



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

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

Series G: Speaking Engagements. 1975-1992

Box 108, Folder 40, Temple Israel [Wilkes-Barre, Pa.]. 20-22
March 1981.



Human rights crusader to sound his message tonight

By **STEPHEN FORD**
Of The Times Leader Staff

The name and title may not evoke any immediate response, nor does his modest attitude in conversation, but Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum easily qualifies as one of this nation's foremost authorities on human rights.

For the past 30 years, Rabbi Tanenbaum has championed the plight of humans in need, whether the oppressor be abject poverty, hunger or despotism.

At 8:15 tonight, residents of Wyoming Valley can share Rabbi Tanenbaum's experiences in the world today, and the one tomorrow, when he addresses a joint audience of Jews and Christians at Temple Israel, 239 S. River Street, Wilkes-Barre.

There are no politics or ideologies shrouded within Tanenbaum's mes-

sage. Following three decades as scholar, consultant to a U.S. president, an expert witness before Senate foreign committees, and a delegate to Vatican II, Tanenbaum's philosophy transcends polemics. Like the reality of hunger when it snarls at the dogma of gun-toting Marxists, or fascists, Tanenbaum's message bites into the nerves and cannot let go. He speaks not of arms or balanced budgets but, in fact, humanity's desire to survive.

A globe-trotting humanist whose forums often take place throughout the world, Rabbi Tanenbaum has witnessed the very best that mankind can offer, and has rubbed elbows with its least-pleasant shadows.

In a telephone interview this week, Rabbi Tanenbaum was asked whether anti-Semitism has re-emerged in the Western world:

"There is no question that there are new episodes of anti-Semitism in

this generation," he stated. "But I think the recent outbreak of anti-Semitism here is primarily due to the country's rising rate of crime and violence in general.

"By that, I mean that when there are incidents of sacrilege in Jewish cemeteries, swastikas on tombs, that sort of thing, I don't think it's a concerted effort by the Ku Klux Klan or the American Nazi Party. I think it's kids vandalizing a sacred place and trying to do the worst thing they think they can do there.

"I don't think we ought to alarm the citizens when there is no proof that it is an orchestrated effort against Judaism. I'd guess that vandals try to spoil Catholic or Protestant cemeteries the same way. It's just that the swastika triggers such an immediate response among Jews."

Rabbi Tanenbaum's patience for childish bigotry grows thin when the

subject of the United Nations is broached.

"The United Nations has been the central arena for anti-Semitic speeches for years now. It is worse now than during the days of Hitler when he ranted for hours over international radio stations about how evil the Jews were. Then, you could turn him off. Now, the UN takes action to support such racist rantings."

Nonetheless, Rabbi Tanenbaum's interests are not concentrated. His primary concern is not anti-Semitism among fundamentalists in the United States, or bigots in France or England, but the status of Cambodia's disenfranchised vis-a-vis the current presidential administration's commitment to human rights.

"I'm not as worried about President Reagan's attitude toward human rights as many others are," he stated. "I talked with Jean Kirkpatrick, Re-

agan's appointed representative to the UN, about the Cambodian children out on rafts looking for a country to dock and her response was immediate. She wanted to help them.

"I am troubled, of course, by many of the statements by (Ernest) Lefever (Reagan's selection to head the U.S. Human Rights Commission) but it is inconceivable to me that this government can act as if human rights is not an issue," he said.

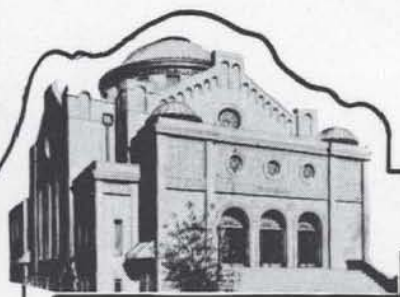
Rabbi Tanenbaum, guest speaker for Temple Israel's "Scholar-in-residence" program, will also appear at Saturday morning services; an informal gathering for teens from 4-6 p.m., Saturday; at the Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Salsburg home, 68 W. Ross St.; an evening soiree at Dr. & Mrs. David Greenwald's, 8 p.m., in Wilkes-Barre, and Sunday morning for a breakfast with other Jewish congregations.



