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AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

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Series D: International Relations Activities. 1961-1992

Box 66, Folder 12, Lebanon, 1978.

## THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

**date**           October 12, 1978  
**to**                Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum  
**from**             Rabbi A. James Rudin  
**subject**

I attended the Lebanese Christian rally at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza on Tuesday noon. They had approximately 200 demonstrators from around the country, including Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia as well as New York.

The placards and chanting called for the Syrian army and the PLO to get out of Lebanon. There were several anti-Arafat posters and there was one sign in Hebrew and English demanding that the Syrians leave Lebanon. On inquiry I found that the sign was done by a Wilkes-Barre rabbi.

Mario Cuomo along with various American Lebanese leaders spoke and there was a telegram from Senator Moynihan.

One of the speakers was Judge Michael Shahady, the Vice President of the American Lebanese League in Fall River, Massachusetts. Although the group is overwhelmingly pro-Israel, Shahady publicly said that the "whole world has sold out the Lebanese Christians...Israel has done nothing...Israel has broken her promise...we Lebanese Christians stand alone."

I spoke to the Judge privately and complimented him on his recent letter to the New York Times, but he remained bitter and angry, especially towards the American Jewish community and the Israeli Government. "You have broken your promise. In July we chose Israel over the Arabs and now we are being destroyed. You are doing nothing..."

Despite my interventions he remained unconvinced, and I would not recommend Shahady for any AJC appearances at this time. He is an impressive speaker but filled with anger.

I also met Father Sharbel Lischaa of St. Maron's Church in Philadelphia. He is very friendly towards Israel and the American Jewish community, and especially towards Roger Meltzer and Murray Friedman in Philadelphia. He is a parish priest type and lacks the

power and status of Judge Shahady but Father Lischaa is quite moderate and most supportive of AJC.

The Maronite Bishop Zayek also attended the rally. Tom Bird says that Zayek is basically anti-Israel but at least on Tuesday he thanked me personally for attending the rally.

You will be interested to know that Paul Hait of the New York Board of Rabbis was officially invited to speak and made a three or four minute personal presentation which was well received.

I looked in vain for Father Haddad but no one seemed to know where he was. Rabbi Hait's name was given to the rally's sponsors by Malcolm Hoenlein of the New York CRC.

To sum up, I was told that this was the largest and best organized Lebanese rally in history. There was extensive local TV coverage (Channels 2, 7, 9 and 11). With the exception of Shahady, the speakers both publicly and privately were overwhelmingly pro-Israel and were very appreciative that a representative of the American Jewish Committee attended the demonstration.

It should be noted that the sponsoring organization was the National Liberal Party of Lebanon (Chamoun's group). There is no doubt in my mind that a coalition can be forged between the American Jewish community and the Lebanese community, but it has to be done with the greatest care and delicacy.

AJR:FM

cc: Morris Fine  
Murray Friedman  
Bertram Gold  
Roger Meltzer



**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** October 12, 1978  
**to** Morris Fine  
**from** George Gruen *GG*  
**subject** Lebanese-Christian Demonstrations

