

VT-876 Transcription

Lecture, "Can the Sickness of Antisemitism be Cured?".

25 April 1991.

Beth Shalom Synagogue and Merton & Barbara Hersh presents The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Stuart J. Hersh Memorial Lecture with Dr. Marc H. Tanenbaum, an influential rights leader and ardent advocate of promoting dialogue between Christians and Jews, on "Can the Sickness of Anti-Semitism Be Cured?" [00:01:00] Cumonow Social Hall, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1991, 7:30 p.m.

Moderator:

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. [00:02:00] Give an opportunity for those who are just coming in now to find a seat. (pause) I want to welcome everyone to our thirteenth annual Stuart J. Hersh Memorial Lecture, and, as always, take the opportunity to extend in the beginning -- as we will have an opportunity at the end, as well -- but especially in the beginning to extend a very, deep heartfelt appreciation to the Hersh family; to Mert and Barbara, and to Marci, and Michelle, in absentia, for their continued support of this annual opportunity to be exposed to some of the leading figures in Jewish life, and to learn and share with them on such an evening.

Over the years, the outstanding and most often outspoken leaders in Jewish life, and in current Jewish issues [00:03:00] that have come to our community as part of this series have always left the congregation and the community very, very stimulated, I know, and certainly never disappointed with the message that they have to share. And I know that this evening that it will be the same. That we will come away from our encounter highly stimulated, and certainly highly educated, as well, from the opportunity of being with our speaker this evening, and our guest, and it's my pleasure to have an opportunity to introduce him to you.

Actually, as I learned at dinner a little while ago, he's not really a stranger to Kansas City, nor really a stranger to Beth Shalom. If you go back a fair number of years, I guess, when he must have been a very young boy, a child prodigy at the seminary in the late 1940s, I think he said -- 1948, '49, somewhere in that point in time, and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum who was then a student at the seminary [00:04:00] came here to conduct, along with Rabbi [Chadas?], *alav hashalom*, for the alternate service for the High Holidays. Now, at that time we weren't here. We were down on 34<sup>th</sup> Street. So, he doesn't know this building, but he certainly has some knowledge of the congregation, and a good

memory, because as we took a little tour around the building for a few minutes beforehand, as he saw certain things he recalled them being on 34<sup>th</sup> Street -- some of the stained glass windows, and so forth. So, a very observant individual with us this evening.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum is the former International Relations Consultant of the American Jewish Committee whose had a long and distinguished career in international human rights, world refugee, world hunger, and foreign relations concerns. He served as Director of International Relations of the American Jewish Committee from 1983 to 1989. He was designated in a recent national poll as one of the 10 most [00:05:00] influential and respected religious leaders in America, and a cover story in *New York Magazine* once described him as one of the foremost Jewish ecumenical leaders in the world today.

In 1987 he was elected unanimously as chairman of the prestigious International Jewish Committee for the Interreligious Consultations, which represents world Jewry in relations with the Vatican, and other world religious bodies. In May of 1988 Rabbi Tanenbaum was awarded the Interfaith Medallion of the International Consul of Christians and Jews for his historic contributions to advancing interreligious understanding

over a period of 25 years that had preceded that date and that award.

He has served as a member of the Human Rights Research Committee of the Foreign Policy Association's Study of Priorities for the 1980s, and in recent years has testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, on issues such as a moral imperatives in the formation of American foreign policy. He has also testified [00:06:00] before congressional committees on world refugee and world hunger problems, and played a key role in organizing White House conferences on foreign aid and energy conservation.

Then President Jimmy Carter invited Dr. Tanenbaum as the American Jewish leader among 10 national religious and academic spokesmen to discuss the state of the nation at Camp David summit meetings in 1979, and he was also appointed as a member of the advisory committee of the President's Commission on the Holocaust.

At the invitation of the International Rescue Committee, he joined delegations of prominent American leaders to carry out three separate fact-finding investigations of the plight of the Vietnamese boat people, and Cambodian refugees, which

contributed to the savings of tens of thousands of lives of Indo-Chinese refugees. He organized many relief efforts for victims of war and conflict, including -- and if some of these names sound familiar it shows you that the problems don't ever go away -- first in the list of those that he is involved in saving in the past, the Kurds, [00:07:00] who certainly are a name familiar to all of us today. Lebanese, Nigerians, Ugandans, Ethiopian Jews, Haitians, Afghanis, Central Americans, and Polish refugees. Things really don't change a whole lot over the course of time, unfortunately. He is a board member of the International Rescue Committee, the Overseas Development Council, the United Nations Association, the Bretton Woods Committee, the National Peace Academy, and the Beard Rustin Institute. And he is a founder and co-chairman of the National Interreligious Task Force on Soviet Jewry, which aids oppressed Jews and Christians in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In March of 1979 he was invited to consult with then Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, and the German parliamentary officials in Bonn on the abolition of the statute of limitations on Nazi war criminals. And I could go on and on, with any number of organizations, many of which have brought him in close, close contact with the church, the forefront of synagogue and Vatican Jewish relations [00:08:00] over these several decades, itself.

