

VT-875 Transcription

Lecture and Q & A regarding Vatican, Jews and Israel.

8 November 1987.

Rabbi Klein?:

Tonight's lecture, a lecture that we believe to be a very, very significant one. Tonight, as you know, we have as our guest Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum. Let me share with you a little bit -- just a very little bit -- of the past of Rabbi Tanenbaum and the present. Rabbi Tanenbaum is the director international relations of the American Jewish Committee. He has a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugee, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns. He was formerly the American Jewish Committee's national interreligious affairs [00:01:00] director. And in a poll -- in a recent national poll -- he was designated as one of the 10 most influential and respected religious leaders in America. A cover story in the *New York Magazine* described him as the foremost Jewish ecumenical leader in the world today.

Dr. Tanenbaum is a founder and leading member of the joint liaison committee of the Vatican secretary of State on Catholic-Jewish relations and the International Jewish Committee for interreligious consultations, and of a similar body with the World Council of Churches. He was the only rabbi at Vatican

Council II and participated in the first official audience of world Jewish leaders with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City. He's also the first Jewish leader to address [00:02:00] 4,000 delegates attending the sixth assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in July of 1983. Naturally, he has lectured at many universities, and seminaries, and religious and educational bodies over the years in the United States, and Europe, and Israel, and at numerous national and international conferences. Tonight, Rabbi Tanenbaum will be speaking on the topic "The Vatican, The Jews, and Israel." It's my pleasure to present Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum. (applause)

Marc Tanenbaum:

Rabbi Klein. [Just Charney?] and friends. Tonight is a first for me [00:03:00] in recent months. This is one of the first times I've come early for an evening lecture anywhere in the New York area. It usually takes me less time and less indirection to travel from here to Jerusalem, or Paris, or Rome, or Vienna than frequently it does making it to synagogues in outlying areas of New York, Fairlawn, New Jersey. And [verily?] I become [*fablumjit?*] somewhere along the way. But apparently the instructions that I got from Mr. Charney about coming here were so clear that it made it an unusual experience for me to be here on time. [00:04:00]

You know, there is a very powerful traditional -- a very powerful image in Jewish tradition about the saving remnant of Israel and I suppose some of us must feel that way this evening, that the [*Hida Segula?*] have come together here. I'm tempted to take a moment to tell you a story that Dr. Billy Graham, who happens to be -- contrary to popular images -- one of the greatest friends of the Jewish people of this century -- who has been one of the closest friends of the late Golda Meir, David Ben-Gurion, Abba Eban -- who's made interventions for Israel during the 1967 war and 1973 war. I'm in fact writing a book that I've outlined on Billy Graham, the Jews, and Israel.

[00:05:00] Billy Graham told me a story not too long ago about a Baptist preacher who was invited to address a Baptist church in Kansas -- Wichita, Kansas, as he recalled it. And it turned out that he was invited to speak there in the height of February and there was a terrible storm raging that night, when this preacher was called to speak in that church. And he came there, driving through very heavy snowstorms. And finally, with all kinds of desperate assistance, he finally made it to the church. So he comes inside this lovely, comfortable church in Wichita, Kansas. And he comes to the pulpit and he gets up, ready to speak. And he looks around and [00:06:00] the congregation is empty, save for one man sitting in the middle of the church. Being a Baptist

preacher, he gets up and he starts preaching. And he starts preaching the gospel and he is called to preach the word. And he preaches for 20 minutes, and 30 minutes, and 40 minutes. Finally, he winds himself up 45, 50 minutes, and he finishes the sermon. And then after the service is over, comes down off the pulpit and he walks to the middle of the church to this one man who's sitting there. And he says to him, "Brother, I have to tell you, I'm very impressed by the fact that you came out on a night like this -- a terrible storm. And furthermore, I'm just shaken to my bones that you sat here through that whole service and that whole sermon, from beginning to end." He said, "I really need to understand that and I just can't understand that. I'm very touched by it, but [00:07:00] I'd like to understand it." So the man looks up at him and he says, "Well, Mr. Preacher, you see, I'm a farmer. And when I get up in the morning -- and I get up early in the morning -- and I call all the cows, if only one cow comes in or two cows come in, I'll feed them, but I sure don't throw the whole bale of hay at them." Monday night I spoke before 1,500 people at the Sutton Place Synagogue. I threw the whole bale of hay them. Tonight you're going to be spared. I'll just pass out the rare alfalfa. At some point, it might be interesting to reflect on various kinds of Jewish responses to this subject, the Vatican, the pope, the Jews, and Israel. [00:08:00] One thing is clear to me,

and I have been working for some 25 years -- since I came to the American Jewish Committee - in the area of Vatican-Jewish relations, Catholic-Jewish relations. I have, over the past four years, been drafted to another assignment; I'm in charge of our international relations work which is essentially a kind of mini state department, working with governments, and foreign ministers, and Jewish communities around the world. But I continue to maintain my portfolio with the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, because there's a very real connection between the Vatican's politics and the politics of governments in many parts of the world, and I'll come to that in a little while.

But one thing has struck me that something unusual happened following the meeting between Pope John Paul II and the audience that he granted to [00:09:00] Kurt Waldheim, an unrepentant Nazi who became president of the Second Republic of Austria. I cannot recall -- literally cannot recall a time -- during the course of the past 25 years when I have experienced seeing so much anger, resentment, rage in the Jewish community so spontaneously all over the United States, all over Israel, all over Western Europe, South America, South Africa -- wherever Jews find themselves. And on the surface of it, it is altogether understandable. But then it occurred to me that something is

going on here, that must one really understand [00:10:00] deeper than the level of headlines. Because Jews have no pope -- thank god -- nobody gave orders for this, nobody pushed buttons for this, nobody gave commands; these were spontaneous expression of the depth of Jewish feeling. Jewish *kishkas* were on the table for weeks and weeks on end, including to this moment. And as I began trying to understand why this extraordinary response, it suddenly struck me one day as I was going through newspaper clippings and reports from overseas. A photograph of this pope side-by-side with Kurt Waldheim with this radiant smile on his face, and suddenly it hit me that what took place here was an extraordinary fusion [00:11:00] of two of the most powerful images in Jewish consciousness in our lifetime. On the one hand, because of the incessant publicity surrounding Waldheim, the World Jewish Congress attacks on his being a Nazi war criminal, being associated with a Nazi in Greece and in Yugoslavia. Waldheim became the supreme embodiment in the awareness of Jews all over the world of the presence of Nazism, of the Nazi Holocaust in our lifetime. Mengele is dead. Ivan Demjanjuk trial is going on. It's becoming (inaudible) in Israel. Has not come to a focus. Linnaeus was sent to the Soviet Union and that Nazi was killed. Waldheim became the central figure of the Nazi presence in our consciousness during this period of time. But side by side with Waldheim there stood Pope John Paul II.

[00:12:00] And for millions of Jews -- millions of Jews who knew nothing about the Vatican Council, couldn't care less; millions of Jews who had nothing to do with the Roman Catholic Church, with cardinals, with bishops, with priests, with nuns, who had no experience whatsoever in what has been happening to the Catholic Church over the past 20 years -- this pope was the embodiment of the 1,900 years' experience of the Jewish people with the Roman Catholic Church.