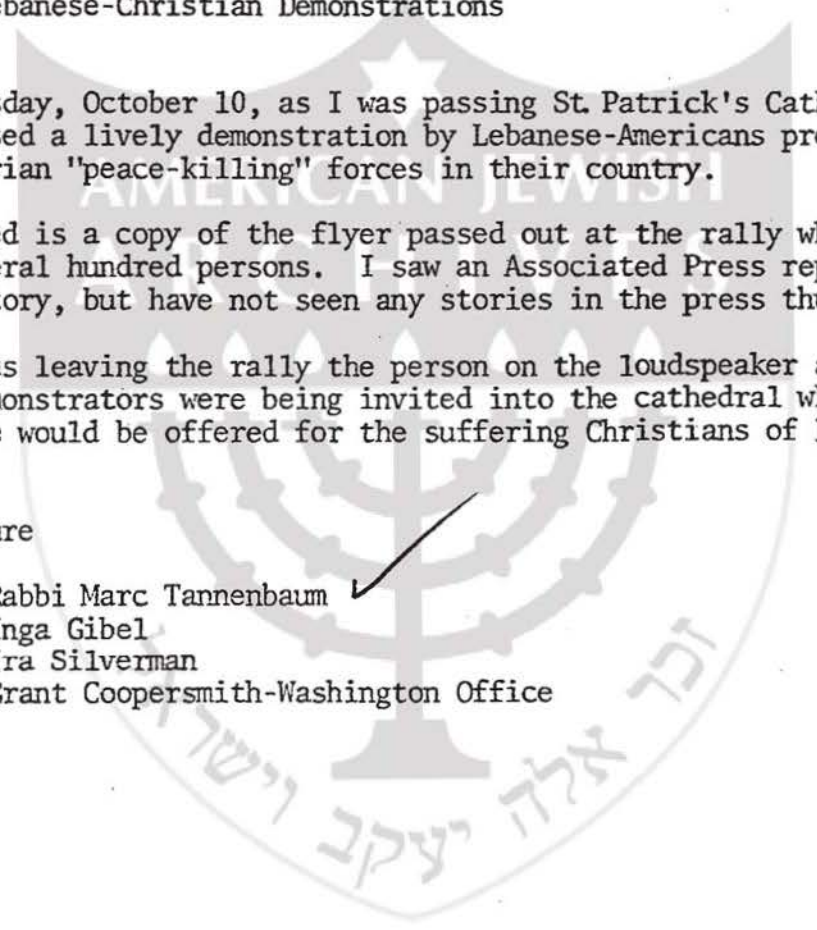
On Tuesday, October 10, as I was passing St. Patrick's Cathedral, I witnessed a lively demonstration by Lebanese-Americans protesting the Syrian "peace-killing" forces in their country.

Attached is a copy of the flyer passed out at the rally which was attended by several hundred persons. I saw an Associated Press reporter phoning in a story, but have not seen any stories in the press thus far.

As I was leaving the rally the person on the loudspeaker announced that the demonstrators were being invited into the cathedral where a special service would be offered for the suffering Christians of Lebanon.

GEG/el  
enclosure

ccs: Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum ✓  
Inga Gibel  
Ira Silverman  
Grant Coopersmith-Washington Office



# LEBANON IS BLEEDING AGAIN!

## Please Stop This Massacre

AFTER four years of bloodshed, destruction and suffering, in a bitter struggle to maintain its security, integrity, sovereignty and democracy, Lebanon is suffering again.

More than 70 thousand Syrian soldiers who are supposed to be peacekeeping in Lebanon have been massacring the Lebanese people, by shelling residential areas and hospitals, especially the Christian sectors of the country. These assaults which began in July, under the guise that they (the Syrians) were trying to control the militia forces, resulted in:

- The killing of many thousands of Christian civilians, including elderly women and children.
- The exodus of 600,000 people from their homes in Eastern Beirut and other areas, where they filled the monasteries, schools, or live in tents, makeshift shelters

or even on the roads.

—The destruction of most hospitals schools, churches, homes, shops, factories, etc. . . .

--Thousands of young people have been kidnapped at Syrian roadblocks and their families can never hear from them.

--Normal life in the country is paralyzed: people cannot go to work for fear of being kidnapped or killed.

--The Lebanese economy is shattered and people cannot get enough food to eat.

**THIS SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENT PEOPLE . . .**

**THIS LOSS OF THE MOST BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS MUST STOP!**

The Lebanese Government is powerless to act in the face of this criminal act directed at its Christian population. We plead with our American compatriots and our Own American Government to protest this barbaric mani-

festation of inhumanity.

The Syrian Government has shown that it intends to realize its long-standing desire of annexing Lebanon to make it a confrontation state against Israel even at the cost of committing genocide against the Christians, who strongly oppose the Syrian occupation of their country.

We are confident that prompted by humanitarian feelings, you will participate with us in denouncing these uncivilized and inhuman acts inflicted by regular armies on a peaceful people that have made great contributions to civilization.

We appeal to our President,

the United States of America and the United Nations to assist in putting an end to the massacre by replacing the Syrian forces with a UN deterrent force; and also, to assist the Lebanese Government to rebuild the national army in order to regain effective authority over its own land and guarantee a peaceful life to all its citizens.

All that the Lebanese people ask is to be able to live in peace.

**HELP SAVE LEBANON**

... a friendly, beautiful, free country.