He has also lectured in probably every major university, seminary institution throughout not only the country, but throughout the world, as well, and appeared before virtually every body that one could imagine as a guest speaker, and as an expert in giving testimony. And I would say, not the least of all, and certainly from a personal standpoint, he is a fellow alumnus of the seminary, a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America Rabbinical School, and therefore a colleague and fellow member of the Rabbinical Assembly, and a great, great pleasure to introduce to you this evening our Stuart J. Hersh Memorial Lecture for 1991, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum.

(applause)

**Marc Tanenbaum:**

[00:09:00] I woke up this morning about 5:30 in order to get ready to catch an early flight out of New York City. I came to Chicago, and sat around for about an hour and a half, until I made my connection to come here to Kansas City. [Patsy Shaumburg?], and later with her husband, was kind enough to welcome me and receive me here. I say that in order to indicate that by the time I got here, I was a little bit disoriented. Therefore, I'm all the more grateful to your really wonderful rabbi, [00:10:00] Alan Cohen, for reading that long introduction just the way I wrote it. (laughter) Became very reassuring and

for all kinds of reasons, I think as Rabbi Cohen indicated. For me in some ways being here tonight is a kind of homecoming. I hadn't realized that so much as, until Patsy took me for a quick ride through downtown Kansas City, and I kept looking for the Alameda Plaza Hotel, which was one of the places I stayed at, and in those days I thought, boy, it's marvelous. Kansas City, which I always thought was prairie village, had such a marvelous hotel that I felt [00:11:00] so comfortable in. I just couldn't recognize the city. That's why it was very important to see those stained glass windows again.

There is certain stability and certain continuity, and it gave me a feeling of *hemshekh*, of continuity with this congregation, this community. I had, I think, three years of really warm and wonderful experiences with Rabbi and Mrs. Chadas, and with the Shalom congregation. I really felt at home here, and I want to come here this evening to try to reciprocate that warmth, and feelings of gratitude for the kind of security and strength coming here for the High Holidays meant to me. It is a particular privilege to be asked to delivery this [00:12:00] Stuart Hersh Memorial Lecture in memory of Stuart, the brother of Merton, and I'm grateful to Merton and Barbara Hersh and their children for the privilege of speaking tonight.

I do want to say, and I don't mean this by way of trying to warm up an audience, I had a feeling since the early days of the '40s, when I was here in the late '40s, when I first came out here I was petrified because of the Jewish Theological Seminary. I was told the Beth Shalom congregation was the largest, the most important conservative synagogue west of the Hudson River. [00:13:00] And I must say, those three years here, especially with the warmth and the richness and vitality of the conversations with Rabbi Chadash and members of the community at that time reinforced that. But I think you have been in many ways, if I may say this, if it's not a presumption, you're really a blessed community. And the stature and quality of the rabbis you've had in the [main?] here, and I must tell you how deeply impressed as a conservative rabbi, how grateful I am that a rabbi of the stature and presence of Rabbi Alan Cohen and his wife continue in that tradition. It's a very reassuring strength, I think, for all of us through the days ahead for this community, as well as for others.

I was asked [00:14:00] to speak about the theme of anti-Semitism in the world today, and I really want to use that as a framework, a point of departure, for examining in many ways the Jewish condition as I perceive it. Generally in the world society today the vat's very large and almost flamboyant a



statement, and I really want to shape it down to appropriate size, because it is inconceivable that anyone can deal with the complexity of the world situation, and certainly the Jewish situation, during the time we have together for this presentation. What I really want to do is, set a framework for [00:15:00] talking about anti-Semitism, past, present, and some reflection on future trends, and the degree to which the issue of anti-Semitism says something to us about our relationship to the general society, to the Christian world, and the international community as it is changing and emerging today. If I don't cover 2,000 years of history adequately, you'll have time during the question-and-answer period to tease that out.