RABBI MARC TANENBAUM

Times Leader 3/3/20/81

3/20 - M,
1981



TEMPLE ISRAEL

239 SOUTH RIVER STREET

WILKES-BARRE, PA. 18702

PHONE (717) 824-8927

DR. ABRAHAM D. BARRAS, *Rabbi*
HERBERT L. RITTENBERG, *President*

June
16
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Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum:

Rabbi Barras has received the biographical information that you sent. However, there was no covering letter with the data and we are assuming, with much delight, that the sending of this material signifies your acceptance of serving as our Scholar-in-Residence the weekend of March 20-21-22, 1981.

7/3/81

In addition to the material sent we would appreciate three glossy photographs for our newspaper and bulletin publicity releases.

Rabbi Barras will be in contact with you as to the details of the format of the weekend.

We are eagerly looking forward to your being in our community.

Sincerely,

SALLY CONNOR
Administrator

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th Street
New York, N. Y. 10022

*mtg folder
3/20/81*

July 17, 1980

Dr. Abraham D. Barras
Rabbi, Temple Israel
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18702

Dear Rabbi Barras,

Thanks very much for your warm and thoughtful letter of July 8th.

This will confirm my acceptance of your invitation to serve as Scholar-in-Resident at Temple Israel on the weekend of March 20, 1981.

While I agreed to the five lectures that you have outlined, I must stress that it is essential for me to have an opportunity to get at least some rest on Saturday afternoon. Otherwise with that schedule I could well be exhausted by the time the weekend is over. I am sure that you understand.

With warmest good wishes for a pleasant, restful, and above all a peaceful Summer, I am,

Cordially yours,

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
National Director
Interreligious Affairs

MIT:RPR

Enclosures

*To update
AK/MT on future*

Dr. Abraham D. Barras
Rabbi, Temple Israel
Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18702

July 8, 1980

on tape

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum:

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Though I have received the biographical material you were good enough to mail, I have not heard from you formally regarding your acceptance of our invitation to serve as Scholar-in-Residence at Temple Israel on the weekend of March 20, 1981. You will recall that we spoke of five presentations during the course of that weekend:

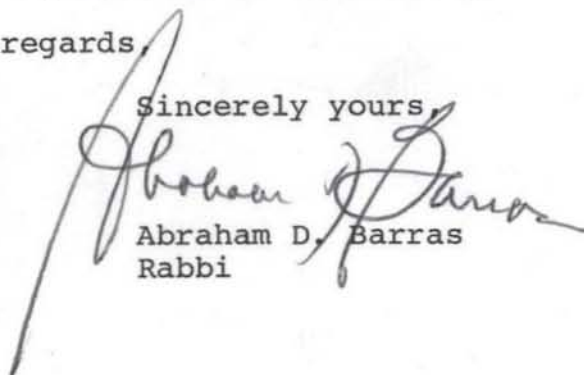
1. A Friday night presentation to a mixed audience of Jews and non-Jews.
2. A Saturday morning sermon to our Congregation.
3. A Saturday luncheon with our teenagers (informal discussion).
4. A Saturday evening get-together with our young marrieds.
5. A Sunday morning breakfast-meeting with our sister congregations of the Jewish community.

I mentioned to you that our Endowment provides a \$2,000 honorarium for this weekend, plus whatever small expenses are incurred by the lecturer.

Please do let me have your acceptance in writing so that we may proceed with our planning accordingly. We are truly excited with the prospect of your spending a weekend here with our Congregation and community.

With the kindest of personal regards,

Sincerely yours,



Abraham D. Barras
Rabbi

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