Before I go on any mission with our leadership anywhere in Europe, it is a central practice for me, so that our people understand what their task is, before we went to Oberammergau to try to make some impact on that classic anti-Semitic play in which Jews are portrayed as the enemies of God, the enemies [00:13:00] of mankind, and it goes on and on and on for centuries now, I make it a point, always, of taking our leadership first to Dachau outside of Munich. And we go to the [mutsavahs?] for the Jews who were killed in Dachau. And we go to the memorial place, and there we cite *Kaddish* and make an [almullay?]. It is critical that Jews understand what that past of anti-Semitism, which emerged out of 1,900 years of teaching of contempt for the Jews, ultimately led to. Oberammergau and Dachau are the interplay of that 1,900 years of teaching of contempt. Well, this trip, before we went to Rome, before we

went to the audience with the pope, which I'll come to in a few moments, I made it a point -- I came to Rome earlier, in mid-July, before the audience took place on September [00:14:00] 1st. And I walked through the Jewish ghetto in Rome. One of my dearest friends is Mrs. Tullia Zevi, a brilliant, tough, smart Jewish leader of the Italian Jewish community. And she has an apartment in the Jewish ghetto. And I walk through the Jewish ghetto, these cramped alleys, places where there was a ghetto wall, and that was to position myself to understand the tasks that we were undertaking.

And then I recalled in my studies of that history of the Jewish presence in the Christian west that it was Pope Paul IV in 1565 who established the ghetto in Rome, where Jews were confined behind those ghetto walls, were not allowed to leave in the morning, and had to be back at a certain hour in the evening when the curfew was established. The Jews had to come [00:15:00] every Sabbath and every holy day outside of their synagogues. They were brought by churchmen in Rome to the church opposite the great synagogue on the Tiber River to listen to forced sermons of conversion, where they were always confronted since the period of the Spanish Inquisition and the Inquisition is spread through Europe by the Dominican fathers who set out to purify the church with this choice: you are given the choice of

the cross -- of conversion -- or as Torquemada, the great inquisitor, held up, either the cross or the sword.

What I'm trying to say is that in Jewish consciousness, anyone with an accurate knowledge of what the history of the Jewish presence in the Christian west has been for the greater part of the past 1,900 years, literally up to the period of Vatican Council II, must know that the teachings of contempt in Roman Catholic tradition. In catechism after catechism, in liturgy [00:16:00] after liturgy, in textbook after textbook, portrayed the Jews in these dehumanized forms. It is in the Christian cosmology, in the Christian worldview, literally throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, this perception that the great conflict in the world is between the *l'havdil*, the children of Christ, and the antichrist. That is the great cosmic conflict in the world, and the Jews were always portrayed, since the period of the New Testament and the church fathers in the first four centuries as the antichrist who became the Satan. And you look through all of the art books of the Middle Ages, and Jews portrayed as being in league with Satan always are shown with long hooknoses, with spittle running down their beards, with a tail, and with horns. This was the dehumanizing image of the Jews who were robbed of their humanity for the greater part of

1,900 years as part of the gospel of love. The gospel of love [00:17:00] became the gospel of hatred for the Jewish people.

And so when one began to see, this image on the one hand of the embodiment of Nazism and the person of Kurt Waldheim, standing side by side with Pope John Paul II who his, for most Jews, -- certainly prior to an awareness of Vatican Council II -- the embodiment of the Roman Catholic Church which, for 1,900 years was the greatest purveyor of anti-Semitism -- theological anti-Semitism -- in western culture. The image of Judas, which was a religious image, became in the secular world the image of Shylock, the Jews who had to have their pound of flesh. And those images of Judas and Shylock penetrated western culture, western civilization. It was no accident, and Hitler said it very clearly: why are you getting very upset with what I am doing with the final solution? I'm simply carrying out what the church has taught for the past 1,900 [00:18:00] years. Hitler actually said that to a group of bishops and then to his generals in Nazi Germany.

And so seeing both of those images fused together, in that image of the pope and Kurt Waldheim, it became what social scientists called synergistic. It began to take on a power, a life, far greater than the elements themselves and induced this

extraordinary rage and anger of seeing the two embodiments of the two greatest sources of hatred toward the Jews, and pogroms, and inquisitions, and *auto-da-fés*, and yellow badges which began with the church in medieval Rome, where Jews in the ghetto were forced to wear yellow hats and yellow badges. Hitler did not have to invent much of that; it was ready-made for him. And then, down through the Protestant reformation with Martin Luther, whose [00:19:00] sermons about the Jews took care of the Protestant side of the equation. So the point is that those images came together and took on a power and led to a response that was virtually traumatic in the Jewish consciousness, which has not been resolved, even to this day, for many Jews.

I could not get over what took place at Sutton Place Synagogue last Monday night. Fifteen hundred Jews or more filled the downstairs of the synagogue, the upstairs of the synagogue and they didn't want to go away. They had somehow to resolve this and reconcile this in their consciousness and how one copes with that.

So that's the first element that one has to recognize. The power of the imagery that emerged and what that represents in the Jewish historic experience. Beyond that, much of the anger and here, I now have to come not only to Jewish anger, but what we

[00:20:00] have not yet actively come to understand, anger among Roman Catholics in the United States, as well as in Europe and elsewhere. Anger at the Jewish response to this episode, which we still [need to?] deal with. But part of the dynamics that was going on in the reaction of both Jews and Roman Catholics to that extraordinary event of the pope's receiving Waldheim on June 25th grew out of the confusions about the role -- the double role -- of this pope himself.

William Saphire wrote a column about this not too long ago in which he spoke about this ambiguous role. He said the pope wears two hats. One is his religious hat and the other is his political hat. His religious hat, he is the universal pastor of 850 million Roman Catholics throughout the world, [00:21:00] 52 million Roman Catholics in the United States. As the universal pastor in Catholic belief, he is regarded, again, *l'havdil*, as the Vicar of Christ on earth. He is the embodiment of Jesus on earth. And as such, Roman Catholics, especially believing Roman Catholics, believe in his infallibility. The pope is infallible. The pope can make no mistakes, no errors, in the area of faith, morals, and discipline. When the pope makes a teaching dealing with matters of faith and conscience, he is regarded as being without any blemish or mistakes. But the pope is also the supreme pontiff of the Vatican state, the Vatican state which is

a sovereign political state, established in relationship to Mussolini's Italy in 1929. And as such, he is regarded as the political head of a political state [00:22:00] which has ambassadorial relationships with 140-some countries around the world. And as a political head, he clearly should be subjected to the same criticism -- certainly to the same judgment -- as any other political head of state. Even Teflon President Reagan we're beginning to see these days stands accountable. I mean, what he's going through first with Bourke and now with Ginsburg, it's a [*clinkite?*]. Look what he went through with the Iran-Contra affair. Even a Teflon president becomes subjected to criticism on the part of people who do not share a common view.