Let me begin by trying to answer what was an ancient question among the Romans, and the Roman Jewish community: [*gundaymalo?*]. What is the [00:16:00] source of this evil which we have come to call anti-Semitism, which singles Jews out for a very special kind of antipathy, hostility, hatred, and worse. One of the definitions given I think by Jean-Paul Sartre at one point when he was asked to define anti-Semitism, he said, "Anti-Semitism is hating Jews more than is necessary." But in point of fact, that's a caricature of a far more profound and serious issue. For American Jews, for Israel, for Soviet Jewry -- Jews wherever they find themselves in the world today. We hear a great deal

about racism, which is an evil, and a moral evil. [00:17:00]  
Anti-Semitism is the oldest moral evil in the history of Western  
Christianity and Western Christian civilization. And it has  
manifestations now in the Middle East. It has had in the Soviet  
Union, as we know. It is still a pervasive problem in much of  
Eastern Europe, which I want to get back to a little bit later  
on.

What is the engine of this evil of anti-Semitism? And how should  
Jews cope with it? I must say, that for some young Jews anti-  
Semitism is a despicable subject to discuss, because somehow it  
tends to create the imagery [00:18:00] that Jews are permanent  
victims of a permanent hatred in human society in the world  
today. I want to try to reverse that perception a little bit  
later on in the development of this theme. There are forms of  
anti-Jewish attitudes which existed in the Greco-Roman Empire,  
beginning before the present era. Much of that had to do with  
the fact that the Jews were a great challenge to the existing  
idolatry polytheistic religions that existed both in ancient  
Greece, as well as in the Roman Empire. There was no way of  
coping with the difference that the Jews represented in the  
challenge of belief in one god, [00:19:00] the prophetic moral  
tradition. But anti-Semitism did not become a reality in Western  
civilization until the early church emerged out of first century

Palestinian Judaism, and began to become -- sought to become an independent religion. And while that's a large and complex subject with a vast literature, let me say it in this concise way: Judaism in the first centuries, first called the intertestamental period, but certainly in the first two or three centuries of this era, was an enormously successful proselytizing religion. It is reported by Lecky, one of the great historians, [00:20:00] that in the first two centuries Jews had converted something like two to three million Greco-Romans to Judaism as a result of their seeking to bring the nations of the earth under the canopy of one god, and belief in one god.

When Christianity emerged out of Judaism in the first century Palestine, and it began to enter into the Greco-Roman Empire it had come early onto the decision that the Jews were not going to become Christians, as much as they tried to proselytize Jews. And Jews became a stiff-necked people in their eyes, et cetera. But when Christianity began to turn its back on Palestinian Judaism, saw no future in it, it turned into the Greco-Roman Empire which was filled in their vision with heathens and pagans [00:21:00] who worshiped all kinds of gods. And when they came into the Roman Empire and wanted to practice early Christianity, they were told by the Emperor and the early governors of the

Roman Empire, there is only one religion that we recognize as a legal religion, and that was Judaism. It was called a *religio licita*, a legal religion recognized by the Emperor and the Empire. Therefore, for the church to become recognized it had first to identify itself in the early Roman Empire as a branch of Judaism in order to get the approval of being a *religio licita* -- a legal religion. But if it was only a branch of Judaism, it would never expand into the Roman Empire, and so [00:22:00] the church began the process of breaking away from the synagogue in order to be seen as an independent religion. In the process of trying to become an independent religion, in order to develop its own legitimacy in the Roman Empire, it began the process which is really the underlying force in anti-Semitism over 1,900 years: namely, it began the process of demonizing Jews, Judaism, the synagogue. And we begin to see in the writings of the church fathers in the first four centuries. Saint John Chrysostom, who was called the Golden-Tongued Orator in Aleppo Syria, begins a series of four sermons in Antioch and elsewhere, in which he begins to speak of a synagogue as [00:23:00] the synagogue of Satan, as a synagogue as a house of prostitution, and that Jews should be packed into their synagogues and burned in order to remove them as a plague on society. That began the first imagery of the Jews as the enemies

of God and the enemies of mankind. And the imagery became very powerful in the writings of the early church fathers.

The other theme that emerged in the first four centuries -- and I'm not going to belabor this too long. Bear with me, I'll get to the twentieth century before I'm halfway through. (laughter) But I think it's important to understand this in terms of coping with what is happening in the world today. The second largest theme that developed in the early church fathers in the fourth century was with the greatest church historian, Eusebius, who was a friend and colleague of Emperor Constantine, who wrote two [00:24:00] massive volumes in which he sought to prove that Judaism played a role in the ancient past. When Christianity came into being Judaism ceased to have any function as a religious community, and therefore it was to be displaced by Christianity. And he wrote two volumes, *Demonstratio evangelica?*], *Praeparatio evangelica*. Judaism existed only to prepare the way for Christianity, and then lost its function.

