Auschwitz in our hearts. <sup>Moreover,</sup> ~~On the other hand,~~ a few of our fellow survivors are unable to overcome the traumatic experiences of their past. Self-tormenting retrospection, collective accusations, a stance of the perennially suffering victim--all these defense mechanisms seem indispensable for their psychic balance. Their predicament deserves our full sympathy, <sup>without</sup> ~~no~~ doubt.

Still, merely looking back in pain and anger will heal no wounds but will keep adding fuel to the ugly rumors of Jewish vindictiveness and unrelenting

intransigence. Be that as it may, nothing should stop us from remaining true to our Jewish tradition which has never limited itself to bewailing dead ashes but <sup>also</sup> insisted on keeping the torch of hope alight.

Nor must anything becloud our overall view of Jews in Germany today and tomorrow. Remembering past anguish has never stopped Jews from building into the future, for over three thousand years.

- EGYPT under Pharaoh tried hard to wipe out the Hebrews on the Nile; yet, the Bible enjoins us, "You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were a sojourner in his land," (Deuteronomy 23:7).
- BABYLON destroyed Jerusalem and drove the flower of its youth into captivity; yet Jeremiah exhorted the captives to pray for the peace of Babylon--which indeed they did, (Jeremiah 29:7).
- HAMAN did his best to massacre all Jews in the Persian Empire--yet the Midrash tells us that some of his offspring became famous Torah scholars in Israel.
- THE CRUSADERS killed off a dozen flourishing Jewish congregations in the Rhineland--yet Jews were soon asked to come back--were later on expelled, and returned, time and again, to rebuild centers of learning which have enriched the heritage of Europe.

We have survived the longest chain of persecutions ever inflicted by <sup>humans</sup> ~~man~~ upon ~~his~~ <sup>their</sup> fellows because sufferings have never taught us hatred--but compassion. Nor have disasters ever shattered our faith in God, our trust in <sup>humanity</sup> ~~man~~, nor dashed our hope that the prophetic vision of world-wide peace may yet come true--even on the ruins of bloodshed and destruction.

Or should we hand Hitler a posthumous victory by keeping Germany "Judenrein"? ~~(rid of Jews)~~

Are we to help execute his craze of "Racial purity"?

Or should we give up Germany as God-forsaken?

The glad tidings out of Europe today are twofold:

With all its admitted shortcomings, weaknesses and the shadows of yesteryear, the German Federal Republic is today the freest, most democratic and self-critical state ever founded on German soil. And: Never before in history have German ears and German hearts been so open and receptive for the message of Judaism as they are today.

One of the tenets of that Jewish message runs as follows:

"You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you...You shall do my ordinances and keep my statutes...I am the Lord your God." (Lev. 18:3 f.).

This commandment, three times repeated in the Bible, has become ingrained so profoundly in the very heart of Judaism that it took some time before we grew aware of its by-product: that Jews, wherever they lived on earth, had to be different from their neighbors, never completely assimilated, always preserving at least a modicum of their own substance. In brief: Jews have always been "the others" par excellence. But what else is democracy and tolerance if not the willingness to accept "the others" in all their God-given otherness--without coercing them into a straight-jacket of inhuman uniformity.

And so the Jews became willy-nilly the seismograph of tolerance and the barometer of democracy the world over. Wherever unity was enforced, ~~like~~<sup>as</sup> in Nazi Germany; wherever pluralism was outlawed, ~~like~~<sup>as</sup> in Soviet Russia, Jews were bound to be the first victims of intolerance and dictatorship. This task of an early-warning indicator against all injustice and despotism may well be part of our prophetic mission in the service of human freedom.

Be that as it may, in Hitler's Germany we were vilified as traitors, bloodsuckers and Evil-incarnate--an indispensable black counterfoil to the artificial image of the ideal German as the paragon of all virtues. Both of them were abstract, scurrilous contraptions of a primitive ideology of evil Jews and perfect Aryans, whose imagination did not even suffice for grey.

← In postwar Germany, conversely, Jews were elevated to victorious fighters in Israeli uniform, to dauntless pioneers conquering the wastelands of Beersheba, and to Biblical heroes of flawless rectitude--in brief, to the cream of the human crop.

It took over 30 years for the pendulum of public opinion to swing to a healthy middle course. Today Jews in Germany are at long last permitted to be neither Jesus nor Judas, neither angels nor devils, but ordinary average people, with all the normal qualities and failings of humanity. And with this incipient normalization of the Jewish image comes a new, young curiosity about Judaism as a living creed, as a source of undying hope,<sup>25</sup> an incentive for self-renewal, as a beacon of confidence in the present crisis of insecurity, besetting countless doubt-ridden young Christians in Germany and elsewhere. For many of them the mystery of Jewish survival and resurrection has in fact become the only tangible proof for the existence of God.

To sum it up: For the first time ever, Jews and Judaism are being taken seriously in small, but growing, circles of German society--as a moral and religious force which has helped cast the foundations of Western civilization and may very well help support faith in the future, too.

Forty years have gone by since that genocide which stands alone in the history of ~~man's~~<sup>humanity's</sup> cruelty to ~~man~~<sup>humanity</sup>, but forty years is a biblical span of time, signalling the end of an epoch, the season for stock-taking and the beginning of a new era. It also seems to be the incubation period necessary for the long-repressed German holocaust syndrome to mature into a belated capacity to mourn, to face the bitter truth, to feel ~~contrition~~<sup>con</sup> and to own up to their sins of commission and omission! <sup>^</sup>

"We have no right to call upon the Jews of the world to forgive us; however, we may humbly ask for reconciliation." This appeal was made by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt on behalf of his government ~~eight years ago~~ in the great synagogue of Cologne. <sup>In 1977</sup>

"We earnestly seek reconciliation. For this very reason we must understand that there can be no reconciliation without remembrance of the past." This was spoken by President Weizsaecker on the 8th of May 1985--at the 40th anniversary of Germany's capitulation.

History has taught us that hands outstretched in friendliness, if rejected once too often, might clench into fists.

I think the time is ripe for us to widen our ken of vision in order to encompass the entire history of German-Jewish relations. To do so, our second thoughts must repose firmly upon three cardinal facts.

- Unique and unprecedented was that systematic Holocaust as the official policy of a government in the center of a Christian Europe which deprived one-third of all Jews of their ~~divinely~~ bestowed right to live.
- Equally unique and unprecedented in all of human history is the determination to make every kind of possible amends, reparations and compensation, which was demonstrated by the great majority of Germans since 1945. No admission of guilt, no amount of money will bring back to life a single one of those countless Jewish children, murdered or burned alive. But sincere <sup>con</sup> ~~at~~ trition and true repentance can pave the way towards a reconciliation of the sons and daughters of our generation whose joint task it is to build a better world, ~~A~~ world in which no Auschwitz will ever be possible--<sup>any</sup> ~~nowhere~~ <sup>or</sup> ~~and~~ against <sup>anyone.</sup> ~~no one.~~
- Unique and unprecedented is therefore the opportunity we now have to put our memories into the service of new life and to buttress that Shalom (peace) which is the sublime vision of Judaism and Christianity alike.

If Germans and Jews should succeed in building a human bridge of understanding across the abyss of the Hitler years, this may well serve as a breakthrough <sup>out of</sup> ~~into~~ the vicious circle of hatred, war and violence which has made most of world history into an endless chain of bloodshed and butchery.

For if even Germans and Jews--of all people--are able to walk towards each other with outstretched hands, one generation after that unforgotten desecration of God's image on earth, this spirit might turn out to prove contagious for other nations as well. At any rate, it will furnish proof that peace on earth need not remain an illusion in Utopia, but could indeed become a viable reality.

<sup>Whether</sup> ~~If~~ we shall succeed in this endeavor, only God knows. But the wholehearted attempt at such an overcoming of all rancors, fears and mistrust--that attempt we owe to our faith, our children and the future of the human race.

Donnerstag, 6.6.

- 9.00 Bibelarbeit (Bibeltext s. S. ....)  
Prof. Dr. Michael Wyschogrod, New York  
Prof. Dr. Rolf Rendtorff, Heidelberg  
Stadthalle
- 9.00 Bibelarbeit (Bibeltext s. S. ...) und Nachgespräch  
Edna Brocke M.A., Moers  
Pfarrer Gerhard Bauer, Berlin  
Moderation: Richter Johann Schwarz, Krefeld  
Gemeindehaus St. Adolphus, Fischerstraße 77
- 10.30 - 13.00 Zu jung für Verantwortung  
40 Jahre nach Auschwitz  
Podiumsdiskussion mit:  
- Eberhard Fechner, Hamburg  
- Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Scheffler, Berlin  
- Simone Spangenberg, Krefeld  
- Jörn Böhme, Berlin  
- Manfred Rexin, Berlin  
- Volker Bouffier, MdL, Gießen  
Moderation: Pfarrer Ulrich Schwemer, Heppenheim  
Pfarrer D. Martin Stöhr, Arnoldshain  
Stadthalle
- 15.00 - 18.00 Wir Menschen in der Schöpfung  
Prof. Dr. Michael Wyschogrod, New York  
Moderation: Prof. Dr. Eberhard Bethge, Wachtberg-Villiprott  
Prof. Dr. Rolf Rendtorff, Heidelberg  
Stadthalle
- 16.30 - 18.00 Gebt dem Kaiser nicht, was Gott gebührt  
Jesus und die Politik  
Prof. Dr. Pinchas Lapide, Frankfurt  
Moderation: Eduard Hesse, Breitscheid  
Richter Helmut Just, Mannheim  
Gemeindehaus St. Adolphus, Fischerstraße 77
- 19.30 - 21.30 Reden von Gott heute  
- Dr. Pesach Schindler, Jerusalem  
Moderation: Dr. Dr. Harald Uhl, Bonn  
Pfarrer Ulrike Berger  
Radschlägersaal

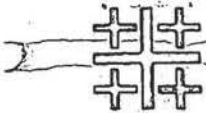
Freitag, 7.6.

- 9.00 Bibelarbeit (Bibeltext s.S. ....)  
Rabbiner Ernst Stein, Berlin  
Prof. Dr. Friedrich-W. Marquardt, Berlin  
Stadthalle
- 9.00 Bibelarbeit (Bibeltext s. S. ....) und Nachgespräch  
Rabbiner Jakob Posen, Zürich  
Pfarrer Ulrich Schwemer, Heppenheim  
Moderation: Günther Bernd Ginzel, Köln  
Gemeindehaus St. Adolphus, Fischerstr. 77
- 10.30 -13.00 Das Selbstverständnis Israels  
Dr. Tomy Segev, Jerusalem  
Moderation: Edna Brocke M.A., Moers  
Pfarrer Otto Schenk, Groß-Umstadt/Kleestadt  
(Stadthalle)
- 15.00-18.00 Nathan nach Auschwitz  
Die jüngste Vergangenheit in der Literatur  
Prof. Dr. Hans Meyer, Tübingen  
Prof. Dr. Eberhard Lämmert, Berlin  
Moderation: Prof. Dr. Eberhard Bethge, Wachtberg-Villiprott  
Rezitation: N.N.  
(Stadthalle)
- 15.00-18.00 Majdanek - Zeugen im Film - Ein Film als Zeuge  
Eberhard Fechner, Hamburg  
Günther Bernd Ginzel, Köln  
Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Scheffler, Berlin  
Vors. RichterIn Dr. Barbara Just-Dahlmann, Mannheim  
Gemeindehaus St. Adolphus, Fischerstr. 77
- (20.00 Erew Schabbat-Gottesdienst  
Synagoge



Samstag, 8.6.

- 9.00 Bibelarbeit (Bibeltext s.S. ...)  
Rabbiner Prof. Dr. Albert Friedlander, London  
Pfarrer D. Martin Stöhr, Arnoldshain  
Stadthalle
- 9.00 Bibelarbeit (Bibeltext s.S. ...) und Nachgespräch  
Dr. Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich, CH-Riehen  
Pastor Hermann Keller, Hamburg  
Moderation: Pastorin Petra Heldt, Berlin  
Gemeindehaus St. Adolphus, Fischerstr. 77
- 10.30 - 13.00 Was können wir vor der Nahostlösung für  
Israel tun?  
Rabbiner Dr. Marc Tanenbaum, New York  
Dr. Hildegard Hamm-Brücher, MdB, München  
Botschaftsattaché Shimon Stein, Bonn (angefragt)  
Bert Stoop, Amsterdam  
Hellmut Sieglerschmidt, Berlin  
Prof. Manfred Zabel, Wilnsdorf  
Moderation: Prof. Dr. Dietrich Goldschmidt, Berlin  
Pfarrer Johannes Müller, Berlin  
Stadthalle
- 15.00 - 18.00 Ein neues Verhältnis zwischen Juden und Christen -  
Konsequenzen für Theologie und Kirche  
Podiumsdiskussion mit:  
Edna Brocke M.A., Moers  
Kirchenpräsident i.R. D. Helmut Hild, Darmstadt  
Prof. Dr. Ulrich Luz, CH-Laupen  
Prof. Dr. Joachim Mehlhausen, Düsseldorf  
Synodalpräsident Dr. Helmut Reihlen, Berlin  
Prof. Dr. Ekkehard Stegemann, Basel  
Prälat Gerhard Bechtel, Mannheim  
Pastor Hermann Keller, Hamburg  
Gesprächsleitung: Pfarrer Gerhard Bauer, Berlin  
Moderation: Prof. Dr. Joachim Hoppe, Berlin  
Schuldekan Albrecht Lohrbächer, Weinheim  
Stadthalle
- 19.30 - 21.30 Heinrich Heines Reisen ins Judentum  
Rabbiner Prof. Dr. Albert Friedlander, London  
Moderation: Pfarrerin Ulrike Berger, Berlin  
Gemeindehaus St. Adolphus, Fischerstraße 77
- 19.30 - 21.30 Josef Reding liest Texte zur Zeit  
Dany Bober singt neue Lieder  
Moderation: Prof. Manfred Zabel, Wilnsdorf  
Robert-Schumann-Saal



## DEUTSCHER EVANGELISCHER KIRCHENTAG

LEITUNG  
POSTFACH 480  
6400 FULDA  
MAGDEBURGER STR. 59  
TELEFON 0681-601091-95

An die Damen und Herren,  
die beim 21. Deutschen Evangelischen  
Kirchentag Düsseldorf 1985 in  
leitender Verantwortung mitarbeiten

---

März 1985

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

dieses Rundschreiben geht an etwa 900 Personen, die auf dem kommenden Kirchentag in Düsseldorf in jeweils besonderen Aufgaben Verantwortung für das Ganze des Kirchentages wahrnehmen: als Bibelarbeiter, Prediger, Referenten, Berater und Seelsorger, in den Leitungen von Arbeitsgruppen, Werkstätten und Foren, in Projektausschüssen sowie in einer Reihe anderer vergleichbarer Funktionen. Ihnen allen danke ich sehr herzlich für Ihre Bereitschaft und für die Mühe, die Sie damit auf sich nehmen.

Wir fassen die genannten Personengruppen im Ganzen zusammen unter der Bezeichnung "Mitarbeiter". Sie erhalten dementsprechend den Mitarbeiterstatus auf dem Kirchentag. Dieses Rundschreiben soll Ihnen die mit dem Mitarbeiterstatus gegebenen Besonderheiten beschreiben und Ihnen die Modalitäten der Anmeldung erläutern. Auf den Inhalt der von Ihnen jeweils erbetenen Tätigkeiten bezieht es sich nicht.

Um Ihnen die Orientierung zu erleichtern, fassen wir die für alle Mitarbeiter erforderlichen Informationen in der Art eines Merkblattes zusammen:

### 1. ANMELDUNG

Bitte füllen Sie die in der Anlage beigefügte "Anmeldung für Mitarbeiter" in dreifacher Ausfertigung aus und schicken Sie zwei Exemplare bis 20. April 1985 zurück an:

Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag  
- Leitung -  
Magdeburger Str. 59  
Postfach 480

6400 Fulda

Für diejenigen Mitarbeiter, die den Einladungsprospekt noch nicht haben, liegt er hier bei. Bitte melden Sie sich nur auf dem Mitarbeiteranmeldeformular an.

## 2. AN- und ABREISE

Der Kirchentag findet vom 5. bis 9. Juni 1985 statt. Alle Mitarbeiter sind eingeladen, am ganzen Kirchentag teilzunehmen. Doch wissen wir bereits, daß dieses einigen nicht möglich ist. Normaler Anreiseterrn ist Mittwoch, 5. Juni, Abreiseterrn Sonntag, 9. Juni 1985. Die Unterbringung durch den Kirchentag beginnt frühestens am 5. Juni und endet spätestens am 9. Juni 1985, falls nicht ausdrücklich etwas anderes vereinbart wird. Die Angabe des An- und Abreisetages auf diesem Formular ist **v e r b i n d l i c h** wegen der von uns vorzunehmenden QUARTIERBELEGUNG.

## 3. TAGUNGSUNTERLAGEN

Bei rechtzeitiger Anmeldung werden Ihnen nach Möglichkeit, spätestens bis zum 29. Mai 1985, folgende Unterlagen zugesandt werden:

Tagungsmappe,

Mitarbeiterausweis,

Essenskarten für Mittag- und Abendverpflegung, soweit sie von Ihnen bestellt worden sind,

Quartierzuweisung,

Fahrausweis für den Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Ruhr (VRR), soweit er von Ihnen bestellt worden ist.

Wenn Sie Ende Mai 1985 unter Ihrer Heimatanschrift nicht zu erreichen sind, so bitten wir Sie, dies auf dem beiliegenden Formular zu vermerken. In diesem Fall erhalten Sie die Unterlagen nicht an eine andere Anschrift nachgesandt. Vielmehr werden sie Ihnen nach Ihrer Ankunft in Düsseldorf im Empfangsbüro für Mitarbeiter (s. Punkte 4) ausgehändigt.

## 4. EMPFANGSBÜRO FÜR MITARBEITER

Das Empfangsbüro für Mitarbeiter befindet sich im Messe-Center, 1. OG, Ladenstraße. Das Empfangsbüro für Mitarbeiter ist von Mittwoch, 5. Juni, bis Sonnabend, 8. Juni 1985, jeweils von 8.30 bis 19.00 Uhr geöffnet.

## 5. MITARBEITERAUSWEIS

Der besonders gekennzeichnete Mitarbeiterausweis berechtigt zu freiem Zutritt zu allen Veranstaltungen des Kirchentagsprogramms, soweit sie nicht, wie einige kirchenmusikalische und kulturelle Veranstaltungen, speziell eintrittspflichtig sind.

Dieser Ausweis ist während des Kirchentages stets mitzuführen und den Ordnern auf Verlangen vorzuzeigen. Im Fall des Verlustes bitten wir um Meldung im Empfangsbüro für Mitarbeiter (s. Punkt 4).

#### 6. UNTERBRINGUNG

Sie werden, wenn erforderlich, auf Kosten des Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchentages in Privatquartieren, Heimen oder Hotels untergebracht. Dabei wird nach Möglichkeit darauf Rücksicht genommen, daß Arbeitsgruppenleitungen und Projektgruppen je zusammen untergebracht werden. Ihre Quartierzuweisung erhalten Sie mit Ihren Tagungsunterlagen zugesandt (s. Punkt 3). Wer sich in Düsseldorf privat ein Quartier beschaffen kann, wird herzlich gebeten, dies zu tun und es im Anmeldeformular zu vermerken.

#### 7. VERPFLEGUNG

Das Frühstück wird im jeweiligen Quartier eingenommen. Hierfür eventuell anfallende Kosten werden direkt vom Kirchentag bezahlt.