Well, an extraordinary thing seemed to have gone on in relation to the pope and his mixed role, some of which Jews almost unconsciously themselves were not clear about. On the one hand, Jews said to themselves, this is the pope. He is the universal pastor of the Catholic church. Catholics say he's infallible. How can an infallible [00:23:00] pope receive a man, a former Nazi, in the first place? And having received him, not say a single word about his Nazi past or the Nazi Holocaust. What kind of infallibility is that? It represents a decline of moral conscience. It was in fact as if Jews accepted the self-definition of the pope in his religious capacity and applied it

to the political arena. For Roman Catholics, and we need to understand this -- I have seldom received as much hate mail as Roman Catholics -- and these are not just, you know, people on the street. I mean, these are not street cleaners, these are not just taxi drivers -- besides, most of the taxi drivers are Israelis or Egyptians now, anyway -- (laughter) but these were people who were lawyers and Wall Street people. I'm getting telegrams from Wall Street brokers who are Irish Catholics saying, who are you, Jews, to tell us [00:24:00] who our pope is to receive? Our pope can receive whoever he wants to receive. Our universal pastor. That is to say, in the judgment even of intelligent Roman Catholics, they began to fudge the distinction between his religious role as universal pastor, infallible, the Vicar of Christ on earth and his political role where infallibility does not obtain in any way. Yet they began, somehow, seeing that he is not only without mistakes religiously, he is without error even as a political leader. And what right do you damn Jews have to tell us how our pope is to live? Now, one began seeing this in many parts of the world. I began seeing it all over Europe as I traveled after those meetings.

I want to say a few words about the significance of that meeting [00:25:00] and why Jews have every right to ask the questions

they did and why we insisted that unless there was an opportunity to meet with the pope directly, to discuss face to face with him and with Vatican leaders the issues that concerned us. And we told the Vatican authorities there would be no meeting in Miami. Not only is there this matter of all of these images that I'm talking about, I think we do have to understand at the outset, part of the mentality of the Vatican and many Roman Catholics is that -- and one has to be honest about this, not play propaganda games about this -- at the very outset, neither the pope nor the Vatican asked for the audience with Waldheim. [00:26:00] They did not invite him to come to Rome. We're now running a program in Austria, as we've been doing in Germany now for 30 years, because there's a whole generation of young Germans and young Austrians who were born either during the war or after the war who are in no way implicated in the Nazi Holocaust, who are the future of those democratic societies, and we've been working with them. And I've been to Austria four times in the past two years.

When we were in Austria -- and I'll be going there again in a week from now to meet with the Austrian Jewish community -- it became very clear from people we talked to in the Austrian government and both political parties that Waldheim himself asked for the audience with the pope on three separate

occasions. And the Vatican, the Holy See, turned him down on three separate occasions. They had enough [sores?] in many parts of the world. They've got problems with Austrian Catholics who are in turmoil, like the Dutch Catholics. They turned him down three separate occasions. [00:27:00] Finally, in Austria, the Social Democratic Party began a series of attacks on the People's Party, which is the conservative, Christian, democratic party in Austria, saying that the People's Party, which made Waldheim their candidate and elected him as president, that they have brought shame and humiliation onto Austria. After the watchlist -- after Waldheim was placed on the watchlist by the United States -- it became clear that for the first time in their history -- certainly since the Second Republic at the end of World War II -- they have a president of their republic who can't go anywhere. Nobody would receive him. This superpower of the world, the United States, put him on a humiliating watchlist and said that he will not be allowed to come to this country. And then most of the countries of Europe said exactly the same thing. The only people who invited Waldheim after watchlist were Qaddafi of Libya and Hussein of Jordan, great world leaders. (laughter) [00:28:00] And so for the Austrians, it began to set in on them that their isolation from the civilized democratic governments of the world was becoming a profound embarrassment for them. And they were desperate to put together a government

after the end of World War II that had some democratic character.

And so the People's Party, which controls the foreign ministry of Austria went to the Vatican and demanded the Waldheim be given an audience and they did it on this basis: it is the policy -- it is the foreign policy -- of the Holy See of the Vatican secretary of state -- that any head of state, especially if he's democratically elected, who asks for an audience with the pope will be granted such an audience. It is simply a formal legalism of the Vatican. If any head of state -- and they have since invited such democratic heads of state as Idi Amin for life of Uganda, who massacred 500,000 Christians, half of them Roman Catholics and [00:29:00] other Anglicans. They received even President (inaudible) [Botha?] of South Africa. And now the pope announced that he wants to go to South Africa in 1988 -- in September of 1988 -- and the black Catholics of South Africa have told the pope, we will not receive you. Stay home. We don't want you to come, because you have honored President (inaudible) Botha, who is the architect of Apartheid and the architect of our suffering, and we cannot understand how the pope can receive a man responsible for our suffering. And so the pope has since announced that they are going but not to South Africa but to

Botswana, Mozambique, Zaire, Zambia, which is a sign of the rejection of his own people of that policy.

Nevertheless, Waldheim, when his government formally asked on the basis of that policy that he be accepted, and the Vatican accepted [00:30:00] his coming. Well, one can say that formally, legalistically, the Vatican was caught by its own standards -- one could think of imaginative ways in which that could be reinterpreted -- but they accepted him. So the issue has less to do with the fact that the pope agreeing to accept him, even though the judgment is exorable. But really became troublesome for us and for Jewish leadership generally, and I think for Jews around the world was having agreed to receive Waldheim, known to be an unrepentant Nazi, a man who has lied about his role as a member of Group E, one of the worst, most savage corps that led to the deportation of 40,000 Jews from Greece. That participated in the Kozara massacres in Yugoslavia, that resulted in the burning of villages -- not of Jews -- of Yugoslav Protestants, of Croatian Catholics. That this man could be received in the Vatican by the supreme pastor of the church, whether in his political dimension [00:31:00] or his religious dimension, and that he could receive him and not a single word was said about his Nazi past. Not a word was said about Nazism. Not a word was said about the Nazi Holocaust. But on the contrary, that the

pope declared that this is a great international servant who has contributed to the cause of world peace. And then Waldheim, [schmeckling?] before the press of the world, turns around and says, "The pope is the conscience of the world of mankind and we had a wonderful audience. It went better than I'd ever expected." And what we said to the Vatican beforehand became absolutely true. It became true with Arafat before him, it became true with Idi Amin, it became true with (inaudible) Botha. The photograph of the pope and Waldheim appeared on the front page of most of the newspapers of the world; t appeared on the front pages of every newspaper in Austria -- *Die Presse, Die Wochenpresse, Kronen Zeitung*. It was, for him, as he exploited this conscience of the world, [00:32:00] now says in effect that I am [Mr. Clean?], without having confessed for a moment anything about his Nazi past.

The danger of what went on was that this became a message or could have become a message to millions of Roman Catholics, especially Roman Catholic young people in Germany, in Austria, in Poland, throughout Europe who have been struggling to come to terms, to face the Nazi past. I cannot begin to tell you how many thousands of young Germans -- we have an exchange program with various foundations -- the Adenauer Stiftung, the Abraham Stiftung -- every year we bring over two, three delegations of

young Germans and bring them to see Jewish life in America. And among them are the children -- we had a daughter of von Weizsäcker, of the president of Germany; [Lemertis's?] son, they had a (inaudible) minister. They come to Jewish life. They come to see the seminaries. [00:33:00] They come to the Leo Baeck Institute. They come to all of the major Jewish institutions. And one after another, young, German Christians say to us, we now begin to understand for the first time what was destroyed by the Nazis in our midst. They don't see Jews anymore. There are no Jews left to have experiences with in most of the cities of Germany.

Well, this becomes now a message to hundreds of thousands, millions of young Germans that this pope who receives Waldheim says nothing about the Nazi past. It is as if to say that the Nazi Holocaust has become so irrelevant that it is not even worth a mention in the presence of this man who was seen as the supreme embodiment of Nazism today.