-- *The Lebanese American Community*  
-- *The American Lebanese League*





# THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

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

*Rabbi Marc  
Tannenbaum*

October 12, 1978

Msgr. Dr. Elias el-Hayek  
Executive Director  
American Lebanese League  
P. O. B. 19522  
Washington, D. C. 20036

Dear Msgr. Hayek:

I was pleased to meet you and hear your moving remarks at the meeting of the NJCRAC this past Monday.

I thought you would be interested in the background memo "Behind the Stereotypes in Lebanon" which we have prepared and just sent out to some 1,700 newspapers, broadcasters, editorial writers, and columnists throughout the country.

I am also enclosing the statement by our President, Richard Maass, issued today, which gives prominent attention to the Lebanese tragedy in the second paragraph.

I look forward to receiving the material you promised to send me from Washington, and to future cooperation to safeguard the fundamental human rights of the besieged Lebanese Christians and indeed to work for a just and lasting peace in which all peoples of the Middle East can live together in tolerance and harmony.

Sincerely yours,

*George E. Gruen*

George E. Gruen, Ph. D  
Director, Israel &  
Middle East Affairs

GEG/el

BEHIND THE STEREOTYPES IN LEBANON

A Background Memorandum

In an attempt to simplify the complex conflict in Lebanon, we often find ourselves using a shorthand that leads to misunderstanding of the nature of the forces involved in that strife-torn country. Here is an attempt to clarify some of the expressions frequently used.

Syrian "Peace-keeping" Forces

The 30,000 Syrian troops, which comprise over 90 percent of the supposedly pan-Arab forces in Lebanon, have been frequently described as a "peace-keeping" force. A true peace-keeping force would have no vested interest in the country where it serves. But Lebanon's eastern neighbor has long had ambitions to incorporate Lebanon into a Greater Syria. Two years ago, Syria sent its army into Lebanon to stem the mounting civil war between Moslem, Christian, and Palestinian factions.

Today, Syria is carrying out a massacre of the Christian population in Beirut. The Syrian "peace-keeping force" has in fact become a force of occupation, inflicting terrible destruction on the lives and property of the Christian community in Lebanon, using the most destructive weapons in its Soviet-supplied arsenal against densely populated residential areas, reducing Christian neighborhoods to rubble, and slaughtering hundreds of innocent men, women, and children.

"Christian Rightists" versus "Moslem Leftists"

Another oversimplification is the frequent use of the terms "Christian rightists" and "Moslem leftists" to describe the opposing sides in the conflict. This leaves the impression that the Christian communities are the reactionary forces and the Moslem communities are the progressive forces in Lebanese society. Yet, for over a century Christians have led in the modernization of Lebanon and played a crucial role in the development of modern Arab nationalism in the Middle East. At the same time, some Christians have been in the forefront of radical Marxist extremism and have led the most violent of the Palestinian terrorist organizations. The war in Lebanon is much more than a socio-economic conflict between rich Christians and poor Moslems. There are rich and poor among all Lebanon's diverse religious communities, and it serves no purpose to perpetuate these stereotypes.

"Israeli-Backed Christian Militias"

Reports on the Lebanese conflict often refer to "Israeli-backed Christian militias," implying that they are somehow puppets of Israel. In fact, religious and communal strife in Lebanon long antedates Israel's creation. It should be recalled that the direct Israeli involvement began as a humanitarian effort to provide medical care through its "Good Fence" on its border with Lebanon-- aid given to both Christians and Moslems fleeing from the violence in the north. Israel's direct military involvement has been motivated primarily by a desire to insure the security of its northern border from raids by Palestinian terrorists operating from Lebanese soil.

\* \* \*

The United States, and indeed all democratic nations, have a common interest with Israel and a moral obligation to protect the Christian Lebanese communities from annihilation at the hands of those who seek to destroy the pluralistic and democratic traditions of what was once the most tolerant and enlightened nation in the Arab world.



# NEWS COMMITTEE

FROM THE

**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  
THURSDAY, OCT. 12, 1978

STATEMENT BY RICHARD MAASS, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
ON THE ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN PEACE TALKS STARTING IN WASHINGTON TODAY

"We hope and pray that the negotiations under President Carter's auspices which begin in Washington today between the representatives of Egypt and Israel will quickly succeed in transforming the Camp David Agreement between Egypt and Israel into a formal treaty of lasting peace.

