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

Series E: General Alphabetical Files. 1960-1992

Box 85, Folder 3, Legislators [New York], 1980.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LEGISLATORS

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July 15, 1980

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
165 E. 56th St.
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum:

This is to thank you for giving our legislators an opportunity to hear one of the most brilliant addresses I have heard since Rabbi Steven Wise talked to my graduation class in 1932! It was indeed unfortunate that the timing precluded us from having the audience it deserved.

However, we plan to make your analysis available to all 250 Jewish legislators in America, and to call on them to take appropriate action. Your description of the rise of militant evangelicism and its impact on traditional church-state relationships, and your awakening us to the threat of an end-run around the constitutional guarantees of our liberties through an innocent sounding piece of Congressional legislation, constitute a great public service.

If you have a summary of your remarks that we could publish, or if you have published them elsewhere in a form we could condense, we would be glad to distribute them to all Jewish legislators. In addition, we plan in our liaison with Congressional leaders to develop a strategy for containing or blocking the developments you spotlighted.

It was heartening to get your advice not to feel our Association must work quietly in the shadows, since Catholic and Protestant groups are working with legislators of their respective faiths. Fortunately, the New York Times for three days in a row publicly mentioned NAJL in connection with Mayor Koch's attack on "quotas", so we plan now to shed our rather quiet strategy for a more open and public role. Our officers have met quietly with the White House on several occasions, with the Israeli Prime Minister and Knesset leaders, and the Israeli Ambassador to the USA. Our role changes now, and your words are helping to make that change, giving us confidence to "go public."

Again, our sincere thanks for your cooperation.

Cordially,

Albert J. Abrams
Executive Director

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