The audience with Pope John Paul II [00:34:00] had been announced months before and his planned trip to the United States for September 11th in Miami. The anger became so great among many Jewish leaders that announcements began to be made that there will be a boycott of the pope's coming. The Vatican,

in its own judgment, wanted to have its meeting with the Jews as the first meeting of the 10-day trip in the United States. Part of that has to do with the perception of American Jews. The Vatican understands, as heads of state in many parts of the world -- and I've now heard this over and over again -- there is the perception that Jews are among the most respected populations in the country. The Jews are intellectually, educationally, socially, economically among the most advanced population. Jews are in art, and culture, and politics. Jews are involved with the Republican party and the Democratic party. Jews are major [00:35:00] constructive factors in America. The pope wanted to have a good visit with the Jews to start the trip off right because in his judgment, as in the judgment of the Vatican -- you know, for the gays to protest, that's [foreign]. They're off the wall anyway, in the Vatican's judgment. Even for radical feminists, Catholic nuns to protest, the pope took care of them. They got up, they made their speeches about equality in the Church and the pope responded by saying no woman will ever become a priest. Not in my lifetime. Go back to the kitchen. Go play some side role. This conservative pope put women on notice: he's running the Church, not they.

But the Vatican then began [suppling?] for the Jews who were seen to be such an extraordinarily productive, creative factor

in America. Despite our numbers, this pope did not want his party destroyed at the very outset. To come to a meeting where the pope would be boycotted, [00:36:00] would be charged with being anti-Semitic, indifferent to Nazism became traumatic for them. I went over before our delegation came in July. I had meetings with the Italian government -- we're doing a conference with them and some programming with them -- a film we've done on Italians of the Nazi Holocaust -- and I have seldom seen such anxiety in a Vatican Secretary of State. What can we do to straighten this out?

On July 9th, Cardinal Casaroli, the Vatican Secretary of State, was in New York City. He came here for an unofficial visit. Casaroli is the second most important man of the Vatican. If something were to happen to the pope, the man who would become the de facto pope would be Cardinal Casaroli. He is the equivalent of George Schultz but, in the Vatican parlance, his holiness range is next to that of the pope. He was here, in New York, on July 9th. He did not come here planning to meet with Jewish leaders. There was a meeting of [00:37:00] Catholic bishops in the United States, among them Archbishop John May; the president of the Catholic hierarchy, Cardinal O'Connor; Bishop [Kiler?], who was in charge of running the whole tour for the pope of the United States; and several other people. We met.

That night, we received telephone calls -- there were four of us who were called -- asking if we could meet with Cardinal Casaroli. He was prepared to change his schedule; he was scheduled to go back to Rome the following morning. The American Catholic hierarchy told him, you cannot go back to Rome without meeting with Jewish leaders. You have got to understand firsthand what is the nature of the Jewish anger, the Jewish protest, the Jewish issues that have so upset the Jewish community as a result of the pope-Waldheim meeting. So that night, I received a telephone call, as did Rabbi Wachsmann of Great Neck; Rabbi Gilbert Klaperman, Orthodox Rabbi, former head of the Rabbinical Council of America; Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, of the Rabbinical Assembly; myself.

[00:38:00] We met the following morning at 10:00 am. We were supposed to meet for a half hour with Casaroli; we met for an hour and a half. And without any signals in advance, [*foreign*] [at the heart?] of Cardinal Casaroli. Before that meeting was over, he knew the intensity of Jewish feeling and why Jews felt the way we did. We began with the Waldheim visit and said to him all of the things that I've just referred to. How can the pope - - let's assume the pope had to meet with Waldheim, because of Austria's claims. How could the pope allow a situation to develop and not say a single word about the Nazi Holocaust? The

impression that is now emerging is that the Roman Catholic Church is engaging in revisionism. The Soviet Union, Poland, East European countries, together with neo-Nazis, have been engaged in a massive effort to revise the history of the Nazi Holocaust. If you come to Babi Yar, you will see a sign which says 100,000 Soviet citizens were massacred here. [00:39:00] My friends, there were 100,000 Jews who were massacred in Babi Yar -- no Christians -- and Jews were removed from the consciousness of anyone who passes by there. It's as if the death of Jews lost all of its meaning. You come to the Warsaw Ghetto, there's a memorial there: the heroic Polish citizens rose up against the Nazis. Nothing about Jews. The Warsaw Ghetto was a Jewish uprising. It was a heroic Jewish uprising. Only laterally now we've begun raising protest with the Polish government and they've begun now making some adjustments to acknowledge the Jews were involved centrally in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

So here you have the Soviet Union, East European countries which are engaging in that revisionism. You have neo-Nazis in the United States and Europe who are publishing books called -- [magazines?] -- *The Nazi Holocaust is a Hoax*. [00:40:00] It never happened; the Jews invented it. The [pen?] who was now running in the conservative party for president of France makes a speech a month ago: the death camps were only a minor footnote

of history of World War II, really a not great significance. *The Journal of Historical Review* published in California, which says that the whole thing is a device of the Zionists and the Jews to manipulate the guilt of the Christian world so Christians will support the state of Israel against the Arabs and Palestinians. But Jews were not killed, death camps did not exist, crematoria did not exist.

Well, my friends, if that is allowed to go on and then if the pope, who is the Vicar of Christ on Earth for 850 million Catholics throughout the world, begins to lend himself to that kind of revisionism. This pope who goes to Germany in June [00:41:00] and singles out before the whole German Catholic population three people who were identified as martyrs: Sister Edith Stein, who he said was killed as a Catholic martyr, when we know for a fact that Edith Stein was murdered, together with other nuns who were born of Jewish parents, only because they were Jews. They did not touch the Netherlands. They did not touch Catholic nuns who were not of Jewish origin. There were a dozen Roman Catholic nuns at that time who were pulled together and taken to Auschwitz because of their Jewish background. And then Father Rupert Mayer of Munich, who was a protestor against Nazi tyranny. And Cardinal von Galen was also beatified. The beginning of the process of beatification of saints, Cardinal

von Galen protested against euthanasia. He hardly said a word about the extermination of Jews in Nazi Germany. So what began to emerge out of this German experience [00:42:00] was the imagery that the only martyrs of Nazism were essentially German Catholics. And hardly any mention was then made of what happened to the Jews.

Nor was any mention made of the fact that the German Catholic Church, in 1933, through the central party, participated actively in helping give Hitler respectability and installing him in power. It was the Vatican, and Cardinal Pacelli, and the German Catholic Church, and the central party who, in July 1933, signed the Vatican Concordat with Adolf Hitler, which gave him his first mark of respectability at a time in which he was being dismissed. And you read the Concordat, it's hair-raising. The German Catholic hierarchy pledges its full obedience and loyalty to Adolf Hitler, the savior of our nation. And we pledge ourselves that we will mobilize the loyalty of all German Catholic priests to support Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime. So [00:43:00] history's being revised. Fifty years from now, if the pattern goes on, the story will be told that Nazism was a struggle against the German Catholic Church and Christianity, and the death camps were a footnote to history. Jews could

hardly be mentioned, [that's for sure?]. That could be the ultimate posthumous victory of Hitler and Nazism.