"The most immediate threat to peace in the Middle East today is the tragic conflict in Lebanon. This grim reality has been underscored in recent days by the gruesome scenes of Lebanese Christian civilians being mercilessly gunned down by Syrian "peace-keeping" forces in Beirut as the Christian refugees sought to flee their bombarded homes. We urge our Government to redouble its international efforts to insure that the Security Council ordered cease-fire is scrupulously observed, that the Syrian occupation forces be withdrawn, and that effective measures be taken to reestablish Lebanon's unity in a manner that protects the rights of the diverse religious and ethnic population groups within Lebanese society and assures that Lebanon not be used as a base for attacks against Israel or its other neighbors.

"The Camp David Framework for Peace in the Middle East opens the door to Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and moderate Palestinians to join the peace-making process. We urge the United States to continue to make it clear to them that only through direct negotiations with Israel can they achieve their legitimate objectives and that the rejectionist policies of Soviet-backed Libya and Iraq are destructive of their own true interests. We trust also that the wavering Saudis will also throw their weight behind the forces for lasting peace in the Middle East."

10/10/78  
8-960-128

Richard Maass, President; Maynard I. Wishner, Chairman, Board of Governors; Morton K. Blaustein, Chairman, National Executive Council; Howard I. Friedman, Chairman, Board of Trustees  
Bertram H. Gold, Executive Vice President

Washington Office, 818 18th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006 • Europe hq.: 30 Rue la Boétie, 75008, Paris France • Israel hq.: 9 Ethiopia St., Jerusalem, 95149, Israel  
Mexico-Central America hq.: Av. E. National 533, Mexico 5, D.F.

September 17, 1978

"LEBANON'S TRAGEDY"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

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

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The eyes of millions are riveted on Camp David this weekend hoping that a dove of peace will flutter atop that summit. But that justified yearning for peace, at least the beginnings of a negotiated peace process, must not be allowed to obscure much longer the tragic massacre of thousands of innocent Christian and Muslim civilians in Lebanon that has been taking place, especially during these past few days. Last week, Robert Basil, president of the American Lebanese League, which claims a membership of two million, held a press conference in Thurmont, Maryland, during which he denounced the "barbarous Syrian occupation" of Lebanon and the incredible silence of the Western world. Mr. Basil appealed to the leaders at Camp David for a declaration affirming Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty as a Western-oriented and pluralistic democracy. Earlier, Dr. Charles Malik, former Lebanese Foreign Minister, joined Mr. Basil in testifying before a U.S. Senate subcommittee during which they declared that Syria is intent on destroying the Christian presence in Lebanon for the purpose of re-creating a Greater Syria. Syria's alleged peace-keeping role, they said, is like asking the fox to guard the chicken coop. Saying that he was neither pro-Zionist nor pro-Phalangist, Mr. Basil stated that if Israel's aid means the survival of the Christians in Lebanon, we fully support Israel's intervention for that purpose. Beyond all the politics, the central moral issue is the saving of human lives and the Lebanese have a right to ask, does anybody out there really care?

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\*Rabbi Tanenbaum, who is National Interreligious Affairs Director of the American Jewish Committee, presents a weekly religion commentary over WINS-Westinghouse Broadcasting System.

RPR



October 6, 1978

Msgr. Elias Hayek  
American Lebanese League  
1129 20th Street, N. W., Suite 405  
Washington, D. C. 20036

Dear Monsignor Hayek:

In behalf of the American Jewish Committee, and for myself personally, I wish to express our genuine sense of grief as well as our fraternal solidarity with you over the tragic loss of lives of innocent civilians in Lebanon. It remains absolutely incomprehensible that the United States and the world community stand idly by while the lives of so many innocent people are being destroyed before the eyes of the world.

It is our hope that the meeting of our National Interreligious Affairs Commission, which will be held on Thursday, October 26, at 6:00 PM at the Hyatt-Regency Hotel in Cambridge, Massachusetts, will afford an opportunity, both for Dr. Charles Malik and yourself, to obtain a hearing and stir the conscience of millions of Americans in the Northeast Region as well as nationally.

We are most grateful to you for accepting our invitation to join Dr. Malik in addressing our group at that time. As I indicated during our telephone conversation, we will be happy to arrange a press conference that same Thursday morning at about 11:00 AM at the hotel in order to amplify your appeal to the American people.