Wir bitten Sie um Verständnis dafür, daß wir die Mittags- und Abend-Verpflegung an Mitarbeiter und Mitwirkende nicht kostenlos abgeben können. Dabei haben wir auch die Erfahrung zu berücksichtigen, daß bei vergangenen Kirchentagen zahlreiche Mitarbeiter wegen ihrer jeweils besonderen Verpflichtungen nicht dazu in der Lage waren, die vom Kirchentag für sie vorgesehenen Mahlzeiten abzuholen.

Mittagessen für Mitarbeiter gibt es von Mittwoch bis Sonnabend (5. bis 8. Juni 1985) in der Zeit von 11.30 - 14.30 Uhr gegen Vorlage der Ihnen ausgehändigten Essenskarten in der Halle 13, Sondereingang für Mitarbeiter. Die Mittagsverpflegung können Sie jeweils nur im Block bestellen, und zwar pro Person für drei Tage - Do., Fr., Sa. - für insgesamt DM 16,--.

Am Donnerstag, Freitag und Sonnabend bietet der Kirchentag jeweils ein warmes Mittagessen (Bohnen-, Kartoffel- und Gemüseintopf vegetarisch) an.

Am Sonntag stellt der Kirchentag keine Mittagsverpflegung bereit. Allerdings wird es am Ort der Schlußveranstaltung Möglichkeiten geben, sich mit einem kleinen Imbiß (Stadion-Gastronomie) zu versorgen.

Auf dem Kirchentag wird es kein Plastikbesteck geben. Bringen Sie deshalb bitte Ihren eigenen Löffel mit.

Für Mitarbeiter besteht die Möglichkeit, Abendverpflegung zu bestellen. Auch hier ist eine Bestellung nur im Block möglich, und zwar pro Person für drei Tage - Do., Fr., Sa. - für insgesamt DM 16,--.

Die Abendverpflegung (Fleischgerichte mit Salaten) kann bereits beim Mittagessen abgeholt werden, spätestens jedoch bis 20.00 Uhr.

## 8. REISEKOSTEN

Die Kosten der Hin- und Rückfahrt zwischen dem Heimatort und Düsseldorf werden vom 21. Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchentag erstattet, falls sie nicht anderweitig abgerechnet werden können. Dabei gelten folgende Regelungen:

- a) Bei Bahnreisen werden die Fahrtkosten 2. Klasse für jede Art von Zügen erstattet. Nach Möglichkeit bitten wir, die Rechnung eines Reisebüros über die Fahrtkosten vorzulegen. Sollte dies nicht möglich sein, müssen die Fahrkarten und Zuschläge bei der Abrechnungsstelle vorgelegt werden.

Bitte beachten Sie dabei besonders: Für Einzelreisende, die mit Regelzügen anreisen, bietet die Bundesbahn bei Vorlage des Mitarbeiter/Teilnehmerausweises stark ermäßigte Sonderrückfahrkarten (50 % Fahrpreisermäßigung) an. Sie gelten vom 4. bis 10. Juni 1985. Wir bitten Sie dringend, diese kostensparenden Fahrkarten zu benutzen.

Sollten Sie Rückfragen bzw. weitere Informationen benötigen, wenden Sie sich bitte an die Fahrkartenausgaben, DER-Reisebüros und DB-Verkaufsstellen, die auch den Verkauf der Sonderrückfahrkarten abwickeln.

Bei Benutzung von TEE- und IC-Zügen sind die tarifmäßigen Zuschläge zu zahlen.

- b) Flugkosten werden nur dann erstattet, wenn dies vorher vereinbart wurde.
- c) PKW-Reisende erhalten für die Hin- und Rückreise und für die in Düsseldorf zurückgelegten dienstlichen Fahrten ein Kilometergeld von DM 0,31. Bei Mitnahme eines Mitarbeiters erhöht sich das Kilometergeld auf DM 0,34, bei Mitnahme von zwei und mehr Mitarbeitern auf maximal DM 0,40.

## 9. FAHRAUSWEIS FÜR VRR

Für alle mit Ihrem Einsatz erforderlichen Fahrten können Sie den Fahrausweis des Verkehrsverbundes Rhein-Ruhr (VRR) anfordern. Dieser Fahrausweis berechtigt zu beliebig vielen Fahrten vom 5. bis 9. Juni 1985.

## 10. NEBENKOSTEN

In Erfüllung des Kirchentagsauftrages entstehende und nicht vermeidbare Nebenkosten werden nur gegen Vorlage der entsprechenden Belege, aus denen die Notwendigkeit der Ausgabe hervorgehen muß, erstattet. Dabei bitten wir um Verständnis dafür, daß die Benutzung von Taxen aus Haushalts- und Kostengründen vermieden werden sollte. In dringlichen Fällen kann im Maß des Möglichen stattdessen die Fahrbereitschaft des Kirchentages in Anspruch genommen werden.

### 11. ABRECHNUNGSSTELLE FÜR MITARBEITER

Die Abrechnungsstelle für Mitarbeiter befindet sich im Messe-Center, 1. OG, Ladenstraße (s. Punkt 4). Die Abrechnungsstelle ist von Mittwoch, 5. Juni, bis Sonnabend, 8. Juni 1985, jeweils von 8.30 bis 19.00 Uhr geöffnet.

Hier werden die Reise- und Nebenkosten (s. Punkt 8 und 10) erstattet. Die Beträge für die von Ihnen bestellten Essenskarten (Mittag- und Abendessen) sowie der ermäßigte Tagungsbeitrag und die Übernachtung von Ehepartnern (s. Punkt 13) sind dort zu bezahlen.

### 12. PARKPLÄTZE

Es gibt genügend PKW-Parkplätze am Messegelände. Sie können auf dem beigefügten Mitarbeiteranmeldebogen einen Parkschein für das Messegelände anfordern; bitte vermerken Sie dazu Ihr amtliches PKW-Kennzeichen.

### 13. EHEPARTNER

Für Ehepartner von Mitarbeitern, die am Kirchentag teilnehmen wollen, ohne selbst Mitarbeiter zu sein, wird ein ermäßigter Tagungsbeitrag von DM 55,-- in der Abrechnungsstelle für Mitarbeiter (s. Punkt 11) erhoben. Sie erhalten Ihren Teilnehmerausweis und die sonstigen Unterlagen zugesandt (s. Punkt 3), vorausgesetzt, daß sie auf dem anliegenden Anmeldeformular für Mitarbeiter mit angemeldet werden.

Für die Unterbringung der Ehepartner stehen den Mitarbeitern folgende Möglichkeiten zur Wahl:

- a) Wird gemeinsame Unterbringung in dem für den betreffenden Mitarbeiter vorgesehenen Hotel (Doppelzimmer) gewünscht, so wird für Hotelunterbringung und Frühstück des Ehepartners ein Betrag von DM 50,-- pro Nacht als Ablösepauschale für die dem Kirchentag entstehenden Kosten erhoben. Dieser Betrag wird in der Abrechnungsstelle für Mitarbeiter (s. Punkt 11) verrechnet.
- b) Wird für den Ehepartner eine gemeinsame Unterbringung in dem für den betreffenden Mitarbeiter vorgesehenen Heim- oder Privatquartier gewünscht, entfällt die Ablösepauschale. Eine entsprechende Quartierzuzuweisung wird zusammen mit Ihren Tagungsunterlagen zugesandt (s. Punkt 3).
- c) Wird für den Ehepartner ein einzelnes kostenloses Privatquartier gewünscht, so wird eine entsprechende Quartierzuzuweisung zusammen mit Ihren Tagungsunterlagen zugesandt (s. Punkt 3).

- d) Wünscht der Ehepartner ein Hotel- oder Pensionsquartier nach eigener Wahl und auf eigene Kosten, so muß die Bestellung an den

Verkehrsverein  
Postfach 82 03

4000 Düsseldorf 1

gerichtet sein.

Ehepartner können Karten für das Mittag- und Abendessen für drei Tage (Donnerstag bis Sonnabend) mit der Anmeldung bestellen. Die Kosten betragen für das Mittag- und Abendessen je DM 16,-- und werden in der Abrechnungsstelle für Mitarbeiter (s. Punkt 11) verrechnet.

#### 14. POSTANSCHRIFT

Für die Zeit des Kirchentages können Sie sich Ihre Post senden lassen unter der Anschrift:

N.N.  
Postlagernd  
Postamt Düsseldorf 21  
- Messepostamt -

4000 Düsseldorf 30

#### 15. ANLAGEN

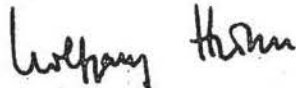
Diesem Rundschreiben liegt das Anmeldeformular für Mitarbeiter in dreifacher Ausfertigung (das weiße Exemplar ist für Ihre Unterlagen bestimmt) und ein Plan des Messegeländes bei.

Zum Schluß bedanke ich mich dafür, daß Sie sich die Mühe genommen haben, dieses ausführliche "Merkblatt" zu lesen, und bitte Sie, sich im gemeinsamen Interesse an die vorgesehenen Regelungen zu halten.

Das schließt Abweichungen im Rahmen der Ihnen möglichen Großzügigkeit natürlich nicht aus. Wenn Sie auf die Ihnen zustehende Kostenerstattung in dem hier mitgeteilten Rahmen ganz oder teilweise verzichten können, so leisten Sie damit auch einen materiellen Beitrag zur Durchführung dieses Kirchentages, für den wir dankbar sind. Vor allem aber danke ich Ihnen allen für die Opfer an Zeit und Kraft, die Sie für das Gelingen des Düsseldorfer Kirchentages gebracht haben und noch bringen werden, eines Kirchentages, dem viele Menschen mit großen Erwartungen entgensehen.

Mit herzlichen Grüßen bin ich

Ihr



Professor Dr. Wolfgang Huber  
Präsident des Deutschen  
Evangelischen Kirchentages

Anlagen

Anmeldung für MitarbeiterZutreffendes bitte  
ankreuzen!

Name, Vorname: Tanenbaum, Marc

Beruf und Titel: \_\_\_\_\_

Anschrift: \_\_\_\_\_

Telefon privat: \_\_\_\_\_

Telefon dienstl.: \_\_\_\_\_

Ich bitte um Übersendung der Tagungsunterlagen bis zum 29. Mai 1985 an die oben  
genannte Anschrift:

Ich hole die Tagungsunterlagen in Düsseldorf im Empfangsbüro für Mitarbeiter ab:

Ich habe meine Mitarbeit zugesagt für: Juden/Christen - Was können wir vor  
der Nahostlösung ..... Sa.

Ich treffe in Düsseldorf ein am: \_\_\_\_\_ um ca. \_\_\_\_\_ Uhr

mit Bahn

mit PKW (pol. Kz.) \_\_\_\_\_

und benötige einen Parkschein

mit Flugzeug

Ich reise von Düsseldorf ab am: \_\_\_\_\_

Ich bestelle für die oben angegebene Zeit verbindlich ein Quartier:

Ich fordere hiermit den Fahrausweis des Verkehrsverbundes Rhein-Ruhr (VRR) an:

Ich melde meine(n) Frau/Mann (Vorname) \_\_\_\_\_ zum ermäßigten Tagungspreis von   
DM 55,-- an. Der Tagungspreis beinhaltet die Tagungsunterlagen einschließlich Fahr-  
ausweis für die öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel des Verkehrsverbundes Rhein-Ruhr (VRR).

Die Unterbringung erbitte ich wie folgt:

- a) Unterbringung mit mir gemeinsam - Anreise am: \_\_\_\_\_  
- Abreise am: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Einzelunterbringung (kostenloses Privat- - Anreise am: \_\_\_\_\_  
quartier) nur vom 5. bis 9. Juni 1985 - Abreise am: \_\_\_\_\_

Ich habe mir selbst Quartier beschafft bei:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**W I C H T I G !** Anschrift: \_\_\_\_\_

Telefon: \_\_\_\_\_

Ich bestelle für mich und für meine(n) Frau/Mann

\_\_\_ x Mittagessen für Donnerstag bis Sonnabend (3 Tage) zum Preis von DM 16,--

\_\_\_ x Abendessen für Donnerstag bis Sonnabend (3 Tage) zum Preis von DM 16,--

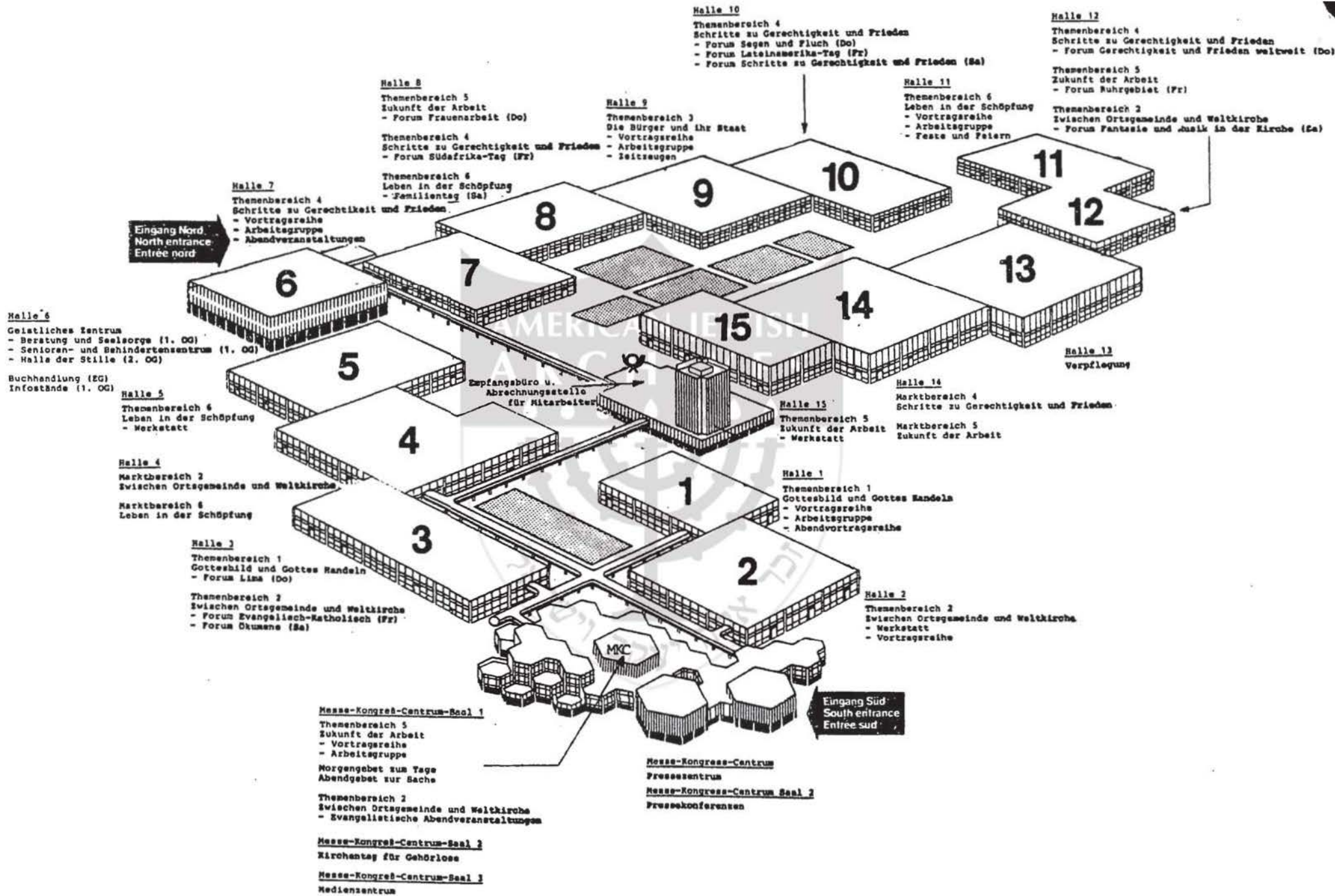
Bemerkungen: \_\_\_\_\_

Ort und Datum

Unterschrift

Bitte lesbar ausfüllen und in zweifacher Ausfertigung (rosa und grün) innerhalb 8 Tagen  
an den Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchentag, Postfach 480, 6400 Fulda, senden.







MAR 18 1985

DEUTSCHER EVANGELISCHER KIRCHENTAG  
Arbeitsgemeinschaft Juden und Christen

Anschrift:  
D. Martin Stöhr  
Evangelische Akademie  
Arnoldshain  
D - 6384 Schmitten 1  
Telefon 06084-514

March 12, 1985

*on tape  
F-June 8/85*

Dear Marc,

enclosed you find the program of our working group for the Kirchentag in June. As Jim assured me on the phone, you will attend the Kirchentag and I want to thank you very heartily for keeping your promise (in contrast to the delegation) and for your willingness to participate in the Kirchentag.

With the panel discussion for Saturday morning we intend to highlight the responsibility of "the nations" for Israel. We are also interested in the economic aspects (like European Community, Common Market and other challenges) and invited therefore a journalist (Mr. Stoop from the Netherlands) who - we are told - is an expert on the matter. Mrs. Hamm-Brücher from the liberal party (F.D.P.) is a real friend of Israel yet she belongs to a progressive but small wing in her party. Ambassador Ben-Ari will not participate (as well as no other official representative of Israel) because of Shabbat. Well. Sieglerschmidt is a member of the social democratic party (SPD) yet he belongs to the more conservative wing in his party.

Mr. Zabel is a member of our working group, active on the political level of exchange (mainly students) with Israel. Personally I have some difficulties in evaluating his work ...

Will you let us know, when you arrive in Düsseldorf? I would be delighted to come and fetch you, if my schedule permits it. Please let us also know if you need our help in arranging accommodation for you.

Pessach is coming nearer and I remember with great joy and pleasure last year's Seder at your home. I really felt so good! Thank you again. Please give my regards to Georgette and also to Zach.

Waiting to hear from you soon,

shalom and le'hitraot,

*אני  
אני*

Vorstand:

Edna Brocke M.A., Prof. Dr. Dietrich Goldschmidt, Pfarrer Otto Schenk,  
Akademiedirektor D. Martin Stöhr

Mittwoch, 5.6.85

Donnerstag, 6.6.85		Freitag, 7.6.85		Samstag, 8.6.85		
Bibelarbeit Stadthalle Gen. 8,20-9,17 Wyschogrod/ Rendtorff Moderation: Blank-Lubarsch	Bibelarbeit Gemeindehaus Gen. 8,20-9,17 Brocke / Bauer Moderation: Schwarz	Bibelarbeit Stadthalle Lev. 25,1-13 Stein/Marquardt Moderation: Just-Dahlmann	Bibelarbeit Gemeindehaus Lev. 25,1-13 Posen/Schwemer Moderation: Ginzel	Bibelarbeit Stadthalle Kol. 1,15-23 Friedlander/ Stöhr Moderation: Lohrbächer	Bibelarbeit Gemeindehaus Kol. 1,15-23 Ehrlich/ Keller Moderation: Heldt	9.00   10.30
Grundkurs I Zu jung für Ver- antwortung? 40 Jahre nach Auschwitz Fechner/ Scheffler/ Spangenberg / Böhme /Rexin / Bouffier Moderation: Schwemer/Stöhr		Grundkurs II Das Selbstver- ständnis Israels Tomy Segev, Jerusalem Moderation: Brocke/Schenk		Grundkurs III Was können wir vor der Nahost- lösung für Israel tun? Tanenbaum/ Hamm-Brücher/ Stoop/ Botschafter Ben-Ari/ Siegler Schmidt/ Zabel Moderation: Goldschmidt/ Müller		10.30   13.30
<b>Mittags - Pause</b>						
Wir Menschen in der Schöpfung Wyschogrod, New York Moderation: Bethge/ Rendtorff Stadthalle	Gebt dem Kaiser nicht, was Gott gebührt. Jesus und die Politik Lapide Moderation: Hesse/H. Just	Nathan nach Auschwitz. Die jüngste Vergangenheit in der Literatur Mayer/Lämmert Gesprächsleitung: Rein Moderation: Bethge Rezitatorin: NN Stadthalle	Majdanek - Zeugen im Film- Ein Film als Zeuge Fechner/ Ginzel/ Scheffler/ Just-Dahlmann Gemeindehaus	Ein neues Verhältnis zwischen Juden und Christen - Konse- quenzen für Theologie und Kirche Brocke Hild -Stadthalle- Luz Mehlhausen Reihlen Stegemann Sick Nordholt Gesprächsleitung: Bauer Moderation: Hoppe/Lohrbächer		15.00   18.00  →

16.00 Uhr

Gedenk-  
Gottesdienst

18.00 Uhr  
Eröffnungs-  
Gottesdienste

Abend - Pause

<p>19.00 Uhr Eröffnung des Kirchentages</p> <p>20.00 Uhr Abend der Be - gegnung</p>	<p>Reden von Gotte heute Schindler, Jerusalem (Ratschlägersaal)</p> <p>Moderation: Uhl/Berger</p>	<p>20.00 Uhr Erew Schabbat- Gottesdienst</p>	<p>Heinrich Heines Reisen ins Judentum Friedlander, London (Gemeindehaus)</p> <p>Moderation: Berger</p>	<p>Josef Reding- Gedichte zur Zeit und Dany Bober- Neue Lieder Ein Abend im Ratschlägersaal</p> <p>Moderation: Zabel</p>	<p>19.30</p> <p>21.30</p>
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MTG FILE -  
AR...: HAIN = 2/6  
BROCKE

April 18, 1985

Mrs. Edna Brocke  
Ludwig Richter Ring 98  
D-4120 Moers 1  
Federal Republic of Germany

My dear Edna,

Thank you very much for your recent warm and thoughtful letter.