So we were not paying with symbols. What we knew was at stake were fundamentally the deepest issues of truth, -- historic truth -- the deepest issues of the future understanding of what our people have suffered as no other people suffered during our lifetime. And so we met with Cardinal Casaroli. We made that all very clear to him. And we said to him that unless there is some fundamental clarification of this on the part of the pope, there will be [00:44:00] no ceremonial meetings in Miami. We're not going into a situation with a pope where the pope would read a *Zettel* and we will read a *Zettel* and that's the end of it. And we'll take pictures, and we'll present gifts, and everybody will think that everything is wonderful. But Cardinal Casaroli listened. And frankly, I almost began having *rachmanus* on him, he took such a battering from us, in a nice way -- civilized discussion -- but firm and unyielding, done with very great dignity. But making it clear that there's no ambiguity about this.

He ended up the conversation by saying, "I've heard some very important ideas here tonight, this morning. I'm going to go back to Rome and I will talk it over with my boss." Well, make a long

story short, he went back to Rome. Ten days later, we received a telephone call from the [00:45:00] Vatican -- Cardinal Willebrands, Father Duprey -- Monsignor Duprey. We were told that -- and I was told this quite explicitly over telephone call -- that the pope understands the importance of this. He is prepared to receive a delegation of Jewish leaders on September the 1st at Castel Gandolfo and he doesn't want any speeches; he wants real conversation. He also said that he would welcome having five Jewish leaders come, so there could be real conversation. We came back, and when I gave that message to my colleagues, we ended up with a rather difficult discussion. What do you mean, the pope is going to tell us he wants five Jews? And we ended up with nine Jewish leaders going, and that was a compromise. We would've had [00:46:00] 12, 15 if the pressures had continued.

What is important is that prior to our going to Rome -- and here I now want to summarize what finally turned out. Before we came to Rome, because the Vatican understood that we will not tolerate any manipulation of Jewish feelings or Jewish experience, we did not ask for this. But the week after the conversation with Cardinal Willebrands, who's head of the Vatican Delegation and Catholic-Jewish relations, the pope unexpectedly sent a pastoral letter to the president of the

Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States. Archbishop John May of St. Louis -- who happens to be a wonderful human being, a very great friend who has supported Israel and supported Soviet Jewry, and has stood against anti-Semitism -- he has been one of the great spontaneous friends of the Catholic Church in this country. [00:47:00] The pope sent this letter to him to be sent to every Catholic bishop in the United States. He said the following:

With our hearts filled with this unyielding hope, we Christians approach with immense respect the terrifying experience of the extermination, the *Shoah*, the pope wrote, to show that he understood the uniqueness of the final solution.

The terrifying experience of the extermination of the *Shoah* suffered by the Jews during the Second World War And we seek to grasp its most authentic, specific, and universal meaning. There is no doubt,

he added,

that the sufferings endured by the Jews are also for the Catholic Church a [motive?] of sincere sorrow, especially when one thinks of the indifference and sometimes resentment in which particular historical circumstances have divided Jews and Christians.

And then, at the same time, they made available to us a text of a statement the pope had made spontaneously -- not a written text -- when he met with the Jewish survivors, the pitiful Jewish community left in Poland, when he met them in Krakow.

[00:48:00] And there, the pope said to the Polish Jews that:

I should like above all to thank you for this meeting which has found its place in my program. It recalls much to my memory many experiences of my youth and certainly not of my youth alone. Memories and experiences that were good and then terrible, terrible. Be sure, dear brothers, that the Poles of this Polish church is in a spirit of profound solidarity with you when she looks closely at the terrible reality of the extermination, the unconditional extermination of your nation, an extermination carried out with premeditation.

And so that message clearly has begun to get through to this pope. When we saw him, on September the 1st, in Castel Gandolfo, the first thing he said to -- and not, incidentally, this Vatican, if you know anything about its history and its way of operating, it is even more conscious of symbols and *glasnosts* than Gorbachev is. [00:49:00] It is very conscious of symbolic gestures. When we came in to meet with the pope in Castel Gandolfo, in his summer residence, for the first time in my 25 years of working in this field, he was not sitting on a throne,

[a keesee a covot?]. He sat in a semicircle with nine of us from the Jewish community and nine from the Roman Catholic community flat on the floor, right next to Rabbi Wachsman. Equality, peers. Not sitting on his higher stage with the Jews in an inferior condition. That was a very clear symbol of his beginning to understand how Jews feel about their role and relationship to the Vatican.

The first words he said to us is that:

My Jewish brothers, today is September the 1st, 1987. This marks the fortieth anniversary of the Nazi invasion of Poland. I know what [00:50:00] the Nazis did to my Polish nation. I also know the suffering that the Nazis inflicted on the Jewish people. I want you to know my solidarity with you. We must work together to see to it that that will never happen again.

Well, we had an opportunity and the important thing -- and here, I want to wind up, and maybe we'll have some time for some questions of things that are on your mind on some things I may not have answered for you. The most important thing that happened in Rome was not with the audience with the pope on September the 1st, a meeting that lasted an hour and 20 minutes. The most important thing that happened in Rome is what took the place the day before. Because on August 31st, a meeting in Vatican City, we sat for eight and a half hours with nine

leaders of three Vatican secretariats [00:51:00] in which each of us laid out the total Jewish agenda. We got into the question of the Nazi Holocaust and this tendency towards revisionism which we will find unacceptable, and will not tolerate and allow to happen. We got into the issue of diplomatic relations with Israel with great forcefulness. We got into the question of the role of the Church. It's still not doing enough, although much has been done since Vatican Council II and I could spend an hour describing that. But in dealing with anti-Semitism in many parts of the world, not the least of which is what has happened in Austria. Because since the pope and Waldheim meeting, the rate of anti-Semitism literally doubled in Austria. Because Austrians the Jews were not attacking their Waldheim, their president, no we were attacking their pope. And Austria's a country who is 80% Catholic -- devoutly Catholic.

So we got into the whole range of issues. Out of those meetings and out of a meeting with Cardinal Casaroli [00:52:00] the following morning came these determinations: Cardinal Willebrands proposed that the Church undertake a serious, systematic study to be published quite possibly in the form of a papal encyclical, examining 1,900 years of Christian anti-Semitism; examining the role of the Catholic Church during World War II and in the Nazi Holocaust. And then, when we met with the

pope the following day and Cardinal Willebrands proposed the study, the pope said, "That study has my blessing. I want to see it happen. And I want to assure you that that study will take place."

Then we talked with Cardinal Casaroli about the business of these surprises. We made great progress in Catholic-Jewish relations in the United States over the past 20 years. There's not a single Catholic textbook today that contains a single anti-Semitic references. The Christ-killer charges are totally removed from Catholic textbooks today. The notion of Jews as wandering Jews published by [Gott?] is [00:53:00] finished in Catholic textbooks; we have worked at that for 20 years. They are [*Judenrein?*] in that sense. And their efforts to portray Jesus in a Jewish sense so that Catholic children feel some empathy with Jewish people. But nevertheless, we said to them that anytime there's a flare-up of some kind, these long, deep traditions tend to manifest themselves. You'll see it again in Panama now. You'll see it in South America where Jews are living in overwhelmingly Catholic countries. Even though the hierarchies in Brazil now are friendly, and parts of Argentina are friendly. The issue is for the activism of the Church in this field.