So between those two things, the images and the caricatures, the stereotypes began to develop. The significance of that is, that, that imagery -- that demonizing of Jews. That presentation of Jews as being outside of the realm of human compassion began to develop [00:25:00] as an essential part of Western Christian

civilization, and Western culture. So by the time of the twelfth and thirteenth century, we begin to find passion plays developing all over Europe, which continue to this day in (inaudible). And in the passion plays Jews are presented as the Christ killers who are rejected by God, who are the wandering Jews, and who will never achieve any peace, will never return to their homeland until they accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. So there were passion plays, there were ritual blood libels, there were icons and iconography which entered into Western culture. In fact, the Jewish scholar by the name of Blumenkranz in France did a book on the art and imagery of Jews in Western Christian art, [00:26:00] which shows Jews as in league with Satan, long hooked noses, long beards with spittle on it, and the tail of Satan. And that imagery became part and parcel of Western Christian culture. It penetrated the wallpaper of Western Christian society. It's important to understand that in order to understand the magnitude of the issue with which we are coping, and how we are trying to deal with that core issue, which motivates anti-Semitism in much of the past 1,900 years.

Well, one moves through the centuries, and we see how those images of Jews, synagogue of Satan, house of prostitution, rejected by God, wandering Jews, begins entering into the whole of the culture. By the time Martin Luther comes into being in

the [00:27:00] sixteenth century -- Martin Luther, who became the founder of Protestantism, as you know. This was not just a Catholic problem. By the time of Martin Luther in the sixteenth century, Luther was at first very friendly toward the Jews, especially in Germany, because he felt that the only reason that the Jews did not convert to Christianity was because the papacy and the Roman Catholic Church were so harsh on the Jews. So he started literally trying to carry out a love affair with the Jews: how much appreciation he had for the Bible; how much appreciation he had for Jews, and Judaism; synagogue, wonderful institution. In fact, he made such a positive impression on Jews that he was a friend of the Jews, that there was a rabbi by the name of Rabbi [Yasalev Rosenheim?], a great rabbi and a great scholar, who thought that he was such a great friend the rabbi [also?] came with a delegation of Jews and tried to convert [00:28:00] Martin Luther to Judaism. (laughter) No success.

The point is, that after Luther became aware of the fact that the Jews were going to be as resistant to his Protestant form of Christianity as much as they were to the Catholic form, Luther turned against the Jews; began writing a series of pamphlets which picked up the themes of the church fathers of the first four centuries: Chrysostom, Eusebius, Aphraates, and others -- and he wrote a pamphlet called, "The Jews and Their Lies." And

it's almost exactly the language of the church fathers of the first four centuries: synagogue of Satan, house of prostitution, pack Jews into synagogues and burn them. When Adolf Hitler, *yimakh shemo*, came into ascendancy in Germany, and began to prepare Germany for the Final Solution [00:29:00] against the Jews -- do you know the first publications he prepared? In German language? Martin Luther's, "The Jews and Their Lies." All of the imagery of the Jews as the enemy of the State, the enemy of God, the enemy of mankind, was in that language. And when Hitler was asked at one point by some of his generals, according to some of the records, "Why are you doing this against the Jews? What is this obsessive hatred, this psychopathic hatred of Jews?" Hitler is reputed to have responded, "I'm only carrying out what the Catholic and Protestant churches have been teaching about the Jews for the past 1,500 years. I'm just implementing it more effectively than the churches did." That's the cultural framework which has to be understood in terms of the magnitude of the issue. [00:30:00] And it has penetrated, warp and woof, of most of Western Christian civilization. Even when Shakespeare was writing a secular play of *The Merchant of Venice*, all of the ancient imagery, which you could have plucked out of the church fathers, out of the passion plays, were used in a secular form against the Merchant of Venice.



The reason why, I believe, it is important to understand this culture of demonizing Jews is, that in the work that we are engaged in today with the Vatican, with all of the major church bodies, Protestant church bodies, the Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox churches, one must understand how massive a piece of work this is. This is not something that is going to be [00:31:00] magically changed overnight. There have been 1,900 years of saturating Western civilization with these hostile, negative images of Jews and Judea. You can walk into Strausberg, the headquarters of the European economic community and the European Parliament today, and over the church cathedral in Strausberg there are two statues. One shows a woman's statue: proud, holding aloft the torch; and the other shows another woman bent over, crushed, looking almost with Satanic features. The figure of the torch, and the proud, triumphant woman is the church; and the broken-down figure of the Satanic figure are the Jews, and that symbol remains to this day. Although Catholics talk today about wanting [00:32:00] somehow to find some way to cover that over.