This is to record my commitment to take part in the Kirchentag session on June 8th.

As we get closer to that event I will want to get more specifics about the subject matter that you want me to present.

Frankly I am a little troubled that the Israeli representative will not attend. It places me in a somewhat embarrassing position but I assume we can work out that interpretation of why my presence was important.

We had another wonderful Pesach, this time with several Christian and black friends joining us. It gave another character to the whole meaning of freedom and liberation. But we missed you and Michael and wished you could have joined us.

Georgette joins me in sending you her best regards. She is presently deeply involved in writing what we hope will be a major book on criminal justice issues.

With warmest good wishes, I am,

Cordially, as ever,

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
Director  
International Relations Department

MHT/BJB  
Enclosures

# 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

ARCHIVES  
April 21, 1985



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

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"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".

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April 26, 1985

THE BITBURG TRAGEDY - A STUDY  
IN GERMANY'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE HOLOCAUST

COMMENTARY

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

-----

The Bitburg cemetery visit of ~~Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan~~ has become in many ways an ~~international~~ <sup>a revealing</sup> ~~Rorschach~~ <sup>people's</sup> test of contemporary attitudes toward ~~the Nazi holocaust~~ <sup>specifically</sup> Nazism and its victims.

Clearly, American Jews have demonstrated during these tumultuous days their unified outrage over ~~the moral obscenity~~ of an American President having been trapped politically into honoring the memories of the Nazi SS butchers. American Jewry has been joined by the U.S. Congress, a number of Christians leaders -- among them Dr. Billy Graham, the National Council of Churches and Catholic spokesmen -- in condemning this tragic event. Numerous ethnic and racial groups have equally expressed their horror over honoring these "barbarous mass murderers and criminals against our common humanity."

Unknown yet to most Americans, <sup>Contrary</sup> almost the ~~obverse~~ <sup>the</sup> reaction has taken place in Germany. Last week, West German cabinet and the Bundestag voted overwhelmingly to support Chancellor Kohl's visit to Bitburg. Quick magazine, the leading German picture-weekly, ran a story (under a picture of President Reagan <sup>Shaking drinks with friends</sup> and ~~the influential Rabbi Tanenbaum!!~~) saying that the powerful "Jewish lobby in America" <sup>with its money and control of the media</sup> have embarrassed Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan. <sup>As if Chancellor Kohl had nothing to do with it.</sup> Despite the growth of democracy in Germany -- which we welcome and support -- many Germans <sup>clearly</sup> still have not faced the meaning of the Nazi holocaust and the difference between a war and the crime of genocide.

The Bitburg tragedy demonstrates how great remains the task of educating <sup>their people</sup> ~~Germans~~ not about their collective guilt, but about their collective responsibility. <sup>German leaders for</sup>

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

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Western Europe

Forty years after World War II

AMERICAN JEWISH

Speech by Dr Alois Mertes,

ARCHIVES  
Minister of State in the Foreign Office  
of the Federal Republic of Germany

before the American Jewish Committee

on 2 May 1985



Mr President,

distinguished officers and leaders of the American Jewish Committee,  
ladies and gentlemen,

allow me first of all to thank you for having invited me, as a German and European, to speak at the 1985 meeting of the American Jewish Committee on the subject "Western Europe forty years after World War II". I am greatly honoured by your kind invitation and ~~deeply moved~~ by this important subject, ~~since~~ It provides me with an opportunity to recall the consequences we Germans in the free part of our nation and our neighbours in the free part of Europe have drawn from experiences and responsibilities prior to the 8th of May, 1945.

I take pleasure in accepting your invitation for two reasons. Firstly, because you are a highly regarded organization in the United States, a country with which the Federal Republic of Germany is linked in close friendship and within our time-tested security pact, the Atlantic Alliance of free peoples. Secondly, because you are a Jewish-American community of great merit which has been fostering mutual acquaintance and understanding between young Jewish Americans and young Germans for years now.

On behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, I should like to thank you sincerely, Mr Friedman, today for your unique contribution to the German-Jewish dialogue and to the strengthening of our German-American community of values and our common destiny. I am doing so as a German who was 11 years old in 1933, 23 years old in 1945 and who is now 63 years old and shares with the overwhelming majority of Germans in East and West the profound conviction that after the crimes committed by Germans and in Germany's name during the dictatorship of Hitler and his underlings, German patriotism, ~~which is morally indispensable~~, can no longer be separated from loyalty to human rights and democracy, which the American-Jewish



Committee has held as its objective since 1906. This is the message we wish to transmit to our children and grandchildren.

When you invited me, neither you nor I ever dreamt that a cemetery near the centre of my electoral district would become the subject of strong emotions and lively discussions in the United States and in Europe. I can and will not remain silent on the historical and moral background of these emotions, discussions and misunderstandings. Let me begin with two facts which are not sufficiently known.

In the Bitburg electoral district which I have the honour to represent in the German Bundestag, only a small minority of 17.4% voted for Hitler in the last free national elections before Hitler seized power, held on 6 November 1932, because they saw him as the only alternative to unemployment. The Communist Party, which sought to imitate the Soviet model, received 5.7%; and the democratic parties received ... of the votes. If voters in all electoral districts at the time had cast their ballots this way, the Nazis would never have come to power. In the most recent elections to the Bundestag, <sup>on March 5, 1983</sup> the Communists (DKP), the National <sup>ist</sup> Socialists (NPD) and the Larouche Party (EAP) received 0.1% of the votes each; the Greens, the pacifist anti-Reagan party, received only 3.8%, whereas the three traditional democratic parties (CDU, SPD and FDP) received 95.9%, of which the CDU alone under Chancellor Kohl received 65.4%. I am therefore proud of my electoral district and of my native Eifel region because the overwhelming majority of the population is democratic, patriotic and pro-western. They maintain excellent relations with the many American soldiers stationed at the two US Air Force bases there.

It is indeed a gesture of hope and encouragement on your part, forty years exactly since the Nazi genocide of European Jewry, that you have given a German politician an opportunity to review Western Europe's progress and geopolitical problems. Germans were responsible for the holocaust, thus besmirching the name of the German people. It is precisely for this reason, and also to preserve our own credibility, that we Germans will never forget the most infamous moment of German history. Hitler ~~and his underlings~~

misused our own people, in particular the loyalty of German soldiers towards their country. Officers of the Wehrmacht such as Richard von Weizsäcker, Helmut Schmidt, Franz Josef Strauss and Walter Scheel fought together with the vast majority of Germans, including myself, in the belief that they were fighting for their country and not for its ruthless leadership. This is also true of the German soldiers who became Austrians again after 1945, such as Kurt Waldheim, a major in the Wehrmacht, and later Secretary General of the United Nations. Many German soldiers, especially those on the Western front, felt a growing conflict of loyalties in the last years of the war between patriotic duty and Christian ethics, a conflict which was expressed tragically in the revolt of 20 July 1944. Such a conflict does not occur for today's German soldier. Together with his American, British and French counterparts, he is serving an alliance defending our countries as well as individual human dignity and personal freedom. Life in a totalitarian dictatorship which is hardly conceivable in a democracy, total war, the almost complete control over information and the ubiquitous fear of denunciation which my generation experienced caused us in 1945 to swear, never again to allow dictatorship on German soil and never again to allow a war to start <sup>from</sup> on German soil. These are the words of Kurt Schumacher, the first chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, who himself spent twelve years in concentration camps. Based on the solidarity of our former enemies in the war, we have been able to realize both parts of this oath in the free part of Germany. Here in New York, I would like to express on behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany our appreciation for the far-sightedness and steadfastness of all US presidents since 1945 in all questions pertaining to Germany as a whole, to Berlin and in particular to the security of West Germany and Berlin. <sup>Germany</sup> We are not prepared to give in to pseudo-ethics of peace which would place that power which twice tried to strangle Berlin's freedom on the same level with the Western power which twice saved Berlin's freedom and which has been a credible guarantor of peace in Europe and of our freedom for forty years now.

For all of us, 1933 is the year in which the rule of law and democracy came to an end in Germany for twelve years. 1938 is the year in which Great Britain and France with their policy of appeasement actually helped Hitler's

\* I also do this as a former German soldier who came into American captivity 4 years ago (on this day) and only then escaped Soviet captivity and could already return home 4 months later.

policy of expansion and in which the persecution of German Jews reached an initial dreadful climax three years before the Wannsee Conference which marked the beginning of the systematic annihilation of the Jews. 1939 is for us the year in which Germany, encouraged by the Soviet Union, invaded Poland, 1941 the year of German aggression against the Soviet Union, 1943 the year of Stalingrad, 1944 the year of the second front and the defeat of German resistance to Hitler, and 1945 meant the end of a bloody war and an inhuman dictatorship, the freeing of the victims of Nazi persecution and genocide, the military defeat of the German Reich, the desperate suffering of millions of German prisoners and expellees, but, above all, the chance for a new and democratic start.

The subject you have given me should serve to enable us to see the dangers threatening Europe today, and therefore the United States and Canada as well, and indeed international peace, and in particular to see the opportunities at our disposal to preserve peace from any risk of war and, what is more, to foster a peace which endeavours to alleviate injustice and eliminate oppression and persecution. For peace is not only a state of non-war; it is the work of righteousness, to quote the prophet Isaiah.

Our experience during the 12 years of Nazi dictatorship and that during the subsequent forty years belong together. It has moulded the judgments of my generation up to the present day. Over the last forty years, the western part of Germany <sup>was able</sup> ~~has had the opportunity~~ to reconstruct a politically and economically viable democracy, based on the rule of law, whereas the eastern part of Germany and our eastern neighbours have been prevented by force from doing so. It is <sup>now</sup> only possible to talk in an adequate manner about the 8th of May 1945, ~~about the development of Western Europe and about the German question~~, if one is aware of the origins and course of the 12 years of Hitler's rule, and of the consequences which the German people and their former Western enemies in the war have drawn since then from their experience. The 8th of May 1945 for us Germans meant more than the end of a totalitarian regime which brought suffering, death and destruction to every

corner of Europe, and which dishonoured Germany's name by planned genocide, and more than the beginning of Germany's and Eastern Europe's subjection to another totalitarian system.

For my generation, the 8th of May in retrospect was above all the beginning of an historic opportunity which we have taken advantage of for forty years: to design a future of freedom and justice, reconciliation and peace. Human rights and the renunciation of force were henceforth to determine German policies.

They were years of democratic stability, years of reconciliation with our neighbours with whom we in the West, starting in 1950, found a road for close institutional unification, and years of identification of our security interests with those of the peoples of the Atlantic Alliance. They were also years in which Germany's good name was restored by its resolute will to make amends to the survivors of Nazi terror, by our solidarity with Israel's right to exist within secure borders, by its will for genuine détente and balanced disarmament, by successfully defending itself against anti-democratic temptations from within and totalitarian pressure from without, and by its development assistance to the Third World which today is greater and more effective than that of all the Warsaw Pact countries. On the 8th May, 1985, Germans of my generation will commemorate the fortieth anniversary of peace and democracy, reconciliation and reconstruction with gratitude. We want our grandchildren and their grandchildren to accept gladly being part of the German nation into which we were born and to which we shall remain faithful in good times and in bad.

We do not want to forget the villainy of the Nazi dictatorship. This is especially true of the genocide of the Jews which was obviously beyond the rationale of war and rather constituted in itself an exclusively criminal proclivity for annihilation. This genocide cannot be compared with any other event between 1942 and 1945. And this I state as a former German soldier who <sup>served his country</sup> ~~did his duty~~ in good faith at the time and who rejects any collective accusations against Germany since they would correspond neither to historical reality nor to Biblical ethics. But we Germans must also recall all the

great things our people have given humanity. US Ambassador Arthur Burns, himself from the American Jewish community and a particularly credible and wise representative of the United States, who is now leaving Bonn, recently appealed to German teachers, politicians and churches to do more in propagating this aspect of political education. He has encouraged us Germans to take more pride in our country and its history. In addition to our tragic mistakes, Ambassador Burns also pointed to the great achievements of our nation. I find it imperative at this point to recall with national gratitude, the inestimable contribution made to German culture by Jewish <sup>also</sup> ingeniousness.

The German people, where it was free to chose after 1945, decided for Western democracy because there can now no longer be anything of national interest to Germany which is separable from justice and freedom. This is the decisive lesson which history has taught us once and for all. We have therefore committed ourselves to these foundations of the West once and for all: Not only the ethics of Christianity, but also the basic values of Western democracy are anchored in Biblical anthropology which views every human being as having been created in God's own image and likeness, values to which the Jews, despite defamation and persecution have remained faithful for millenia. The decision to stand up for the moral principles of the West implies the will, indeed the moral duty to persist internationally in claiming individual human rights and national self-determination for our whole nation. This will demand political steadfastness and historical perseverance on the part of the Federal Republic of Germany and of its major allies. Hitler's 1939 "recipe", in all its possible variants, including the threat and use of force, and collusion with Russia to the disadvantage of Poland and the West, is forever banned from German foreign policy.

After these preliminary remarks which I find imperative, let me turn to the situation of Europe forty years since the war. When the armed forces of Germany surrendered unconditionally in 1945, large expanses of Europe, and especially all of Germany, lay in physical and moral ruins. The victorious Western allies, in particular the United States, believed in the possibility of creating a worldwide order for peace on the basis of the UN Charter. But it was soon to be seen that the Soviet Union, as today, both in theory and in

practice, interpreted almost all the principles of post-war policies which it had agreed to with the Western powers in a manner which remains incompatible with Western faith in freedom and democracy, self-determination and independence, peace, security and disarmament. The Soviet Union misused its military victory over Germany in order to create by force a buffer zone in Eastern Europe and its occupation zone in Germany from 1945 to 1948 which led to the division of Europe and Germany still known as the open European question and the open German question. At the opening of the Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe in Stockholm on 18 January 1984, Secretary of State George Shultz said:

"Since 1945, Western Europe has seen a great reconciliation of old enemies and a great resurgence of freedom, prosperity, unity, and security. It is a crowning achievement of the European tradition in which the United States has been proud to play a part. But throughout the same period, an artificial barrier has cruelly divided this continent - and indeed heartlessly divided one of its great nations.

This barrier was not placed there by the west. It is not maintained by the west. It is not the west that prevents its citizens' free movement, or cuts them off from competing ideas.

Let me be very clear: The United States does not recognize the legitimacy of the artificially imposed division of Europe. This division is the essence of Europe's security and human rights problem, and we all know it."

On the same subject, President Reagan stated on 5 February 1985:

"There is one boundary which Yalta symbolizes that can never be made legitimate, and that is the dividing line between freedom and repression. I do not hesitate to say that we wish to undo this boundary. In so doing, we seek no military advantage for ourselves or for the Western alliance. We do

not deny any nation's legitimate interest in security. But protecting the security of one nation by robbing another of its national independence, and national traditions, is not legitimate. In the long run, it is not even secure.

This is the best possible description of the reality and the consequences of the division of Europe. The determination of the United States to defend its rights, responsibilities and interests in all the East-West crises since 1945 against all pressure, threats and blackmail is, in addition to its military presence in Western Europe, the most visible political incarnation of the credibility of the American position in Europe. The Western powers are defending not only the freedom of West Berlin, they are also defending the claim of the German people and of the Eastern Europeans to a just peace based on individual and national human rights.

The Soviet policy of subjection and expansion from 1945 to 1948 culminated in the first Berlin crisis which resulted, not only in West Germany but also in all the major countries of Western Europe, in the recognition of a fact still valid today:

The security of Europe and of the United States are inseparably linked since the political objectives and the military potential of the Soviet threat are directed against Europe and America. At the Williamsburg economic summit in 1983, Japan also subscribed to the common aims of European and American security. We Europeans can only survive as free countries if we form a close political and military community with the United States, whose power and credible solidarity is founded on shared values on which our common interests are based. I would ask you to take the following into consideration in all questions related to Germany and Europe. The risk of war in Europe is almost zero. But, as Chancellor Kohl stated, the Soviet Union wants a political victory in Europe in a military peace. Its will for expansion westward, as former Chancellor Schmidt put it recently, is unbroken. It does not wish to conquer the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany, but rather win over the minds and hearts of the German people, especially of young Germans. Trying to ~~force~~<sup>drive</sup> a wedge between Germans and Americans is the logical consequence of Soviet foreign policy, which is characterized by exceptional perseverance and which no doubt will continue for quite some time. Any

division between the American people and Germany or between the German people and America serves, as a result, only Moscow's interests. I cannot conceive of how such a division could possibly benefit the United States, Europe or the Jewish community. On the contrary, such a division places us all in danger. I am afraid that the Bitburg controversy has ipso facto only raised Moscow's chances of influencing young people psychologically. I regard it as our duty, in public discussion on the past, not to forget the needs of the present and future in the vital interests of Europe and America. Any <sup>selective</sup> relativizing or partial attitudes <sup>turning complete historical or political views</sup> are simply irresponsible if we are really convinced that Europe and America need one another.

If today we want to describe the present conditions and prospects for European policy, we first have to refer, as I did, to the basic facts which emerged from the Second World War. Their causes are clearly Hitler's crimes and expansionism, and then Stalin's resolve to create an area west of Russia in which European populations must live under regimes which do not respect basic human rights and practise a relationship with the Soviet Union which cannot be compared with that between the West European countries and the United States of America.

All nations of Europe have clearly fallen back to the level of small or medium-sized countries whereas the Soviet Union was able to extend its sphere of influence and power right to the centre of Europe and rose to acquire a par rating with the United States as the second world power. At the same time Germany and Europe were divided into an area of democracy and self-determination and into one of totalitarianism and foreign domination. The splitting of Europe into two halves has in the meantime become a major factor determining European and above all German policy. Relations between the two superpowers, which since the Second World War have gone through different phases, have a decisive bearing on the policies pursued by the Europeans.



