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ANTI-ISRAEL INFLUENCE IN AMERICAN CHURCHES

A BACKGROUND REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

Sources of Anti-Israel Sentiment	1
The Arab Missionary and Relief Establishments	2
Liberationist Ideology	4
Arab Churches	5
Orthodox Churches	5
Eastern Rite Catholic Churches	8
Organizational Ties	11
At the National Council of Churches	12
Other Organizations	13
Conclusion	15

PREFACE

This background report is, we believe, the first to survey systematically the sources of anti-Israel influence within American Christian churches. What constitutes anti-Israel sentiment has been carefully delineated: the use of double standards - harsher judgments and stricter demands made on Israel than on her Arab antagonists - biased or loaded renderings of history; and sometimes, resort to theological arguments hostile to Judaism.

Among the recent factors which have affected negative attitudes toward Israel is the rapid increase in immigration into the United States of Arab Christians and Moslems, resulting in a growth of population from some 250,000 to an estimated two million in the last fifteen years, coupled with recent efforts to bolster a growing pan-Arabism. Surely, Americans of Arab heritage have the same rights extended to all religious and ethnic groups by American pluralistic democracy: to develop their distinctive values, culture and influence. We affirm these rights - even as we may profoundly disagree with many of their positions and attitudes.

However, many of the recent immigrants come from nations so hostile to Israel that they still refuse to recognize her right to exist. Moreover, they come from cultures heavily imbued with anti-Semitism, where notorious documents of Jew-hatred, such as The Protocols of the Elders of Zion have been reproduced not only for intensive national consumption, but for export to other parts of the world. Of those who are Christian, many are adherents of a tradition of Christianity which has had neither dialogue nor contact with Judaism or with Jews, and whose theology denies any religious validity to Judaism.

We believe there are both theological and social grounds for building understanding and mutual respect between Arabs and Jews in America, as well as in the Middle East and in other parts of the world. Jewish-Christian dialogue has taught us that an essential aspect of understanding is the confronting and uprooting of sources of bigotry and inherited caricatures, whether of religious or cultural origin. American pluralism, and ultimately perhaps the achievement of full peace in the Middle East, may depend on the success of that process taking place between Arabs and Jews.

One final note: the purpose of this study was to identify the sources of anti-Israel sentiment and influence in American churches. To avoid distortion, it should be underscored that the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Council of Churches and major Protestant denominations have affirmed the right of Israel to live in security and to possess its full sovereignty as a nation-state. There are pockets of hostility to Israel in the organized church community, but there is also a broad and enduring sympathy and support on the part of millions of American Christians throughout the country for our sister democracy in the Middle East, the State of Israel.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
National Interreligious Affairs Director

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SOURCES OF ANTI-ISRAEL SENTIMENT

American Christians have long been divided in their views on Middle Eastern affairs. Since before Israel was actually founded, approval and disapproval of the Jewish state have existed side by side in the church community. Israel has not lacked friends and supporters; year after year, opinion polls have shown the American public to be much more sympathetic to her than to her Arab antagonists, and many of the nation's church leaders have spoken out in her behalf, singly or in concert. Yet at the same time, an anti-Israel, pro-Arab attitude has been much in evidence in certain segments of American Christianity.

A pro-Arab disposition is strongly in evidence among Protestant denominations with long-standing involvement in missions to the Arab Middle East; in churches and church-related groups engaged in aiding Arab refugees; among certain left-wing "liberationist" ideologues; and in communions with predominantly Arab constituencies, whether Catholic or Eastern Orthodox. In these quarters, champions of the Arab cause often influence church policies and organizational resolutions far beyond their numbers, giving church groups a pro-Arab tilt by constantly pressing for statements critical of or detrimental to Israel.

In this report, certain criteria have been used to determine whether a group or an action is considered anti-Israel. Concern for the welfare of Palestinian refugees does not, in itself, constitute hostility to Israel. Nor does appreciation of Arab culture, interest in religious dialogue with Islam, or disapproval of specific policies of the Israeli Government. What constitutes anti-Israel bias is the unequal application of standards -- for example, criticizing Israel for military reprisals without taking note of the hostile actions that provoked them, or calling upon Israel to recognize the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), still publicly committed to her destruction, without the contingent demand that the PLO recognize Israel's right to exist as a sovereign state. Bias may also reveal itself in an unbalanced rendering of history. For example, Israel alone may be blamed for the existence of Palestinian refugees with no acknowledgment that their displacement is also the result of Arab-initiated wars against Israel, or that an equal number of Jewish refugees were forced to flee Arab countries without compensation for homes or property.

There is also a potent anti-Jewish legacy in Christian tradition which sometimes comes into play when Israel is being discussed; in such instances anti-Israel sentiment takes on an anti-Jewish coloration.

The following pages describe the major sources of anti-Israel, pro-Arab sentiment within the organized Christian community in the U.S., the church institutions on which Arab sympathizers exert significant influence, the religious organizations which they have created or with which they are allied, and the ways in which they seek to win American public sympathy for their views through religious channels.

The Arab Missionary and Relief Establishments

Modern Arab nationalism has some of its roots in a Protestant missionary presence that began in the last century. A number of denominations have long been involved with philanthropic, educational and missionary ventures in the Arab Middle East: with universities, secondary schools, hospitals, social service centers, refugee aid projects and so forth. Many institutions of higher learning in the Moslem world began as American missionary undertakings -- among them the prestigious American University of Beirut (originally the Syrian Protestant College).

Out of these missionary and service activities, which have had strong financial support, has emerged a group of church professionals who naturally sympathize with Arab aspirations, identify with Arab views, and are ready to promote Arab interests both within their organizations and in public -- often at the expense of Israel. Men and women like these usually hold the staff positions in the Middle East departments of their denominations and of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. They are thus chiefly responsible for recommending lecturers and resource persons; for choosing, producing or distributing education materials including films; and for drafting resolutions on the Middle East.

In contrast, staff members sympathetic to Israel rarely serve in Middle East departments. They do serve in other departments, and try to alter or balance resolutions harmful to Israel at church conventions, but their efforts are almost invariably last-ditch struggles waged against the inertia of large assemblies of delegates who are only too ready to adopt statements drafted by "specialists."

Among Protestant bodies, those with the most active anti-Israel staff members include the United Church of Christ, the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the Reformed Church in America, the Quakers (Friends United Meeting), the United Methodist Church, and the Mennonite Central Committee (the relief and development agency of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches of North America). Except for the Methodists, all of them, especially the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterians, have institutional commitments in the Arab Middle East. Officials of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches -- the latter a predecessor of the United Church of Christ -- founded the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,¹ which sent hundreds of missionaries to the Arab world.

In their appeals for support of relief services to Palestinian refugees, some of the Protestant missionary groups occasionally display anti-Israel bias and engage in distortions of historical fact -- for example, representing Israeli "aggression" as the only cause of the Palestinians' plight. This anti-Zionist animus is older than the State of Israel itself:

Protestant, AUB /American University of Beirut/ people, and oilmen helped the State Department in the 1930s to resist Zionism within the United States... In 1945 mission and

1. Renamed the United Church Board for World Ministries soon after its 150th anniversary in 1960.

church groups helped found the Institute of Arab-American Affairs to combat Zionism. During the next two years what was named the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry studied the Jewish homeland question. Testimony of American mission-related individuals was anti-Zionist, although one United States churchman, representing conservative Christians who saw a separate Jewish home as a fulfillment of biblical prophecy, was pro-Zionist.²

Originally, Christian antagonism to the idea of a Jewish state rested as much on theological and religious as on political grounds (as did the few instances of support for the idea). The view that the Church, the "new Israel," had superseded the "old Israel" and thereby inherited the biblical promises was commonly cited in responses to early Zionist initiatives. So was the notion that the Jews had been condemned to eternal dispersion because they had rejected the messiahship of Jesus. Since the State of Israel has come into being, Western Christians hostile to the Jewish state seldom resort to these theological arguments, although Arab Christian leaders invoke them frequently.

Even in the West, traces of the pervasive anti-Jewish polemic in Christian tradition, and of the triumphalism that interprets Judaism and Jewish history through Christian eyes, still surface from time to time in comments about Israel, in anti-Jewish attitudes, and especially in the use of double standards of morality. Jewish (or Israeli) behavior is judged against a standard of absolute perfection, and deviations from this idealized norm are deemed proof of utter sinfulness; the failures and shortcomings of others are judged more pragmatically. Quaker Life, for example, combined almost all of these elements in an article clearly hostile to Jews and Judaism, as well as to Israel.³

In the Roman Catholic community of the U.S., things are somewhat similar. Some leaders with a background of philanthropic or educational service in the Arab Middle East actively promote anti-Israel positions. Foremost among them is the Reverend Joseph L. Ryan, S.J., who is Rector of Holy Cross College in Worcester, Massachusetts, a member of the Center for the Study of the Modern Arab World at St. Joseph's University in Beirut, and a former Vice President of Al Hikma University in Baghdad. He was the founder and first President of Americans for Justice in the Middle East and is presently associated with the Middle East Resource Center, both anti-Israeli organizations.

Father Ryan has made a number of nationwide speaking tours, lecturing at colleges and universities. His main themes have been that the PLO deserves support because there is a difference between the "violence of the oppressed" and the "violence of the oppressor"; that non-Jews are "second-class citizens in Israel"; that peace is impossible unless Israel withdraws from the territories occupied in 1967; and that a Palestinian state must be established on the West Bank and in Gaza. He does not believe, he has said, that Israel should have been created or should exist.

2. Joseph Grabill, Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), pp. 307-8

3. "Promised Land," by Harold Smuck, Quaker Life, September 1976.

Anti-Israel statements have also come from the present Archbishop of Anchorage, Alaska, Joseph T. Ryan (no relation to Father Joseph L. Ryan, above), who previously was National Secretary of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association. The Association's present National Secretary, Msgr. John G. Nolan, is a board member of Americans for Middle Eastern Understanding, a pro-Arab group.

Liberationist Ideology

A second source of anti-Israel sentiment within the churches is the current ideology sometimes referred to as "liberation theology." Not unlike the Social Gospel movement of yesteryear, it calls upon Christians to identify with oppressed peoples and makes the active pursuit of racial, social and economic justice a religious obligation. This approach is supported, not only by many members of racial minorities and persons from the Third World, some of whom hold important staff positions in the church community, but also by some classic liberals concerned for justice and world peace.

In theory, liberationist thought should not lead to anti-Israel positions, for Jews, too, are a minority, and Israel is a beleaguered democracy if there ever was one. But the same selective morality which singles out Israel for special abuse in the United Nations is also at work here. Liberationist activists champion the Palestinians as oppressed Third World people and brand Israel as a racist, colonialist outpost of American imperialism. Though their numbers are not large, they are among the most vehement spokesmen on the American Christian scene, and sometimes manage to co-opt church professionals working for world peace and justice. Or they prevail on other committed liberals to endorse seemingly evenhanded public statements, which urge Israel to recognize the PLO or allow Palestinians to return to "their homeland" -- in other words, to admit hundreds of thousands committed to her own destruction.

Father Daniel Berrigan, S.J., who has denounced Israel as a "criminal Jewish community" and as a "settler state" seeking "Biblical justification for crimes against humanity," is perhaps the most dramatic spokesman for this viewpoint. Less drastic versions of his arguments are presented by others who, naively extrapolating from American history, find the call for a "secular, democratic state" appealing and the concept of a Jewish state retrogressive. The leftist liberationists, like other anti-Israel groups, insistently publicize the writings of well-known anti-Zionist Jews in the U.S., such as Rabbi Elmer Berger and Alfred Lilienthal, and the often totally unfounded accusations of a few Israelis -- such as Israel Shahak, a vehement anti-Zionist, or Felicia Langer, an attorney who is a member of Israel's Communist Party. The fact that Israel is a democracy in which, unlike most of the Arab nations in the Middle East, open dissent from government policy is guaranteed by freedom of speech, is never acknowledged.

ARAB CHURCHES

Though Protestant missionaries made a number of Arab converts in the last century, and though Arab Protestant Churches and congregations exist in the Middle East and the U.S., the overwhelming majority of Christian Arabs are Eastern Orthodox or Catholics of the Eastern Rite. This state of affairs ultimately stems from two major schisms in Christianity. Some Eastern churches, including the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Coptic Church of Egypt and the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, have stood apart from the rest of the Christian churches since the fifth century in a dispute over the question of the two natures (divine and human) of Jesus. The great schism of 1054 separated Byzantine (Orthodox) Christianity from Western Latin Christianity.

Communities of Arab Christians have existed in the United States for some time, but only in recent years have some of their leaders aggressively pursued political goals on Middle East issues. Not all American Christians of Middle Eastern background are against Israel; thus, many Lebanese support Israel as the defender and ally of the beleaguered Christian community in Lebanon. But those who do oppose Israel are a potent new influence in organized American Christianity. They have used public relations techniques skillfully and on occasion have made common cause with Moslem leaders. From their leadership positions in their own churches, they have pressed non-Arab church groups and agencies for anti-Israel statements, and have sought to influence the U.S. Government against Israel.

The major Christian Arab communities in the U.S. are described below.