Well, finally, I want to say to you that we were satisfied that given the complexity of the Vatican -- which is almost as complex as the Kremlin -- we knew -- there's those of us that have been working this field as those of us who have been working with the Soviet Union -- you don't come into Gorbachev [00:54:00] and lay the law on the table and demand that in 24 hours he let 400,000 Jews go. You can do that -- and we do that -- but you know that the process of unfolding, and you know that the power behind getting that done is not was Jews said to Gorbachev, but the fact that Gorbachev is deeply preoccupied with the United States government, and its power, and its economics. That's the leverage for Jews to get out. And with the Vatican, it's also a matter of a process of moving the Church on these issues.

The pope came to Miami and with this all closed, there were some 200 Jewish leaders there. Half of the Vatican curio was present. The most Jews going to Rome -- and I daresay there must be some of you feel the same way -- they wanted two things coming out of the Vatican. We wanted a public apology from the pope about what he did with Waldheim. Even, some people said, he ought to get down on his knees before Jewish leaders. [00:55:00] And if you don't do that, it's a failure. And we want instant diplomatic relations with Israel. If you don't come back with that, it's a

failure. Well, I've come to conclusion that there's a dividing line in Jewish life between those who have been involved in some way, have had some relationship with a Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church over the past 20, 25 years, and those who have no experience whatsoever and somehow, sitting on the outside of reality, expect things. Which is simply unreal. And therefore, when those expectations are not met, it's condemned as a failure.

The meeting with Miami was important for two reasons. First of all, if you read the text of the pope's speech, not the headlines of the newspapers -- if you read the text of the pope's speech, two-thirds of that text was an extraordinary [00:56:00] document on the condemnation of anti-Semitism, on the rejection of the Nazi Holocaust and the final solution. He ended up using Meir Kahane's words twice. Never again, never again. "The Roman Catholic Church and its people throughout the world will never again allow anti-Semitism to fester and bring about that kind of condition."

This pope has even said some very positive things about Israel and Jerusalem. If we have the time later, I'll read it to you. But in that speech, what was significant was that he also talked about God's covenant with the Jewish people is eternal, that the

Church has not come to replace Jews or Judaism. The Jews have their own validity. But what's significant about that -- and I was told this by somebody in the Vatican -- was the fact that this pope, sitting on the same level with Rabbi Wachsman; Rabbi Wachsman received the same kind of standing ovation that the pope [00:57:00] received -- was that the television cameras of America -- all of them -- were on this speech, and the majority of 52 million Catholics in America heard this pope making that speech of that positive character of respect for Jews and Judaism, and repudiating anti-Semitism as being unacceptable to the Catholic Church.

To Jews it may mean nothing, but I'm concerned how 52 million Catholics in America feel about that. I don't want to see a Howard Beach take place in America where it is Catholics and Jews at each other's throats. And it can happen in society's like this, where the level of civility and civilization is this thin; have no illusion about that. You see the growing racial and other kinds of tension of the city. You read in *The New York Times* today about the Christian Brotherhood, the Aryan Order, who killed a Jewish man in Denver, a newscaster. That hostility is there; [00:58:00] it must be dealt with.

It is also a message that went out to 850 million Roman Catholics around the world. Before we went to Rome, before our Ministry of Israel encouraged us to go, saying that it's a potentially historic opportunity. Of the 12 countries that have established diplomatic relations in Africa with Israel, 10 of the 12 are predominantly Roman Catholic churches.

Let me wind up by simply saying that on the issue of diplomatic relations with Israel, and though I need more time to get into that, we simply have to change our own mentality about how to deal with the Vatican. It is simply unwise, and inappropriate, and unreal for Jews to come to the Vatican, hat in hand, asking for a [toyve?] for the Vatican to diplomatically recognize Israel. Israel came into being, has lived for 40 years without the benefit of the Vatican's [bracha?]. Israel has de facto diplomatic relations [00:59:00] with the Vatican. Golda Meir goes there, and Abba Eban goes there, and Moshe Dayan goes there, and Shimon Peres goes there and they're treated as heads of state.

But what we need to understand is this is not a game where Jews and Israel have been the losers and the Vatican is the winners and we're coming to the Vatican say, [teeya suh toyvay?], establish diplomatic relations. That's not the way it is at all,

my friends, and for this I need much more time. I've just completed a 50-page study over the past two years of the Vatican's attitude towards Zionism and Israel. I'm not going to enter into it. I want to make one point you need to understand: if you study what in fact has happened, in reality, the Vatican's diplomatic policy toward Israel and the Middle East has been a series of unbroken failures. The Jews have been the winners, the Vatican has failed.

Between 1896, when Hertzl first came to the Vatican to ask for diplomatic relations, until 1948, [01:00:00] the Vatican had one policy toward Israel and the Middle East: internationalization of Palestine. They wanted Palestine internationalized and run by Catholic countries -- France, Belgium, Italy. Possibly Protestant Great Britain would be allowed in. They failed. Israel was created. Internationalization of Palestine failed. And then the Vatican turned to internationalize the city of Jerusalem. And they tried that until 1967; they failed. The city of Jerusalem will not, has not, and will not be internationalized for no other reason because Jordan doesn't want it as much as Israel doesn't want it. So now the Vatican has failed again in that policy, has begun to move now to another policy, some international statute which recognizes the right of Christians to free access and religious liberty in

Jerusalem, which they've got already, and the Israelis are prepared to discuss that. So as we've discussed now with Israeli foreign ministry, [01:01:00] we've stopped talking to the Vatican about, please, do us a favor. Establish full diplomatic relations.

What we've now begun saying to the Vatican, look, this is your problem, my friends. You need diplomatic relations with Israel more than Israel requires it from you. Because like the Kremlin, you simply are not in the ballpark. You don't have diplomatic relations either with Israel or with some other Arab countries. If Israel and Jordan sit down tomorrow and start negotiating diplomatic ties -- peaceful ties -- and again dealing with the future of Jerusalem, you're not going to have a single word to say. You just are not part of the game. So you, like the Kremlin now is bending over backwards trying to reestablish diplomatic relations with Israel in some way. They're now sending consuls, consulates, consul generals to Israel. They know they have got to have diplomatic relations to be part of the peace process. The Vatican is still living in the illusions of the Crusades. And so [01:02:00] the problem is, for them, Israel will go on as it has for the past 40 years, God willing. If Israel solves its internal problems between the religious and the secular, and the Jews and the Arabs, and the [*Sephardi mayash kanasm?*], those are

the real problems. The real problems that are facing us are not the question of the Vatican doing us a [toyve?] and establishing full diplomatic relations. The monkey is really on their back. We have real problems to deal with. If the Vatican wants to talk about it, we are now in active conversation, weekly.

Yesterday, I met with Shimon Peres's top aide to talk about our approaches on that. We don't need any more Cardinal O'Connor's visits to Israel. What we need are hard negotiations on real issues, and that is a matter of establishing the right atmosphere. We think that with all of the limitations and all of the problems that what emerged out of a bad situation was the containment of much damage, the containment of much possible anti-Semitism -- [01:03:00] not over there, but in this country, in this city, where a little few more attacks on the person of the pope could have led to real violence -- verbal violence -- against the Jews. And it was important to contain that. I really don't care very much what the pope does in Castel Gondolfo. I care very much about what Mayor Wagner, and former police commissioner Pat Burns, and hundreds and hundreds and thousands of Roman Catholics who are in positions of power in this city, in this state, in this nation, how they feel about Jews. And I don't want that to change. I think we've managed to keep that in tow. You've been very patient. Thank you. (applause)

Rabbi Klein:

Friends, I don't know about you, but [01:04:00] Sunday at 8:30 -
- night -- it's hard to come in and to listen to a talk.