But important developments have also taken place in Europe itself. We have seen the establishment and growth of the European Community and the relative increase in the importance of the Europeans within the Atlantic Alliance, whilst on the other hand there have been very slow yet noticeable evolutionary trends within the Warsaw Pact.

When I speak of "Europe" I mean, as I have intimated in my remarks so far, the whole of Europe. We include the nations of Eastern Europe. Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary are, according to their own self-perception, too, nations of Central Europe; the other members of the Warsaw Pact are a part of Europe. (The Soviet Union, too, is of course partly a European country, but it is first and foremost a global or superpower. Russia, by the way, has never belonged to that part of Europe, which was shaped by western Christianity and Judaism, by the era of enlightenment and democracy.

In this Europe the two most heavily armed military alliances in the world stand face to face. Germany lies on the border between the totalitarian East and the democratic West: The dividing line passes right through Germany. That is why the effect of the division of Europe is more intensely felt in my country than anywhere else. In Germany, we have become especially aware of the absolute necessity to maintain peace against any risk of war, whether conventional or nuclear; and to shape a peace of freedom and justice. The Federal Republic of Germany is firmly integrated into the European Community and the Western Alliance of free and democratic countries. This integration is based on a deep conviction and not on opportunist considerations. Our political priority has been and remains: freedom before unity. That is why our policy in the short term must aim at mitigating the effects of the division of the country and of Europe and, in the long term, at reaching a state of peace in Europe in which the German people will recover its unity through free self-determination. We are fostering with the United States and other allies a peaceful, evolutionary process as a result of which all Europeans can live freely and in peace. Thus, we keep the national interests of the Germans strictly in harmony with the interests of the West in general and of

Europe in particular in seeking a favourable development of relations with the East. We have linked our destiny to that of our neighbours, ~~and, therefore, our policy is a policy for peace in Europe.~~

Incorporated in this European policy ~~for peace~~ <sup>that towards</sup> is ~~the policy towards~~ the GDR, the German Democratic Republic, pursued by the Federal Republic of Germany in full agreement with our Allies. We follow this policy out of our responsibility for genuine and lasting peace in Europe. It is designed to secure fruitful relations between the two states in Germany as well as the greatest possible exchange of information and personal contacts between Germans on both sides of the border.

When we speak of the two most heavily armed military alliances standing face to face in Europe, however, we must not forget that Europe has lived in peace since the end of World War II, ~~and this is one of the great paradoxes of our age.~~ In that period military force in Europe has been used only within the Soviet sphere of influence - East Berlin in 1953, Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968. We have to bear this basic fact in mind when we speak of the relationship between the two superpowers and its impact on Europe. The long phase of stability in Europe would have been hard to imagine without the war-preventing influence of a balance of military power. For Western Europe the nuclear protection which only the United States can provide will remain essential for maintaining this balance in the foreseeable future.

Developments in relations between the two superpowers affect the Europeans in two ways. One is that they bring the United States and the Soviet Union into direct contact with their respective European allies, the other that they influence the prospects of the Europeans as a whole in the process of shaping the East-West relationship.

As to the first, we see decisive differences between Soviet and American policy. The Soviet Union has traditionally seized every opportunity to exert influence on the West European members of NATO so as to counteract the joint plans of the Alliance and split it. This is, and will probably remain, a

fundamental objective of Soviet policy towards Western Europe. In pursuing this aim, Moscow, through excessive use of political pressure and propaganda designed to intimidate the public, has achieved the opposite to what it wanted in that it has caused the West European allies to strengthen their ties with the United States.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

we Germans know which power since the Second World War has twice tried to strangle the freedom of West Berlin and which power twice saved this freedom. We know which power suppresses human rights and the trade unions in one part of Europe and which power guarantees these fundamental rights in our part of Europe. There are two <sup>ethnic</sup> minorities in the Soviet Union who suffer particularly under discrimination and the lack of freedom: the Jews and the Germans.

We have noticed too that the Soviets have adopted a varied approach to the West European members of NATO. Of late, the Federal Republic of Germany has been the main target of Soviet propaganda, in which attacks on NATO's arms modernization plans have been intermingled with denunciations of an alleged revanchist attitude on our part.

"Playing the European card" will certainly remain a prominent feature of the Soviet Union's policy towards the Western Alliance. Even now Moscow is trying to exert political pressure on European countries whom it accuses today of giving unqualified support to the American Strategic Defence Initiative.

In contrast, American policy towards Eastern Europe was until recently focused almost exclusively on the Soviet Union itself. But more recently the United States has begun to intensify its relations with other members of the Eastern Bloc Alliance, including the GDR. This has come at a time when the smaller Eastern Bloc countries can be seen to have a somewhat greater scope

for movement in the conduct of their foreign policy. It remains to be seen whether the Soviet Union, with the leadership question having quickly been settled, will seek to tighten the reins on its allies.

Although the period of low profiled relations between the superpowers, especially following the Soviet Union's departure from the Geneva conference table in the winter of 1983, has placed a strain on East-West relations as a whole, it has at the same time shown that the Europeans were able on their own initiative to help bridge tension during that spell. The dialogue between the Europeans in East and West was not cut off. The CSCE process, with the various stages having been laid down at the Madrid follow-up conference in 1983, has been an important factor in maintaining the East-West dialogue. In this context, special mention should be made of the Conference on Confidence and Security-building measure and Disarmament in Europe which opened in Stockholm in January 1984 in the presence of the 35 Foreign Ministers of the participating States, including the American Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Minister. The Europeans on both sides of the dividing line in Europe have played their part in bringing the superpowers back to the conference table in Geneva. They will now have to ensure that their viewpoints are brought to bear in the negotiations. For instance, they will have to remind the superpowers that the results they seek can only lead to a more stable security in Europe if determined efforts are also made to achieve greater stability in the balance of conventional forces in Europe, this being a question of growing importance.

As the negotiations get under way, the Europeans in East and West will not content themselves to the role of spectators. They should not regard the emerging tendency of the United States and the Soviet Union to adopt a more bilateral approach to international problems as a threat to their interests but as an improvement in the general conditions for their own involvement in the process. The CSCE is the principal framework within which to seek improvements in the overall relationship between East and West. Such improvements include progress in economic co-operation where, on account of the complementary nature of the economic potentials in Western and Eastern Europe (including the Soviet Union itself), considerable possibilities remain

untapped. This is also true for environmental protection, scientific and technological co-operation, and culture.

The Europeans have a strong awareness of their common cultural heritage, in particular between the Finnish-Russian and the Polish-Russian border on the one hand and the Atlantic coast on the other hand. The CSCE's Cultural Forum, which is to be held in Budapest in October, will make this even more evident.

But in the development of bilateral relations as well, the Europeans are rendering their own special contribution. Contacts between the populations of Eastern and Western Europe have been intensified in recent years. In this context I need only mention as examples the visit by the British Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher to Budapest, the visits of the German Foreign Minister Genscher to Warsaw, Moscow and Sofia, and the recent visit of the British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe to East Berlin, Prague and Warsaw.

We believe that in many respects there exist favourable conditions for a start of a realistic policy in the direction of genuine détente. For this, we need a clear vision of what is necessary and what is possible.

The Europeans bear a special responsibility for cautiously but systematically advancing the process of security and co-operation in Europe. The close knit contacts with our eastern neighbours to whom we are linked by virtue of a multi-faceted common history, a rich cultural heritage and a shared destiny, constitutes an element of stability and a source of hope of all Europeans. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany will steadily advance and expand its contacts and co-operation with its eastern neighbours on the basis of the *modus vivendi* treaties concluded with them. The declared will of the two States in Germany to shape their mutual relations and their policies in such a manner that impulses promoting the cause of a just and solid peace emanate from Germans must continue to prove its worth in practice as a contribution to co-operative European security.

In particular in my capacity as a guest of the American Jewish Committee, I would like to comment on the obvious importance of the Middle East for the geopolitical interests of Western Europe. Although much more time would be needed, let me mention a couple of things at least:

We in the European Community wish to make a contribution to a lasting peace in this region. But this must not block American endeavours towards an alleviation of or solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, it must support them. For this reason, dialogue and consultations between the United States and Europe are particularly essential with regard to the Middle East.

As a German, nevertheless, I would like to stress that it is essential for us Germans, in East and West, to be aware and never forget that Germany's special responsibility for Israel is an element of credibility and ethics in any good German foreign policy. The remarks of the Federal Chancellor in his Government Statement of 4 May 1983 remain just as valid as they were during his visit to Israel where I accompanied him.

"Our policy on the Middle East is founded on respect for the legitimate interests of all peoples and States - some of them mutually opposed - in that region. In addition, we are particularly attached to Israel, and we stand up for Israel's right to live in freedom and security. This attitude denotes every aspect of our Middle East policy which hopes to contribute to a lasting peace in the region. This does not preclude, however, that there may be individual political questions between the Federal Republic of Germany and the State of Israel on which we disagree."

In conclusion I would like to bring up another matter before this distinguished audience, which occurred to me as a result of my years of discussions with young Germans: the peace question must be repoliticized, it must not be allowed to degenerate into military and technical details.

It is not weapons and soldiers as such which are a threat to peace; they are the instruments of political will. Unless the debate on peace and security is brought back into the arena of political discussion, it will degenerate into the technical jargon of military strategy and disarmament diplomacy. I once

said in the German Bundestag that some of the supporters of armaments and some of the supporters of disarmament had one thing in common; they talked only of weapons, no longer discussing the underlying political issues. In the Atlantic Alliance, we secure peace in freedom vis-à-vis the Soviet Union - that is the purpose of NATO. Parallel to this, we try to build peace with the Soviet Union and its allies - that is the purpose of dialogue, arms control, co-operation and confidence-building measures.

Moscow's political objectives and the military potential available for achieving them represent, in themselves, a serious threat to the security of the West and justify the existence of the Atlantic Alliance, with all the burdens we carry for assuring security: the deployment of a sufficient defensive potential, the sharing of calculated risks, demanding both personal sacrifices and financial expenditures.

Internally, the Soviet Union acts repressively. Externally, it acts expansively on a global scale. Both internally and externally, the Soviet aims run counter to elementary tenets of the liberal democracies of the West. Its long-term goal of expansion, so contrary to the vital security interests of the West, is not based on a master plan deposited in a Kremlin safe. It can rather be clearly observed, being based in the first instance on the Soviet Union's imperial concept of security, and secondly on Lenin's foreign policy, openly subscribed to by the Soviet leadership, with claims to world hegemony. As far as the Soviet security concept is concerned, an insatiable quest for absolute security, it aims logically at a constant "peaceful" extension of influence in Western Europe and the Third World.

It is of interest to note that in the West people often shy away from squarely facing these facts. I am in favour of taking seriously what Eastern leaders say. Why is it that we do not want to listen? Do they not state their aims clearly? Indeed, the Soviet Union may be accused of many things, but it cannot be accused of concealing its political principles and objectives. For reasons of self-interest, Moscow cannot run the risk of attacking any member country of the Alliance. Instead, Moscow tries to induce us to adopt precautionary "good <sup>behaviour</sup> ~~conduct~~" and to submit increasingly to its wishes. In other

words, the Soviet leaders are counting on our willingness to appease through what may be called anticipatory compliance. Moscow wants to achieve superiority in Europe by gradually decoupling the Federal Republic of Germany, <sup>first psychologically, then politically</sup> from the West and Europe from the United States, in order to split up the Atlantic Alliance into zones of American security and European insecurity with the aim of gaining a controlling access to Europe's resources and inventiveness.

The motto of the Atlantic Alliance is: "Vigilia precium libertatis" - vigilance is the price of freedom. Americans and Europeans are paying this price. And I believe, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, this motto is the best yardstick for preserving the right proportions in discussing controversial subjects between Americans and Europeans, be they of an historical, political, economic or military nature. My beloved parents who were practising Christians and good Germans, and my older brother who was a Catholic priest and who often warned of anti-semitism during the Nazi period, taught me to respect Jewish piety and Jewish faithfulness to the Law.

I am aware of how righteousness, i.e. fairness, determines Jewish ethics. It is expressed in the sayings of old which Rabbi Natan Levinson of the Institute of Jewish Studies in Heidelberg pointed out to me: "Do not judge your neighbour for you do not know what you would have done in his place." Jesus of Nazareth also lived in this spirit when he said in the Sermon on the Mount: "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged."

With its fairness, its far-sightedness and its will to build bridges, the American Jewish Committee embodies the best traditions of American and Jewish humanism. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr President, the thanks of the German people, which I express here once again in all sincerity, go to you all.



# Statements & Speeches



Federal Republic of Germany

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## WESTERN EUROPE FORTY YEARS AFTER WORLD WAR II

Speech by Dr. Alois Mertes  
Minister of State in the Foreign Office of the  
Federal Republic of Germany  
Before the American Jewish Committee  
May 2, 1985

Allow me first of all to thank you for having invited me, as a German and European, to speak at the 1985 meeting of the American Jewish Committee on the subject "Western Europe Forty Years after World War II." I am greatly honored by your kind invitation. It provides me with an opportunity to recall the consequences we Germans in the free part of our nation and our neighbors in the free part of Europe have drawn from experiences and responsibilities prior to the 8th of May, 1945.

I take pleasure in accepting your invitation for two reasons, firstly, because you are a highly regarded organization in the United States, a country with which the Federal Republic of Germany is linked in close friendship and within our time-tested security partnership, the Atlantic alliance of free peoples. Secondly, because you are a Jewish-American community of great merit which has been fostering mutual acquaintance and understanding between young Jewish Americans and young Germans for years now.

On behalf of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany, I should like to thank you sincerely, Mr. Friedman, today for your unique contribution to the German-Jewish dialog and to the strengthening of our German-American community of values and destiny. I am doing so as a German who was 11 years old in 1933, 23 years old in 1945 and who is now 63 years old and shares with the overwhelming majority of Germans in East and West the profound conviction that after the crimes committed by Germans and in Germany's name during the dictatorship of Hitler and his underlings, German patriotism can no longer be separated from loyalty to human rights and democracy, which the American-Jewish Committee has held as its objective since 1906. This is the message we wish to transmit to our children and grandchildren.

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When you invited me, neither you nor I ever dreamt that a cemetery near the center of my electoral district would become the subject of strong emotions and lively discussions in the United States and in Europe. I can and will not remain silent on the historical and moral background of these emotions, discussions and misunderstandings. Let me begin with two facts which are not sufficiently known.

In the Bitburg electoral district which I have the honor to represent in the German Bundestag, only a small minority of 17.4 percent voted for Hitler in the last free national elections before Hitler seized power, held on November 6, 1932, because they saw him as the only alternative to unemployment. The Communist Party, which sought to imitate the Soviet model, received 5.7 percent, and the democratic parties received 76.0 percent of the votes. If voters in all electoral districts at the time had cast their ballots this way, Hitler would never have come to power, at least not legally. In the most recent elections to the Bundestag on March 5, 1983, the Communists (DKP), the Nationalists (NDP) and the Larouche Party (EAP) received 0.1 percent of the votes each. The Greens, the pacifist Anti-NATO Party, received only 3.8 percent, whereas the three traditional democratic parties (CDU, SPD and FDP) received 95.9 percent, of which the CDU alone under Chancellor Kohl received 65.4 percent. I am therefore proud of my electoral district and of my native Eifel region because the overwhelming majority of the population is democratic, patriotic and pro-Western. They maintain excellent relations with the many American soldiers stationed at the two U.S. Air Force bases there.

It is indeed a gesture of hope and encouragement on your part, forty years exactly since the Nazi genocide of European Jewry, that you have given a German politician an opportunity to review Western Europe's progress and geopolitical problems. Germans and Austrians were responsible for the Holocaust, thus besmirching the name of the German people. It is precisely for this reason, and also to preserve our own credibility, that we Germans will never forget the most infamous moment of German history. Hitler misused our own people, in particular the loyalty of German soldiers towards their country. Officers of the Wehrmacht such as Richard von Weizsäcker, Helmut Schmidt, Franz Josef Strauss and Walter Scheel served together with the vast majority of Germans, including myself, in the belief that they were serving their country and not its inhuman ruthless leadership. This is also true of the German soldiers who became Austrians again after 1945, such as Kurt Waldheim, a major in the Wehrmacht, and later Secretary General of the United Nations. Many German soldiers, especially those on the Western Front, felt a growing conflict of loyalties in the last years of the war between patriotic duty and Christian ethics, a conflict which was expressed tragically in the revolt of July 20, 1944. Such a conflict does not occur for today's German soldier. Together with his American, British and French counterparts, he is serving an alliance defending our countries as well as individual human dignity and personal freedom. Life in a totalitarian dictatorship which is hardly conceivable in a democracy, total war, the almost complete control over information and the ubiquitous fear of denunciation which my generation experienced caused us in 1945 to swear: Never again dictatorship on German soil, never again war from German soil. These are the words of Kurt Schumacher, the first post-war Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, who himself spent ten years in concentration camps. Based on the solidarity of our former enemies in the war, we have been able to realize both parts of this pledge in the free part of Germany. Here in New York, I would like to express on behalf of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany our

appreciation for the far-sightedness and steadfastness of all U.S. presidents since 1945 in all questions pertaining to Germany as a whole, to Berlin and in particular to the security of West Germany and West Berlin. I do this also as a former German soldier who became a prisoner of war of the U.S. Army forty years ago to this very day and only thus escaped Soviet captivity. I was able to return home four months later.

The subject you have given me should serve to enable us to see the dangers threatening Europe today, and therefore the United States and Canada as well, and indeed international peace, and in particular to see the opportunities at our disposal to preserve peace from any risk of war and, what is more, to foster a peace which endeavors to alleviate injustice and eliminate oppression and persecution. For peace is not only a state of non-war. It is the work of righteousness, to quote the prophet Isaiah.

Our experience during the 12 years of Nazi dictatorship and that during the subsequent forty years belong together. It has molded the judgements of my generation up to the present day. Over the last forty years, the western part of Germany has been able to reconstruct a politically and economically viable democracy, based on the rule of law, whereas the eastern part of Germany and our eastern neighbors have been prevented by force from doing so. It is only possible to talk in an adequate manner about the 8th of May 1945 and about the development of Western Europe if one is aware of the origins and course of the 12 years of Hitler's rule, and of the consequences which the German people and their former Western enemies in the war have drawn since then from their experience. The 8th of May 1945 for us Germans meant more than the end of a totalitarian regime which brought suffering, death and destruction to every corner of Europe, and which burdened Germany's name by planned genocide. Soon after began Germany's and Eastern Europe's subjection to another totalitarian system.

For my generation, the 8th of May in retrospect was above all the beginning on an historic opportunity which we have taken advantage of for forty years: to design a future of freedom, justice, and peace. Human rights and the renunciation of force were henceforth to determine German policies.

They were years of democratic stability, years of reconciliation with our neighbors with whom we in the West, starting in 1950, found a road for close institutional unification, and years of identification of our security interests with those of the peoples of the Atlantic alliance. They were also years in which we tried to restore Germany's good name by our resolute will to make amends to the survivors of Nazi terror, by our solidarity with Israel's right to exist within secure borders, by our will for genuine detente and balanced disarmament, by successfully defending ourselves against anti-democratic temptations from within and totalitarian pressure from without, and by development assistance to the Third World which today is greater and more effective than that of all the Warsaw Pact countries.

We want our grandchildren and their grandchildren to accept gladly being part of the German nation into which we were born and to which we shall remain faithful in good times and in bad.

We do not want to forget the villainy of the National Socialist dictatorship. This is especially true of the genocide of the Jews, which was obviously beyond the dreadful rationale of war, victory or defeat.