ORTHODOX CHURCHES

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

The U.S. and Canadian branch of the Antiochian Orthodox church, known as the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, came into being in 1975, when two groups that had split apart in 1936 were reunited. The parent church's Holy Synod is based in Syria; the North American headquarters are in Englewood, N.J. The size of the church's U.S. constituency is somewhat of a mystery. Spokesmen claim 50,000 "dues-paying members" but add that a total of 350,000 persons is "attached to" or "associated with" the Archdiocese. The 1978 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches reports a membership of 152,000, with 152 ordained clergy and 110 churches. The American Arabic-Speaking Community Almanac of 1975 lists 98 churches, broadly distributed throughout the U.S., but most numerous in California, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

The Antiochian church has influence beyond its numbers because it is a member of the National Council of Churches with representation on the NCC's Governing Board. Its representative there is Dr. Frank Maria, chairman

of the church's Department of Near East Affairs. Metropolitan Philip Saliba, the head of the North American Archdiocese, was until recently a Vice President of the NCC. Both Metropolitan Saliba and Dr. Maria are vigorous advocates for the PLO; the latter has frequently introduced resolutions urging U.S. recognition of the PLO at NCC meetings. In similar vein, he has pressed for investigations of alleged human rights violations and breaches of international law in Israel and the occupied territories.

In mid-1977, the Patriarch of the church, Elias IV, toured the U.S. for six weeks, with appropriate panoply and publicity. He ceremoniously called on President Carter and UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim (on the latter visit, he was accompanied by the Lebanese and Syrian ambassadors, both of whom gave receptions for him). Patriarch Elias was also hosted by other Christian notables, such as Melkite Archbishop Joseph Tawil. In addition, the Patriarch, who was the only Christian leader ever to address a majority of the world's Moslem heads of state, when they met in Lahore, India, was guest of honor at a dinner given by ambassadors of Arab states in Washington.

At the church's annual convention, also in Washington, Elias declared in a press conference that Jews had little "historic connection" with the territory of the State of Israel. Speaking through his interpreter, he said: "As far as we Christians are concerned, we are the new Israel. All the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah... After the destruction of the Temple, the Jews were dispersed. Those who remained lived in peace with the Arabs and the Christians" until modern times, when, he said, "outsiders" came in.

A leaflet distributed by the church press conference quoted the Patriarch: "As Christian Arabs, we believe that the loss of Jerusalem affects the Arab cause in general. We shall not spare any effort to insure that Jerusalem remains an Arab city, open to all believers and to the entire world... The Palestinian plea is for a Jerusalem returned to its own people." He also asserted that "the exiled and dispersed Palestinians are the symbol of all human suffering."

Bolstered by his presence and his outspoken position, the convention passed five resolutions, all of them presented by Dr. Frank Maria. One condemned the Israeli Government's legalizing three "additional Zionist-Israeli settlements on occupied Arab lands in violation of international law," and called upon President Carter to persuade Israel "to abolish these settlements and any further illegal encroachment upon Arab territories." A resolution on human rights demanded that the United States withhold economic and military aid from Israel, charging that Israel stands condemned by the UN for violations of the human rights of Arabs. Another resolution, asserting that the Arab-Israeli conflict has been "the most poorly reported story in the history of American journalism," called upon the news media in this country and Canada to "stop being part of an insidious campaign to defame and misrepresent the Arabs."

Other resolutions advocated American Christian-Islamic dialogue, settlement of the Lebanese conflict with "peace and justice for all," and relaxation of U.S. and Canadian immigration regulations to allow admission

of Lebanese refugees. All these points, widely publicized, were repeated as the Patriarch traveled from coast to coast, attending six regional parish conferences and visiting New York, Boston, Montreal, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Louisville, Oklahoma City and Los Angeles. In Louisville he said war in the Middle East was inevitable unless Israel gave back the territories taken in 1967.

Coptic Orthodox Church

Adherents believe the Coptic Orthodox church to be Christianity's oldest organized denomination and to have been founded by St. Mark in 40 C.E. in Alexandria. Today, about 7 million of Egypt's 40 million inhabitants are Copts. The head of the church is Pope Shenouda III in Cairo. In the U.S., according to the 1978 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, the inclusive U.S. membership totals 40,000, with 14 churches and 12 ordained clergy.

In April and May 1977, Pope Shenouda paid a ceremonial visit to the U.S. and Canada, traveling to Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Buffalo, Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Houston, as well as to Washington and New York. In Washington he met with President Carter and visited by the local Catholic archbishop, William Cardinal Baum. In New York, accompanied by two Egyptian ambassadors, he saw UN Secretary General Waldheim.

Pope Shenouda is a former Egyptian Army officer. He took part in the Israel-Arab War of 1947, and during the War of 1973 was reported by Radio Cairo to have asked that he be drafted again. However, no anti-Israel remarks by him or others were noted during his North American tour, nor has the American Coptic community been particularly active against Israel.

Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch (Archdiocese of the U.S.A. and Canada)

The Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch traces its origin to the earliest Patriarchate established in Antioch by St. Peter the Apostle, and is under the supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and All the East. No information about its worldwide or U.S. membership is available. In the Middle East and India, it has 35 archdioceses as well as many churches, schools and seminaries. In the U.S. there are eight parishes, in California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey and Rhode Island. In Canada, there are three, two of them in the Province of Quebec and one in Ontario.

The present head of the Church is Patriarch Mar Ignatius Yacoub III. He has visited the U.S. twice, in 1969 and 1971. The Archdiocese of the U.S.A. and Canada was formally created in 1957. Its head is Archbishop Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, previously Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan in Jerusalem, who first came to the U.S. in 1949 to collect war relief funds for his co-religionists. His headquarters are in Hackensack, N.J. The Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch is a constituent body of the National Council of Churches, and Archbishop Samuel serves on the NCC Governing Board.

Armenian Apostolic Church of America

This is a branch of the Armenian Church under the jurisdiction of the See of Cilicia in Lebanon, whose Coadjutor Catholicos is Karekin Sarkissian. Cilicia's jurisdiction traditionally extends over Armenian dioceses in Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus; it is also accepted by adherents elsewhere who consider the See in Soviet Armenia too much dominated by Communist authorities.

Catholicos Sarkissian has been active in the World Council of Churches and has been a vice chairperson of its Central Executive Committee since 1975. He came to the U.S. in 1973, and was prelate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America when he was elected to his present office in 1977.

Pan Orthodox Trends

When Patriarch Elias of the Antiochian church toured North America in 1977, he repeatedly pleaded for unity among Orthodox Christian churches, describing it as inevitable. And indeed, cooperation, if not structural unity, among Orthodox churches in North America is a significant trend. In October 1978, at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, a National Conference of Orthodox Bishops in America was held for the first time, to consider the prospects for Orthodox unity and to make Orthodoxy "a major spiritual and moral force in this nation."

Already, the different churches interlock in many ways. Thus, the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese is an outgrowth of the Syrian Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church. Antiochian Metropolitan Saliba is Vice Chairman of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas, (SCOBA); its head is Archbishop Iakovos, the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. Also included in SCOBA are archbishops and bishops of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church in America, the Orthodox Church in America, the Serbian Orthodox Church in America, the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America, the American-Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese in the U.S.A., the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of America, and the Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church in Exile.

Pan-Orthodox ecumenism is clearly an internal Christian concern, but its implications reach farther. A unified Orthodoxy would offer a far more prestigious platform to the more vehemently anti-Israel leaders in the Orthodox community than they have had to date.

EASTERN RITE CATHOLIC CHURCHES

Melkite Eparchy

Melkite or Byzantine-rite Catholics accept the Pope as their spiritual leader, but have their own liturgy and are governed by their own patriarchs and bishops. Their titular head is Patriarch Maximos V Hakim of Damascus. There are about one million Melkite Catholics in the world, half of them in the Middle East.

In the U.S., Melkites number about 20,000. An eparchy (diocese) was established by papal bull in 1977, in Newton, Massachusetts. The eparch or head of the American church, Archbishop Joseph Tawil, was one of and Eastern Rite Catholic and Orthodox Group which hailed the UN's recognition of the PLO, describing the latter as "a moderate organization whose concern had been the liberation of their homeland from Israeli occupation and aggression."

In July 1976, Patriarch Maximos visited this country to attend the annual meeting of the American branch of his church, as well as the International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia. At a press conference he urged the U.S. to be "more impartial, not involved one hundred percent with Israel," and added that he thought the U.S. was beginning to give "more consideration to the Arab side" in the Middle East. He asked that the U.S. use its influence to have the lands occupied by Israel since 1967 returned to Arab control, so that the Palestinians might create their own state on the West Bank.

In June 1977, on the tenth anniversary of the Seven-Day War, Patriarch Maximos celebrated a special mass in Rome to pray for Jerusalem. The ceremony was organized by the Egyptian Ambassador to the Holy See, who is the dean of Arab diplomats accredited to the Vatican; it was attended by a number of high Vatican officials. The patriarch called on the Jewish people to recognize the rights of the Palestinians, and told those present: "Let us pray for the return of the Palestinians to their homeland."

A curious conflict arose between Patriarch Maximos and the Vatican over the Patriarch's authority to ordain priests serving in the U.S. Unlike the Roman Catholic Church, the Melkite Church accepts married men into the priesthood. Two married priests ordained in the Middle East are serving in the Newton eparchy; a third was ordained in Canada and then was brought to the U.S. A Vatican spokesman claimed that the Canadian ordination was illicit, and that those performed in the Middle East were licit only for service in that area, not in the U.S. Maximos replied sharply, asserting his own prerogative and taking the Vatican spokesman to task.

The controversy over patriarchal vs. papal authority, while an internal Christian affair, has a bearing on the matter of Arab influence in American Christian institutions and thus is of concern to Jews. An influx of Arab clergy ordained by an Arab prelate with a record of strong hostility to Israel is not a heartening prospect. Significantly, the priest ordained in Canada, the Reverend Romanos Russo, is the director of the Damascus area group for the Friends of the Holy Land, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Yonkers, New York, which was founded in 1974 "under the guidance of His Beatitude, Maximos V Hakim...." Whether or not Patriarch Maximos will use the Newton eparchy to bring Arab prelates into the U.S., and what roles such prelates may play here, will bear careful watching.

The Maronite Diocese

The Maronites take their name from St. Maron, a monk who lived in Northern Syria in the late fourth century. Their liturgy is in Aramaic.

Although no exact numbers are available, they are known to be the largest Christian community in Lebanon. Outside the Middle East, they have an archbishop and many monasteries and religious houses in Rome, as well as bishops in Brazil, Australia and the U.S. Maronite parishes also exist in North Africa and in France, Canada, Mexico, Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay and South Africa.

In the U.S., after being an exarchate for six years, the Maronites became a diocese in 1972. The Diocese of St. Maron currently consists of 43 parishes, two institutions, 58 priests and 12 seminarians; its jurisdiction extends to all 50 states. The diocesan seminary is located in Washington. The see of Maronite Bishop Francis Zayek, head of the church, has recently been moved from Detroit to Brooklyn.

Chaldean Rite Catholics

The Chaldeans trace their origins to Nestorius, a bishop and prominent teacher in the Eastern Church during the fifth century, who was censured by Rome on doctrinal grounds. His followers subsequently split; one faction became the Nestorian Church, still in existence as an independent Eastern denomination, while the other, the present Chaldeans, reunited with the Roman Catholic Church, though retaining the Eastern rite. To this day, Chaldeans pray in Aramaic.

In the U.S., Chaldeans number about 1,500 families, comprising some 7,500 persons. Most of them originally came from Northern Iraq and settled around Detroit, where they now form two large parishes. There is a third parish in San Diego and a fourth in Los Angeles. They are under the jurisdiction of local Catholic bishops, but in matters of rite their superior is the Patriarch of Babylon, whose see is in Baghdad.

ORGANIZATIONAL TIES

To what degree do the various Arab Christian groups in the U.S. make common cause with one another, with Moslem leaders and with non-Arab Christian groups in promoting anti-Israel positions? The answer is that some are extremely active in this way, others not at all; the Arab-American community, far from being monolithic, reflects many of the differences and power struggles that divide peoples and governments in the Middle East.

Many Maronites, for example, are friendly to Israel, because Israeli forces have acted to protect and preserve their co-religionists during the recent fighting in Lebanon; others are anti-Israel, believing that Israel's policies -- indeed, her very existence -- are ultimately responsible for the influx of Palestinians which upset the delicate political and religious balance in Lebanon and helped precipitate the civil war there.

Yet despite differences like these, there are efforts to foster a growing pan-Arab consciousness. Sparked by the more vehemently anti-Israel spokesmen, a number of religious leaders have formed a Standing Conference of American Middle Eastern Christian and Moslem Leaders. The Antiochian Orthodox Metropolitan Philip Saliba is its Secretary General; the Melkite Archbishop, Joseph Tawil, is treasurer. Maronite Bishop Francis Zayek is also a member, as are Imam Mohamad Jawad Chirri, Islamic Center in Detroit; Imam Muhammed Abdul Rauf of the Islamic Center, Washington; the Rev. George Garmo of the Chaldean Catholic Church in Southfield, Mich.; the Rev. Joseph Hourani of the Presbyterian Church in Elmer, N.J.; Msgr. John Nolan of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association in New York; Rafic Rasamny of the American Druze Society in New York; also, Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis of the Church of the East in Chicago; Archbishop Mar Athanasius Y. Samuel of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch in Hackensack, N.J.; and Bishop Mesrob Ashjian of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America in New York.