This issue of the demonology of anti-Semitism began to be confronted for the first time in 1,900 years by the Roman Catholic Church, and the Vatican Council II, which took place between 1962 and 1965 in Rome. I had the privilege of being a

guest observer of Vatican Council II. In fact, I was the only rabbi present through the invitation of Cardinal [Bea?] who was president of a secretariat that was set up by Pope John XXIII, and by Cardinal Sheen of Baltimore, who was then of the Catholic Bishops Commission.

I've got to take a moment [00:33:00] to tell you about a personal story. And what Vatican Council II meant to me personally, and what I think it means in the context of understanding this whole history and culture. I was one of three children, the child of Orthodox Jewish parents, who came from the Ukraine to the United States. They lived in a very small Jewish village called the [Nidivka?] in Kiev [Gadanya?], in the province of Kiev. When I was about three, four years old my brother, sister and I, we would walk to shul every Shabbos and [Yantiv?] -- long walk, 20 blocks away. And one Sabbath afternoon before Pesach we came home, and it was our practice [00:34:00] on Shabbos afternoon. We would sit around, and my parents would reminisce about the *alte heym*, the old country. They would talk about the [blatis?] and the poverty, the *pogroms*. And on this Erev Pesach, which happened to be a Good Friday, suddenly my father is almost seized, began to spill out the story to us three children sitting in the living room.

He said, "It happened Erev Pesach, on a Good Friday. We were in our small village, the [Nidivka?] in Kiev [Gadanya?]. Down the road from my father's house," his father was called a [Stadisteyd?] he was sort of a de facto Jewish mayor set up by the czar's forces, to collect taxes, and also to provide [00:35:00] young Jews for the czar's army, (inaudible), which somehow he managed never to do. And he said, on this Good Friday all of a sudden we heard a noise, and looked out down the road, and there was a Russian Orthodox priest marching up the road with a large, golden pectoral cross on his vestments, holding a staff. And behind him was his entire congregation, who had just come out of the Good Friday liturgy where the story of the passion of Jesus and the crucifixion was told. Then the priest came up to my grandfather's house, banged on the door, demanded that the entire family come out and stand in front of the house. They had some words between them, and then the priest pointed his staff, [00:36:00] his pastoral staff, at my uncle, whose name was Aaron. Aaron had been a poet in Odessa who came to visit and spend Pesach with the family in their village. The priest then had the entire Russian Orthodox congregation surround my Uncle Aaron, as my father told the story; took him down to the lake at the edge of the village; brought all the two, three hundred Jews of the village to the edge of the lake; and there on Good Friday, Erev Pesach, they forced my Uncle

Aaron to walk into the lake until the water covered his head and he drowned. And as he went under, the priest screamed, "[yoveska morde?]," God-forsaken Jew. We offer up this Jew as ransom for the murder of Christ by the Jewish people." [00:37:00]

That was my first introduction to Christians and Christianity as a child living in a predominantly Christian neighborhood in South Baltimore, Maryland. I had become almost traumatized by that experience. And suddenly, somewhere along the way as I grew older it began to stick in my head that the Christians seem to believe that the Jews are a (inaudible) people. Jews are God killers, Christ killers, and I was convinced that Christians were a homicide people who kill Jews. When we would walk to shul on the holidays, when we would [00:38:00] pass a church, whether it was a Catholic church, Baptist church, Methodist church, my father would intuitively take us by the hand and walk across the street. Because if a church door was open, and you could see the crucifix, my father literally would begin to tremble. It took me a very long time to be able even to think of the possibility of talking seriously with any Christian leader. Given that history which I had learned in *yeshiva*, and then at the seminary of what the Jewish experience had been in 1,900 years of Western Christian civilization.