Enclosed is some background information about the National Executive Council Meeting that will be held that weekend, October 26 through 29, in the Boston area.

As I indicated, we will be glad to pay whatever expenses you will have for travel and hotel. Should you wish to come in the evening before and rest up before the Thursday events, kindly let us know so that we might make the necessary hotel reservations.

It would help us if you could send us a biographical sketch, photograph, and some excerpts from the statement that you may want us to make available to the press at the press conference.

Msgr. Hayek  
October 6, 1978

- 2 -

With warmest personal good wishes and my prayer for God's care over you and your great people. I am,

Faithfully yours,



Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
National Interreligious  
Affairs Director

MHT/nt

Encls.



September 17, 1978

"LEBANON'S TRAGEDY"

WINS RELIGION COMMENTARY

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

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The eyes of millions are riveted on Camp David this weekend hoping that a dove of peace will flutter atop that summit. But that justified yearning for peace, at least the beginnings of a negotiated peace process, must not be allowed to obscure much longer the tragic massacre of thousands of innocent Christian and Muslim civilians in Lebanon that has been taking place, especially during these past few days. Last week, Robert Basil, president of the American Lebanese League, which claims a membership of two million, held a press conference in Thurmont, Maryland, during which he denounced the "barbarous Syrian occupation" of Lebanon and the incredible silence of the Western world. Mr. Basil appealed to the leaders at Camp David for a declaration affirming Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty as a Western-oriented and pluralistic democracy. Earlier, Dr. Charles Malik, former Lebanese Foreign Minister, joined Mr. Basil in testifying before a U.S. Senate subcommittee during which they declared that Syria is intent on destroying the Christian presence in Lebanon for the purpose of re-creating a Greater Syria. Syria's alleged peace-keeping role, they said, is like asking the fox to guard the chicken coop. Saying that he was neither pro-Zionist nor pro-Phalangist, Mr. Basil stated that if Israel's aid means the survival of the Christians in Lebanon, we fully support Israel's intervention for that purpose. Beyond all the politics, the central moral issue is the saving of human lives and the Lebanese have a right to ask, does anybody out there really care?

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RPR



Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 • 212.751-4000 • Cable Wiscom, N.Y.

October 6, 1978

Dr. Charles Malik  
Georgetown Holiday Inn  
2101 Wisconsin Avenue, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20007

My Dear Dr. Malik:

It gave much personal pleasure to have the privilege of speaking with you over the telephone.

As you know, my colleague, Mr. Hyman Bookbinder, who represents our organization in relations with the government, has made a number of interventions in order to try to arrange the meeting between yourself and President Carter. As soon as we hear some word, we will be sure to let you know.

I wish to express our deep appreciation for your ready willingness to accept our invitation to address the National Interreligious Affairs Commission Meeting of our organization on Thursday, October 26, at 6:00 PM at the Hyatt-Regency Hotel in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This meeting will bring together our top policy-making leadership who are concerned about improving relationships between the Jewish people, Arab Christians, and Muslims.

If you so wish, we shall be glad to arrange a press conference for you at 11:00 AM that same day at the hotel in order to provide an opportunity for you to appeal to the conscience of the American people and our government, so that they will not stand by idly while the blood of innocent civilians continues to be spilled in your beloved country.

It would be helpful to us if we could obtain a photograph, a biographical sketch, and the excerpts from a statement that you might wish to make at that time so that we could make it available to the press for that 11:00 AM press conference.

In behalf of the American Jewish Committee, and for myself personally, I wish to express our feelings of deepest fraternal solidarity with you at this tragic moment in the lives of your great people. We pray to God that the bloodshed will come to an end, and that peace and tranquility will be restored to Lebanon.

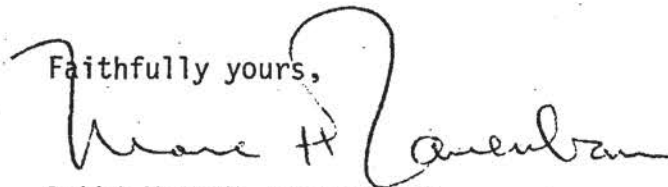
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Dr. Charles Malik  
October 6, 1978

- 2 -

With warmest personal good wishes, and my prayers for God's richest blessings  
over you and your people, I am,

Faithfully yours,



Rabbi Marc H. Tannenbaum  
National Interreligious  
Affairs Director

MHT/nt

Encls.