The Standing Conference claims to represent two million Americans of Arabic heritage and to be "composed of hierarchs and representatives of Orthodox Christian, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Sunnite Moslem, Shiite Moslem and Druze bodies in the United States." On March 22, 1978, Metropolitan Saliba, acting for the Standing Conference, wired to President Carter and Secretary of State Vance to protest the Israeli invasion and occupation of South Lebanon. In a press release of the Conference, issued on the letterhead of the Antiochian archdiocese, he commented: "Without Israeli withdrawal from all Arab-occupied land and self-determination for the Palestinian people, there will never be peace in the land of the Prince of Peace."

In the Washington area, Arab-American Moslem and Christian leaders came together in October 1977 to assure President Carter of their support for his human rights program. They particularly commended the 1977 U.S.-Soviet declaration concerning objectives for an Arab-Israeli peace settlement (a move since eclipsed by President Sadat's visit to Israel and the Camp David accords), and stressed that the legitimacy of Palestinian rights must be taken into account in any settlement. The signers were: the Very Reverend George M. Rados, pastor of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church; the Reverend Joseph Francavilla, pastor of Holy Transfiguration Melkite Greek Catholic Church; Dr.

Muhammad Abdul-Rauf, executive director of the Islamic Center; the Reverend Esper Ajaj, pastor of the Arabic Baptist Church; the Reverend Hector Douehi, pastor of Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church; and Aida F. Habib, a member of St. Mark Egyptian Coptic Orthodox Church.

It was the first known meeting of the Washington area's Arab-American religious leaders, and the first time they joined to speak in a common cause. Given the long history of Christian-Moslem tensions in the Arab world, marked as it has been by oppression and bigotry on both sides, these joint efforts certainly are a noteworthy development.

At the National Council of Churches

A move in a similar direction was the formation of a task force on Christian-Moslem Relations and the establishment of an Islamic Desk at the National Council of Churches, in August 1977. The formal request for the task force had come from Dr. Frank Maria and Metropolitan Philip Saliba of the Antiochian archdiocese, both officers of the NCC at the time. The two leaders emphasized that it was essential for American Christians to understand Arab Christian and Moslem attitudes and aspirations, "particularly in relation to a Middle East settlement."⁴

The inner workings of the National Council of Churches provide frequent illustrations of how forces sympathetic to Arab claims bureaucratically outweigh those sympathetic to Israel. The promoters of pro-Arab sentiment identified earlier in this paper -- the missionary establishment, the left-wing "liberationists" and the Arab churches -- are all represented in the NCC, many in key positions; and they tend to work together when matters pertaining to Israel are on the agenda.

In 1973, for example, when a number of state and local councils of churches publicly decried Egypt's and Syria's surprise attack on Israel during the Yom Kippur Holy Day, the NCC carefully avoided putting responsibility for the war where it belonged (though its then deputy general secretary, speaking as an individual, joined in the condemnation). Rather, a resolution by the NCC's Governing Board pointed to the United Nations as "the primary instrument for achieving long-range peace" and urged the U.S. and the Soviet Union "to halt immediately arms shipments to the belligerents" -- at a time when the Soviet Union had already sent massive armaments to the Arab nations and when Israel's military supplies were critically low.

Again, in May 1978, when Israel responded to a terrorist attack with a reprisal raid on southern Lebanon, the NCC's Governing Board passed a resolution scoring Israel's use of cluster bombs and criticized the U.S. Government for supplying them -- but rejected an amendment referring to persons "wantonly killed or maimed" in the terrorist action which occasioned the reprisal.

The affair of the Reverend Isaac C. Rottenberg is another case in point. In a letter to The New York Times (May 24, 1978), Mr. Rottenberg,

4. The Washington Star, August 6, 1977

for ten years Director of Communications at the Reformed Church in America, protested what he described as "a persistent anti-Israel propaganda campaign within the Council," noted that "every NCC Governing Board meeting has been preceded by internal bureaucratic power plays aimed at criticizing Israel," and claimed that whenever "concerns were raised in the Council about anti-Semitism, the Holocaust or the emergence of neo-Nazi movements, attempts have been made to trivialize or neutralize them." Earlier, Mr. Rottenberg had been among those who protested that Rumanian Archbishop Valerian Trifa, who was under Federal indictment on charges of having lied about his involvement in war crimes, was a member of the NCC Governing Board. Shortly after the publication of his letter in the Times, Rottenberg was fired from his denominational position.

There are, both within the NCC and in denominational groups, persons sympathetic to Israel and seriously interested in Jewish-Christian dialogue, but they are less close to the centers of institutional power and funding than those of the opposite persuasion:

Where churches have had an overseas missionary relationship with a particular faith, funds can be obtained from the mission agencies. However, where no such relationship exists, it is very difficult to attract financial support. The Jewish-Christian Advisory Committee of the National Council of Churches is an illustration. Because there are no parallel units with funding capability in the denominations, this office is facing a serious financial crisis. Our churches are not presently equipped to deal with other faiths outside the context of mission.⁵

A recent resolution by the NCC Governing Board on the Middle East peace effort, adopted on November 3, 1978, combined elements of sympathy and antipathy toward Israel. It welcomed the movement toward peace represented by the Camp David agreements, celebrated the role of Egypt and the initiatives of its President, and rejoiced with Israel "in feeling that its dream of peace and deliverance might be realized and the threat of annihilation diminished." At the same time, the resolution underscored the Palestinians' right to self-determination, reaffirmed "the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force," and urged President Carter "to broaden the context of the peace discussions to include the recognized representatives of the Palestinian people in order to enable them to become full parties in the peace process." The resolution also voiced the hope that other Arab states besides Egypt would agree to participate in the search for peace and cautioned that until the unresolved issues in the Middle East conflict were settled, "the unity, independence, and territorial integrity of Lebanon" would "continue to be in jeopardy."

Other Organizations

Members of the clergy and present or former church officials also sit on the boards of a number of pro-Arab organizations that are not explicitly

5. Robert L. Turnipseed: "Interreligious Relationship -- An Urgent Ecumenical Concern," editorial in Ecumenical Trends, September 1978

church-related. Thus, Americans for Middle East Understanding (AMEU) has the following among its board members: Harry G. Dorman, formerly director of NCC's Middle East and Europe Department; Msgr. John G. Nolan, the Pontifical Mission for Palestine; Father Joseph L. Ryan; and L. Humphrey Walz, a former Synod executive of the United Presbyterian Church, who is also editor of AMEU's journal, The Link.

American Near East Refugee Aid, Inc. (ANERA) similarly counts a number of religious leaders among its present or former directors: J. Richard Butler, the NCC's director for the Middle East and Europe; the Reverend Dr. Edward L. R. Elson, Chaplain of the U.S. Senate; Msgr. Nolan (see above); and the Very Reverend Francis B. Sayre, Jr., Dean of the Washington Cathedral.

Father Joseph L. Ryan was a signer of a letter appealing for contributions to the Middle East Resource Center (MERC) in Washington. MERC, established late in 1975, is a project of Search for Justice and Equality in Palestine, an organization directed from Waverly, Massachusetts by Dr. Edmund Hanauer, an anti-Zionist Jew and disciple of Rabbi Elmer Berger. Father Ryan's co-signer was Dr. Hisham Sharabi, president of the National Association of Arab Americans, who has been publicly criticized by moderate Arab-American leaders for his defense of Palestinian terrorist tactics. MERC's function, the letter noted, was "to bring information on Middle East issues to members of Congress, journalists and citizens groups." MERC was "currently establishing personal contacts in the offices of members of Congress who have shown concern for human rights, in order to raise the issue of Israeli violation of Palestinian rights with these members of Congress as well as with the general public."

Finally, Middle East Perspective, Inc., which is headed by Dr. Alfred Lilienthal and publishes his vehemently anti-Zionist newsletter, has for its Vice Chairman John Nicholls Booth, a Unitarian minister.

CONCLUSION

Recent public opinion polls have shown some dilution of American popular support for Israel: not a reversal toward increased identification with the Arab cause, but a shift toward neutrality.

After thirty years of incessant refusal by the Arab states to recognize Israel, Egyptian President Sadat's dramatic visit to Jerusalem undoubtedly captured the imagination of many Americans and prompted them to view him as the prime champion of peace. On the other hand, Israel's concerns for security and normalization as part of the peace process may have impressed many Americans as foot-dragging or nit-picking. The shift in public opinion is probably due more to these developments than to the efforts of the anti-Israel groups described in this report. Undoubtedly, most Americans welcomed the signing of a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, but how that achievement will affect attitudes toward Israel remains to be seen.

Despite the peace treaty, anti-Israel forces will continue their efforts to attenuate the still broad support Israel enjoys among Americans. The Jewish community, in its interreligious contacts and programs, must help consolidate that support and give it expression, so that voices in the Christian community that are hostile to Israel will not resonate beyond their true proportions.



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INTERRELIGIOUS

Newsletter

A REVIEW OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

MILES JAFFE, *chairman*
Interreligious Affairs Commission

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM, *national director*
Interreligious Affairs Department

Vol. 2, No. 1, May 1978

Prepared and edited by Judith H. Banki

RELIGIOUS, COMMUNAL LEADERS PRAISE HOLOCAUST TV DRAMA

The epic nine-hour film drama, Holocaust, recently telecast nation-wide by NBC-TV, won strong praise from leaders of major religious communities in the United States, as well as from spokesmen for a variety of civic, educational and communal organizations.

The film presentation was lauded not only as a powerful emotional experience, but as a historically and morally important effort to depict the brutalities of the Hitler era, particularly the Nazi attempt to annihilate European Jewry, to millions of Americans who were unaware of the historical realities. Nearly one hundred and twenty million people -- one of the largest audiences on record for a television special -- watched all or part of the four-night series, including members of the White House staff and the Cabinet.

AJC's national director of Interreligious Affairs, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, served as script consultant to NBC and Titus Productions for Holocaust, and AJC helped prepare the official NBC study guide which relates episodes and characters in the film to concrete history, provides general background information and bibliographical suggestions, and raises questions for group discussion and clarification. The study guide has been distributed to schools, churches and synagogues across the country in the hundreds of thousands.

Statements praising the film drama and pointing to its significance were issued by Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Jewish and Protestant leaders, including officials of Southern Baptist, Lutheran and Methodist church groups, and of the National Council of Churches. Executives of communal organizations, such as Benjamin Hooks of the NAACP, Vernon Jordan of the National Urban League, George Meany of the AFL-CIO and Terry Herndon of the National Education Association, also underscored the importance of the film's message.

Among the moving testimonies to Holocaust was one by Archbishop Torkum Manogian, Primate of the Armenian Church in North America, who said it recalled painfully for him the genocidal annihilation of Armenians in 1915, and the fact that then, as with the Jews, Christian nations did nothing about the massacres. He noted



Scene from HOLOCAUST

that Adolph Hitler told his officers not to have scruples about killing Jews because, "Who remembers what happened to the Armenians?" The Archbishop expressed the hope that the Holocaust would "send a shiver of conscience through its viewers" and if so, "it will have served a great purpose in sensitizing mankind to its rampant inhumanity."

Editorials in a number of Christian journals pointed to the lessons to be learned from Holocaust. In his widely-syndicated column in the Catholic press, Msgr. George Higgins commented:

The lesson of the holocaust and of the television program by the same name is that it is never too soon for Christians to come to the defense of Jews who are being threatened by any form of anti-Semitism. Indeed the holocaust might never have happened if a sufficient number of Christians had learned this lesson in Europe before rather than after the rise of Nazism....It now remains for the American people and for Catholics in particular to take up where NBC left off and, through a variety of educational methods, to try to plumb in greater depth the causes and the meaning of the holocaust and its implications for the future.

In recognition of the "historic contribution of the television dramatization Holocaust toward increasing understanding of the meaning of the Nazi Holocaust for all people," AJC presented its 1978 Mass Media Award to the National Broadcasting Company and Titus Productions Inc. at its annual meeting in May.

Copies of the NBC study guide, A Viewer's Guide to Holocaust, prepared in cooperation with AJC, are available from The American Jewish Committee, 165 East 56 Street, New York, 10022, at 15¢ per single copy, \$12.00 for orders of 100.

INTERRELIGIOUS TASK FORCE ON SOVIET JEWRY DELEGATION URGES STRONG HUMAN RIGHTS STAND IN BELGRADE AND ROME

In a recent trip to Belgrade and Rome, a high-level delegation of American Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish leaders strongly pressed the case for human rights and religious liberty in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

The trip, undertaken to demonstrate broad-based American support for the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, was sponsored by the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, and was led by Sister Ann Gillen, the Task Force's executive director; Professor Andre Lacocque, a national co-leader of the Task Force; and Rabbi A. James Rudin, AJC's assistant national director of Interreligious Affairs. Other members of the delegation were: Professor Thomas E. Bird, chairman of Slavic Languages Department, Queens College, City University of New York; Dr. William Phillippe, synod executive of the United Presbyterian Church, Synod of the Piedmont (Maryland, Delaware, D.C., Virginia and North Carolina), Baltimore, Maryland; Rev. John A. Radano, chairman of Religious Studies, Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey; and Judge Charles Z. Smith, president of the American Baptist Churches, and associate dean of the University of Washington Law School, Seattle, Washington.

The delegation praised the human rights position of Justice Arthur J. Goldberg, U.S. Ambassador to the Belgrade Conference. The American religious

Leaders also met with representatives of Great Britain, Holland, the Vatican, Spain and Hungary. (It was the first time an Eastern bloc country had met with an inter-religious group in Belgrade.)

In Rome, the delegation conferred with Vatican officials and also participated in the international Sakharov hearings, where they heard stirring personal testimonies about the abuse of human rights and religious liberty of Jews and Christians in Eastern Europe.