Strangely, while I was at the seminary I began doing my masters degree under [00:39:00] Professor Alexander Marx, who was a great historian. I began looking to the whole question of the relationship of Christians and Jews, and the first book that Professor Marx gave me was a book called, *The Conflict of the Church and Synagogue*. It was written by a great Anglican professor by the name of James Parkes. And I could not believe what I read. Parkes went through the whole of the New Testament, all of the writings of the church fathers, all of the subsequent church history to make the case that, that tradition of Christian teaching is responsible for anti-Semitism throughout the past 1,900 years. And what turned Parkes on to do this study -- and it's still a magnificent study -- was that he was a YMCA youth leader in Berlin in the 1930s, and he saw [00:40:00] Christian children being converted into Nazis in the Nazi Youth Movement. He couldn't understand how you could be a Christian and a Nazi at the same time. So he was driven back. And that, when I began to see that not only James Parkes, but other scholars, were prepared to face as a matter of Christian conscience what had gone on in the demonization of Jews, Judaism, the synagogue, over nearly two millennia, I began to feel that maybe there is some hope. Maybe there are other James Parkeses in the world that we need to know about.

So after I left for the seminary, I did some work in publishing with Rabbi Heschel and others. I came to work for the Synagogue Council of America, and the first activity I engaged in [00:41:00] was to set up meetings with liberal Protestants who were the only Christians talking to Jews at that time. Catholics were not allowed to talk to Jews. Priests were not allowed to come into any church, or allowed in any synagogue or temple, or Jewish institution. In fact, in New York there was one priest who was a kind of a *Shabbos goy* for the church, his name was Father George Ford. He was the only priest allowed to go to either Christian ecumenical meetings or to go to Jewish meetings. And the poor man, when you'd see him at the end of the day, was absolutely exhausted. He would go to 10, 12 meetings a day, because he was the only priest allowed to go to meetings. Well, I began to realize, as I began early on in those years to see that there was some possibilities of facing this issue, and try to bring about some change.

To make a long and complicated story brief, [00:42:00] in Vatican Council II after three difficult, even tortuous years, Pope John XXIII insisted, as a result of an experience when he was the apostolic delegate in the Balkans, stationed in Istanbul, that something had to be done about anti-Semitism in the Roman Catholic Church, and in the Vatican. When he was the

apostolic delegate in Istanbul, he was visiting all the Balkan countries, and when he came into Hungary and into Budapest, he would go to a mass on Sunday with fellow Catholics and Christians. Then when he would come out of the mass he would see these Christians putting on iron guard uniforms or Nazi uniforms, and began rounding up thousands of Jews, [00:43:00] and sending them off to Auschwitz. It became a traumatic experience for him. He was really in many ways, a simple, Italian peasant of great humanity.

That story was told to me by [Hayer Herschman?] who was an American government representative in the Balkans during World War II. He was bringing relief supplies to refugees. That at one point in Pope John XXIII's career when he was still the apostolic delegate he was confronted with the fact that the Nazis in Hungary were preparing to round up 3 to 4,000 Jewish children, but them in cattle cars, and send them off to Auschwitz and certain death. And Hayer Herschman came to Pope John XXIII, then the apostolic delegate and said, "How can you let this happen? [00:44:00] Can't you do anything to try to prevent this massacre of the innocents?" And Pope John, apostolic delegate Angelo Roncalli, called in an aide. He had three to four thousand Catholic baptismal certificates made out. They were given to each of the Jewish children, and their lives

were saved. (inaudible) Chief Rabbi Herzog after the war came to him to thank him for being a good Christian, and for helping to save thousands of Jewish children's lives.

John XXIII, after that experience, became as I was to learn, traumatic for him to believe that somebody could regard themselves as a good Catholic, preaching the gospel of love, [00:45:00] and they became among the most rabid Nazis, preaching a gospel of hatred and destruction against the Jews, from whom came Jesus in the flesh, and the Virgin Mary, and all of the disciples. Those contradictions overwhelmed him. So, he called in Cardinal Bea and said, "Before this Vatican Council is over, we must have a Vatican Declaration that uproots the deepest sources of anti-Semitism in the Catholic Church." Cardinal And Cardinal Bea who was a German Jesuit, who knew something about what was going on in his own country -- what happened to the Jews. We set about, and there we began developing relationships with Cardinal Bea and members of the secretariat. And the Vatican Declaration came into being. [00:46:00] President Nasser of Egypt tried to destroy the declaration. I was in Rome at the time when Nasser reputedly spent \$3 million to produce a 400-page book called, *Il Complotto contro la Chiesa (The Plot Against the Church)* to prove that the declaration condemning anti-Semitism and speaking of respect for Jews and Judaism was a



plot of the Jews to change the teaching of the church. And in fact, he said there was a small core of converted Jews who entered the Catholic Church to carry out that mission. So, Cardinal Bea was called, Cardinal Bayer, and he pointed out there was several [*meshumadden?*], people who were originally Jews who became converts, whom he said carried out that purpose.

