

MS-603, Box 112, Folder 4 Transcription

Dictation [1978].

Marc Tanenbaum:

-- Bishop, I think it's Blandfords Dodier. Look up the first name in the Catholic Almanac, or in our Memphis, Tennessee file.

My dear Bishop Dodier, it was the (inaudible) pure joy to be with you during my recent visit to Memphis.

You are one of most gracious hosts that I have yet met, [01:00] and I cannot recall any occasion on which my professional duties were made so pleasurable as a result of the simple feeling of warm hospitality and courtesy that you so spontaneously manifest.

I do think the conference was a very meaningful one, and I hope it leads to further reconciliation [02:00] and mutual respect among all of the people of Memphis.

You are a beacon of light not only in that city, but in the nation, and I want you to know that you have my constant good wishes and prayers for God's blessings over you.

With warm expression of good wishes, I am

Cordially, sign my name.

Enclose a copy of the Oberammergau press release. Carbon copy to William [Graunick?] in Atlanta.

This is a letter to Bishop [03:00] Thomas Kelly, I think he's Executive Director or Executive Secretary of the United States Catholic Conference in Washington, DC.

My dear Bishop Kelly, I hope this finds you in the best of health.

During the week of November sixth, I was privileged to take part in the third national workshop on Jewish-Christian relations held in Los Angeles, MWJC. [04:00]

Throughout the conference, there was much concern expressed about reports of the dismissal of Monsignor George Higgins from his post at the USCC. Monsignor Higgins is such a beloved and respected figure among [05:00] so many people involved in

ecumenical, Jewish-Christian relations, and racial justice, that there spontaneously emerged a desire to express the broad feelings throughout the country of affection and support of him. That sentiment became manifest in the drafting of the resolution addressed to the USCC that was signed [06:00] by many people from throughout the country.

Several of my Catholic, Protestant, and Evangelical colleagues asked me to communicate to you and through you to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, these feelings about George in the form of some representative petition that was signed. I carry out that obligation by enclosing [07:00] several of the petitions that include the signatures of Christians and Jews from many parts of the country.

All of us, I am sure, are thrilled to learn that Monsignor Higgins has been reestablished in a position in which his dignity as well as his extraordinary gifts can be used productively for the benefit of the Catholic community, as well as for [08:00] the nation at large.

With warmest personal good wishes, I am Marc H. Tanenbaum.

Blind carbon copy to Monsignor Higgins. Blind carbon copy to Monsignor John Hodgkins, to Father John [Kearem?], to Dr. Eugene [Spiffer?], to Monsignor John Eagan at the University of Notre Dame, to Monsignor Gino [Beroni?] at HUD, his address is in the workshop folder. Also to Father Brian Hehir. [09:00] And make a photocopy of the petitions for each of these people.

This is a letter to Mr. Jankowski. You'll have to get his first name; I think it's Robert. President, CBS TV.

My dear Mr. Jankowski, during the first week of November, I had the privilege of taking part in the third national workshop on Jewish-Christian relations held in Los Angeles.

This national assembly brought together several hundred [10:00] persons from the Christian and Jewish leadership community who are professionally involved in ecumenical, Jewish-Christian relations, and human rights and social justice activity.

During our deliberations, a deep concern was expressed over the proposed termination by CBS TV of the major religious programs, [11:00] "Lamp Unto My Seed" and "Look Up and Live," which was felt would have made such fundamental and creative contributions to the improvement of understanding between all religious,

racial, and ethnic groups in our country during the course of the past decades.

That concern became translated into a petition that was signed by hundreds of people from throughout the country. I was asked to accept the responsibility of sharing with you a copy of that petition, and some of the representative signatures. [12:00] And herewith enclosed are several of those documents.

This is but another expression that I have found of the pervasive and deep feelings of support for the pioneering religious programming that CBS TV has contributed to the welfare of our nation. Accompanying it is the genuine hope that [13:00] much of this contribution can be preserved and enlarged rather than diminished, especially at a time when our nation is in such desperate need for heightening moral sensibility in every area of our corporate and individual lives.