Following this trip, Interreligious Task Force leaders participated in the National Foreign Policy Conference on Human Rights sponsored by the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D. C. in late February. The issue of Soviet Jewry was an integral part of this Conference. Sister Ann Gillen, Rabbi Rudin and Judge Smith all served on the planning committee of the Conference and also as panelists during the proceedings.

There are 15 local and regional Interreligious Task Forces on Soviet Jewry around the country.

BAPTISTS AND JEWS FACE THE FUTURE

A three-day conference co-sponsored by AJC and the Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas brought together some 200 Baptists and Jews, pastors and rabbis, scholars and political leaders, at Southern Methodist University in Dallas last December. Described by Dr. James M. Dunn, director of the Christian Life Commission, as "an exciting and fruitful dialogue for Baptists and Jews exploring the relationships between our religions, our shared Scriptures and our common ethical commitments" the unprecedented meeting covered a variety of contemporary subjects of common concern to both groups.

The opening session was addressed by Dr. Jimmy R. Allen, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, who movingly recalled the fate of the Jews in the Nazi era in an address stressing the importance of religious liberty in a pluralistic society. The Honorable Allard Lowenstein, United States Representative for Special Political Affairs to the United Nations, underscored the importance of human rights as a prerequisite for world peace, and called upon Christians and Jews to openly express their opposition to transgressions against human rights and religious liberties. The discussion of human rights as a moral imperative was discussed by Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon and the Honorable Rita Hauser, former U.S. Ambassador to the UN and present chairperson of AJC's Foreign Affairs Commission.

IAD's Judith Banki and Rabbi A. James Rudin were among the speakers at concurrent sessions devoted to such subjects as world hunger, church-state relations, the role of women in Jewish and Baptist traditions, anti-Semitism and racism, religious liberty and cults, and Baptists and Jews in the USSR. A session on Israel and the Jewish-Christian dialogue was addressed by Professor Franklin Littell of the Department of Religion, Temple University, and IAD's Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum. The concluding luncheon was addressed by Texas Congressman James Wright, House Majority Leader, who gave an emotional eyewitness account of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Israel.

"A Call to Conscience," issued at the close of the meeting, stressed common bonds and a shared commitment to democratic traditions while acknowledging "our distinctive religious differences as believing Christians and Jews."

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT ASSURES AJC ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Israeli Minister of Justice, Shmuel Tamir, has assured the American Jewish Committee that recent legislation against the use of material inducements to conversion will not restrict religious freedom or the pursuit of normal education or philanthropic activities by Christians or any other religious group in Israel.

(Mr. Tamir's statement referred to a law, enacted last December by the Israeli Knesset, that made it a criminal offense both to give or promise money or other material benefits in order to entice a person to change his religion, or to receive such benefits.)

Noting that the law had aroused concern among Christian leaders in the United States, "and particularly among those very leaders who have been Israel's staunchest friends and supporters in the American Christian community," AJC President Richard Maass wrote to Mr. Tamir, and to Prime Minister Menachem Begin, asking for a clarification of the law's intention.

"We share with other Jews," Mr. Maass wrote, "the feeling of moral offense at proselytization, whose purpose is to undermine Judaism and the continuity of the Jewish people." However, he added, "we believe it important that government spokesmen in Israel reassure our Christian friends and neighbors as to Israel's unwavering commitment to freedom of religion and to the full exercise of the rights of the Christian minority in Israel."

Mr. Tamir, in his reply declared that "there is no intention whatsoever on the part of the Israeli Government to restrict in any way religious freedom of the Christian community or any other community in Israel or to impede them from the pursuit of normal educational or philanthropic activities." He added:

The government and the people of Israel are fully cognizant of and greatly appreciate the positive attitude and support of the many Christian religious bodies both in Israel and abroad to the State of Israel and the Jewish people. We, on our part, have over the years striven to create mutual trust, respect and understanding between the different religious communities in Israel. Never have the various religious communities enjoyed such freedom of religious worship and freedom of access to the holy places as they do now under Israeli jurisdiction.

NEW BOOK DOCUMENTS EVANGELICAL-JEWISH DIALOGUE

At a meeting welcoming the publication of Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation: On Scripture, Theology and History, leaders of the two communities noted progress in mutual understanding at the same time acknowledging that serious problems remain between them.

Published by Baker Book House in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the volume contains papers presented at the first national symposium of evangelicals and Jews, held in New York in December 1975. It was jointly edited by IAD's Rabbis Marc H. Tanenbaum and A. James Rudin, and Dr. Marvin R. Wilson, professor of Biblical and theological studies at Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts.

While stressing that the book provides a "deepened perception" of the values and beliefs of the two groups, and illustrates the diversity and pluralism that exist within each of them, Rabbi Tanenbaum cautioned that the publishing of the cooperative study had not dissolved "the real and extensive problems that continue to exist between evangelicals and Jews, especially on the level of people in the street." Among these, he said, were the fear of Christian proselytizing by Jews and such "born-again only" publications as the Christian Yellow Pages, which seek to "exclude Jews and others from the mainstream." Dr. Wilson declared that "too often, Jews have been viewed as trophies to be bagged" by evangelicals, and commented that evangelicals "need to know how Judaism has been reshaped by the teachings of the rabbis since Biblical times."

Dr. Wilson and Dr. Arnold T. Olson, former president of the Evangelical Free Church of America, agreed that most evangelical Christians are strong supporters of Israel's right to the Holy Land. Dr. Olson was among a number of prominent evangelicals who placed a public advertisement in some forty newspapers, affirming their belief in biblical prophecy and Israel's "Divine Right to the Land," and voicing "grave apprehension concerning the recent direction of American foreign policy vis-a-vis the Middle East."

Not all evangelicals believe in Israel's divine right to the land, Dr. Wilson noted, but, "We see Israel as the land of the Bible," and share with Jews "a common interest in the survival of Israel."

Rabbi Rudin compared the present time in evangelical-Jewish relations to "the period just prior to Vatican Council II, when Catholics and Jews began a rich and fruitful dialogue."

Also speaking at the conference was Dan Van't Kerkhoff, editor at Baker Book House.

SYMPOSIUM COMMEMORATES ISAAC CENTENNIAL

Despite measurable improvement in Christian teaching about Jews and Judaism, aspects of what Jules Isaac called "the teaching of contempt" may still be found, both in religious education materials and in the popular imagination. This was one of the conclusions reached by Christian and Jewish scholars at a symposium commemorating the hundredth anniversary of the birth of the noted French-Jewish historian, whose analyses of prejudice in Christian teaching paved the way for many recent reforms.

Panelists for the symposium, which was co-sponsored by AJC and the National Conference of Christians and Jews, were: Mme Claire Huchet-Bishop, a friend and disciple of Prof. Isaac and editor of the English translations of his books; Dr. A. Roy Eckardt, professor in the Department of Religion Studies, Lehigh University; Dr. Eugene Fisher, executive secretary of the Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations, National Conference of Catholic Bishops; and Judith Banki, AJC's assistant national director of Interreligious Affairs. Serving jointly as hosts of the meeting were AJC's Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum and Donald McEvoy, the NCCJ's senior vice president for National Program.

Dr. Fisher cited the three major themes highlighted in Isaac's analysis as (1) "the charge that the dispersion of the Jews throughout the world was a punishment by God for their so-called rejection of Jesus' mission and person;" (2) "the allegation that Judaism was degenerate at the time of Jesus;" (3) "the deicide charge, which blamed all Jews, past and present, for the death of Jesus."

He pointed out that, following the condemnation of all three charges by Vatican Council II, a concerted effort was initiated to "eradicate negative and false portrayal of Jews and Judaism in Christian religious textbooks."

Referring to his own recent study of Catholic teaching materials, Faith Without Prejudice, Dr. Fisher noted that "the deicide and the divine retribution themes have entirely disappeared from our textbooks." He added, however, that "the charge of Jewish degeneracy, while muted, remains an area of problems, as does the typical depiction of the Crucifixion in both our classroom and liturgy."

Mme. Bishop, who is Catholic, and author of the book, How Catholics Look At Jews, deplored the fact that the new ecumenism has been confined largely to the top level of the religious communities, and has not reached the masses of Christians at the parish level. She also maintained that "anti-Zionism today is but the accepted word for anti-Semitism, whether people are aware of it or not."

Dr. Eckardt noted that, although some Christian leaders, "in order to redeem the Christian past vis-a-vis the Jewish people and Judaism, are calling for a reform in the teaching of the Church," they often "end up retaining the very teachings that have caused all the trouble -- especially those doctrines associated with the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus, and with the return of the Jewish people to their land."

"The outcome of this kind of reform," he added, "is no more than Christian triumphalism with guilt feelings. What is needed is a thoroughgoing revolution within the Church, in the spirit of Jules Isaac, but going far beyond his important criticisms."

Mrs. Banki cited several "contemporary variations on the themes that Jules Isaac described as the 'teachings of contempt.'"

"Although Christian scholars have largely repudiated the negative stereotype of the Pharisees as legalistic hypocrites, and even place Jesus within or close to the Pharisaic tradition," she said, "the Pharisees continue to serve as convenient whipping boys. Thus, a Roman Catholic diocesan newspaper, commenting recently on a Supreme Court decision, described the Justices as 'outdoing the biblical Pharisees, at least in empty legalism, if not in sheer hypocrisy!'"

She also cited editorial comments in Christian publications that compared the Eichmann trial to the trial of Jesus, and described such comparison as "obscene."

AJC CRITICIZES CONVERSIONARY CAMPAIGN

The AJC sharply criticized the special missionary campaign of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, that seeks to convert the Jewish people to Christianity. The Synod, at its 1977 Convention, committed itself to a "two-year goal of persuading fifty percent of our congregations to prepare themselves for effective witness to the Jewish people." IAD's Rabbi A. James Rudin called the conversionary effort "a moral affront to the Jewish people and to forty centuries of Jewish religious life and theological self-understanding."

"By singling out Jews for intensive proselytizing," he stated, "the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has, in effect, branded Judaism as an inadequate and incomplete religion."

In December 1977 and again in April of 1978, Rabbi Rudin and Jordan Harburger, AJC West Central Area Director, met in St. Louis with the Missouri Synod leadership responsible for implementing the Church's resolution promoting evangelism among Jews. The AJC representatives expressed their deep concern about the intent and implications of the resolution. They specifically called for suspension and revision of a training manual entitled "Witnessing to Jewish People," which they said "employs base stereotypes that do gross violence to the integrity of Jews and Judaism."

Rabbi Rudin and Mr. Harburger expressed the hope that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod will abandon its present missionary campaign directed at the Jewish community and will instead embark on programs of education and true dialogue that will advance mutual respect and understanding between Lutherans and Jews.

VISITORS TO ISRAEL

Recent interreligious tours to Israel involving community leaders, lay and clergy, coordinated by AJC's Visitors to Israel Program, included a trip sponsored by the Federation of Lansing, Michigan; a Philadelphia study tour co-led by the Rev. Robert M. Hoag and Rabbi Harold Waintrup; and a group from Waterbury, Connecticut organized by The Rev. Andrew Smith and Rabbi Joel Chazin.

Letters from Christian and Jewish participants in these tours to IAD's Inge Lederer Gibel, national coordinator of the program, expressed appreciation for "a deeply moving spiritual experience...." for "new insights," for AJC's "excellent coordination, not only of sites but of meetings with important Israeli personalities," and for "the openness and democratic candor with which those on the tour were able to hear a variety of views regarding Arabs and Jews in Israel and the Middle East."

Interreligious study tours offer a unique opportunity for Christians and Jews, in a traveling dialogue, to see Israel through each other's eyes. Special itineraries are tailored to the interests of each group. Leaders wishing to form a study tour or join a future group should write to AJC's
Visitors to Israel Program.

DR. BILLY GRAHAM, ARCHBISHOP THOMAS DONNELLAN ADDRESS AJC'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

In his first open address to a major national Jewish organization, the Rev. Billy Graham called on evangelical Christians and Jews to work together for "the peace of Jerusalem" and an end to terrorism. The noted evangelist, who spoke before AJC's policy-making National Executive Council in Atlanta, Georgia last October, received AJC's National Interreligious Award.

Dr. Graham condemned anti-Semitism, saying "the institutional church has sinned through much of its history and has much to answer for at the Judgment, especially for the anti-Semitism practiced against the Jewish people." He also called on Christians and Jews to work together toward establishing better race relations and higher ethical and moral codes.

Speaking the previous evening to AJC's Interreligious Affairs Commission, The Most Rev. Thomas A. Donnellan, Archbishop of Atlanta, pointed to the landmark developments which had brought about a new beginning in Catholic-Jewish relations.

"Obviously the bishops of the United States have recognized that an important element in their dialogue with the Jewish people has been and will continue to be the place that the State of Israel plays in the identity of Jews," he declared, referring to guidelines on Catholic-Jewish relations issued by the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Archbishop Donnellan noted that the American hierarchy has declared that reconciliation, peace and justice in the Middle East must entail recognition of the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign state with secure boundaries, and recognition of the rights of Palestinian Arabs. He emphasized that the second point "would not mean an alignment with any particular spokesman for the Palestinian Arabs," and added his own personal conviction "that concessions to terrorists are self-defeating and in the long run, more costly to humanity."