In any case, the enemies of the declaration were finally defeated after enormous struggle. The Arab prelates who came from the Arab countries said it was all a Zionist plot. It was a political document, and they tried to stop it. But the pope, Cardinal Bea persisted, and we provided documents proving how serious anti-Semitism was in the Western Christian world, and the declaration was adopted in October 20, 1965.

I stood in the hall of St. Peter's Basilica as Pope Paul VI introduced that declaration. The sacred Synod [*searching?*] in the mystery of the church acknowledges the depth of its profound spiritual indebtedness to the Jewish people in Judaism. It rejects the notion of the Christ-killer charge against the Jews, which was the first time in 2,000 years the Catholic Church ever could [00:48:00] bring itself to say that. Then, it said it repudiates anti-Semitism by anyone, any time at any place, which is to say, Saint John Chrysostom, and Eusebius, and Saint

Jerome, their declarations of anti-Semitism were not official church doctrine by anyone, any time, and any place. There were 2,500 cardinals and bishops from all over the world who were present. It was the largest seminar in Catholic-Jewish relations ever held in 2,000 years. When that declaration was introduced by Pope Paul VI, it was approved by 99% of the vote of 2,500 cardinals and bishops from all over the world. I stood there with tears in my eyes, [00:49:00] and I said, "Had that declaration been adopted 500 years ago certainly my Uncle Aaron would be living today, and I would have known him." I never got to see my Uncle Aaron. It may well have been that the majority of six million Jews would be alive today, because the backbone of that culture of the demonization of the Jews began to be broken.

Well, in the past 25 years we have spent an enormous amount of time, and effort, and energy -- I came back from Rome and traveled literally to every city in the United States with colleagues to organize dialogues within Catholics and Jews, Protestants and Jews, because it became clear to me, [00:50:00] there was so much ignorance, so much illiteracy, so many stereotypes. The images of Jews which had been established for 2,000 years pervaded so much of Western Christian civilization. But something had to be done to make contact, especially now

that the authority of the pope and the Church was behind standing against anti-Semitism. Human contact to overcome this ignorance, this illiteracy, and this imagery.

So, now there exists today literally in every city in the United States groups of Christians and Jews, Catholics and Jews, who've come to know each other as persons, often friends, often cooperating on many different issues. I'm not sure you're aware of it, but the first Catholic-Jewish dialogue in the United States [00:51:00] took place in Kansas City. In 1960 the late Bishop Helmsing in the city organized the first Catholic-Jewish dialog at Rockhurst College. His assistant was a monsignor, William Baum, who went on to [*ashiva shomala?*] to higher things. He became a cardinal, and is now head of one of the major congregations in Rome in the Vatican. And he always says to me, "Remember, Marc, you've got a friend in the Curia in Rome."

In any event, one of the consequences of that activity, in addressing ourselves to the demonology is, that over the past 25 years not a single Catholic textbook [00:52:00] used in any Catholic parochial school, or in this city, or any city in the United States has any longer a single reference to the Jews as Christ-killers. It does not have a single reference to the crucifixion were the collective guilt of the Jews. Not a single

reference to the Jews as a wandering people punished by God -- rejected by God. If you compare that with a 1937 Baltimore catechism, you can see that we've traveled light years. The 1937 Baltimore catechism was literally a manual in how to teach anti-Semitism against the Jews. In "Questions and Answers," that's how children were raised.

Well, this is where we are today in relation to the issue of anti-Semitism, in relation to the Catholic Church. There have been parallel activities with much of the Protestant churches, but the Protestant [00:53:00] churches have become more complicated more recently. While it is easier for them to adopt statements condemning anti-Semitism, as most of them have done, I must say many of the liberal, Protestant church leaders have identified themselves almost completely with the PLO, and the Palestinian cause, and we saw the outcome of that in the Persian Gulf crisis. All of the major Protestant church leaders joined together to criticize President Bush for sending American troops in and leading the coalition into the Persian Gulf. Somehow, Saddam Hussein was hardly ever mentioned. But some of these kind of people also have that kind of passivity toward Adolf Hitler, as well. Somehow in that vague, kind of abstract theology, evil doesn't exist. And there is one of our largest problems today

that we [00:54:00] have to cope with. Namely, the issues are no longer anti-Semitism, but problems of anti-Israel attitudes.