With warmest personal good wishes, I am cordially yours. A carbon copy to Gene Mater, Vice-President of CBS. He wrote to me recently, a letter that should be in the files. Send a blind carbon copy to Pamela [Ilott?] at CBS, also to Mort [Yarmon?] and Francis Rosenberg, [14:00] also to Bert Gold. Also send to Bert

Gold a copy of the letter and the petition regarding Monsignor George Higgins.

This is letter to the Honorable Arthur Goldberg in Washington, DC. I'll have to ask [Seymour Hersh?] for his address.

My dear Arthur, I was very glad to have the opportunity to hear your perceptive views about Pope John Paul II, as well as about our good friend, Monsignor George Higgins. [15:00]

As I promised, I will call you shortly to arrange an appointment with you, in order to explore further the matter of Pope John Paul II. In the meantime, I have been receiving some information which tends to confirm the data that I wrote about in the first article that you have received from Archbishop John Quinn. I leave for Germany this weekend in order to give some lectures in Munich and Oberammergau. As soon as I return, [16:00] I will call you in order to set a date that is mutually convenient.

Like yourself, I was both relieved and thrilled to learn that Monsignor Higgins was reinstated. I am sure that no small part of that reversal of decision was due to your vigorous and

effective interventions. You performed for all of us a very great mitzvah indeed.

I thought that you might be interested in seeing the enclosed petition in support of George that I drafted and that was signed [17:00] by several hundred people at a recent national workshop on Jewish-Christian relations, held in Los Angeles. Copies of this were sent to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and I hope it contributed to the positive result that we both very much wanted.

With warmest good wishes to you and Mrs. Goldberg, I am cordially yours. Sign my name.

Carbon copy to Bert Gold and to Seymour Hersh. Enclose in this a copy of the petition for George Higgins, and also a copy of the Oberammergau press release.

This is a letter to Dr. Eugene Fischer, executive secretary, [18:00] Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations, United States Catholic Conference, Washington, DC. My dear Gene, it was very good being with you in Los Angeles at the workshop on Jewish-Christian relations. I am very glad that we had some time

together. Our conversation was long overdue, and I hope there will not be such a long span before we meet again.

My purpose in writing to you now is to respond to the idea of our possibly doing a collaborative [19:00] project on Jewish-Christian aspects of seminary curricula and priest formation.

The AJC would be very much interested in undertaking such a collaborative enterprise with you on a national basis. I am enclosing a copy of a [20:00] somewhat preliminary study that we did with Sister Rose Albert [Shearing?], in preparation for a conference at DePaul University some years ago.

As you can see, it contains some interesting information, as well as areas and categories that might lend themselves again to some examination.

After you've had a chance to look at this, would you let me have the benefit of your reaction? Perhaps we could set a date very shortly to meet and to discuss how next to proceed. [21:00]

With warmest personal good wishes to you and Cathy, I am cordially as ever, sign my name.

With a carbon copy to Brent Cooper Smith. A blind carbon copy to Seymour Hersh and Ira Silverman and Bert Gold, and Miles Jaffe.

A letter to Mr. A.P. Wall, editor of the Chicago Catholic, Chicago, Illinois. My dear [editor?], many thanks for sending me a copy of the Chicago Catholic, which contains my article on Pope John Paul II and the Jews.

I appreciate very much your thoughtfulness in giving [22:00] this piece your prominent attention. My reason for writing it is to allay anxieties in the Jewish community, which have been widespread, given the Jewish experience in Poland. At the same time, it is to suggest that not all Poles are anti-Semites as well as to indicate that Pope John Paul II may well be a model to emulate on the part of many people who had difficulty in the past shedding themselves of their [23:00] anti-Semitic hatred and prejudices.

I hope we have an opportunity to meet together in the near future. Should you be visiting New York, please do give me a ring. It would be marvelous to have lunch or dinner with you. Again, with much appreciation, cordially as ever.

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