The American Jewish Committee

Date 10/18/78

FROM: RABBI A. JAMES RUDIN

TO: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum

       For approval

XX For your information

       Please handle

       Read and return

       Returned as requested

       Telephone me

       Your comments, please

REMARKS:







CHANCERY OFFICE  
P.O. Box 333 - Ft. Hamilton Station  
Brooklyn, New York 11209

205 82nd Street  
Brooklyn, New York 11209  
(212) 680-6270

**DIOCESE OF ST. MARON - U.S.A.**

October 12, 1978

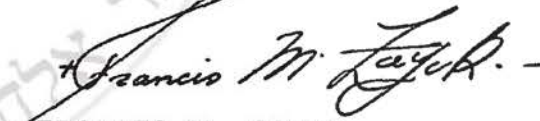
Rabbi A. James Rudin  
165 East 56th Street  
New York, -New York 10022

Dear Rabbi Rudin:

I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to you and the other Rabbis who came to and participated in the rally on behalf of Lebanon. In these crucial times of the Christians of Lebanon and Lebanon's future, all our people are grateful for your spirit of solidarity.

Trusting that you celebrated an enjoyable Yom Kippur, and wishing you and your loved ones many happy returns, I am

Sincerely yours in the Lord

  
+FRANCIS M. ZAYEK  
BISHOP OF SAINT MARON

FMZ/fe

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date**       October 20, 1978  
**to**           Marc Tanenbaum ✓  
**from**        Brant Coopersmith  
**subject**     Jewish-Christian-Moslem "Trialogue"

In view of increasing contacts between Jews and Arabs, both Christian and Moslem, you may want to recall the enclosed article from the Sept. 15 edition of the Washington Post — which reports the formal beginning for the Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington that becomes effective on January 1, 1979. My memo of September 15 did not emphasize Moslem participation. Therefore, I want to take this occasion to point out that both the World Community of Islam in the West and the more traditional Islamic Center are represented in the Interfaith Conference and between them they have pledged \$5000 toward the budget which is an amount similar to that of the Jewish and Catholic contribution. You may recall that the cash budget is somewhat over \$50,000.

So for all practical purposes, we have a continuing relationship with both Black Muslims and Arab Moslems. We get along fine with the representative of the Black Muslims. As for the Moslems from the Islamic Center, that remains to be seen. Since the Center is led by an Egyptian, if peace comes between Israel and Egypt, we should have little difficulty. If no peace, it will be tough.

The purposes of the Conference include the following:

- A. To provide a common ground upon which the diverse religious faiths of the metropolitan area as represented by their leaders can meet;
  - 1. To foster understanding of the beliefs and practices of each faith, and
  - 2. To address issues of common concern to people of religion, particularly those affecting the life of the lives in this community;
- B. To provide a unified moral force and voice in this community in time of crisis;
- C. To provide moral, ethical and practical leadership in the effort to resolve continuing social problems toward the goal of improving the quality of life for all people;
- D. To be a symbol of unity in a broken and divided world,

recognizing both the diversity and the interdependence of  
Faiths in seeking to do God's work.


The Board of Rabbis, JCC and AJC make up the Jewish "Faith Community"  
in the Conference. Danny Mann and I are members of the 13 member steer-  
ing committee which is chaired by Bishop Marino of the Archdiocese.

At the organizaing meeting the Assembly of the Conference formally  
adopted a proposal that there be formed four task forces which will deal  
with Criminal Justice, Economic Justice, Aging and Human Rights. While  
the Conference is committed to these four priorities, the Quakers pro-  
posed an International Peace and Justice Concern which proposal will have  
to be considered.

With respect to the several Orthodox Christian groups — all of which  
had formal observers present who have been given the right to participate  
with voice but no vote — I am reasonably confident that they will eventually  
join.

Therefore, we have a substantial interreligious corporation with  
participation of Protestant, Catholic Orthodox (formal observer status)  
Jews and Moslems. If there is some proposal you may have which fits  
into any of the four task force subject matters listed above, please  
think about this mechanism.

