

MS-603, Box 112, Folder 11 Transcription

WINS radio commentary regarding AJC delegation to Austria
following Kurt Waldheim's election. 14 September 1986.

M1:

-- commentary by Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, of the American Jewish Committee.

Marc Tanenbaum:

During the last week of August, a delegation of six American Jewish Committee leaders went on a fact-finding mission to Austria. It was the first Jewish group to visit Vienna since the turbulent and distressing presidential election of Dr. Kurt Waldheim. After consultation with leaders of the Austrian Jewish community, the AJC spent a week of intensive meetings with the chancellor, the foreign minister, leaders of both political parties, social scientists specializing in research on anti-Semitism, and educators engaged in anti-Fascist education projects. We held four separate meetings with Austrian Jewish leaders, as well as a richly informative briefing with the American ambassador and his able staff.

At the risk of distortion in trying to summarize such an emotional, complex experience in phrase, I would have to say

something like this: Austria has many and deep problems in facing up honestly to its long history of anti-Semitism, [01:00] and its involvement in the Nazi horrors. But there are signs of genuine hope, especially among its younger generation, many of whom we found are determined to face the past, and to learn the right lessons from it. Perhaps the most hopeful sign of all is the decision of Austrian authorities to set up a joint working group with us, to study, in-depth, anti-Semitism in Austria, and to develop effective methods for combating that ancient evil. We welcome that cooperation, and are pledged to make it work for the sake of Austrian Jewry, as well as for the future of Austrian democracy, in which all of us have a stake.

This is Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee.

M1 :

The preceding was a commentary, and the views expressed are not necessarily the views of WINS. WINS news time, 12:59.

END OF AUDIO FILE