IAD BRIEFS

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, who was named one of America's ten most influential religious leaders in a poll conducted by The Christian Century, was one of a delegation which investigated the plight of Vietnamese boat people and other Indo-chinese refugees during a ten-day mission to Thailand, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Singapore. The delegation, led by Leo Cherne, chairman of the International Rescue Committee, had planned to visit Malaysia as well but other members -- including author James Michener, Bayard Rustin, the Hon. William Casey and Ambassador Cecil Lyon -- unanimously declined when Rabbi Tanenbaum was refused entry to the predominantly Moslem country.

Rabbi Tanenbaum also participated in a three-day conference of world Jewish leaders and Vatican officials in Madrid and Toledo, Spain. A warm welcoming address by Toledo's Cardinal Martin, and a moving response by Rabbi Ronald Sobel of Congregation Emanu-El in New York, recalled the poignancy of the Jewish experience in Spain, where a golden age of Jewish culture and learning which had flourished for nearly five hundred years was ended by the Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of the Jewish community. That bitter legacy was faced candidly by both groups as they probed contemporary issues in hope of a more humane world.

The Women's Interreligious Dialogue on the Middle East, which began in New York and is now going strong in Philadelphia, brings Christian, Jewish and sometimes Arab American women together to explore and deepen their understanding of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Philadelphia dialogue, which includes Jewish, Baptist, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Quaker and Roman Catholic women, has been spear-headed by Joan Dickstein and is co-chaired by Susan Weinberg, both board members of AJC's Philadelphia Chapter. Also, IAD's Inge Lederer Gibel has recently sparked the formation of a WIDME in Cincinnati.

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Vol. 1, No. 3, May 1977

Prepared and edited by Judith H. Banki

AJC HAILS LITURGICAL DEVELOPMENT

AJC hailed as "a most welcome and heartening development" the recommendation of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy that the "Reproaches" -- a hymn considered offensive to Jews -- be omitted from the Good Friday ritual this year. In a letter to Archbishop John R. Quinn, chairman of the Committee, IAD's Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum called the move a "historic action" which would foster "mutual respect and solidarity between the Catholic and Jewish peoples."

AJC had earlier sent to the Committee on Liturgy a study citing several negative references to Jews and Judaism in Catholic Liturgy, and calling attention to the anti-Jewish impact of the "Reproaches." The study was one of several originally submitted to Vatican II by the AJC at the request of the late Augustin Cardinal Bea, head of the Vatican commission which produced *Nostra Aetate* (popularly known as the "Jewish Declaration") in 1965. (Both that document and the Vatican Guidelines for Catholic-Jewish Relations in 1975 called for the elimination of anti-Jewish references in Christian teaching, preaching and liturgy.)

Ironically, this devotion, which has served to build resentment and hostility toward Jewry, is a deliberate inversion of a Jewish prayer of thanksgiving, the *dayenu* chant from the Passover Seder. A brief excerpt from each shows the similarities:

DAYENU
(it would have sufficed)

How thankful we should be to
God
For his many deeds of kindness
to us!

DAYENU

Had God freed us from the
Egyptians,
And not wrought judgment upon
them,

DAYENU

Had He wrought judgment upon
the Egyptians,
And not destroyed their gods.
DAYENU...

THE REPROACHES

My people, what have I done to
you? How have I offended you?
Answer me. Did I not bring you
out of Egypt? And for that you
erected a cross for your Saviour?

...For your sake I scourged Egypt
with the death of her first-born;
but you, you have handed me over
to be scourged.

The "Reproaches" are put into the mouth of Jesus, although the hymn was composed more than a century after his death. According to the distinguished Jewish

scholar, Dr. Eric Werner, who collaborated in preparing AJC's study, "Anti-Jewish Elements in Catholic Liturgy," for Vatican Council II, the source of the "Reproaches" is the Passion homily of Melito, Bishop of Sardes, thought to have lived 120-185 C.E. Melito borrowed the form of the *dayenu* chant, which expresses gratitude for God's benefits bestowed on his people Israel, gave it an "anti-Jewish twist" in which the theme of gratitude is replaced by one of ingratitude -- Israel's ingratitude, reaching its nadir in the scourging and crucifixion of Jesus. In an article detailing his scholarly detective work ("Melito of Sardes, The First Poet of Deicide," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol. 37, 1966), Dr. Werner observes that the Passion homily is an "instance of utilizing Jewish material against the Jews -- a method that goes through the ages up to this very day."

The action by the liturgical staff was considered a temporary solution, pending a decision by the Bishops' Committee on Liturgy on whether to eliminate the hymns or revise them.

Following similar AJC approaches to the Episcopal Church last year, the House of the Delegates of the Episcopal Church removed the "Reproaches" hymn from a draft revision of the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer. (See *Interreligious Newsletter*, Vol. 1, No. 2)

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

ARCHBISHOP TRIFA WITHDRAWN FROM NCC GOVERNING BOARD

Rumanian Orthodox Archbishop Valerian D. Trifa, whose membership on the governing board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. drew vigorous protests from Jewish and some Christian sources, was in effect suspended from the board on February 4 by the church he represented, the Orthodox Church in America.

Archbishop Trifa faces denaturalization hearings on charges by the Justice Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service that in obtaining American citizenship he lied about his membership in the fascist Rumanian Iron Guard and his involvement in Nazi atrocities in Rumania during World War II.

The NCC had maintained that it had no power to dismiss or suspend Trifa, since he was the appointed representative of a constituent church. However, the Council's executive committee, which had earlier proposed that the Orthodox Church withdraw him, endorsed the action in a statement which emphasized the "serious moral implications" of the charges against Trifa.

A spokesman for the million-member Orthodox Church, the Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, announced that the archbishop "will not take part in the council's work or attend meetings of its governing board until further notice." The ban will remain in effect pending disposition of the litigation against him and of an investigation being conducted by the church itself.

AJC had made available to members of the NCC executive committee material from primary Rumanian sources, including "The Trifa Manifesto," which documented Archbishop Trifa's unremitting anti-Semitism, anti-Greek hate propaganda, racism, and pro-Nazi activities.

In the light of that record, AJC executive vice president, Bertram Gold, expressed regret that the de facto suspension was not an outright expulsion, but he acknowledged that the action indicated the NCC's disapproval of Trifa's anti-Semitism.

Trifa's presence on the NCC board had also been protested by the executives of state councils of churches in New York, New Jersey, North Carolina and Oregon, and the (independent) Christian Conference of Connecticut, who communicated their objections to NCC leadership.

PUBLIC TRIBUNAL ON RELIGIOUS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ...



The National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which is organizing testimony before the Helsinki Commission of the U. S. Congress and Executive Branch in Washington, D. C. on the issue of "the Helsinki Agreement and Religious Liberty," organized on March 16 a unique "public tribunal" to dramatize the denial of human rights and religious liberty for Jews and Christians in Eastern Europe.

While focusing on the massive violation of the religious liberties of the three million Soviet Jews, the tribunal also provided the opportunity for spokesmen for Catholic, Baptist, Latvian Lutheran, Ukrainian and nationality groups in Eastern Europe to publicly testify about the oppression their respective groups have been suffering.

The testimony cited case histories of Soviet citizens who were fired from their jobs, incarcerated in mental hospitals, refused opportunities for higher education, exiled to labor camps, and subjected to myriad other kinds of intimidation and discrimination because of their insistence on observing religious practices or their expressed requests to emigrate. In each case, it was pointed out that such actions violated the terms of the Helsinki Agreement.

The evidence was presented to a panel that included Rita Hauser, attorney and former U.S. representative to the United Nations Human Rights Commission; Dr. David R. Hunter, director of education, Council on Religion and International Affairs; Bayard Rustin, executive director, A. Philip Randolph Institute; Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum and Sister Ann Gillen, executive director of the Task Force.

Among the witnesses were Prof. Thomas E. Bird, professor of Slavic languages, Queens College, City University of New York; Dr. Walter Dushnyck, editor, *Ukrainian Quarterly*; Prof. William Fletcher, director of Soviet Studies, University of Kansas; Prof. Howard Greenberger, New York University Law School; Rev. Blahoslav S. Hruby, secretary, Research Center for Religion and Human Rights in Closed Societies; Mr. Ilya Levkov, a Soviet Jew and research director of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry; and Rev. Alexander Veinbergs, pastor, Latvian Lutheran Church, Washington, D. C.

Dr. Bird urged his fellow Roman Catholics and fellow Christians to understand their own self interest in supporting the cause of Soviet Jews. He declared:

This is not a "Jewish problem." The Soviets want the Jewish community to be isolated. If they are being persecuted and isolated today, we are surely going to be in a group that is persecuted and isolated tomorrow...

We Christians, in an age that has witnessed the Holocaust, have a profound historical, moral obligation to stand guard over the destiny of the children of Israel wherever its existence is threatened, whether it be a reborn Jewish commonwealth, or with beleaguered Soviet Jewry.

The public forum was one of several activities launched by the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry since the major Chicago II conference last November, which drew some 250 participants, most of them Christians. An impressive array of religious and civic leaders, including U.S. Representative Robert Drinan (D-Mass), a Jesuit priest; Senator Charles Percy (R-Ill.), and Dr. Cynthia Wedel, a president of the World Council of Churches, called the Soviet Union to task for failing to fulfill commitments to human rights, including the

right to emigrate, to which the USSR agreed in signing the Helsinki Accord.

Among the results of Sr. Gillen's energetic efforts to expand inter-religious concern for the plight of Jews and other oppressed minorities in the Soviet Union has been the formation of local interreligious task forces in communities around the country. Such groups have been organized in Cincinnati, Dallas, St. Louis and Wilkes-Barre-Scranton, with plans for others. *Interested Christians and Jews should contact Sr. Ann Gillen, National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, 1307 South Wabash, Chicago, Illinois 60605, or any local AJC office.*



MORE ON MOON

Widespread concern with the implications of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church is evidenced by the unprecedented response to a forceful critique of the Moon movement made by Catholic, Protestant and Jewish leaders at a December 28th meeting held at AJC headquarters.

On that occasion, IAD's Rabbis Marc Tanenbaum and A. James Rudin were joined by the Rev. James J. LeBar, of the Office of Communications of the Catholic Archdiocese of New York, and Dr. Jorge Lara-Braud, executive director of the Commission on Faith and Order of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

While concentrating on the anti-Jewish content which is documented in Rabbi Rudin's study of *Divine Principle*, the basic doctrinal text of the Moon movement, the religious leaders voiced equal concern about other aspects of his activities, including his methods of indoctrination reported by former Moonies who have defected from the group.

Rev. LeBar announced that his office had sent a letter warning priests in the Catholic Archdiocese of New York of "the acute dangers" that Rev. Moon's Unification Church represents. "It is important to bear in mind that Rev. Moon's teachings are in direct conflict with Catholic theology and, therefore, render his movement suspect for Catholic participation," he said.

Father LeBar made public a list of 62 "front organizations of the Unification Church" and questioned why there would be "need to hide behind such fronts, which often deny any association with Sun Myung Moon and his followers?"

Dr. Lara-Braud, quoting from a working paper of his commission, declared that Moon's doctrines "deny the classic Christian understanding of Jesus Christ" in salvation, and "claim a deficiency for Christ's work which Christians could not accept."

The Protestant theologian also pointed out that Moon's *Divine Principle* "fosters continuing anti-Semitism" in that it claims that "Christ failed because the Jews did not believe in him and put him to death." He termed that teaching "double indemnity" against the Jews.

Rev. Moon had earlier reacted to AJC's release of the study. In a seven-point statement published as a full-page advertisement in *The New York Times*, he declared that the Unification Church "categorically condemns anti-Semitism, the most hideous, abject and cruel form of hatred." He further stated that his movement recognizes "the divine and natural right" of Jews to physical survival and preservation of religious tradition; regards Israel as a haven for Holocaust survivors and a sanctuary for Jews fleeing oppression; will work for "an acceptable accommodation between the Arabs and Jews;" and "strives toward the establishment of a United World Family of Nations" in order to contain Soviet imperialism.

Responding to this statement, Rabbi Tanenbaum declared: "We trust that the Rev. Moon's public condemnations of anti-Semitism will now result in concrete actions that will demonstrate that he means what he professes. A comprehensive and systematic removal of negative and hostile references to Jews and Judaism which abound in the *Divine Principle* would be one such demonstration that his statements are serious and are made in good faith and are not simply public relations pieties."

(Single copies of the report, *Jews and Judaism in Rev. Moon's Divine Principle*, are available by request from the American Jewish Committee.)



ISRAELI GOVERNMENT NIXES OFFENSIVE FILM

An anguished appeal from Mother Basilea Schlink of the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary, urging Jewish leaders to protest plans by a Danish film producer to make a pornographic film about Jesus on location in Israel, drew a quick response from AJC and from the Government of Israel. Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum accused the producer, Jens Jorgen Thorsen, of "attempting to cash in on the current sickness of pornography," and cited an official Israeli Government response that it would "not allow any film to be made that would be offensive to any religious group."

In a separate action, AJC's Interreligious Affairs Commission criticized the film, "Nasty Habits," as "an entirely inappropriate vehicle to parody the Watergate scandal." The IAD continued: "By choosing to satirize a Catholic women's religious order instead of the true perpetrators of Watergate -- those elected and appointed officials of the United States Government who abused their legitimate powers and deceived the American people -- the film deflects public scorn from those who deserve it onto the wrong vocation and the wrong sex." The IAC found the film "offensive not only to women and to Catholics, but to fair-minded people of all persuasions."