Regards,



cc: I. Silverman  
H. Applebaum  
M. Friedman

# Christian, Jewish, Islamic Faiths Unite on Area Problems

By Marjorie Hyer

Washington Post Staff Writer

The top leaders of three religious faiths—Christian, Jewish and Islamic—yesterday formed an unprecedented interfaith conference of Metropolitan Washington, designed to focus a unified religious effort on community problems.

Leaders of 12 Protestant denominations (including seven different kinds of Baptist), two Islamic groups, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington and three Jewish groups gathered at the Washington Cathedral and signed documents to create the new organization.

In addition leaders of three Eastern Orthodox communions signed as observers, with the understanding that they probably would become full members in the future.

A statement of purpose set the Con-

ference's goals as "speaking with a united voice" on common concerns, "working to transform society" and "trying to become a symbol of unity."

Canon Lloyd Casson of the Washington Cathedral, one of the architects of the new organization, put its objectives more simply when he said: "Our primary concern is to improve the quality of life in the Washington area."

Interfaith organizations including Christians and Jews have become relatively common in recent years. But the Interfaith Conference launched yesterday is only the second organization to include Muslims. Southern California had the first.

Signing the formal incorporation papers yesterday were Imam Khalil



Abdel Alim of the World Community of Islam in the West (formerly known as Black Muslims), Daniel Mann of the Jewish Community Council and the Rev. Dr. Ernest Gibson of the Council of Churches, William Cardinal Baum, Roman Catholic archbishop of Washington, who was ill with the flu yesterday, will sign later.

Although the Interfaith Conference is not scheduled to go into full opera-

tion until next January, yesterday's founding members established five program priorities. They are problems of the aging, criminal justice, human rights, economic justice and world peace and international security.

They also elected Episcopal Bishop John T. Walker of Washington as president; Rabbi Eugene Lipman of the Washington Board of Rabbis, and Imam Alim as vice presidents; the

Rev. Richard Taylor, executive of the Christian Churches, as treasurer, and the Rev. Leamon W. White of the D.C. Baptist Convention, as secretary.

The ground rules of the organization attempt to enable the diverse group to speak with a united voice on social issues in cases in which they can, but without overriding the convictions of members who hold different views. "We have been careful not to deal with those areas, however important, where we know we will differ theologically," Mann said.

The conference also is intended "to provide a unified moral force and voice in this community in time of crisis," according to its constitution. Had the body been in existence at the time of the Hanafi Muslim takeover two years ago, Casson speculated to a visitor, "a unified voice might have

moved into action more quickly... their religious brothers had spoken the Hanafi, it might have changed the situation," he said.

The nature of the conference's attack on the five priority areas designated yesterday will be determined by a 13-member administrative group which will bring specific recommendations to the conference's next assembly, Jan. 11. Casson said he doubts that the recommendations would, initially, at least, take the form of specific projects such as the actual construction of housing for the aged.

In his remarks to the group yesterday, Bishop Walker told the religious leaders that the new organization "has the potential for being one of the most effective instruments for interfaith cooperation in the entire nation."

October 25, 1978

George Gruen, Abraham Karlikow, Marc Tanenbaum

Ira Silverman

Brant Coopersmith Memo on Lebanon

I think you will find the attached memo from Brant Coopersmith to Gila Rowe to be a thoughtful, albeit oversimplified summary of the Lebanon situation. I agree with Brant's repeated suggestion that a fuller backgrounder on the subject, complicated as it is, could prove most useful.

Can you three cooperate in getting one done?

IS:ls  
enc.

cc: Harold Applebaum  
Brant Coopersmith  
Murray Friedman

cc: Hyman Bookbinder  
Murray Friedman  
Harold Applebaum

memorandum

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

**date** October 18, 1978  
**to** Ira Silverman ✓  
**from** Brant Coopersmith  
**subject**

You may be interested in the enclosed exchange of memoranda between Gila Snow Rowe and me.

When I spoke to El-Hayek to get the information for Gila, he told me that the NJCRAC people were very pleased with his presentation, had called him several times, and that Bromberg had indicated to him that they were going to send an advisory piece across the country which would include a suggestion to contact local Lebanese. El-Hayek told Bromberg that before contact was made with Lebanese it might be helpful to let him (El-Hayek) know so that he could telephone his people telling them that they would be contacted.