It constituted in itself an exclusively criminal proclivity for annihilation. This genocide cannot be compared with any other event between 1942 and 1945. And this I state as someone who served his country in good faith at the time and who rejects any collective accusations against Germany since they would correspond neither to historical reality nor to Biblical ethics. But we Germans must also recall all the great things our people have given humanity. U.S. Ambassador Arthur Burns, himself from the American Jewish community and a particularly credible and wise representative of the United States, who is now leaving Bonn, recently appealed to German teachers, politicians and churches to do more in propagating this positive aspect of political education. He has encouraged us Germans to take more pride in our country and its history. In addition to the dark years of National Socialism, which we should never forget, Ambassador Burns also pointed to the great achievements of our nation. I find it imperative at this point to recall with national gratitude the inestimable contribution made to German culture by Jewish citizens.

The German people, where it was free to choose after 1945, decided for Western democracy because there can now no longer be anything of national interest to Germany which is separable from justice and freedom. This is the decisive lesson which history has taught us once and for all. We have therefore committed ourselves to these foundations of the West once and for all. Not only the ethics of Christianity, but also the basic values of Western democracy are anchored in Biblical anthropology which views every human being as having been created in God's own image and likeness, values to which the Jews, despite defamation and persecution, have remained faithful for millenia. The decision to stand up for the moral principles of the West implies the will, indeed the moral duty to persist internationally in claiming individual human rights and national self-determination for our whole nation. This will demand political steadfastness and historical perseverance on the part of the Federal Republic of Germany and of its major allies. Hitler's 1939 "recipe," in all its possible variants, including the threat and use of force, and collusion with Russia to the disadvantage of Poland and the West, is forever banned from German foreign policy.

After these preliminary remarks, let me turn to the situation of Europe forty years since the war. When the armed forces of Germany surrendered unconditionally in 1945, large expanses of Europe, and especially all of Germany, lay in physical and moral ruins. The victorious Western allies, in particular the United States, believed in the possibility of creating a worldwide order for peace on the basis of the UN Charter. But it was soon to be seen that the Soviet Union, as today, both in theory and in practice, interpreted almost all the principles of postwar policies which it had agreed to with the Western powers in a manner which remains incompatible with Western faith in freedom and democracy, self-determination and independence, peace, security and disarmament. The Soviet Union misused its military victory over Germany in order to create by force a buffer zone in Eastern Europe and its occupation zone in Germany from 1945 to 1948 which led to the division of Europe and Germany still known as the European Question and the open German Question. At the opening of the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe in Stockholm on January 18, 1984, Secretary of State George Shultz said:

"Since 1945, Western Europe has seen a great reconciliation of old enemies and a great resurgence of freedom, prosperity, unity, and security. It is a

crowning achievement of the European tradition in which the United States has been proud to play a part. But throughout the same period, an artificial barrier has cruelly divided this continent - and indeed heartlessly divided one of its great nations.

This barrier was not placed there by the West. It is not maintained by the West. It is not the West that prevents its citizens' free movement, or cuts them off from competing ideas.

Let me be very clear: The United States does not recognize the legitimacy of the artificially imposed division of Europe. This division is the essence of Europe's security and human rights problem, and we all know it."

On the same subject, President Reagan stated on February 5, 1985:

"There is one boundary which Yalta symbolizes that can never be made legitimate, and that is the dividing line between freedom and repression. I do not hesitate to say that we wish to undo this boundary. In so doing, we seek no military advantage for ourselves or for the Western alliance. We do not deny any nation's legitimate interest in security. But protecting the security of one nation by robbing another of its national independence and national traditions is not legitimate. In the long run, it is not even secure."

This is the best possible description of the reality and the consequences of the division of Europe. The determination of the United States to defend its rights, responsibilities and interests in all the East-West crises since 1945 against all pressure, threats and blackmail is, in addition to its military presence in Western Europe, the most visible political incarnation of the credibility of the American position in Europe. The Western powers are defending not only the freedom of West Berlin, they are also defending the claim of the German people and of the Eastern Europeans to a just peace based on individual and national human rights.

The Soviet policy of subjection and expansion from 1945 to 1948 culminated in the first Berlin crisis, which resulted, not only in West Germany but also in all the major countries of Western Europe, in the recognition of a fact still valid today: The security of Europe and of the United States are inseparably linked since the political objectives and the military potential of the Soviet threat are directed against Europe and America. At the Williamsburg Economic Summit in 1983, Japan also subscribed to the common aims of European and American security. We Europeans can only survive as free countries if we form a close political and military community with the United States, whose power and credible solidarity is founded on shared values on which our common interests are based. I would ask you to take the following into consideration in all questions related to Germany and Europe: The risk of war in Europe is almost zero. But, as Chancellor Kohl stated, the Soviet Union wants a political victory in Europe in a military peace.

Its will for expansion westward, as former chancellor Schmidt put it recently, is unbroken. It does not wish to conquer the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany, but rather to win over the minds and hearts of the German people, especially of young Germans. Trying to drive a wedge between Germans and Americans is the logical consequence of Soviet

foreign policy, which is characterized by exceptional perseverance and which no doubt will continue for quite some time. Any division between the American people and Germany or between the German people and America serves, as a result, only Moscow's interests. I cannot conceive of how such a division could possibly benefit the United States and Europe. On the contrary, such a division places us all in danger. I am afraid that the Bitburg controversy has ipso facto only raised Moscow's chances of influencing young people psychologically. I regard it as our duty, in public discussion on the past, not to forget the needs of the present and future in the vital interests of Europe and America. Any selective approach towards complex historical or political issues of such importance is simply irresponsible, even when such an approach is emotionally understandable.

If today we want to describe the present conditions and prospects for European policy, we first have to refer, as I did, to the basic facts which emerged from the Second World War.

All nations of Europe have clearly fallen back to the level of small or medium-sized countries, whereas the Soviet Union was able to extend its sphere of influence and power right to the center of Europe and rose to acquire a par rating with the United States as the second world power. At the same time Germany and Europe were divided into an area of democracy and self-determination and one of totalitarianism and foreign domination. The splitting of Europe into two halves has in the meantime become a major factor determining European and above all German policy. Relations between the two superpowers, which since the Second World War have gone through different phases, have a decisive bearing on the policies pursued by the Europeans.

But important developments have also taken place in Europe itself. We have seen the establishment and growth of the European Community and the relative increase in the importance of the Europeans within the Atlantic Alliance, whilst on the other hand there have been very slow yet noticeable evolutionary trends within the Warsaw Pact.

When I speak of "Europe" I mean, as I have intimated in my remarks so far, the whole of Europe. We include the nations of Eastern Europe. Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary are, according to their own self-perception, too, nations of Central Europe. The Soviet Union, too is of course partly a European country, but it is first and foremost a global or superpower. Russia, by the way, has never belonged to that part of Europe which was shaped by Western Christianity and Judaism, by the era of enlightenment and democracy.

In this Europe the two most heavily armed military alliances in the world stand face to face. Germany lies on the border between the totalitarian East and the democratic West: the dividing line passes right through Germany. That is why the effect of the division of Europe is more intensely felt in my country than anywhere else. The Federal Republic of Germany is firmly integrated into the European Community and the Western alliance of free and democratic countries. This integration is based on a deep conviction and not on opportunist considerations. Our political priority has been and remains: freedom before unity. That is why our policy in the short term must aim at mitigating the effects of the division of the country and of Europe, and in the long term, at reaching a state of peace in Europe in which the German people will recover its unity through free

self-determination. We are fostering with the United States and other allies a peaceful, evolutionary process as a result of which all Europeans can live freely and in peace. Thus we keep the national interests of the Germans strictly in harmony with the interests of the West in general and of Europe in particular in seeking a favorable development of relations with the East. We have linked our destiny to that of our neighbors.

Incorporated in this European policy is that towards the GDR, the German Democratic Republic, pursued by the Federal Republic of Germany in full agreement with our allies. We follow this policy out of our responsibility for genuine and lasting peace in Europe. It is designed to secure fruitful relations between the two states in Germany as well as the greatest possible exchange of information and personal contacts between Germans on both sides of the border.

When we speak of the two most heavily armed military alliances standing face to face in Europe, however, we must not forget that Europe has lived in peace since the end of World War II. In that period military force in Europe has been used only within the Soviet sphere of influence - East Berlin in 1953, Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968. We have to bear this basic fact in mind when we speak of the relationship between the two superpowers and its impact on Europe. The long phase of stability in Europe would have been hard to imagine without the war-preventing influence of a balance of military power. For Western Europe the nuclear protection which only the United States can provide will remain essential for maintaining this balance in the foreseeable future.

There are, of course, fundamental, indeed decisive differences between Soviet and American policy.

We Germans know which power since the Second World War has twice tried to strangle the freedom of West Berlin and which power twice saved this freedom. We know which power suppresses human rights and free trade unions in one part of Europe, and which power guarantees these fundamental rights in our part of Europe. There are two ethnic minorities in the Soviet Union which suffer particularly under discrimination and the lack of freedom: the Jews and the Germans.

The Soviet Union has traditionally seized every opportunity to exert influence on the West European members of NATO so as to counteract the joint plans of the alliance and split it. This is, and will probably remain, a fundamental objective of Soviet policy towards Western Europe. In pursuing this aim, Moscow, through excessive use of political pressure and propaganda designed to intimidate the public, has achieved the opposite to what it wanted in that it has caused the West European allies to strengthen their ties with the United States.

We have noticed too that the Soviets have adopted a varied approach to the West European members of NATO. Of late, the Federal Republic of Germany has been the main target of Soviet propaganda, in which attacks on NATO's arms modernization plans have been intermingled with denunciations of an alleged revanchist attitude on our part.

"Playing the European card" will certainly remain a prominent feature of the Soviet Union's policy towards the Western alliance. Even now Moscow is trying to exert political pressure on European countries which it accuses

today of giving unqualified support to the American Strategic Defense Initiative.

Although the period of low profiled relations between the superpowers, especially following the Soviet Union's departure from the Geneva conference table in the winter of 1983, has placed a strain on East-West relations as a whole, it has at the same time shown that the Europeans were able on their own initiative to help bridge tension during that spell. The dialog between the Europeans in East and West was not cut off. The CSCE process, with the various stages having been laid down at the Madrid follow-up meeting in 1983, has been an important factor in maintaining the East-West dialog. In this context, special mention should be made of the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measure and Disarmament in Europe which opened in Stockholm in January 1984 in the presence of 35 foreign ministers of the participating states, including the American Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Minister. The Europeans on both sides of the dividing line in Europe have played their part in bringing the superpowers back to the conference table in Geneva. They will now have to ensure that their viewpoints are brought to bear in the negotiations. For instance, they will have to remind the superpowers that the results they seek can only lead to a more stable security in Europe if determined efforts are also made to achieve greater stability in the balance of conventional forces in Europe, this being a question of growing importance.

As the negotiations get under way, the Europeans in East and West will not content themselves with the role of spectators. They should not regard the emerging tendency of the United States and the Soviet Union to adopt a more bilateral approach to international problems as a threat to their interests but as an improvement in the general conditions for their own involvement in the process. The CSCE is the principal framework within which to seek improvements in the overall relationship between East and West. Such improvements include progress in economic cooperation where, on account of the complementary nature of the economic potentials in Western and Eastern Europe (including the Soviet Union itself), considerable possibilities remain untapped. This is also true for environmental protection, scientific and technological cooperation, and culture.

In the development of bilateral relations as well, the Europeans are rendering their own special contribution. Contacts between the populations of Eastern and Western Europe have been intensified in recent years. In this context I need only mention as an example the visit by the British Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher to Budapest, the visits of the German Foreign Minister, Mr. Genscher, to Warsaw, Moscow and Sofia, and the recent visit of the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, to East Berlin, Prague and Warsaw.

We believe that in many respects there exist favorable conditions for a start of a realistic policy in the direction of genuine detente. For this, we need a clear vision of what is necessary and what is possible.

Particularly in my capacity as a guest of the American Jewish Committee, I would now like to comment on the obvious importance of the Middle East for the geopolitical interests of Western Europe. Although much more time would be needed, let me mention a couple of things at least. We in the European Community wish to make a contribution to a lasting peace in this region. But this must not block American endeavors towards an alleviation of or

....



solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, it must support them. For this reason, dialog and consultations between the United States and Europe are particularly essential with regard to the Middle East.

As a German, nevertheless, I would like to stress that it is essential for us Germans, in East and West, to be aware and never forget that Germany's special responsibility for Israel is an element of credibility and ethics in any good German foreign policy. The remarks of the Federal Chancellor in the Government Statement of May 4, 1983, remain just as valid as they were during his visit to Israel, where I accompanied him:

"Our policy on the Middle East is founded on respect for the legitimate interests of all peoples and states - some of them mutually opposed - in that region. In addition, we are particularly attached to Israel, and we stand up for Israel's right to live in freedom and security. This attitude denotes every aspect of our Middle East policy, which hopes to contribute to a lasting peace in the region. This does not preclude, however, that there may be individual political questions between the Federal Republic of Germany and the State of Israel on which we disagree."

In conclusion I would like to bring up a matter before this distinguished audience, which occurred to me as a result of my years of discussions with young Germans: the peace question must be repoliticized; it must not be allowed to degenerate into military and technical details.

It is not weapons and soldiers as such which are a threat to peace. They are the instruments of political will. Unless the debate on peace and security is brought back into the arena of political discussion, it will degenerate into the technical jargon of military strategy and disarmament diplomacy. I once said in the German Bundestag that some of the supporters of armaments and some of the supporters of disarmament had one thing in common. They talked only of weapons, no longer discussing the underlying political issues. In the Atlantic alliance, we secure peace in freedom vis-a-vis the Soviet Union - that is the purpose of NATO. Parallel to this, we try to build peace with the Soviet Union and its allies - that is the purpose of dialog, arms control, cooperation and confidence-building measures.

Moscow's political objectives and the military potential available for achieving them represent, in themselves, a serious threat to the security of the West and justify the existence of the Atlantic alliance, with all the burdens we carry for assuring security: the deployment of a sufficient defensive potential, the sharing of calculated risks, demanding both personal sacrifices and financial expenditures.

It is of interest to note that in the West people often shy away from squarely facing these facts. I am in favor of taking seriously what Eastern leaders say. Why is it that we do not want to listen? Do they not state their aims clearly? Indeed, the Soviet Union may be accused of many things, but it cannot be accused of concealing its political principles and objectives. Moscow wants to achieve superiority in Europe by gradually decoupling the Federal Republic of Germany, first psychologically, then politically, from the West, and Europe from the United States, in order to split up the Atlantic alliance into zones of American security and European insecurity, with the aim of gaining a controlling access to Europe's resources and inventiveness.

The motto of the Atlantic alliance is: "vigilia precium libertatis" - vigilance is the price of freedom. Americans and Europeans are paying this price. And I believe this motto offers the best yardstick for preserving the right proportions in discussing controversial subjects between Americans and Europeans, be they of an historical, political, economic or military nature. My beloved parents who were practicing Christians and good Germans, and my older brother who was a Catholic priest taught me to respect Jewish piety and Jewish faithfulness to the law.

I am aware of how righteousness, i.e. fairness, determines Jewish ethics. It is expressed in the sayings of old which Rabbi Natan Levinson of the Institute of Jewish Studies in Heidelberg pointed out to me: "Do not judge your neighbor, for you do not know what you would have done in his place." Jesus of Nazareth also lived in this spirit when he said in the Sermon on the Mount: "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged."

With its fairness, its far-sightedness and its will to build bridges, the American Jewish Committee embodies the best traditions of American and Jewish humanism. Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. President, the thanks of the German people, which I express here once again in all sincerity, go to you all.



# NEWS

FROM THE

# COMMITTEE

**aje**

**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, May 5... The following statement was issued today by Howard I. Friedman, President of the American Jewish Committee:

"The American Jewish Committee views today's moving events in Germany with mixed feelings. The visit to the Bitburg Military Cemetery marred what would have been a significant pilgrimage. As late as Monday of last week, the American Jewish Committee urged President Reagan at a private meeting at the White House to cancel the Bitburg visit, and we are convinced our advice was sound.

"The President's remarks at Bergen Belsen and at the Bitburg Air Base were eloquent, and his visit to Konrad Adenauer's grave most welcome -- a visit we had strongly urged during our talks last week with both the German and American governments. For it is with Adenauer's Germany that we seek reconciliation, not that represented by the SS at Bitburg. We proposed that President Reagan pay tribute to Adenauer because he was the founding father of modern German democracy and the architect of positive relations between Western Germany and the Jewish people, particularly with the State of Israel. His political vision was based on a total rejection of Nazi tyranny and totalitarianism.

"Our lingering sadness over Bitburg 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.

"The Nazi Holocaust is a uniquely Jewish event, but it is a universal tragedy as well, as has been shown by the response of peoples everywhere -- veterans, labor, Black and ethnic and Christian leaders, all of whom affirmed their solidarity.

"Finally, there is the irony that the unfortunate controversy over Bitburg has widened almost beyond comprehension the attention to the Holocaust and to its challenge that its lessons must never be forgotten."

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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

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CSAE 1707



# The American Jewish Committee

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

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 7, 1985

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

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 you -- 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 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, heard and gloried in the eloquent words you spoke at Bergen-Belsen and at the Bitburg base, we continued to believe that the visit to the Bitburg cemetery marred the otherwise spectacular positives of the day. We cannot pretend, and you would not want us to, that our deep feelings on the inappropriateness of the cemetery symbolism have been dissipated by the positives that we saw in the rest 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 in New York only two hours after you completed 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."

HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, President ■  
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DAVID F. SQUIRE, Boston; RICHARD L. WEISS, Los Angeles ■

President Ronald Reagan  
May 7, 1985

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I assure you, Mr. President, that we are indeed ready to assist the healing process and to maintain our continuing availability for constructive workings with your administration.

Sincerely,



Howard I. Friedman



HIF:stg



DEUTSCHER EVANGELISCHER KIRCHENTAG

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An die  
Mitarbeiter des  
21. Deutschen Evangelischen  
Kirchentages Düsseldorf 1985

9. Mai 1985

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

Im April 1985 haben wir Ihnen das Rundschreiben für  
Mitarbeiter und die dazugehörigen Anmeldeformulare  
übersandt. Leider haben wir Ihre Anmeldung bis heute  
noch nicht erhalten.

Wir benötigen für den organisatorischen Ablauf dringend  
alle erbetenen Angaben, vor allem Ihre verbindliche  
Quartierbestellung, bis spätestens

Mittwoch, den 15. Mai 1985.

Wir können sonst Ihre funktionsgerechte und angemessene  
Unterbringung nicht mehr garantieren.

Bitte senden Sie uns zwei Exemplare (rosa und grün) der  
Ihnen zugegangenen Anmeldeformulare ausgefüllt zurück.

Wir hoffen, daß Sie für unsere Bitte Verständnis haben  
und verbleiben

mit freundlichen Grüßen

H. S t e e g e  
Organisationsleiter

f.d.R.

*Hannelore Pfeffer*  
Hannelore Pfeffer Sekretärin

*Hyman Bookbinder*

To: Marc Townsbaum

I thought this letter  
deserved a response --  
albeit an inadequate  
one, but time didn't  
permit more.

B.



# THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE • 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20036 • (202) 265-2000

May 14, 1985

Professor Virginia M. Shaddy  
311 N. 41st St.  
Omaha, Nebraska 68131

Dear Professor Shaddy:

This is a belated acknowledgement of your letter dated May 1 -- only because it took all this time for it to be forwarded to my Washington office.

In a way, I'm glad these two weeks have passed -- and that the "Birtburg" event is over. With the headlines off the front page, perhaps both your and my perspective on the broader issue you raise will be less "emotional." (to use your word) I say this with utmost respect for the way you used the word.