Normally it's hard; tonight was fascinating and wonderful.

(applause) What shall I say? Only the usual lament, the others -
- the people who miss these things, who miss these important
talks. In any event, Rabbi Tanenbaum has graciously agreed to
take some questions from the group, from the assemblage, this
evening. And those who wish to ask, please, start with Helen,
then Mr. [Salend?], Art [Kopel?], Irv Friedman, and one more,
right down front. I don't know your name, sir.

Irwin Penzel:

Irwin [Penzel?].

Rabbi Klein:

Irwin Penzel. OK, Helen?

Helen:

Rabbi Tanenbaum, what do you see happening over the next months
or years that will indicate to you how to reach [01:05:00]
success of what you see as the pope's (inaudible) towards
[litigation?] of (inaudible) actions?

Marc Tanenbaum:

It seems to be implied in your question -- and let me tease it out, make sure I understand it -- that you're looking for some single action?

Helen:

No, I mean, I think what you would see, really, as showing that there have been some concrete results from the pope's statements about anti-Semitism in the past?

Marc Tanenbaum:

We have a commitment -- it is one of the things that grew out of our meetings in Rome on August 31st and the audience with the pope -- that originally the date, as set for December 11th through the 14th in Washington, we're scheduled to have a major conference with the Vatican, including [01:06:00] Vatican leaders and scholars and Jewish scholars examining the Nazi Holocaust from Jewish and Christian perspectives. It is our plan to bring together the foremost Jewish scholars and authorities on the *Shoah* to make sure that we contain this revisionism and make sure we contain what is it a tendency that emerged in one of the pope's talks about trying to whitewash Pius XII. And the record is more complicated, but it is not the whitewash that we will allow to take place.

Now, if that study gets underway shortly, we may have not change the date. Not because of the Vatican. Because of the problem of organizing Jewish life. You know, sometimes, I must tell you I [*ich binze maykana?*], there are times I wish the Jews had a pope. So somebody could say, there will be four Jews, there'll be five Jews, they'll go, and that's it. When you have democracy, sometimes [*ma kenedn?*] [01:07:00] [*ivah kivatch?*], too much democracy. (laughter) Your [*dabi?*] said use a cold compress, my [*dabi?*] said use a hot compress. (laughter)

In any case, that will be a very concrete thing. If as a result of a study that the pope agreed to, they undertake a systematic effort to look at the role of the Church in creating these dehumanizing images of the Jews across 1,900 years in some papal document, whether it's an encyclical or an apostolic letter, goes out to 850 million Catholics throughout the world, it will be a staggering thing for generations to come. Because I don't know how many of you may have seen this, but when I was in Miami, was watching television there at night, I did one program with Dan Rather during the time of the audience. And he had a clip from the streets of Miami -- they were doing some street interviews. [01:08:00] There were Hispanic Catholics and other Catholics lined up with tears in their eyes. And one woman said, "When I see the woman walk through the street, I believe I see

God in our midst." You have to understand that that's what this pope means to many Catholics, especially Hispanic Catholics. For this pope to say to Hispanic Catholics as he's been saying to us, you cannot be a good Christian and be an anti-Semite at the same time. The largest problems of anti-Semitism in America today we have not with Irish Catholics or Italian Catholics, but Hispanic Catholics, Puerto Rican Catholics, who have not been touched by the reformation of the Vatican Council.

So there is a massive impact that this pope can have. We simply have a whole series of things. There's no one thing that's going to bring this about, but there are a whole series of studies and projects that are underway. We have programs now going on with the Catholic hierarchy [01:09:00] in the United States for teaching about the Holocaust in every Catholic school in America. We have another project which has now been underway -- I started it for years ago -- every Catholic seminarian now has a textbook on Jewish history, Jewish religion, Jewish culture, from the beginning of Jewish history down to the day, in our terms to change all of the fantasies. That means that no future priest will ever be educated on all of the old illusions of the past. That takes time.

What has accumulated in 2,000 years is not going to be resolved

in 20 years. But we've laid the foundation, we've begun the process. And if we don't cripple ourselves by our own internal, not legitimate criticism, but just *narishkeit*, you know, wild attacks. We've laid the foundation for finally cleaning up this gospel of love, which has been a gospel of hatred and destruction for our people. And that's what's the task we're about. Yes, sir? [01:10:00]

Mr. Salend?:

Can the Church really stop this preaching hatred of Jews and still survive as a church? It seems to me it's the foundation of Christianity [and the Church?].

Marc Tanenbaum:

Well, it's important to read some of the new writings that have come out since Vatican Council II. There's a whole new theology of Jews and Judaism, which is 180-degree turn-away from what was the classic teaching. You're absolutely right that it was the classic teachings for 1,900 years -- most of 1,900 years -- not only among Roman Catholics, but among Protestants who draw their sources from Martin Luther. Martin Luther's sermons, the *Juden und ihren Lügen*, the Jews and their lies. I mean, just monumental anti-Semitism of the worst kind. All of that fit in.

What has become to happen since Vatican Council II and what began to be [01:11:00] the turning point was that finally the Catholic Church had to face the Nazi Holocaust. Not only because they were being nice to Jews -- I mean, they saw what anti-Semitism lead to -- but because the Nazi Holocaust almost led to the destruction of the Catholic Church. It was the total breakdown of the Catholic moral system. The Nazi Holocaust did not take place in Uganda or Banana Republic, it took place in the country of Germany, which is a country of ancient Christian civilization, the most advanced country of science and technology in the twentieth century. It was not carried about crazies; it was carried about by Mengeles who had two PhDs, two MDs. It was carried out by the most advanced minds and the Catholic Church, at one point, had to face itself. How could this happen in a country of ancient Christian civilization? And they knew that unless somehow they deal with the issue of anti-Semitism and the demonic teachings [01:12:00] of Nazism and Aryanism and all of that, the likelihood is that that pattern could repeat itself again. So they've begun to deal with that.

And we have an obligation that those people are prepared to deal with that, to reinforce them, to welcome them. [*Naddup vishen lehentensay?*] doesn't mean anything. There is now a whole library of books -- Rosemary Ruth, her *Faith and Fratricide*; Van

Heusen who's done now four volumes of the whole theological teachings about Jews and Judaism, rejecting the old teaching. Saying that the issue is now how Christians deal with Jews, but how do Christians enter into the covenant which God made with the Jews, which is the real covenant. And there are all theories now about two covenants, a single covenant with two branches, but there's a revolution going on in the theological world of the Catholic Church. There are some elements that are now beginning to resist it. And we have a responsibility not to allow that [01:13:00] to become larger than a fist on the horizon. Because the movement forward has been that substantial. I can just show you the library. When I last saw Cardinal O'Connor, he came with (inaudible), he has a whole library of all of his new teachings. But that library now is in the library of every cardinal, every archbishop and bishop, every theological seminary throughout the United States. Brazil has adopted a new catechism which has a whole new view. Argentina, Archbishop [Quattachino?] teaches that in the seminaries.