INTERRELIGIOUS VISITS TO ISRAEL

In February two major study tours were coordinated by AJC's Visitors to Israel Program. The first, co-led by Dr. George Gruen, director of Middle East Affairs for AJC, and Dr. Arleon L. Kelley, associate executive director of the NCC's Commission on Regional and Local Ecumenism, included visits to Egypt, Syria and Jordan as well as Israel. Participants, among whom were outstanding AJC leaders from chapters around the country, as well as the director of the New Mexico Council of Churches, and a member of the NCC national board, met with political, academic and religious leaders in all countries visited. This was the third such tour co-sponsored by AJC and NCC. Rabbi A. James Rudin and Inge Lederer Gibel were previous leaders of these tours.

The Metropolitan Ecumenical Training Center Capital-to-Capital Mission was the second February mission. METC members and participants had met for several years as a study group focusing on Christian-Jewish relations, and their pilgrimage to Jerusalem was a result. National leaders from Washington, D.C. included the Rev. Tilden Edwards, executive director of METC; Daniel Mann, executive director of the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington; Rabbi Stanley Rabinowitz, president of the Rabbinical Assembly; Ms. Cynthia Roberson, executive director of

the Secretariat for Black Catholics; Rev. John Steinbruck, Lutheran activist on behalf of Soviet Jewry, and Dr. Timothy S. Healy, S.J., president of Georgetown University. Commenting on the trip in a letter to Ms. Gibel, Fr. Healy wrote:

Probably the briefest way to put it was that I went both understanding and sharing the American support of Israel, and my week in Israel merely strengthened this conviction... In a sense Israel, and above all Jerusalem, have to remain a spiritual home. To cite my own part of the testament, the gospel read in the Mass last Sunday has the haunting phrase, "Salvation is of the Jews." I am sorry that I did not have more time to walk and roam around that part of Israel which would fascinate me most from the point of view of prayer, and that is the Sea of Galilee. But I keep telling myself that pleasure is reserved for a return trip.

Each study tour, in addition to special meetings tailored to the professional interests of tour participants, offers opportunities to meet with Jewish, Christian and Moslem leaders in all areas of Israeli life.

The program, which provides complete airline and hotel arrangements as well as the special interest meetings that mark it as unique, is coordinated in Israel by Ms. Taffy Baker of AJC's Jerusalem office, and in the U.S. by Ms. Gibel, national coordinator of the Visitors to Israel Program, to whom inquiries should be addressed at 165 East 56th Street, New York, New York 10022



IAD BRIEFS

IAD supplied materials on Judaism, Jewish-Christian relations, Soviet Jewry and Israel for educational kits sent to some 1500 Southern Baptist officials throughout the United States. A forthcoming conference co-sponsored by the Southern Baptists' Christian Life Commission in Dallas and AJC is presently in the planning stages, as is an Evangelical-Jewish meeting in Atlanta.

Expressions of solidarity and sympathy were sent by AJC chapter leaders and staff members to Roman Catholic and Episcopal church authorities, decrying the recent massacre of Roman Catholics in Rhodesia, and the shocking death of the Rt. Rev. Janane Lwum, Anglican Archbishop of Uganda. (Uganda President Amin's claim that Archbishop Lwum was killed in an automobile accident has been greeted with skepticism in many parts of the world.)

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum was among the religious technical advisers for the six-hour biblical epic, "Jesus of Nazareth," presented on NBC-TV on April 3 (Palm Sunday and the first day of Passover) and April 10 (Easter Sunday and the eighth day of Passover). Rabbi Tanenbaum, who had reviewed the film in London and consulted with its director, Franco Zefferelli, commented:

This film has not only avoided all of the negative images about Jews and Judaism which have nurtured anti-Semitism in the past but has, on the contrary, consciously sought to portray first century Judaism in a warm, faithful and sympathetic light.

IAC CHAIRMAN, MILES JAFFE, ADDRESSES NATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS WORKSHOP

Miles Jaffe, chairman of AJC's Interreligious Affairs Commission, participated centrally in the *Third National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations: Living Together in an Age of Pluralism*, April 19-21 in Detroit, Michigan. Mr. Jaffe spoke at a workshop devoted to contemporary issues on the subject: *Church and State: Parochialism and Abortion*, outlining ground rules for discourse of these sensitive, highly-charged issues.

IAD staff also participated in the national workshop in various capacities. Judith Banki delivered a paper on *Women Today and the Jewish-Christian Dialogue*; Inge Gibel served as panelist in a workshop devoted to discussion of Middle East problems; Rabbi James Rudin moderated and participated in a workshop on *Evangelism and the Dialogue*; and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum served as one of three reactors who summarized the conference. (Other reactors were Fr. Edward J. Flannery, former director, Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Dr. William L. Weiler, executive director, Office on Christian-Jewish Relations, National Council of Churches.) Sherwood Sandweiss and Ruth Kroll of AJC's Detroit office also participated in the conference, ably organized and chaired by Fr. Alex J. Brunett, director of the Office of Ecumenical Affairs of the Archdiocese of Detroit.

ARCHIVES

NOTABLE QUOTABLES

...My own feelings were stirred even more profoundly when I heard the repeated references to the fact that the alleged crimes had been committed more than thirty years ago and when several church leaders told me that it's time for the Jews to forget. Ah, it seems so long ago, does it not? Some people are tired of being reminded. But don't you realize that for those of us whose homes were invaded by storm troopers it is like yesterday; and that in the nightmares of our loved ones it is still a horrible NOW? Furthermore, our refusal to forget is not based on a desire for revenge, but rather on a determination not to betray the memory of our dead or our responsibility toward future generations... In most Protestant and Orthodox churches, I perceive very little of a sense of urgency to deal with the appalling lack of real concern about the historical role of the Christian churches in centuries of persecution against the Jews.

And now comes that inevitable question, one that is usually raised with great vehemence: "Are you suggesting that there is anti-Semitism in our midst?" What an odd question to ask! What basis would there be for us to believe that we, Christians in the NCC, have somehow remained untainted by this particular manifestation of human sin?

Let me ask a counter-question. How come that we, who will often respond to charges of rampant racism in the Christian churches with quick consent and contrite confessions, find it necessary to react with such indignation to the suggestion that we search our hearts to see whether there are seeds of anti-Semitism to be found among us? By naming the demon and acknowledging its power, we may once again discover the liberating reality of grace. I believe it would be good for us to reflect on that.

...from an open letter on the "Trifa affair" sent to members of the

governing board of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. and other fellow Christians by the Rev. Isaac C. Rottenberg, Secretary for Program Interpretation, Reformed Church in America.

* * * * *

We are beginning to be able to acknowledge and respect each other's religious traditions as representing positive ways of life. Christians are realizing that Judaism has its own integrity and needs no Christian correction. Together we are beginning to see that we can behave as equals, that we do not need to make each other's belief systems "wrong." We are siblings, each possessing his own validity, vitality and wholeness. Christians no longer pray for the conversion of the Jews. It is all right now with most Christians for Jews to be Jews and Christians Christians.

This climate of growing respect and understanding is now threatened by the recent growth of something called -- for want of a better name -- "Jewish-Christianity." The zealous proponents of "Jewish-Christianity" aim their proselytizing activities specifically at Jews. They maintain that real fulfillment for a Jew consists in accepting Jesus (they call him Yeshua) as messiah. Their message is grounded in the notion that to accept Jesus "is the most natural wonderful, and, above all, spiritual thing that can happen to a Jewish person." Once again the "incompleteness" of Jewish faith is being preached.

The current rise of "Jewish-Christian" missionary activity in Long Island is distressing to both Jews and Christians. It is upsetting to Jews because it impugns the integrity of Jewish belief. It is alarming to Christians because it misrepresents Christianity. It is disturbing to both Jews and Christians because it undermines the basis of mutual respect which it has taken so long for us to establish.

Perhaps the greatest danger in this "Jewish-Christian" missionary activity is that the Jewish community may draw back from interfaith dialogue, convinced that the "Jewish-Christian" movement is simply a highly visible manifestation of the otherwise tacit intent of all Christians to convert Jews to Christianity.

We wish, therefore, to make it clear that as Christians we acknowledge and affirm the integrity of Judaism and disavow completely the message and the methods of these "Jewish-Christian" groups.

From a public statement by the Rev. Lawrence McCoombe, chairman, Commission on Christian-Jewish Relations, Episcopal Diocese of Long Island, New York. (The statement has the full support of the Rt. Rev. Jonathan G. Sherman, Bishop of Long Island.)

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EVANGELICAL-JEWISH DIALOGUE

In the sense of dialogue as a structured and systematic exploration of profound religious and theological issues, organized dialogue between the Evangelical Christian and the Jewish community is a rather recent and somewhat fragile flower. Those who pioneered in it had to overcome a good deal of resistance on both sides. On the Jewish side, where the dialogue with Christians had developed largely with theologically liberal Protestants and, since Vatican Council II, with ecumenically-minded Catholics, there was an understandable suspicion that the process of dialogue might be subverted to conversionist appeals, a concern heightened by the memory of enforced disputations of past centuries. On the Evangelical side, there was a suspicion that dialogue might blunt the edges of religious distinctiveness and should be avoided lest Evangelicals succumb to compromising ecumenical pressures. (It was not only with Jews that some Evangelicals were hesitant to enter into dialogue, but with other Christian groups as well.)

Over the years, many caricatures and negative images had developed on both sides — perceptions of Evangelicals as “rednecks,” “crackers,” or bigots, right-wingers with no concern for social justice, and perceptions of Jews as “Shylocks,” “Scribes” and “Pharisees,” that is, a rigidly narrow and legalistic people, stubbornly hanging onto a fossilized faith, the religion of the “Old Testament.” There was a further misconception that Evangelicals and Jews had very little in common regarding positions of public policy or domestic agenda. Many of these misperceptions were fed by a simple fact of geography: until recently Jews have been concentrated in the urban centers of the Northeast and the upper mid-West and the major Evangelical population was located in the Southeast and the Southwest. American mobility and changing demographic patterns have changed all that; recent political developments suggest that Evangelical Christians have moved up to stage front and center in American life.

Breaching The Barriers

It was not until the late 1960s and the early '70s that a systematic national program was undertaken to breach the barrier of mutual suspicion and ignorance. The first

national conference of Evangelicals and Jews took place in December, 1975 in New York City, co-sponsored by the Institute of Holy Land Studies and AJC. This three-day conference opened a candid exchange on critical issues of scripture, theology and history. The meanings of Israel, messiah, Bible, salvation, conversion and faith were probed, and the moral implications of such issues as war, racism, anti-Semitism, church-state relations and social justice were explored. One of the outcomes of this historic meeting was the book, *Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation* (edited by Marc H. Tanenbaum, Marvin R. Wilson and A. James Rudin, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1978). Among the regional dialogues which spun off from this conference was a one-day meeting in Philadelphia co-sponsored by AJC and *Eternity* magazine, and a substantial conference in Dallas co-sponsored by AJC and the Texas Baptist Convention. The second national conference of Evangelicals and Jews took place at the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois in December, 1980, co-sponsored by AJC and



At Evangelical-Jewish conference: IAC Chairman Robert S. Jacobs, Professor Richard V. Pierard of Indiana State University and AJC President Maynard I. Wishner.

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ROBERT S. JACOBS, *chairman*
Interreligious Affairs Commission

RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM, *national director*
Interreligious Affairs Department

Christianity Today, with Rabbi Tanenbaum and Dr. Kenneth Kantzer serving as co-chairmen.

These meetings revealed a genuine appetite for serious dialogue; academicians, local pastors and rabbis, seminarians, national officials, community relations specialists and lay people interacted in a lively and open way. Evangelicals and Jews discovered many shared concepts and concerns, and when they differed — as indeed they did — it was not in the spirit of triumphalism or manipulation. Not least important, the “human chemistry” between these groups proved to be very positive.

Areas Of Agreement

Jews and Evangelicals meeting in dialogue soon discover several areas of similarity and mutual concern:

A similar congregational policy and structure. Both groups are free of any hierarchical structure, and each congregation is independent, selecting its own pastor or rabbi and operating as a free entity within the community.

Reverence for the Hebrew Bible, the foundation of both Jewish and Evangelical spiritual values. While there are profound differences between the two communities on biblical interpretation (indeed, there are differences within each, as well) both affirm that the Hebrew Bible has transcendent meaning for the entire human family, and look to it for inspiration and guidance.

An abiding commitment to the security and survival of the people and the State of Israel. Again, although theological understandings of the redemptive meaning of the rebirth of Israel differ both between and within the two communities, Evangelical Christians are generally sympathetic to and supportive of Israel. That support has been reassuring to Jews in the face of an unrelenting campaign to isolate and undermine Israel in the international forum.

A shared commitment to the principle of separation of church and state in the United States. Based on memories of discrimination and persecution in Europe, both communities have been vigorous upholders of religious freedom and government non-interference in matters of faith. (They do not always agree on what constitutes a breach of the separationist principle, but are profoundly committed to the principle itself.)

The struggle to achieve human rights and religious liberty for co-religionists in the Soviet Union. There are currently an almost equal number of Evangelicals and Jews in the USSR, and both communities of believers currently face persecution, discrimination and repression. Evangelicals and Jews have joined in protesting the official virulent Soviet campaign of anti-Semitism, and in calling attention to the plight of seven Christian Pentecostals still living in the basement of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. (A report on the actions of the Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry to press for human rights at the 1980 Madrid Conference on European Security and Cooperation may be found

elsewhere in this *Newsletter*.)