In any event, if there is to be increasing association between Jewish and Lebanese communities here, some basic backgrounders would be helpful. This is not at all to suggest that what I batted out in a couple of minutes for our colleague in San Francisco represents such a back-grounder. But it does have some of the information which should be included.

Regards,



encl.

Dictated by Mr. Coopersmith  
Signed in his absence

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date FO-SFB  
October 10, 1978

to Brant Coopersmith

from Gila Snow Rowe *GS*

subject WORK WITH LOCAL LEBANESE

memorandum

We now have a Maronite priest here and would like to establish working ties. Could you please fill me in on what worked for you and what potential pitfalls and areas of sensitivity there are?

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

cc: Harold Applebaum



San Francisco Bay Area  
703 Market Street, Suite 1614 / San Francisco 94103 / 392-1892  
Gedalia Snow Rowe, Assistant Area Director

October 17, 1978

Gila Snow Rowe

Brant Coopersmith

Your memo on Lebanese

With respect to your inquiries on working with your local Lebanese, there is no magic. The situation in Lebanon is very complicated. It would take a small volume to spell out the background to the present situation, and even if I were competent, I would not hazard the effort. Nonetheless, let me make a few points at random.

1. The Maronite Christian communities in Lebanon, who are presently fighting, do not have the support of other Christian communities in that country. Among them are Greek Catholics, Greek and Armenian Orthodox, and Protestants.
2. The Maronite Communal leadership does not seem to have active support of Maronite ecclesiastical authorities. Although the Maronite Patriarch has during the last weeks appealed for help.
3. The reluctance among these other Christians is based on their physical location and the fact that they have co-religionists in other parts of the Arab world, against whom they fear reprisals.
4. The Maronites are an ancient community going back to the earliest days of Christianity antedating Mahammad. They have always been able to defend their communities. There are some communities under attack by Syrians which have never had a foreign soldier in their streets.
5. They are committed to an open free pluralistic Lebanon in which they can be as free as Christians in the U.S. At least this is how it is put by Dr. Charles Malek, the most distinguished Lebanese Christian known to the West. While an Orthodox Christian, Dr. Malek supports the Maronite communities because he sees them as the only force willing to fight for the kind

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October 17, 1978

Page 2

of pluralism which will permit Christians to live in dignity in an Arab world.

6. Israelis assist the Lebanese Christians who are fighting the PLO.
7. The Lebanese Christians refer to the present fighting as the Syrian War. The fighting a couple of years ago was referred to as the Palestinian War.
8. They see the Palestinians under the PLO as intruders in Lebanon who have disturbed the delicate ethnic balance that existed before their coming.

The above list is very limited, but it will suffice to give you an idea of some of the major considerations. When you contact your Lebanese neighbors, they will be able to help you to understand better. However it is good to remember that the situation is very complicated and that all Christians do not see it the same way, and that many non-Lebanese experts do not agree with them either.

Up until recently many Lebanese in this country--most of them by far are Christian and Maronite--have been confused by the NAAA (National Association of Arab Americans). Now, however, there is a relatively new organization ALL (American Lebanese League). Msgr. Elias El-Hayek, Executive Director of ALL, tells me that the Priest in San Francisco is Fr. Paul Mouawad, 1133 Broadway, Millbrae, California, 94030, 415-697-4730. Msgr. El-Hayek encourages you to make contact with him. Msgr. El-Hayek is calling Mouawad and telling him that you will be in touch with him.

We have been giving ALL considerable assistance here. While not a secret, we are not holding public meetings or issuing press releases. The NJCRAC will be sending out a memo on ALL. Msgr. El-Hayek spoke to their Israel Commission on October 9th. El-Hayek also tells me that Mouawad was elected to the board of the NAAA, but had had his name removed from that list because of the NAAA's pro PLO bias.

Mouawad comes from Portland, Oregon where he organized a Maronite parish. That is his main goal in San Francisco.

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October 17, 1978

Page 3

If you are going to try to assist ALL, you might want to contact the Israeli consul in San Francisco for a briefing as to how they view the situation in Lebanon.

These are able people but they are new at the game of public affairs. You are an expert. The best we can do for them is to help them achieve their goals of American support for the survival of their communities.

Regards,

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

cc: Harold Applebaum