I cannot, in this response, do justice to your thoughtful letter. It is clear that you write as a friend, wanting to help. You raise questions about which millions of words have been written. I can offer no special wisdom to resolving the dilemma you pose: (though you don't use these words) "We must forget and remember at the same time." My simple contribution to this is that no work is really necessary to help people forget; we do have to work on remembering -- and on understanding. Many of the statements made in connection with Bitburg, highlighted by those of President Reagan himself, demonstrate how inadequate is that memory and that understanding.

What saddens me about your letter, I must say frankly, is the clear suggestion that those of us who are involved in assuring memory and understanding are failing to be involved in the "widely human dimension" of the struggle for a "better kind of world." I ask you to rethink this indictment. It is as inaccurate as it is unfair -- and I know from the tone of your letter that you do not wish to be unfair. Let me make my point only by citing the case of Elie Wiesel, far and away the most prominent and eloquent voice associated with Holocaust memory. Do you not know that his voice has never been silent on any issue of freedom and tolerance and peace and human rights? You name it -- Biafra, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Nicaragua -- Wiesel has been up front, in body and voice, demanding justice. He uses the memory and the meaning of the Holocaust to add special power to his plea for justice. The Jewish people generally have not been absent from most of the great struggles for freedom. Forgive the chauvinism, but that's what makes me proud to be a Jew.

- - more -



As a member of the President's Commission on the Holocaust, I was the author of a proposal which the Commission adopted unanimously -- the creation of a National Committee of Conscience. This Committee, consisting of our nation's outstanding citizens, would have the responsibility to speak out loudly and clearly wherever and whenever the likelihood of genocide was detected or suspected. This was our way of saying that our memory of the Holocaust must be used to prevent such crimes in the future against any people.

Believe me, please, I do not write this in any adversarial sense. I identify with all of the goals and hopes you express. I write only to suggest, in good spirit, that Jews are doing better than you think in using our "collective and individual influence and energy" to create that better world. But we can do even better, I'm sure, and in that sense I welcome your letter.

Sincerely,



Hyman Bookbinder  
Washington Representative

HB:dw



1 May 1985

RECEIVED MAY 13 1985

Mr. Hyman Bookbinder ✓  
The American Jewish  
Committee  
c/o Institute of Human  
Relations  
165 East 56th Street  
New York 10022

Dear Mr. Bookbinder:

Without going into great detail, let me just say that I have known and loved the Jewish people, collectively and individually, from my childhood. I am a university professor (World Literature and the Humanities) and have lived in France for a number of years, where I received my doctorate.

I am writing this (in simple letter form, rather than in any formal, scholarly presentation - but knowledgeability and scholarship are behind it) in response not only to the Nightwatch program, televised the 29th of April, but to the whole question of President Reagan's visit to the Bitburg cemetery.

Even before this particular question was raised, and made so much of, I had been thinking about the whole "holocaust" issue. My voice is not a lonely one. There are a good number who think as I do. But advertizing, propoganda, and the media "catch up" so many thousands, who do not think for themselves, who are not led, as they should be, by these "leader" forces, to think with both logic and broad perspective, but become emotionally involved in whatever is being "cried up."

Yes, "it is time to forget the holocaust." Why is it so difficult to understand that this does not mean not to deplore what happened at that point in history (and elsewhere, at other times, against different groups of people)? It means, so clearly and obviously: yes, we are aware of these evils; let us concentrate our minds and efforts not on "clutching the evil" to us, but on daily, diligent, good-willed efforts to do just the opposite: international, inter-cultural, inter-religious understanding, while retaining our individual integrity and convictions.

Regarding the President's visit to a cemetery where there are some SS officials buried, along with many others -

Jewish, Catholic, ordinary Germans, and others - is it not obvious that such a visit does not mean (and no one really thinks it does, if they stop to think) that we are condoning the Nazi activities!

We must simply stop showing, and re-showing, and clinging to these things. It's almost as though we find our only identity in feeling ourselves to be victims, martyrs. The only lesson from that evil is to "forget" it, and go forward to the good, the best, and to diffuse that good everywhere. Otherwise, we permit ourselves to be dragged down, to become static, to "luxuriate" in the misery, in negativity. Our time, energy, and productive efforts should take us out of ourselves toward a better present and future, together, not to keep re-creating past evils. Elementary psychology (if good sense and religious faith do not) tells us how dangerous this is.

If our great-grandparents, let us say, were tortured and killed in the Civil War, or were themselves cruel slave-holders, do we cease to visit those cemeteries, recognizing that many were victims, others were misled, uneducated, and even some among them negatively bent on evil and/or personal gain?

We are the human species. No one can say what we would do if we were not born of dedicated, ethical, or religious parents, in a free country. Even apart from all this, evil exists in the world, among human beings. We cannot but see and judge the actions of evil men, but the persons are human beings. At such a cemetery, we mourn not only those who were victims of others, but also the tragedy of man's inhumanity to man - of the tragedy that recurs from time to time throughout the history of the race.

Ought we not to reject the narrowness and expand our sympathy and awareness to a widely human dimension, turning our souls, minds, and hearts to a better kind of world? As we would both agree, this will not come about of itself but is for us to build, by spreading truth, education, values, brotherhood - not by fancy or emotional words but by diligent, daily thinking and doing: not by "seeing evil everywhere," but by approaching issues with the best that we are, projecting, as far as possible, the good, and expecting, thinking, the same of others, rather than reading everything from one narrow mindset. There is no contradiction between doing this and being aware of, and guarding against, the weaknesses, possible evils, and foibles of the human race.

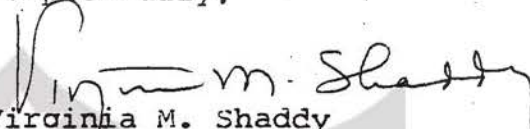
The less we (and the media, and leadership voices - a real responsibility) make over evils by repeating them, thinking emotionally and graphically about them, the less we re-create them. Act against them, yes, when they appear, but what will help diminish them can only be the effort to educate, to understand, and to help others understand, projecting always our own best capacities and drawing the best out of others.

I hope sincerely that you understand aright what I have said in this letter, which I write to you out of respect for you and your position; that you know that I understand how you, and others, have come to your thinking and feeling today. Yet I do believe that the Jewish people, and other "minority" groups, especially those in leadership positions, so often (surely, without being conscious of it) increase collective feelings of aggressiveness, often hatred, because of the tendency to overdo, over-emotionalize, over-impose, their own image and experience, almost, seemingly, desperate for some kind of imposing of identity. Injustices should always be prevented, injustices toward anyone - man, woman, black, white, Jew, Catholic, Protestant. There is no reason to separate "issues" and "causes": principles of justice should apply to all, and efforts to implement them should be made for all. If we deplore injustice, the only way we can be sure that "this will never happen again" is, surely, not to keep filling the collective psyche with horrors, negativity, but to turn from them (if we deplore them) to opening ourselves to the understanding of others, to making efforts, each in his/her place (and reaching further where we can), for educating, edifying, constructively creating - especially in those areas where it is sorely lacking.

I think that if we - all of us - do not take the time, and thought, to question ourselves, to open closed doors in our minds (rather than letting our minds be taken over by narrow half-truths or emotionalized images - all masquerading as truth, and masking truth) to consider all elements of a situation or an issue, we will re-create the things we insist on keeping in our minds (the things deplored) - the thoughts and images which, eventually, bring about the action thought of, the action feared. How often do we listen to, read, and ponder the ideas of those whose views we consider opposed to our own?

The Jewish people, more than any other, because of their great tradition, their common, collective solidarity, and their leadership positions (so many), could use their collective and individual influence, and energy, to be real leaders in education, inter-cultural understanding, and intelligent thinking.

Respectfully,



Virginia M. Shaddy  
Associate Professor of English  
Creighton University  
Omaha, Nebraska 68178

Residence:  
311 North 41 Street  
Omaha, Nebraska 68131

cc: President Ronald Reagan  
Senate Majority Leader  
Robert Dole  
Mr. Marino de Medici (Il Tempo)  
Mr. Heinz Ohfeldt (Die Spiegel)  
Mr. Craig Oliver (CTV, Canada)

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES





DEUTSCHER EVANGELISCHER KIRCHENTAG  
Arbeitsgemeinschaft Juden und Christen

Anschrift:  
D. Martin Stöhr  
Evangelische Akademie  
Arnoldshain  
D-6384 Schmitten 1  
Telefon 06084-514

May 16, 1985

Dear Marc,

enclosed you find the program of our workin group for the Kirchentag in Düsseldorf. As you see, we try to give as broad a scope as possible and I hope you will have time to take part in some of our sessions.

The central office of the Kirchentag didn't have your answer last week when I called, so they could not confirm to me, that you will stay in the same hotel like our group. But I do hope, they can manage it. In any case, it is the Hotel Fürstenhof, Fürstenplatz 3, Düsseldorf. Please let us know you scheduel, so that we can see to it, that someone comes to fetch you at the airport.

As to the penal discussion itself: well, maybe we can still convince Shimon from the israeli embassy to take part in this penal; but as it is on Shabbat, they do not want to appear in public at a christian meeting. And it does not seem to be an excuse. My special interest in this penal discussion is the economic question in as much Europe (the common market) and the western world are responsible for israeli economic possibilities say in matters of export (now that Spain and Portugal are associated members of the common market) or how Israel can be supported so that it does not hav-e to look for markets in the weapon industry or to "sell" computer soft ware by "exporting" itsbest young people to countries that can pay better.

I am looking forward to see you soon and I hope you will enjoy your stay here.

Best regards also from Michael -

*Shalom*

*Edna*

Vorstand:

Edna Brocke M.A., Prof. Dr. Dietrich Goldschmidt, Pfarrer Otto Schenk,  
Akademiedirektor D. Martin Stöhr

# Statements & Speeches



Federal Republic of Germany

Editor: Hans Wiessmann

Vol. VII No. 18, May 21, 1985

## THE GERMAN-JEWISH RELATIONSHIP AFTER BITBURG

SPEECH BY GUNTHER VAN WELL  
AMBASSADOR OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY TO WASHINGTON  
AT THE ANNUAL BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING  
OF B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL  
Washington, D.C., May 21, 1985

I have gratefully accepted your invitation because I was and I am deeply appreciative of its motive, namely to be helpful in the search for mutual understanding and in strengthening our common cause, which is to serve and promote human rights, democratic freedoms, peace and international cooperation, and - above all - to prevent the scourge of intolerance, racism and hatred ever from getting the upper hand again, leading to the abyss of genocide and holocaust.

B'nai B'rith International and the Federal Republic of Germany are on the same side of the struggle for human dignity and a better world. Your organization and the new Germany of the Basic Law have joined forces - always keeping very much in mind the terrible experience of Nazism.

We are committed never to forget Dr. Leo Baeck, your courageous last President in Germany before and during the Hitler regime and the first to call for the reinstatement of European B'nai B'rith after his return from the Theresienstadt concentration camp. We will gratefully remember the visit to the Federal Republic of Germany of your first official delegation under the leadership of Honorary President David Blumberg in 1983. We recognize another token of your organization's solidarity with the new Germany in the bestowing of the distinguished award for humanitarianism on our former chancellor Willy Brandt. My Government has asked me to extend today an invitation to President Kraft and Executive Vice President Thursz to visit the Federal Republic of Germany as our official guests. We welcome the BBYO-German Youth Exchange, which will be implemented this summer to further what B'nai B'rith has always stood for: sound intercultural and interfaith relations. This first exchange of 30 American Jewish and German youth should be the beginning of a determined effort to get our young people together in defining a common purpose for the future. After the experiences of the last weeks, there seems to be a new urgency to have our young people know each other better. Hambach as a symbol for the mission of European youth in shaping a free and democratic Europe should be made

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

better known-also to American Jewish youth. The future of Europe, which is tightly connected with the future of Germany, is of vital importance for America and for Israel. The Soviet Union has moved its power into the center of Europe and further into the Middle East. A new totalitarian ideology is challenging our common Western culture and civilization rooted in Judaeo-Christian values. Let the terrible past and the dangers of the present guide us towards recognizing our common goals and interests. Let us help each other and strengthen each other. Let us build a solid, long-term basis for our relationship so that sudden eruptions, like the painful debate of the last few weeks, can be avoided.

Forty years have passed since the end of World War II. But that war and the twelve years of Nazi dictatorship are not only a part of German history. They have taught us a lesson like no other lesson a nation can be taught. Federal President von Weizsäcker said in his speech before the German Parliament on May 8, 1985: "All of us, whether guilty or not, whether old or young, must accept the past. We are all affected by its consequences and liable for it. The young and old generations must and can help each other to understand why it is vital to keep alive the memories. It is not a case of coming to terms with the past. That is impossible. It cannot be subsequently modified or made not to have happened. However, anyone who closes his eyes to the past is blind to the present. Whoever refuses to remember the inhumanity is prone to new risks of infection." In his speech President von Weizsäcker also referred to the fact that the historical burden and responsibility of all Germans as a nation lies upon both German states. He said: "Recently in Baltimore in the United States, an exhibition on "Jews in Germany" was opened. The ambassadors of both German states accepted the invitation to attend. The host, the President of the Johns Hopkins University, welcomed them together. He stated that all Germans share the same historical development. Their joint past is a bond that links them. Such a bond, he said, could be a blessing or a problem, but was always a source of hope."

The traumatic lesson of our past determined one of the fundamental elements of the policy of the Federal Republic of Germany. We have accepted a responsibility which we share with the other Western democracies and which is the basis also of the work of B'nai B'rith: The protection and promotion of human rights. In his address commemorating the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp Chancellor Kohl said: "The suffering of people, the victims of inhumanity, urge us to preserve peace and freedom, to promote law and justice".

The Jewish community has always been in the forefront of those who fight for human rights. There are many reasons why we should stand together in particular in this area.

For most of us in this room, whose memories span more than the last four decades, 1945 was truly a watershed year, marking in many significant ways the end of an era. 1945 saw the defeat of a tyranny previously unmatched in the historical record; it saw a catastrophe for the Jewish people unequalled in Jewish history. It saw the physical and spiritual collapse of Germany, unprecedented in German history.

Beyond all the grief and desperation, we saw the beginning of a new era. Out of the cataclysm of the Jews and out of the physical and moral ruins of a criminal regime in Germany we saw arise two miraculous achievements in history and in the struggle of human beings to establish free societies - the establishment of both Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany.



We know that the foundations of these two countries are anchored to the foundations of European and American culture. We know that they are inconceivable without the Jewish and Christian tradition, which holds that the dignity of each individual and his creation in the image of God cannot be called into question, and that they constitute the standard on which our order is based.

German-Jewish relations will retain the mark of the holocaust. But let's not forget the times when German-Jewish relations were close and fruitful.

We know that the steadfast commitment of Leo Baeck, Nahum Goldmann, Ben Gurion, Konrad Adenauer to the rebuilding of German-Jewish relations after May 8, 1945, drew strength from the Judaeo-Christian roots of our culture. Their objectives and standards remain valid for us. They knew that it was not possible simply to carry on where the past left off. But this did not prevent them, on the basis of a shared cultural heritage, from talking to each other, from establishing German-Jewish relations in a slow process of getting closer to each other. This process has been more intensive with Israel than with American Jewry. We would wish that the troubling, painful discussion of the last few weeks leads American Jews to join us in new determined efforts to establish closer links also between the Federal Republic of Germany and American Jewish communities. We Germans wish to make our contribution to it. B'nai B'rith - in inviting me today - gives me the opportunity, on behalf of my Government, to say this before a most legitimate representative of Jewish international responsibilities and leadership. The development of a reciprocal relationship of my country with B'nai B'rith is extremely important for two reasons:

- Since the days of the Mendelssohnian Enlightenment one of the most creative, dynamic and vibrant centers of Jewish economic and cultural life had developed in Germany. In fact, the most important in the pre-Hitler era had been that of Germany. At its apogee in 1925, it comprised 564,000 individuals. The history of B'nai B'rith-Germany, which began in Berlin in 1881 and saw its peak in 1924, when district 8 (Germany) with over 15,000 members was the most populous district of the Order, surpassing even the largest American district, speaks for itself.

During the first six years of Nazi rule, 350,000 Jews fled Germany, among them almost every German Jew of intellectual, scientific, or academic stature; 180,000 more perished in the concentration camps. With their exodus and death a magnificent era of German-Jewish culture came to an end. The great majority of my people has, therefore, up to this day never been exposed to what the older generation referred to as the Ashkenazim culture. All Germans of today are in many ways still its heirs without knowing their spiritual fathers.

There are at present 73 Jewish communities in the Federal Republic of Germany with altogether some 30,000 members. These are very few to keep the torch of the Ashkenazim heritage burning. It is American Jewry which has become the main torch bearer.

- In Germany, in Israel and in the United States, we are witnessing a transition from the generation who lived through the war and holocaust to the generation which was born after this inferno. This change cannot but affect German-Jewish relations. The new generation in Germany, too, views its relationship with Jews in the light of moral criteria. But the young

people regard the forming of these relations as a matter of a free political decision, not as an expression of a feeling of guilt.

On the other side there is a new generation of self-confident Israeli citizens emerging who lack the traditional ties with Europe and the United States.

In the United States a generation is coming to adulthood whose knowledge of and attachment to European and Middle East history is less profound and intensive.

The facts and developments I have just mentioned may contribute to more dispassionate relations among these three countries, but they can also lead to alientation.

In order to prevent this, the American-Jewish organizations could play a vital role. Because of the past, our solidarity with the Jewish people and with the state of Israel is an integral part of the ethics of our republic and our policy. Federal President von Weizsäcker has accepted the invitation to pay a state visit to Israel in October, the first visit to Israel by a Federal President ever. This will be a suitable occasion to solemnly restate our commitment to the Jewish people and to the state of Israel.

Germans and Jews - 40 years after the end of World War II - should strive to achieve what Moses Mendelssohn wanted to achieve:

Nach Wahrheit forschen,  
Schönheit lieben,  
Gutes wollen,  
Das Beste tun.

To seek after truth  
to love what is beautiful  
to wish for good  
To do the best.

\*\*\*\*\*

May 17, 1985

Honorable Richard von Weizsacker  
President  
Federal Republic of Germany  
Adenauer Allee 135  
5300 Bonn 1 Germany

Dear Mr. President:

I write to express my profound appreciation to you for the truly historic address you delivered to your Parliament on May 8. It is one of the most perceptive and brilliant statements I have ever read, and it comes at a time when it's so necessary to put things in their proper perspective.

As you know, the American Jewish Committee, which I am privileged to represent in Washington, has made every effort to minimize any permanent damage which may be threatened by the unfortunate Bitburg event. In this connection, you may know that I have been called upon frequently to comment on the situation, and still am. I cannot tell you how very helpful it has been for me to be able to refer to your speech and thereby to tell the TV audiences or others whom I address that the words you spoke reflect today's Germany, and it is that Germany with which we have been reconciling for the last few decades.

Again, my compliments and appreciation for the major contribution you have made to understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Hyman Bookbinder  
Washington Representative

HB:dw

cc: Ambassador Guenther van Well

bc: B. Trosten, M. Tanenbaum  
D. Gordis, M. Yarnon  
Wolfgang Pordzik



# *International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, Inc.*

One Park Avenue, Suite 1900 • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016

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SARAH L. DUCORSKY  
*Secretary*

May 17, 1985

Dear Friends:

For the past two months one issue has posed an unprecedented challenge to the Jewish community in the United States: the appearance of President Reagan at the German military cemetery in Bitburg where 49 Waffen-SS soldiers lie buried. The President's trip to Germany to attend the economic summit of the Western powers coincided with the May 8 anniversary of the Nazi surrender and the end of World War II in Europe. It was widely expected that the President would use this occasion to pay homage to the victims of war, including the 6 million Jews who perished in the Holocaust, by visiting a site of a concentration camp in Germany. It would have also been an appropriate place to underscore the emergence of a new Germany, a democracy firmly allied with the West, which, during the past 40 years, has made significant efforts to overcome the terrible legacy of the Third Reich. Regrettably, insensitivity to the emotions of millions of people, survivors of the Holocaust, other victims of the Nazi regime, the American war veterans, and all others who remember the depth of evil that Hitler and Nazism represented, and the political bungling by the President and the West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, combined to turn this opportunity into its opposite -- a ceremony that, regardless of intentions, became a tribute to the perpetrators of Nazi crimes, and a gesture of rehabilitation of the SS murderers.