Apart from these areas of shared concerns, Evangelical Christians and Jews discovered that their human interaction dissipated stereotypes and worked against any tendency to view the “other” as abstractions. They discovered shared concerns about a host of issues, including social justice, single-issue politics, religious pluralism, family life and public morality, and each group discovered the other was far from monolithic in its approach to these issues.

Areas Of Tension

Profound differences in theology and understanding of scripture are to be expected in any dialogue between distinctive religious communities. Interestingly, such differences are not usually tension-producing, because the participants are secure in their own faith commitments, and seek the opportunity to better know and understand the other community, and their own in relation to it. Dialogues are not disputations. Nevertheless, some areas of tension are bound to arise in any intensive encounter between different faith communities. For Evangelical Christians and Jews, these tend to fall into two general areas: one relating to different approaches to certain public policy issues, the other relating to Christian missionary endeavors.

Public Policy Questions

While neither group holds unanimous positions, *most* Evangelicals favor prayer in the public schools; *most* Jews are opposed. There are honorable and persuasive arguments on both sides, but it is also a question on which emotions run deep. Those who favor prayer and other religious observances in public schools do not believe they pose a threat to church-state separation. Those who oppose them believe that government should have no role in fostering religious practices, which are the proper responsibility of home, church and synagogue. Moreover, Jews, as a very small minority, have frequently found that “non-sectarian” prayers become sectarian in practice, where overwhelming majorities of the school population are Christian.

Behind much of the thrust for a public affirmation of religious faith in the civic arena is the concern that our country has lost its moral underpinnings: violence and crime are on the increase, reverence for human life seems to be diminishing. Americans of all persuasions share this concern, but many caution that responsible moral behavior must not be confused with conformity to a particular creed. The assumption that a public proclamation of religious faith automatically bestows morality on the policy positions advocated by a particular spokesman is a dangerous one. Equally dangerous is the temptation to identify sectarian faith with civic virtue and patriotism. The first implies: “If you do not agree with my position on these issues, you are immoral.” The second implies: “If you do not worship as I do, you are un-American.” Both attitudes threaten the constitutional liberties which uphold freedom of conscience.

Conversionary Activities

The missionary imperative of Evangelicals towards Jews remains a hard knot between the two communities, although it has not impeded dialogue. Here, two questions need to be distinguished: one theological, the other relating to some missionary practices.

Since Judaism is the trunk onto which the branch of Christianity has been grafted, Jews would of course prefer Christians to eschew missionary efforts directed to the Jewish community on *theological grounds*, and to acknowledge that the Jewish people's covenant with God is continuous and unbroken. Yet many Jews are prepared to accept that the seeking of converts is a central thrust of Evangelicals, and that they have the right to define themselves. Moreover, in the context of religious liberty, every religious community is free to attempt to persuade others of its own religious truth. Jews strenuously object, however, to being singled out as special targets of missionary activity, and to the use of deception, coercion, or psychological and emotional pressure in the attempt to win converts. In practice, such methods have been used, and should be renounced by Christians as unworthy.

Also considered objectionable is a tendency for missionaries to focus on individuals who are, in some sense, marginal to the Jewish community or emotionally vulnerable for a variety of reasons. Since a Jewish family comfortably grounded in its faith and nourished by a practicing knowledge of Jewish faith and tradition is unlikely to be swayed, many missionary efforts have been directed to such groups as newly-arriving Soviet Jews, some of whom are disoriented, unaffiliated and not yet integrated into American life, to say nothing of Jewish life. Similar efforts have been directed at Jewish students on college campuses — frequently a period of vulnerability, when young people are cut off from home and family ties, emotionally uprooted, and some of them are searching for a “quick fix” solution to troubling problems and questions. (It is not only Jewish students who are vulnerable at such a time, and college campuses are a rich recruiting ground for a variety of cults and sects.) Perhaps the most difficult point of contention has been the question of what Christians call Jewish Christians, Hebrew Christians or Messianic Jews — the latter a tautology, since normative Judaism is inescapably messianic. Evangelicals find it hard to understand why Jews cannot be “both,” and why the Jewish community excludes from its ranks those who call themselves “Jewish Christians.” However, a hypothetical analogy frequently provides the basis for understanding Jewish feelings on this issue. If a group of Christians came to believe that the Koran is the ultimate revelation and Mohammad the final prophet of God, but still honored Jesus and Mary and celebrated essential Christian holy days — while investing them with Islamic symbolism — and claimed to be “fulfilled” Christians — Muslim Christians — would the Christian community accept them as *bona fide* Christians? Would Christians say: “You have the right to religious freedom, but if you are Muslims we cannot accept you as

fellow-Christians.” How would Christians feel about such a group missionizing among their children?

Obviously, there are no easy answers to these questions, nor to others on which large numbers of Evangelical Christians and Jews are divided. But the two communities have discovered they can speak to one another in candor and sympathy.

Jews have also been reassured by the response of Evangelical Christians to acts of vandalism and anti-Semitic expression. Thus, a group of Evangelical ministers, at a meeting with AJC leaders in Los Angeles which had gathered to hear IAD's Judith Banki report on the growth of Evangelical-Jewish dialogue, spontaneously rose to offer their support. Pastor Chester Harter, Jr., of First Baptist Church of South Gate, declared: “It is our responsibility as Christians to challenge those who perpetrate these acts of violence and hatred.”

Judith Banki

WOMEN OF FAITH IN THE 80s CONFERENCE

A conference unique for the participation of women leaders from an unprecedented variety of faith, ethnic and racial backgrounds took place at the Stony Point Conference Center in Stony Point, New York, Nov. 9-10, 1980.

Coordinated by IAD's Inge Lederer Gibel, Sarah Cunningham, associate editor of *A.D.* magazine and Sister Ann Gillen, a board member of the National Coalition of American Nuns, and underwritten by a grant from the Nathan Appleman Institute for the Advancement of Christian-Jewish Understanding, the Women of Faith in the 80s Conference gave rise to extraordinary interpersonal and interreligious sharing and an enriched appreciation of differing religious traditions. Thus, participants heard an Orthodox Jewish woman, a Roman Catholic nun and a Muslim professor criticize their own faith communities for



AJC's Mimi Alperin, Dr. Rosemary R. Ruether and IAD's Inge Lederer Gibel at Women of Faith Conference.

denigrating women, yet express their personal commitment to those communities and their determination to work for change within their traditions. A devout Muslim and a fervent Zionist embraced in human fellowship; a Nigerian feminist living in the U.S. sought advice from a Jewish feminist in relating to in-laws whom she described as doubly patriarchal, through church teaching superimposed on ancient African traditions.

The keynote address at the conference, "The Call of Women in the Church Today," was given by Dr. Rosemary R. Ruether, Georgia Harkness Professor of Theology, Garrett-Evangelical Seminary. Dr. Ruether, author of numerous books and articles on theological and social issues, challenged the traditional role models assigned to women in the Church, which placed them in "auxiliary and powerless roles." While there are no leadership roles in the Church for which women are disqualified by virtue of actual abilities, she stated, there is a special calling for women in the Church today: to recognize the way in which the long historic oppression of women has shaped religion, culture and social institutions "on pathological, dualistic, hierarchical patterns of domination and subordination," and "to be witnesses against these dehumanizing patterns of relationships in the Church and society..."

Other major speakers in addition to the three coordinators were Dr. Riffat Hassan, professor of religion, University of Louisville; Blu Greenberg, chairperson of "The Jewish Woman in a Changing Society" of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies; Dr. Virginia R. Mollenkott, a widely published author and member of the Evangelical Women's Caucus and Dr. Alba Zizzamia, Office of World Justice and Peace, New York Archdiocese.

AJC staff and lay women leaders involved in the conference as planners, chairs of sessions, workshop moderators and participants included Mimi Alperin, chairperson of the Interreligious Affairs Commission's Subcommittee on Women; Judith H. Banki, assistant national director of Interreligious Affairs; Alice Fisher, assistant area director, Philadelphia office; Charlotte G. Holstein of the Board of Governors; Ruth Kroll, assistant area director, Detroit office; Norma Levitt, honorary president of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods; and Elise Waintrup, executive board, Philadelphia Womens' Interreligious Dialogue on the Middle East.

On the recommendations of conference workshops, a permanent steering committee was formed. It will issue statements on behalf of Women of Faith in the 80s, help groups in other parts of the country plan similar conferences, and provide an open-ended forum for religiously-committed women interested in building coalitions and deepening interreligious understanding.

In addition to receiving widespread publicity, the Women of Faith Conference was videotaped by CBS and was the subject of a network television program in February. *A videotape cassette of the program is available for rental by interested persons or groups.*

INTERRELIGIOUS AFFAIRS COMMISSION HONORS MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR.

In a ceremony sobered by the memory of the murdered black children of Atlanta, Mrs. Elaine Alexander, AJC Atlanta Chapter leader, presented AJC's national interreligious award to the Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr. in recognition of his "decades of service to the cause of reconciliation and mutual respect between members of all religions, races, and ethnic groups in American society."

The presentation took place at a luncheon of the National Interreligious Affairs Commission in Atlanta, which devoted a major segment of its meeting to a demonstration of solidarity with the suffering families of the children. Noting that over a million Jewish children were lost to the forces of bigotry and cruelty during the Nazi Holocaust, and expressing a wish to "be present with the mourning families in their time of pain," Rabbi Tanenbaum and Rabbi Judah Mintz, president of the Atlanta Rabbinical Association, con-

AJC's DIAMOND JUBILEE

The American Jewish Committee, our nation's oldest human relations organization, celebrates its 75th Anniversary May 13-17 in Washington, D.C. In addition to a comprehensive review of domestic and foreign affairs and Jewish communal concerns, featuring the participation of national and world leaders, the meeting will focus on interreligious relationships as a major component of AJC's ongoing program.

Special anniversary events of interreligious significance will include a meeting of AJC leadership with the apostolic delegate to the United States, Archbishop Pio Laghi, at the office of the apostolic delegation on May 14. Archbishop Laghi, who has served in Latin America and in Jerusalem, will discuss the responsibilities of his mission against the background of Vatican policies and concerns.

Nationally eminent Christian leaders will join AJC for dinner and an ecumenical Sabbath service at the Washington Hebrew Congregation on May 15.

A special meeting of the Interreligious Affairs Commission on May 13 will focus on Interns for Peace, a project for Jewish-Arab understanding involving American and Israeli Jews in cooperative programs with Israeli Arabs. Special guests will be Rabbi Bruce Cohen, director, and Farhat Agbaria, field supervisor.

ducted a special memorial service in memory of the slain children. Rabbi Mintz led the traditional Hebrew prayer of mourning.

The keynote address was made by Dr. Joseph L. Roberts, Jr., pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, who stressed that compassion for the dead must extend to the living, and pointed to the needs of the poor and powerless.

Earlier, Rabbi Tanenbaum shared the podium with Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson and former United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young for the annual breakfast of the Christian Council of Metropolitan Atlanta.

THE NEW RELIGIOUS RIGHT

The new coalition of Evangelical preachers and ultra-conservative political organizers has created deeply ambivalent reactions in the Jewish and Christian communities, as well as in the general society. Does the ideological goal — claimed by some — to establish “a Christian Republic” in America nurture religious bigotry? Do its methods threaten American democracy and religious pluralism? Or has its influence and political power been overdramatized in the mass media?

To help stimulate reasoned discussion of the significance of this new force in American life, AJC has sponsored or co-sponsored a series of public forums bringing together religious leaders and interested citizens in various parts of the country.

New York City ... AJC's New York Chapter, in cooperation with the Ecumenical Commission of the Archdiocese of New York, the Council of Churches of the City of New York and Saint Peter's Church, a congregation of the Lutheran Church in America, sponsored an open forum on the subject, “The Moral Majority: Threat or Challenge?” at Saint Peter's Church on March 23. The panelists were: the Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, Jr., Episcopal bishop of New York; the Rev. Richard Neuhaus, Lutheran pastor and author and editor, *Lutheran Forum*, and the Rev. Joseph O'Hare, editor of the Jesuit magazine, *America*. Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum moderated the program, which was introduced by IAC Chairman, Robert S. Jacobs.

Denver ... “Religion and Politics” was the theme of the annual Interfaith Conference sponsored by the University of Denver's Center for Judaic Studies in cooperation with fifteen other educational and religious organizations, including AJC. The all-day conference on Feb. 17 featured morning presentations by Dr. Cynthia Wedel, author and past president of the National Council of Churches, Church Women United and the World Council of Churches, and AJC's Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum. Afternoon sessions were addressed by Sister Clare Dunn, C.S.J., an Arizona state legislator active in the National Task Force for the Political Education of Women Religious, and Dr. Barbara Har-

grove, professor of sociology of religion at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver. A concluding panel on “Evangelical Perspectives” featured Sister Dunn, Rabbi Tanenbaum and Dr. Wedel.

Los Angeles ... In response to the growing impact of “the electronic church” and the new religious right, AJC and the National Conference of Christians and Jews co-sponsored a conference on “Religion and the Electronic Media” at Saint Sophia's Cathedral on March 24. EcuMedia, a coalition of liberal Protestant organizations that produce local religious and public affairs programming in Southern California, cooperated in the program. Clergy, denomination executives, media specialists, members of the academic community, representatives from the electronic media, and the general public participated in the one-day conference.