So the point is, it is the beginning. It is a young sapling. It needs to grow because the overgrowth of the anti-Semitism has been so great of the past. But as that is pulled out and these saplings are allowed to grow, it will take us another 100, 200

years before that could become the dominant view. We have an obligation to see to it that that happens. Yes, sir?

Art Kopel?:

Rabbi, thank you for being here tonight. Those of us who are both --

Marc Tanenbaum:

I just like to throw bales of hay at people. (laughter)

[01:14:00]

Art Kopel:

Those of us who are pragmatic Jews 24 hours a day and yet have nothing to do with Jewish (inaudible) or the Jewish leadership are also involved in a process to support the Jewish leadership, one way or the other. I think your reference to the American Jewish Congress just a little while ago was --

Marc Tanenbaum:

I didn't mention them by name at all?

Art Kopel:

-- I know you did mention them. (laughter)

Marc Tanenbaum:

But you were listening carefully.

Art Kopel:

Yes, sir. I'm listening carefully. And yet, but the [virtue?], of course, is you were (inaudible). Now, please, it'll just take a moment. Those of us who are (inaudible) kind of Jews now want to be involved at least to the point of sending money, joining whatever we can do to the Jewish leadership. We're --

Marc Tanenbaum:

I'll pass around pledge cards in a minute, you keep that up.

[01:15:00] (laughter)

Art Kopel:

-- but to be so (inaudible) the American Jewish Committee, especially since (inaudible), we know about the very Jewish congress, especially since (inaudible). And we know about the hysterical views. We know all about these things. And when that letter came out, that full-page letter, by the American Jewish Congress, many of us responded and said, wow, they're looking for me. Now, I realize what you're saying, I think. They're not saying the right things. And I fully realize that perhaps your approach and your colleagues' approach may very well be the

right thing. But yet, we are here and we want to do something.
And when somebody says, let's scream, we want to scream,
[01:16:00] I really don't know how to handle that.

Marc Tanenbaum:

There's a whole school of psychotherapy called the primal scream. Sometimes it helps, sometimes it doesn't. Look, as people who know me, my stock and trade is that -- I think the greatest one can pay another human being is to be frank and tell the truth, and not play propaganda games. I understood the sentiments that led one of my colleagues whom I've known for many years to write that ad and publish it in *The New York Times*, calling for boycott. A legitimate sentiment. The wisdom of it is another question under the circumstances. What I find really very difficult to accept is that after a screaming boycott, putting an ad in the paper, and asking people to send funds in to support that line and boycott, when we got a call from the Vatican saying that there was an audience [01:17:00] with the pope, the very person who wrote that ad calling for boycott demanded over weeks of time to be part of the delegation to meet with the pope.

Now, I don't want to personalize it, but that was not only one thing. There was one other Jewish organization which quit the

organized Jewish body that has been working with the Vatican to go off to Rome, to [*mach schavitz fezuh kalane?*], running its own programs with the Vatican because they want to say that they own the Vatican. But then when the Vatican wanted to set up this audience, they came to the centralized Jewish body, which represents the American Jewish Committee, Bnai Brith International, World Jewish Congress, Synagogue Council of America, Israel Interfaith Committee with Jews from Europe, America, South America, and Israel participating. When the Vatican came to us and said that the pope is prepared to meet with you and the Vatican will meet with you, this Jewish organization, which walked out of the organized body to make *shabbos* for itself and have its own monopoly, suddenly flip-flopped. Came back and said, we, too, want to be part of the delegation. [01:18:00]

Now my feelings about this have to do with a whole attitude of strategy with how one deals with such a complicated phenomenon like the Vatican and like the Kremlin. You don't play Jewish institutional games. Publicity games, institutional games, personal publicity when you're dealing with such issues that affect Klal Israel all over the world, and especially in relation to Israel. You don't use that for institutional publicity or fundraising. You know, there's another group out on

the west coast that also published ads all over the place, saying they were going to boycott, et cetera, et cetera. They have a right to do that, it's a democracy. Jews have as much right to declare their independent views as anyone else. But don't use this sensitive issue of such deep importance for the sake of fundraising. Before you know it, they'll invite a pope to be a guest of honor at a UJA DINNER. (laughter) [01:19:00] What's happening?

Helen?:

Not a bad idea.

Marc Tanenbaum:

Might not be a bad idea. We'll beat the budget. So no, my only point is that, you know, at some point, you know, what I'm trying to suggest is that we have been conditioned as a people, for all kinds of legitimate historic reasons to react to [*schkei gevald?*]. See, Jews will come out to a UJA function or [*schkei gevald?*], [*mischlockt yin?*]. Boy, this place would have been packed tonight. And we're talking about Ethiopian Jews, God forbid, or some other Jewish community, why don't we talk about Jews in South Africa? God forbid something should happen. You know, we've got a major program trying to set up a failsafe system for the Jews of South Africa. God forbid if that

situation explodes. There are 120,000 Jews there and we've now prepared a whole program with [Hayas?] and JDC and others, [01:20:00] should something happen. We are not going to wait again. Just as we did this with the Jews of Central America. But we did not go [*schkei gevald?*] beforehand. You can raise funds [*schkei gevald?*], but you also are doing a disservice to Jews. There is a place for calm, and moderation, and [*sehow?*]. What the [*rambam coach vilhazah hov?*], the moderate way.

We are not going to win a confrontation with the Vatican. We are not going to destroy the Vatican. We are not going to kill the pope. You know, one of the people who was winning great publicity on the west coast, nobody ever heard him before.

Editor of a magazine told *The San Francisco Examiner* the pope is public enemy number one of the Jews. So the effect of that great [*huchna?*] was that that the Archbishop of San Francisco, who's been one of the great friends of the Jews, during vetting [*council?*] since then said, "If that's the way the Jews feel, they are impossible. I want to have nothing to do [01:21:00] with them. This was a man who marched for Soviet jury and used his cathedral for those purposes.

We were angered in a very controlled way. We got the result we wanted. When we were in the Vatican, we were very angry and they knew it. You could feel it in the room; it was electric. But we

were angry not for the sake of [opening their?] hearts, we were angry in order to get a result. We got the result we wanted. There are bigger results we need and it's not going to happen by this. One of the consequences of that ad and the people flip-flopping, joining the delegation, is they became a joke in the Vatican. That's the danger. My god. You're the people who were going to boycott us. What are you doing here? Why are you lining up to see the pope? You just said in a big ad -- \$40,000 you paid to tell the world you're not going to see the pope. Look at this. And so the person went around, apologizing for the ad. What kind of [cycle?] is that?

So [01:22:00] yeah, there are ways of helping. All of these groups have chapters out here -- American Jewish Congress, Anti-Defamation League, Bnai Brith, American Jewish Committee. The most direct way to help is to participate. But also to ask hard questions of criticism, not to follow blindly. Jews are too smart, too wise. There's too much [*seclun huchma?*] to yield to those kinds of impulses. We have very serious, heavy work to do. It requires our best intelligence, not the intelligence of the streets. I've got to stop. I've got to go home. Thank you.

(applause)

Rabbi Klein:

Friends, thanks for coming. As you can see, Stew Jackson again has taped this as he did tape the Abba Eban lecture of about a month ago. If you want to suggest to friends that they look at the tape, it will available [01:23:00] in the library within a few weeks so that people who were unable to be here might the benefit of hearing some of these wonderful comments this evening. Thanks for coming. Good evening. (applause) All right, [Harold?].

END OF VIDEO FILE