As the issue developed in March and April, the International Network became the leader among Jewish organizations in protesting these plans. At the March 23 press conference the President explained that he would not visit Dachau, the site of the first concentration camp set up by the Nazis, because he saw no point in imposing "unnecessary" guilt on the Germans, few among whom were old enough to remember the atrocities. Unfortunately, this statement provoked almost no response from the established Jewish leadership. Mario M. Cuomo, governor of New York, and Menachem Rosensaft were virtually alone in publicly condemning the President. On March 30, the New York Times published an Op-Ed article by Rosensaft, which pointed out the errors in Reagan's statement and criticized the plan to omit the visit to Dachau.

A few days later the White House announced the plan to visit Bitburg. Apparently, the lack of strong public reaction to the March 23 press conference led the President's staff to believe that the Bitburg ceremony would not cause too much of an uproar. In response to the wave of protests raised by Jewish and veteran organizations, and the criticism in virtually the entire media, the White House hastily amended Reagan's travel plans to add a Presidential visit to Bergen-Belsen. Evidently, the administration believed that homage to SS-men could be balanced by laying a wreath in memory of their victims. Despite continuing outrage, and the televised plea by Elie Wiesel to Reagan not to go to Bitburg, the White House refused to drop it from the President's itinerary.

On April 21 the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors opened its Inaugural Assembly in Philadelphia. Despite misgivings by some survivor leaders who were reluctant to attack President Reagan, Rosensaft delivered an impassioned speech in front of the Liberty Hall, condemning the President for creating "a moral crisis of unprecedented proportions" by tying the Bitburg and Bergen-Belsen visits into "an obscene package deal." If the President did not eliminate the Bitburg visit, challenged Rosensaft, survivors and children of survivors should go to Germany to protest, so that the President would have to see them as he proceeded to honor the memory of the SS.

Immediately after the conclusion of the Gathering, officers of the Network began planning the protest in Germany. Since it was expected that the Bitburg site would attract large crowds of demonstrators who intended to use the Reagan visit as an occasion to press their own political agendas, such as the Green Party, the nuclear freeze movement, and other anti-American groups, we decided to stage our protest in Bergen-Belsen. The symbolic significance of the site where tens of thousands of Jewish victims lay buried seemed to us much more appropriate than the vicinity of a German cemetery. Our presence at Bergen-Belsen would have unmistakable legitimacy and thus have a greater impact. We also wanted to combine our protest with a memorial ceremony to honor the victims of the Holocaust.

We thus decided to send a delegation of Network leaders and activists to stand at the entrance to Bergen-Belsen as Reagan came in, with the intention of making clear that, in light of his intention to lay a wreath at Bitburg two hours later, his presence at Belsen constituted a desecration, because, for the first time since the liberation, the site would be used for blatantly political purposes. As our preparations proceeded, the Network received public support from only two Jewish organizations, the World Jewish Congress and the World Federation of Bergen-Belsen Survivors, particularly Sam Bloch, Hadassah Rosensaft, and Norbert Wollheim.

Menachem and I met with the Consul General of West Germany in New York, Dr. Peter Sympher, requesting his assistance in securing a demonstration permit. Through his good offices we were put in contact with the police authorities in Lower Saxony. They were very cooperative and courteous but turned out to be powerless: all security arrangements concerning the President's trip had to be cleared with the White House staff which had in the meantime set up operations in Bonn. All efforts to contact them and secure access to the site proved to be of no avail. Telephone calls made by Rosensaft from Israel went unreturned, and my efforts to contact the State Department in Washington were also frustrated, despite the personal intervention on our behalf by Sigmund Strochlitz, member of the US Holocaust Memorial Council, with a high State Department official.

On May 3, in Jerusalem, at a press conference held together with Sam Bloch, professor Yehuda Bauer of the Hebrew University, and Rositta Kenigsberg, Rosensaft stated: "President Reagan has accomplished in Germany what would be impermissible in America: denial of freedom of assembly and freedom of speech."

Meanwhile, in New York, Jean Rosensaft and Dr. Bonnie Maslin, wife of Dr. Yehuda Nir, a survivor who joined the delegation to Belsen, enlisted the assistance of Nina Rosenwald, Aaron Ziegelman, and Joel Boyarski, all of whom are prominent in the Jewish community, and together brought the situation to the attention of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York. On May 4 Senator Moynihan devoted his entire national radio broadcast, made in response to Reagan's weekly radio talk, to the fact that we were being prevented by the administration from holding our demonstration at Bergen-Belsen while the President entered the memorial site. We learned later that Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware had also made intense efforts to help us in this matter.

The delegation, consisting of about 50 persons, held a press conference in New York before departure. Hadassah Rosensaft, a survivor of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, Eva Fogelman, Stephen Tencer, Tom Teicholz and I explained the purpose of the trip and the form our protest would take. Similar press conferences were held in Hannover for the West German and international press. In addition to Rosensaft, Kenigsberg, Fogelman, Tencer, Teicholz and myself, the delegation included the following leaders of the Network: Michael Korenblit, Sarah Ducorsky, Esther Fink, Rebecca Knaster, Joyce Celnik, Charles Silow, Bernard Kent, Jeanette Friedman-Sieradski, and Ritalynne Brechner. We were also joined by professor Henry Friedlander of Brooklyn College, a survivor, who provided invaluable advice and assistance throughout the trip. In Germany our group was joined by Jack Eisner, president of the Holocaust Survivors Memorial Foundation.

Despite the efforts of the White House to stonewall us, we received help and cooperation from the authorities in Lower Saxony who provided our bus with a police escort, enabling us to cross all the checkpoints on the road to Bergen-Belsen. On Sunday, May 5, immediately after Reagan left Belsen by helicopter, we were allowed to enter the Memorial site. We lay roses at the Jewish Memorial and sang Ani Maamin. Menachem Rosensaft spoke on behalf of the delegation. His speech was followed by remarks made by Kalman Sultanik, a survivor and Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress, and Jack Eisner. Stephen Tencer read El Mole Rachamim, and the ceremony concluded with the saying of Kaddish and singing of the Zog Nit Kein Mol. In this way we paid homage to the memory of the victims and expressed our protest against the way they were exploited by the President.

Enclosed are some of the press accounts of our demonstration. They prove that, despite obstacles, we were correct in proceeding with our protest, and that we have accomplished our goal. We were helped by a number of individuals. In addition to those mentioned above, the officers would like to express their gratitude to Walter Kirschenbaum, who, together with Tom Teicholz helped us coordinate press briefings, Naomi Kabak and Kathy Golan of Kenness International, who made all travel arrangements, and Joseph Tekulsky and Solomon Zynstein, two other leaders of the survivors who gave us their encouragement and support. Above all, we are grateful to all those who, moved by a sense of moral outrage and deep concern that Bitburg would become a symbol of rehabilitation of Nazi crimes, offered to join the Network at their own expense, and came to be with us in Bergen-Belsen.

We shall keep you advised of all continuing developments and our future plans. With all good wishes,



Jerzy B. Warman

30. Mai 1985 / nn

An die  
Teilnehmer der Podiumsdiskussion  
"Was können wir vor der Nahostlösung für Israel tun?"

Sehr verehrte Frau Hamm-Brücher,  
sehr geehrte Herren!

Sie haben dankenswerterweise Ihre Beteiligung an einer Podiumsdiskussion auf dem Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchentag in Düsseldorf zugesagt:

"Was können wir vor der Nahostlösung für Israel tun?"

Samstag, 8. Juni 1985, 10.30 Uhr bis 13.00 Uhr  
in der Stadthalle, Saal 1, Fischerstr. 20 (Pempelfort).

An der Podiumsdiskussion werden sich insgesamt beteiligen:

Dr. Hildegard Hamm-Brücher, MdB, Staatsminister a.D., München  
Pfarrer Michael Krupp, Jerusalem  
Senatsrat a.D. Hellmut Sieglerschmidt, Berlin  
Botschaftsattaché Shimon Stein, Bonn (angefragt)  
Journalist Bert Stoop, Amsterdam  
Rabbiner Dr. Marc Tanenbaum, American Jewish Committee, New York  
Prof. Manfred Zabel, Wilnsdorf.

Ich selbst habe die Moderation übernommen. Als "Anwalt des Publikums" wird an dieser mitwirken:

Pfarrer i.R. Johannes Müller, Aktion Sühnezeichen -  
Friedensdienste, Berlin.

Der Ablauf der Podiumsdiskussion ist gedacht wie folgt:

Zunächst werde ich Sie vorstellen und eine kurze Einführung über die Sicht der Probleme des Staates Israel seitens der deutschen Freunde geben. Sodann werde ich mindestens einige von Ihnen - je nachdem, wie jeder von Ihnen zu Wort kommen möchte - bitten, die Diskussion mit kurzen statements von 5 Minuten einzuleiten. Ich bitte Sie dabei darauf zu achten, daß beabsichtigt ist, besonders die politischen und vor allem die wirtschaftlichen Verantwortlichkeiten der Europäischen Gemeinschaft und der USA für das Existenzrecht Israels und dessen ökonomische Sicherung zu erörtern. Dagegen kann es nicht darum gehen, innerisraelische Spannungen über den Weg zum Frieden sowie Israels Verhältnis zu den arabischen Staaten und zur PLO zum eigentlichen Gegenstand der Diskussion werden zu lassen. Im Titel der Veranstaltung ist mit Bedacht "vor der Nahostlösung" gesagt, denn diese zu erörtern, wäre nach früheren Erfahrungen fehl am Platze und fruchtlos.

Hieran wird sich eine Diskussion unter den Podiumsteilnehmern anschließen, die bis ca. 11.45 Uhr dauern mag. Währenddessen sind die Zuhörer eingeladen, kurze Stellungnahmen und Fragen an die Podiumsteilnehmer schriftlich zum Podium an Pfr. Müller zu geben. Dieser wird die Fragen sortieren, ggf. bündeln und zur Beantwortung an die Podiumsteilnehmer weiterleiten. Von 12.40 Uhr bis 13.00 Uhr sollte Zeit für abschließende statements bleiben.

So weit der geplante Rahmen. Es ist nach aller Erfahrung dringend, daß die Podiumsteilnehmer sich vorweg etwas miteinander absprechen, damit die statements aufeinander und in ihrer Reihenfolge abgestimmt sowie die Richtung der weiteren Diskussion ein wenig geplant werden können. Ich lade Sie deshalb zu einer Vorbesprechung ein zu:

Freitag, 7. Juni 1985, 13.30 - 14.45 Uhr  
Besprechungsraum der Arbeitsgemeinschaft  
Juden und Christen beim DEKT,  
Stadthalle, 2. Obergeschoß  
Fischerstraße 20 (Pempelfort).

Sollten Sie noch Rückfragen haben, so werde ich - wenn nicht zufällig andernorts - jedenfalls in der Unterkunft der AG Juden und Christen: Hotel Fürstenhof, Fürstenplatz 3, Düsseldorf, erreichbar sein.

In der Hoffnung auf ein gutes Gespräch wünsche ich uns allen

Shalom!

Ihr





**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** May 31, 1985

**to** Marc Tanenbaum

**from** David Geller

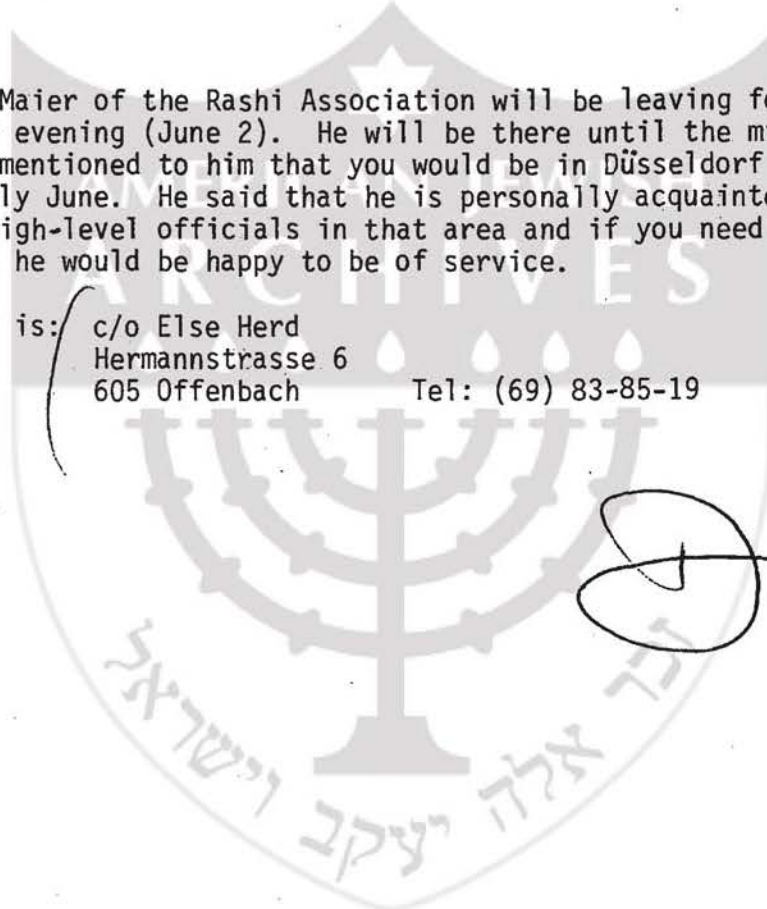
**subject** Dr. Joseph Maier of Rashi offering assistance re contacts in Düsseldorf

Dr. Joseph Maier of the Rashi Association will be leaving for Germany this Sunday evening (June 2). He will be there until the middle of August. I mentioned to him that you would be in Düsseldorf for a few days in early June. He said that he is personally acquainted with a number of high-level officials in that area and if you need any assistance, he would be happy to be of service.

His address is: c/o Else Herd  
Hermannstrasse 6  
605 Offenbach Tel: (69) 83-85-19



DG:DG



THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

1220 S.W. Morrison, Suite 930  
Portland, Oregon 97205

To: *Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum*

From: Susan Abravanel

For your information  As we discussed

Your comments  As promised

Please share with *Harold Applebaum*

Remarks:

*Bitburg & So. Africa*

## Letter To The President Of The United States Of America

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Sir:

*We hold the greatest respect for your position as our nation's leader and we have no question that you are a person of good will. We know that you seek reconciliation. We understand how recent events have led you into a series of decisions which have raised clouds over your pending trip to Germany. For this we are sorry.*

*Nevertheless, the members of our organization, dedicated to the reconciliation of the Jewish and Christian communities in Oregon, ask you not to visit the cemetery at Bitburg. We affirm the words of Elie Wiesel, "The issue here is not politics but good and evil.*

*And we must never confuse them."*

*The Oregon Holocaust Resource Center joins us in this request as do many other Oregonians. The attached signature pages bear witness to our common concern.*

*Please Mr. President, do not visit Bitburg!*

*Sincerely,*

The Reverend Raymond V. Kearns

Rabbi Josua Stampfer

The Rev. Rodney I. Page

Clifford Lunde, Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Rustin M. Kimsey

The Rt. Rev. Matthew Bigliardi

The Rev. John Matthew

Bishop Calvin McConnell

The Most Rev. Cornelius M. Power

The Most Rev. Paul Waldschmidt

The Rev. Thomas M. Castlen

The Rev. Glenn E. Camper

The Rev. Paul Swanson

The Rev. Gregory E. Page

EMO Newsletter

Düsseldorf, 8. Juni 1985

Die Arbeitsgemeinschaft Juden und Christen beim DEKT hat auf dem Kirchentag in Düsseldorf eine Reihe von Veranstaltungen durchgeführt. Gegenstand der Vorträge und Diskussionen waren:

- Die Verantwortung der Deutschen 40 Jahre nach Auschwitz,
- Das Selbstverständnis Israels,
- Die Bedeutung des Majdanek-Prozesses,
- Die Frage, was wir vor der Nahost-Lösung für Israel tun können,
- Die Konsequenzen für Theologie und Kirche aus einem neuen Verhältnis zwischen Juden und Christen

Die Teilnehmer an den Veranstaltungen haben mit Erleichterung und Zustimmung die Rede Richard von Weizsäckers zum 8. Mai 1945/85 gehört. Gleichwohl sind sie nach wie vor alarmiert. Im Zeichen der für die Bundesrepublik proklamierten "geistig-moralischen Erneuerung" drohen aufrichtige Bemühungen um eine Verarbeitung der Geschehnisse in Deutschland von 1933-1945 und deren Vorgeschichte zu ersticken. Die Gedenkfeier in Bergen-Belsen und Bitburg aus Anlaß des 8. Mai, deren Zustandekommen und die über sie geführten Diskussionen lassen dies deutlich erkennen. Die Ermordeten mit jenen, die Europa mit Krieg und Vernichtung überzogen hatten, im gleichen Atem als Opfer ehren zu wollen, nahm den Opfern erneut ihre Würde. In der Gleichsetzung liegt zudem eine Verfälschung der Geschichte, die das deutsche Volk in ein unaufrichtiges Verhältnis zu einer eigenen Vergangenheit führt und ihm damit schweren Schaden zufügt.

Wir sind beschämt, daß Kirchenleitungen und Synoden den Protest gegen dieses Vorgehen demonstrierenden Juden überlassen haben, die an den Toren des ehemaligen KZ von Polizei fortgetragen wurden. Repräsentanten der evangelischen und katholischen Kirche solidarisierten sich nicht mit ihnen; sie nahmen vielmehr - im Gegensatz zu Repräsentanten der Juden - an der Gedenkfeier in Bergen-Belsen teil. Ihr Auftreten und ihre Aussage sind dem Schicksal der Opfer wie dem der Überlebenden nicht gerecht geworden. Angesichts des Schweigens der kirchlichen Organe und des Verhaltens der Repräsentanten der Kirchen fragen wir uns, ob die Synodalbeschlüsse über ein neues, positives Verhältnis zu den Juden, die von den Synoden im Rheinland, in Baden, in Berlin und von der Reformierten Kirche in Nordwestdeutschland gefaßt wurden, Papier bleiben werden, statt zu solidarischem Handeln mit den Juden im täglichen Leben zu führen.

Ähnlich beunruhigt sind wir über das Gesetz gegen die sogenannte Ausschwitz-Lüge und die im Zusammenhang damit geführten Diskussionen. Die Verbindung und damit Gleichbehandlung des Leugnens der Verbrechen von Ausschwitz mit dem Leugnen durch den Krieg verursachter Verbrechen an Deutschen bei der Vertreibung in dem selben Straftatbestand und dessen Einordnung in den strafrechtlich völlig unangemessenen Bereich einer Beleidigung zeigen eine beschämende Aufrechnungsmentalität. Dieser Vorgang ist ein weiterer Beleg dafür, daß weite Teile unseres Volkes noch immer die Augen vor der Ungeheuerlichkeit der vergangenen Verbrechen zu verschließen und sich notwendigen Konsequenzen zu entziehen suchen.

Unter der Besorgnis erregenden widersprüchlichen Situation in der Bundesrepublik leiden nicht zuletzt alle Bestrebungen, zum Staat Israel und seinen Bürgern ein offenes und verständnisvolles Verhältnis zu finden zu einem Zeitpunkt, da dieses Land sich in einer besonders schweren wirtschaftlichen, politischen und vor allem geistigen Krise befindet.