Keynote speaker was Ron Hendren, critic-at-large for KNBC NEWS and investigative reporter on the electronic church. A highlight of the conference was a dialogue on the implications of the use of television as a religious experience between two national religious figures: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum and Dr. Harry Hollis, associate executive director, Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Atlanta ... AJC's National Interreligious Affairs Commission meeting in Atlanta on March 9, featured a thoughtful exploration of the Moral Majority phenomenon by two Christian leaders. Commission Chairman Robert S. Jacobs moderated a panel consisting of the Rev. Dr. David Taylor, director of the Office of Ecumenical Coordination of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. and the Rev. Msgr. Noel Burtenshaw, director of communications for the Archdiocese of Atlanta and editor of the *Georgia Catholic Bulletin*.

While speakers and panelists at these various conferences addressed different aspects of the emergence of the religious right as a vigorous force in the United States today, certain common themes and concerns emerged from the dialogue. The right of groups such as the Moral Majority to organize and compete in the public marketplace was universally affirmed. Many speakers cautioned against caricaturing the new religious right. Some pointed out that the cluster of organizations combining religion and right-wing political views are — in Rev. Neuhaus' words — “capitalizing on a deep resentment. They and their followers believe that in the past they have been excluded from and despised by the leadership elites in American life.”

What concerned most of the participants in these meetings was a perceived tendency for such groups to “baptize” a right-wing political agenda with the sanctity of religious morality, and to brand as immoral public figures or political officeholders who differ with their political positions on a host of unrelated issues, rather than debating these issues on their own merits. Moreover, their approach to problems is simplistic, said many of the speakers, and reflects a lack of concern for the poor and powerless in our society and an authoritarian approach to family life, education, religion and various social issues.

AJC "DISMAYED" AT VATICAN RECEPTION OF PLO OFFICIAL

In a public statement also sent to Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Casaroli, AJC President Maynard Wishner protested the formal reception of Farouk Kadoumi, a high official of the Palestine Liberation Organization, by the cardinal on March 18, in Rome.

Mr. Wishner noted:

The PLO's declared official policy is to use violence and terrorism to destroy the State of Israel, a sovereign member of the family of nations. For over 15 years, the PLO carried out a continuous campaign of murder and assassination aimed at civilian men, women and children. The Vatican meeting is especially disturbing because Kadoumi himself represents the most

intransigent "rejectionist front" position towards Israel.

AJC's protest continued:

Millions of people of good will will find it impossible to reconcile this action with recent pronouncements of the Vatican calling for universal repudiation of violence and terrorism which the PLO so singularly embodies. By making possible this meeting with the PLO, the Vatican has contributed to the legitimizing of the use of terrorism in international relations. The March 18th meeting, which was sought by the PLO and to which the Vatican agreed in order to "acquaint (itself) directly with the PLO's views," is a regrettable disservice to the cause of peace and justice in the Middle East.

The National Christian Leadership Conference for Israel, a coalition of Christian clergy and laity, also protested the meeting. Noting that Mr. Kadoumi "has repeatedly and publicly voiced his unconcealed hatred of the State of Israel and his total commitment to its destruction," officers of the conference declared:

We hope and pray for a clear word from the Holy See that legitimate concerns about the Palestinian people and questions about Jerusalem can never be negotiated with people who, through their National Covenant and their actions, threaten the very survival of the State of Israel as well as the peace of the world.

The letter of protest was sent to Monsignor Jorge Mejia, Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity, and signed by Dr. Franklin H. Littell, Sr. Rose Thering, O.P., the Rev. Isaac C. Rottenberg and the Rev. William Harter, officers of the conference.

75TH ANNIVERSARY AJC CHAPTER PROGRAMS

Several AJC chapters have commemorated the agency's Diamond Jubilee with special interreligious programs.

AJC's Phoenix Chapter commemorated the 75th Anniversary with a four-day Interfaith Institute featuring the Rev. Dr. Franklin H. Littell, professor of theology at Temple University. Dr. Littell, one of the nation's foremost scholars on the Holocaust and on Jewish-Christian relations, spoke and interacted with close to 1,000 people, including clergy, university students and faculty, religious school teachers and media professionals, during the course of the four-day Institute.

The Atlanta Chapter presented awards to Greek Orthodox Archbishop Iakovos, primate of North America, for his work on humanitarian concerns and to the Rev. George Telford of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, for his contribution to advancing Protestant-Jewish relations.

The Boston Chapter, which observed the anniversary with a "Showcase Series" of lectures throughout the year, featured a lecture by Rabbi Tanenbaum on April 7th on "The Changing Complexion of Christian-Jewish Relations," and presented an award of appreciation to Krister Stendahl of Harvard Divinity School for "furthering Christian-Jewish understanding."

The Denver Chapter's 75th Anniversary program also featured a lecture by Rabbi Tanenbaum on the new religious right.

INTERRELIGIOUS TASK FORCE PRESSES SOVIET UNION ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Last November six religious leaders representing the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry participated in the Madrid Conference on European Security and Cooperation as official observers. The group pressed the cause of human rights and religious liberty for Soviet Jews and other oppressed peoples in the USSR. The delegation was led by Sister Ann Gillen of Chicago, the Task Force's executive director, and Rabbi A. James Rudin, AJC's assistant national director of Interreligious Affairs. Other members were Sister Ann Marie Erst, a member of the Bishop's Commission on Justice and Peace, Dublin, Ireland; the Rev. Dr. William R. Phillippe, pastor of Bower Hill Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa., and a member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches; the Rev. John Radano, professor of theology, Seton Hall University, S. Orange, N.J.; Professor Charles Z. Smith, past president of the American Baptist Churches and dean of

the University of Washington Law School, Seattle, and the Rev. John Steinbruck, pastor of the Luther Place Memorial Church, Washington, D.C.

While in Madrid, the Task Force presented its position paper to the 35 national delegations assembled for the Conference. The paper spelled out six specific human rights agreed to in the Helsinki Final Act, which the Soviet Union has consistently abrogated. These include the right to leave one's country; the right to establish and maintain religious contacts between citizens of different countries; the right to teach one's children their religious traditions; the right to maintain one's religious beliefs in dignity, free from persecution; the right to maintain houses of worship and the right to employment.

After four days in Madrid, the group met with Vatican officials in Rome to enlist their assistance for Soviet Jews and Christians who are subject to Soviet repression. While in Europe during the American Thanksgiving season, the Task Force delegation symbolically adopted two Soviet families, one Jewish and one Christian, who are currently being harassed and persecuted by the USSR authorities.

The National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry was founded in 1972 by the Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice and the AJC. The Task Force also sent representatives to the 1977 Belgrade Conference on European Security and Cooperation.

VISITORS TO ISRAEL PROGRAM

In an article in the February 27th *Philadelphia Bulletin*, Nelson Diaz, a young Hispanic attorney from Philadelphia, described his experience as part of a study tour of Israel organized by IAD's *Visitors to Israel Program*:

There were many things that surprised me about Israel. Most significant was the lack of institutional racism among Jews. There seemed to be equality for oriental Jews, Spanish Jews, black Jews and Jews from every background and color...

The Jewish vigor, the commitment to assure a homeland and place of refuge for all Jews all over the world, was exemplified at Yad Vashem, the memorial to the Holocaust.

The whole visit reminded me how important it is for America to continue with her own struggle, to guard her freedoms and to seek equality for blacks, Puerto Ricans and the poor. We in America should never forget the errors and atrocities of the Nazis, as painful as it is to recall them. Concentration camps for Japanese, and the mistreatment to which blacks and Hispanics have been subjected, must never again find a place here.

Israel is a celebration, a land of hope for all

mankind. Its existence is all the greater for having taken so long to be fulfilled and despite such great obstacles.

This study tour brought together fifteen of Philadelphia's business, government, community and academic leadership — including blacks, Hispanics, white Christians and Jews — for a traveling dialogue in Israel. The group was organized by AJC's Philadelphia Chapter under the direction of Dr. Murray Friedman and the Philadelphia Jewish Community Relations Committee under the direction of Dr. Lawrence Rubin; the tour was planned by IAD's Inge Lederer Gibel in consultation with AJC's Jerusalem office.

The group met with Israeli officials representing a wide variety of views, and with experts in government and intergroup relations, as well as with Israeli Arabs, Palestinians and black Jews. The tour included visits to important sites related to the modern State of Israel as well as its biblical and archeological past.

(The Visitors to Israel Program provides specialized study tours tailored to the interests and concerns of leadership groups, and offers a unique opportunity for interreligious groups to travel and learn together. For further information, write to Ms. Gibel at AJC.)

IAD BRIEFS

- "Theological and Historical Perspectives on Jerusalem," a one-day seminar in Jacksonville, Florida on March 2, featured presentations by Dr. Marvin Wilson, chairman of the Department of Biblical Studies at Gordon College in Wenham, Mass.; Dr. Eugene Fisher, executive secretary for Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and IAD's Rabbi James Rudin.

While each spoke from his own religious perspective, the three scholars agreed that Christians must understand the centrality of Jerusalem to Jews and their claim to the land as the search for peace continues in the Middle East. The seminar was sponsored by the Jacksonville Ministerial Association in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Diocese of St. Augustine, the Jacksonville Baptist Association and Beth Shalom Congregation, and included responses to the presentations by Baptist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic pastors.

- IAD's Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum delivered the inaugural lecture for the Alfred R. and Lee Abrams Collection in Hebrew and Jewish Studies at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Ind. in February.

The collection was established in memory of the 1921 Notre Dame alumnus and his wife by their son and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Edward M. Abrams of Atlanta, and by the Abrams Foundation. Mr. Abrams is a leader of AJC's Atlanta Chapter. The endowed collection of books and other resource material will further Judaic studies within Notre Dame's theology department.

- An institute on "Christian and Jewish Priorities in the 80s" co-sponsored by the Union County Ministerial Association and the Union County Board of Rabbis was addressed by the Rev. William H. Harter, pastor of Falling Spring Presbyterian Church in Chambersburg, Pa., and secretary-treasurer of the National Christian Leadership Conference for Israel, and Rabbi Rudin at the First Presbyterian Church in Cranford, N.J. on January 29. It marked the first interreligious clergy institute in Union County.

NOTABLE QUOTABLES

"What can we as Christians, and especially as preachers of the Gospel, do to insure that never again does the proclamation of the Lord's passion become a message of hate rather than of redeeming love? At the very least, we can purge our preaching and prayer of every way of speaking and every idea which might nurture the false notion that the Jews are in some particular way responsible for the death of Jesus. The Second Vatican Council has declared that: *What happened in his (Jesus') passion cannot be charged against all Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today... The Jews should not be represented as rejected by God or accursed, as if this followed from Holy Scripture*" (NA 4). The American Bishops have added that: *nothing which in any way approaches the notion of Jewish collective guilt should be found in any Catholic medium of expression or communication. Correctly viewed, the disappearance of the charge of collective guilt of Jews pertains as much to the purity of the Catholic faith as it does to the defense of Judaism* (NCCB 1975) ...

"Homilies, religious education materials, and devotional prayers (e.g. for Stations of the Cross) should all reflect the purity of Catholic faith about both the death of the Lord and the election of Israel. But it is more than an examination of texts that is called for; it is also an examination of conscience. May the Lord grant us grace to speak his truth in love!"

Excerpts from a letter by the Rev. Dohrman W. Byers, director of the Office for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations of Cincinnati to all priests and deacons of the Cincinnati Roman Catholic Archdiocese. Accompanying the letter was a set of background notes for preachers, "Proclaiming the Passion Without Prejudice," which clarified essential Roman Catholic understanding of historical and theological responsibility for the passion of Jesus.

"...The issue that faces us today is not one of personal guilt for the past but of objective responsibility for the future. As an American born toward the end of 1943, I cannot feel personally guilty for what others may have

done in another time and another place. But as a Christian who wishes to take some pride in membership in the one Body of Christ, I cannot escape a sense of responsibility concerning the use to which the teachings of my church have been — and might again be — put. It is out of such a sense of responsibility to the future in the burning light of the fires of Auschwitz that the 1974 Vatican Guidelines mandate an "overriding preoccupation" for improving Catholic-Jewish relations in all dioceses "even in areas where no Jewish communities exist." The religious tradition I hold dear did have, even if unwittingly, its role to play in the tragic events of the Holocaust. This fact must be honestly faced so that we can truly say that never again shall Jesus' legacy be abused for the sake of murder. Yet on the basis of that same legacy I can claim hope in the success of the venture of reformation begun by the Second Vatican Council....

"Indeed, there is much work to be done. The old forms of theological anti-Semitism still exist among us today, and have been joined by new forms flowing out of the ideologies of both the right and the left of the modern political spectrum. As Christians, we must join together in common witness with the living Jewish community to resist, in the words of Vatican II, all "hatred, persecutions, [or] displays of antisemitism directed against Jews at any time and by anyone."

Excerpts from "The Holocaust and Christian Responsibility," an article by Eugene J. Fisher in America, February 14, 1981. (As noted below, reprints of the entire article are available from AJC.)

Available from AJC ...

"The Holocaust and Christian Responsibility" by Eugene Fisher. The executive secretary for Catholic-Jewish relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops probes the painful questions raised by the Holocaust for Jews and Christians alike and surveys a range of responses to these questions. (Reprinted from *America*)

"Discover Ecumenical and Interfaith Israel." A special guide geared to the unique needs of the Christian visitor to Israel, this 32-page booklet surveys Christian, Jewish interfaith, and government institutions providing the Christian visitor lectures and study programs, as well as encounters with co-religionists, Jews or Moslems, while visiting the Holy Land. Published by AJC's Israel office in cooperation with the Israel Interfaith Committee, it offers Christian visitors a living link with their religious roots.

Single copies of the above are available free from the American Jewish Committee on request.

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