Wir fordern nachdrücklich:

1. Die Bundesregierung möge alle ihr zur Verfügung stehenden Wege und Mittel nutzen, eine Friedensregelung in Nahost zu fördern, die Existenzrecht und Existenzmöglichkeit des Staates Israel sichern. Dazu gehören besonders:
  - Förderung des direkten Handels mit Israel wie auch des Handels der Europäischen Gemeinschaft mit Israel.
  - Kein Verkauf von Waffen an arabische Staaten, kein Verkauf von Waffen an Israel.
  - Verstärkte Förderung des kulturellen Austauschs mit Israel, so etwa des Studiums in Israel, der Weiterbildung Erwachsener in Israel und des planmäßigen Jugendaustauschs mit Israel möglichst unter deutscher Beteiligung an der Reisesteuer Israelis.
2. Die Regierung von Bund, Ländern und Gemeinden, die Kirchen und ihre Gemeinden, die Massenmedien, die Gewerkschaften, wie die Verbände von Handel und Industrie mögen alles in ihrer Macht stehende tun, daß über die Ereignisse in Israel wie über die Ereignisse in den Israel umgebenden Ländern möglichst vollständige und allseitige Information verbreitet wird. Es gilt, Israel-Feindschaft, Antizionismus, Antisemitismus, neuerlich bezeichnet als "Judenfeindschaft" mit aller Schärfe zu begegnen.

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

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



DRAFT

## AJC ACTIVITIES RELATING TO GERMANY

Following the catastrophe of the Nazi era, the AJC focused much of its attention and energies on the ~~worrisome~~ <sup>disturbing</sup> anti-Semitic ~~phenomena~~ <sup>manifestations</sup> occurring in post World War-II Germany. This document will briefly describe several of the projects and activities in which the AJC has been involved over the past three and a half decades.

### German Educators Project

From 1960 through 1968, the American Jewish Committee conducted a program of bringing selected German educators to the United States to study our methods of teaching in a democracy, and to adapt what they had learned in this country to the educational programs and procedures in German schools.

Prompted by anti-Semitic manifestations in the 50's ~~and~~ especially the notorious "Swastika Outbreak" in 1959 and early 1960, the AJC conceived of this program as a way of overcoming the authoritarian traditions <sup>that penetrated German culture much so early,</sup> ~~so deeply ingrained in the history of Germany~~ as well as the lingering effects of Nazi ideology. Adding urgency to the

situation at that time, was the conclusion reached by a German survey in 1959, that virtually nothing about the <sup>Nazi</sup>~~Hitler~~ period was being taught in the schools.

The program for the German educators was devised and conducted in cooperation with the Institute for International Education, located in New York and administered by that organization in collaboration with the American Jewish Committee. In Germany, the program was administered by the Institute for Social Research of the University of Frankfurt, headed by the late Professor Max Horkheimer, consultant in Germany to the American Jewish Committee.

By the time the program was terminated as a result of the recession in West Germany, 15 teams totalling approximately 100 carefully selected German educators, came to the United States. One of the more significant outgrowths of this program was the establishment in 1965 of the Deutsche Vereinigung fur Politische Bildung (German Association for Political Education), whose objective was to intergrate the activities of all teachers of political subjects in German public, secondary schools, universities and adult education programs. A number of publications also resulted from this program.

### The German Textbook Project

Concerned about history textbooks used in West German secondary schools, the AJC commissioned a study by a leading West German educator, Dr. Wolfgang Bobke. The study - "Jews in West German History Textbooks" analysed nine texts, embracing 34 volumes, which constituted a representative selection of books used in history classes. The study found that while the newer books contained a substantially full account of the Nazi persecution of the Jews, they fell short of providing an adequate historical background of the European and especially German anti-Semitism that led to the Nazi era.

### The Oberammergau Passion Play

The American Jewish Committee has had a long involvement with officials of the Oberammergau community and with religious leaders in West Germany. Beginning in August 1977, a delegation of AJC leaders met on 4 successive occasions with Oberammergau officials in Munich and in the village itself, to present the findings of a comprehensive study of ~~earlier~~ <sup>the Passion Play</sup> texts and to communicate concern regarding the ~~remaining~~ anti-Jewish impact of the drama. These were the first extended dialogues between the Oberammergau authorities and representative Jewish spokesmen. In addition, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum was invited to conduct the first seminar on Jewish-Christian relations with Oberammergau villagers in November 1978. A symposium on "The

"Passion of Jesus" was co-sponsored by the prestigious Bavarian Catholic Academy in Munich and the AJC, and made a significant impact on German religious and academic circles. In 1980, Judy Banki of AJC's Interreligious Affairs Department, edited a booklet entitled "What Viewers Should Know About the Oberammergau Passion Play, 1980", analysing the drama and providing both historical background information and commentary of Christian scholars. In 1984 two additional AJC delegations went to Oberammergau under the direction of Rabbi Rudin and Judy Banki. *James*

#### AJC/Konrad Adenauer Exchange Program

Since 1980, the American Jewish Committee and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation of West Germany, a political organization associated with the Christian Democratic Party, <sup>(CDU)</sup> have co-sponsored an exchange program for future leaders of the Federal Republic of Germany and the American Jewish community. The program, designed and co-ordinated by William Trosten, was meant to provide young Jewish leaders with an objective view of the "New Germany" and its 30 year history and accomplishments. For the German group it provided the opportunity to study the American Jewish community and its contributions to the social, cultural, political and economic life in the United States. The program has been extremely successful <sup>in improving understanding between</sup> ~~and provided the AJC with access to future~~ influential leaders in West Germany <sup>and the American Jewish</sup> ~~community.~~ *community.*

### AJC/Fridrich Ebert Foundation Exchange Program

In 1984, a group of AJC officers accepted the invitation of the Fridrich Ebert Foundation connected with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) of West Germany. In return AJC hosted a reception for a number of representatives from the Ebert Foundation. In 1985, a second group of AJC officers took part in this program.

### AJC Chapter Leadership Delegation

In October of 1984, an AJC Chapter Leadership delegation visited West Germany and East Germany, becoming the first such Jewish delegation to visit East Germany since the end of World War II. A strong relationship was developed with the leadership of the small Jewish community in East Germany and AJC arranged for a German-speaking rabbi from the United States to lead services for the High Holidays in East Berlin. In addition, the AJC arranged for the shipment to East Germany of a quantity of kosher wine, Jewish prayer books and other source material.

### The RASHI Association

In 1976, the AJC agreed to help organize an organization of scholars and others interested in European Jewry, devoted to the preservation of Jewish monuments and other structures that remained standing in countries occupied by the Nazis. This organization has been helpful in eliciting interest and financial help on the part of the German Government, resulting in major repairs to structures such as the RASHI Lehrhaus and other structures in Worms.

### Other Activities

\* The AJC has been involved in a number of other activities relating to West Germany. Since the end of World War II, we have participated with other organizations in monitoring the cases of alleged Nazi criminals living in the United States. We have maintained close contact with members of the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations as well as with the similar office which had functioned under the aegis of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. In addition, we have conducted press conferences for personalities such as Beata Klarsfeld and her husband Serge relating to the cases of Klaus Barbie and others. We have also conducted press conferences for Tuvia Friedman relating to his search for Mengele. A number of AJC radio and TV programs have been devoted to the topic of Nazi criminals in the U.S. and abroad.

\* In December of 1981 the American Jewish Committee, under the leadership of Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum and Zachariah Shuster, and the Evangelical Academy of Arnoldshain, the Research Project Group of, "Judaism in Catholic Religious Instruction" at the Pedagogic Catechetical Seminar at the University of Freiburg; and the Research Project Group "Judaism in Evangelical Religious Instruction" at the Research Group on History and Religion of Judaism, at the University of Duisburg, co-sponsored a major conference of German religious and secular educators devoted to an examination of what the German school system is teaching about Nazism, anti-Semitism, Jews and Judaism.

\* In July 1984 Howard Friedman, AJC President, was the first Jewish leader to be invited to address the observances marking the 40th anniversary of the effort to assassinate Hitler and overthrow the Nazi regime.

\* In 1947 and 1948, AJC cooperated with American officials in preparing articles and other materials for publication in Germany. In 1950, AJC published The New Threat from Germany by Arthur Mayer, Chairman of AJC's Committee on Germany.

\* AJC leaders have met privately with the top officials in Germany including Chancellor's Konrad Adenauer, Ludwig Ehrhardt, Helmut Schmidt, Helmut Kohl and Willy Brandt.

\* In 1979 there was an AJC Board of Governors Mission to Germany under the leadership of Richard Maass to discuss the issue of the German Statute of Limitations on War Crimes. While in Germany they were invited to the opening session of the Bundestag, and later met with Chancellor Schmidt.

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wie erwartet, fanden die themenbereiche ueber das gottesbild, staat und buerger und die schoepfung den groessten zuspruch. unter den umweltfragen war ueberraschend besonders stark die nachfrage nach themen, die mit gen-technologie zusammenhaengen.

die wachsende teilnahme von katholiken als mitarbeiter, teilnehmer und offizielle gaeste beim kirchentag entsprach der allmaenlichen evangelisch-katholischen annaeherung. ('faz', 10.6.)

der rabbiner marc tanenbaum, einer der prominentesten sprecher des judentums in den usa, rief die deutschen am 8.6. beim kirchentag zur solidaritaet mit israel auf. ('wams')

die zwangsumsiedlung der schwarzen bevoelkerung in suedafrika wird nach ansicht des generalsekretars des suedafrikanischen kirchenrates (sacc), christian beyers naude, trotz gegenteiliger ankuendigungen der suedafrikanischen regierung weitergehen. auf einem 'suedafrikatag' des deutschen evangelischen kirchentags meinte naude, die ankuendigung der regierung sei nur ein versuch, die gewaltsamen zwangsumsiedlungen, die weltweit aufsehen erregten, 'raffiniert' weiterzufuehren. (dpa)

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# Institute of Documentation of the Holocaust Era, Inc.

53 Park Place, Suite 503 • New York, NY 10007 • (212) 349-1861

10.6. 1985 כ"א סיון

א.מ.ל.

לכבוד

שר המשפטים  
מר משה ניסים  
ירושלים

כבוד שר המשפטים!

אחרי שיחתנו בכנסת בחודש שעבר הייתי ב-20 במאי בפרנקפורט ושוחחתי עם החובע הכללי שחוקר את פרשת מנגלה. אחרי שיחה ממושכת, הוא הסביר לי שממשלת גרמניה לא תוכל להעמיד את מנגלה למשפט בגרמניה אם הוא יובא ע"י קבוצה באופן בלתי ליגאלי.

אך ורק על פי שלושה תנאים הם יכולים לשפוט את מנגלה בגרמניה:  
א. שיזהו אותו שהוא הוא.  
ב. שיעצרו אותו באופן ליגאלי.  
ג. שיעבירו אותו באופן חוקי לגרמניה מהמדינה שנעצרו.

אם ימולאו שלושת התנאים הנ"ל, יקבל האיש או הקבוצה את הפרס של מיליון מארק, אחרת אף פרוטה.

רציתי לשכנע אותו, שגרמניה תחן - 100.000 מארק למי שיזהה אותו. על כך לא הסכים החובע וטען, שזה נגד החוק הגרמני. הוא יעץ לי וביקש שמדינת ישראל תעשה זאת, או ארגון יהודי נאמן בארה"ב.

בשיחתי איתך אמרתי לי, שמדינת ישראל ומשרד המשפטים תעמיד את מנגלה למשפט, ללא שום תנאים, העיקר שיביאו אותו לישראל - קבוצה או כל צורה אחרת אז יקבלו את הפרס המלא של מיליון דולר ממשרד המשפטים.

אולי תסכים הפעם להכריז על 100.000 דולר מי שיזהה את מנגלה עתה והמסטה המקומית תבדוק את זהותו יחד עם מומחים של גרמניה-ישראל וארה"ב.

אם הוא-הוא, אזי הלחץ יהיה כל כך גדול בעולם. מטעם ארה"ב, מדינת ישראל וגרמניה שהמדינה בה יזהו את מנגלה תתבייש לשמור עליו ולחפות על מעשיו וכן יוציאו אותו למשפט או לגרמניה או לישראל.

אנא תענה לעצתי בחיוב ותכריז על 100.000 דולר מי שיזהה אותו ואת מקום מגוריו עם תצלום אחרון וכל הסימנים הנחוצים. כמו כן מיליון דולר, מי שיביא אותו לישראל למשפט.

הנני מעביר אליך את כתב האשמה על מנגלה 15 עמודים שקיבלתי מהחובע ב-20 במאי 1985 כמו כן את ההודעה על הפרס של מיליון מארק. גם את התצלום של ד"ר רודולף קעפלצ'ר ראש העירייה של גינסבורג ששוחחתי עמו בינואר השנה והוא סירב להבטיח לי, אם מנגלה ימות בקרוב, שלא יתן לקבור אותו בעיר גינסבורג. על כך לא הסכים.

הנני מעביר לך חומר זה דרך הקונסוליה הישראלית בניו-יורק.

אהיה בארה"ב עד אמצע יולי, כלומר עוד חודש.

בברכה שלך

טוביה פרידמן

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THOUGHTS AFTER BITBURG

by Abraham H. Foxman  
Associate National Director  
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith

Bitburg is no longer inconspicuous. It has entered into the long memory of our people.

It was a classic case of the road to Hell being paved with good intentions.

Selecting Bitburg cemetery as the site for reconciliation between the adversaries of World War II was thoughtless, insensitive and an unintended affront to the memory of all those murdered by the SS in the death camps and on the battlefields of the Bulge.

It called for protest and we were not silent.

Our protests were heard. Of that there is no doubt. Yet in a tragicomic sequence of misunderstandings, miscalculations, mistakes, misstatements and missed opportunities, they were not heeded.

And so the time has come to look back with the 20/20 vision of hindsight to see what went wrong and why, to assess the damage and to learn from the experience.

No one opposed and practically everyone favored the concept of reconciliation four decades after the guns were stilled but it was fatally flawed by the poor staff work that went into the site selection.

That original error was compounded when those involved viewed the prospect of any shift as a threat to face, as surrender to pressure and, most far fetched of all, as an implication of collective guilt for the generation of West Germans with no connection to the Third Reich.

The issue somehow was turned into a test of will as the head of state of each country felt that it put his reputation in jeopardy. Although President Reagan openly apologized for reopening painful wounds, neither he nor Chancellor Kohl was able to acknowledge error but, in dif-

(more)

ferent ways, plunged deeper and deeper into quicksand with their efforts to explain the unexplainable.

As polls revealed, Americans were divided into those who supported the presidential wreath laying among SS graves and those who saw it as a rehabilitation of the Nazi enemy. For some, it became just another Jewish issue. They said it was time to let bygones be bygones and they diminished the Holocaust into just another wartime atrocity. They did not walk in Jewish shoes or see it with Jewish eyes as a unique historic expression of governmental malevolence directed at an entire people because of their faith. On the other hand, Jews, veterans and other protesters could not understand why their fellow Americans could not see it as a gesture toward forgiveness of the Nazis and a repudiation of American ethics. It indicated that memory of the genocide had dimmed and that the resonance of its moral lesson had faded.

Inevitably, Bitburg damaged a well meaning American President who had demonstrated his sympathy with the Jewish people by his support of Israel, his dramatic use of the Air Force to rescue Ethiopian Jews and his outspoken support of Soviet Jewry.

Across the ocean, the incident stirred up the stench of anti-Semitism. It became clear that West Germany was not completely purged, that while desirable, reconciliation papered over a poisonous problem that still persists in pockets of the population.

Nevertheless, the situation provided some credits along with the debits. The Jewish community spoke in one clear voice. While not changing the site, the Administration attempted a measure of atonement by visiting Bergen-Belsen where President Reagan spoke with eloquent sincerity. Once again, the Holocaust was exposed to the conscience of mankind as at no time since the mass graves were exposed at the liberation of the concentration camps. No doubt, there is greater understanding of its unique horror and greater appreciation of why we Jews have vowed, "Never again."

For us at the Anti-Defamation League, Bitburg directs us to strive with greater intensity and effectiveness in our Holocaust educational programs.

Like the Holocaust, one Bitburg is too many.

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DUSSELFORD, WEST GERMANY - A resolution adopted here last week by the Kirchentag Assembly sharply criticized tendencies in West Germany "to suppress an honest treatment of the events from 1933 to 1945 in Germany" and rejected "a falsification of history which leads the German people to a dishonest relationship with their own past."

The Kirchentag Assembly, sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Churches of West Germany, was attended by an estimated 130,000 German religious, civic, and political leaders who met here from June 5 through 9<sup>1/2</sup>. Some 80,000 of the participants were under 30 years of age.

The resolution was adopted unanimously at a plenary session organized by the Working Group of Jews and Christians of the Kirchentag Assembly. Dr. Dietrich Goldschmidt of Berlin, professor of sociology at the Max Planck Institute, served as chairman of the session.

Dr. Goldschmidt introduced the resolution following an address by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee, and an intense panel discussion by German political, academic, and religious leaders. In his address, Rabbi Tanenbaum called on the West German government and churches to oppose the growing "verbal violence against the Jewish people and Israel," the double standards invoked against Israel and Jews, and he appealed for German political and economic support of Israel especially during this critical period.

In response, the Kirchentag resolution acknowledged that "broad sections of our people still seek still to close their eyes against the horror of past crimes and refuses to draw the necessary consequences." The Evangelical Lutheran statement identified with "relief and agreement" with the speech of West German President Richard von Weizackers on May 8, marking the 40th anniversary of the ending of World War II. In his address before the Bundestag, President von Weizsacker said, "We are not assisted in our task (of commemorating May 8) if we or others spare our feelings. We need and we

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DUSSELDORF, WEST GERMANY - In a resolution sharply critical of the Bitburg cemetery affair





the Kirshentag ~~xxx~~ statement asserted:

"We expressly demand/

~~ix~~ 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." They urged the "furthering of direct trade with Israel as well as direct trade between the EEC and Israel; 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 Israelis' travel tax."

The resolution finally appealed to "the government of the Republic, the states and cities; the church and its communities; the mass media; the trade union, and the associations 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 in 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."

In his address, Rabbi Tanenbaum

said, "The tragic Bitburg cemetery affair has stirred up troubled feelings among millions of Americans - not only Jews - over whether the German people have truly confronted the evil of Nazism and have made a determination to uproot that demonic ideology root and branch. As a result of what I have experienced with you this week, I plan to tell the American people that they can have confidence in you, that there is a whole/<sup>new</sup> generation of young German men and women who are facing the horrors of that terrible past and who are committed to building and defending a genuine democracy. That 'New Germany' is forged in the inspired traditions of the first Chancellors of the Federal Republic, Konrad Adenauer and Kurt Schumacher. They must remain the symbol and inspiration of our reconciliation - not Bitburg

have the strength to look truth straight in the eye - without embellishment and without distortion." He called on the German people to "commemorate the six million Jews who were murdered in German concentration camps," adding that "at the root of their tyranny was Hitler's immeasurable hatred against our Jewish compatriots. Hitler had never concealed this hatred from the public, but made the entire nation a tool of it...The genocide of the Jews is unparalleled in history."

The Kirchentag resolution expressed alarm over "the commemorations in Bergen-Belsen and Bitburg on May 8" for wanting "to honor the murdered in the same breath as those who covered Europe with war and annihilation (that) 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."

The Evangelical Lutherans then said they were "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 the former concentration camps. Representatives of the Protestant and Catholic churches 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."

The Kirchentag resolution then asserted, "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."

Declaring that "Israel finds itself in an especially difficult economic, political and above all spiritual crisis at this time,"