But, it must be said in all clarity that while anti-Semitism has declined measurably in the United States, while it is carried forward essentially by core groups of marginal anti-Semites in this country. And by that I mean, the skinheads, the neo-Nazis, the Aryan Brotherhood, those movements, some of which spilled over in this area during the farm crisis. When people began saying, it was the Jews -- the Jewish bankers who were closing down the farms. But that was really marginal to the mainstream of America. It is remarkable that in some of the major episodes, which could have led [00:55:00] to really vicious anti-Semitism in this country, if you read some of the newspaper accounts, certainly in New York and Washington, Los Angeles. Of all of the business that was going on at Wall Street with the junk bonds, and Boesky and Milken and Levine, and it had that happen in Europe in that way, there would have been a *pogrom* against Jews. Jews were undermining the economy of America. Well, we began to see that almost no resonance at all. I think many Americans in their fairness, especially those who were educated, and have a sense of tolerance, begin to realize that there are good people and bad people in every one of the communities. Fortunately, while the Boesky stuff was going on -- there were stories about

the mafia going on, and there were a few other names, like Donovan, and a few other episodes. But somehow said, this was part of the American way of life. This is the evil side of the American way of life.

Let me say this, [00:56:00] quickly, and it will be misunderstood, but I want to say it anyway. It is clear from all of our polls that while generally the most vicious forms of mass anti-Semitism have declined in the United States -- and listen, don't misunderstand this comment. One of the signs which one can deeply regret for all kinds of other Jewish religious reasons, is the fact that the rate of intermarriage in this country has gone between 40 to 50%. From the point of view of Jewish continuity, it is a disaster. Jewish survival, and the quality of Jewish life, it is a major challenge. But underneath that, socially, psychologically, what it says to us is, that the vast majority of educated -- college-educated [00:57:00] Americans, whether young men or women, feel the Jews are normal people like any other people in the society, even to the point of wanting to marry them. I don't offer that up as any kind of norm for the future. But it is an insight of reverse, which says something about the nature of what is happened in America.

It is clear from the polls that have taken place that the most substantial problem of anti-Semitism exists today among young, black intellectuals and academics for a variety of reasons. One is, that there is a pan-African ideology identification with the third world. Pan Africa is the Zionism of young, black, avant-garde intellectuals as they identify themselves. They now have a spokesman in [00:58:00] Louis Farrakhan who has great attention, and says things in Madison Square Garden in New York that you could not believe could be said today, and gets a standing ovation for bitter hostility against the Jews from 25,000 young blacks. And he does it around the country. That's one of the major issues that we have to confront in this society, and we have all kinds of programs: black-Jewish relations; black-Jewish dialogue; working with black congressman, and Jewish congressman -- congressmen who are Jews and blacks. Coincidentally, get along very well in Congress. It's a surprise, but black congressmen -- congressmen who are blacks, are among the strongest supporters of Israel, the cause of Soviet Jewry. Of course, there's a trade-off always going on, because Jews are the strongest supporter of aide to Africa, and also an antiapartheid movement. But that clearly in terms of our contemporary seed [00:59:00] is one of the great preoccupations we have.

Finally, let me just say a few words about the changing context. I'll conclude with this, so that whatever else we might want to discuss can be raised during the discussion period.

One of the ironies of anti-Semitism today is, the reversal of roles in the sources, and the purveyors of anti-Semitism of the world. I would dare say that, up until 1965, and perhaps a little beyond that, if one had asked a Jew who is the worse source of infection of anti-Semitism in Western World, almost invariably most Jews would say, Christians, Catholic Church, the Vatican, the papacy. In the 1930s, [01:00:00] after the period of the Depression, Marxism, the Communist Party of this country, was regarded as the utopian salvation of mankind. And many young Jews when simply asked to acknowledge saw that as an answer to Christian anti-Semitism, and a hope for a classless society in which anti-Semitism would wither away. The irony is up until certainly the Gorbachev period. The Soviet Union became the greatest purveyor of anti-Semitism on the international scene, at the United Nations, in Eastern Europe -- residues of which continue to exist in Poland and Hungary, and East Germany, all of which are on our agenda these days. And ironically the twist has taken place that if we want to deal with the problem of anti-Semitism in any community, whether it's graffiti on a synagogue, whether it's vandalism against a synagogue, almost



invariably the [01:01:00] local Catholic priest or some Protestant ministers will come to the aid of Jews. They'll say, use my church for services until you're able to straighten your place out, if you had a fire. It is an incredible reversal of roles. Many Jews are not prepared for that. We're not prepared for really friendly *goyim*. (laughter) That's not been our experience.

The opposite situation has been, and it continues to this day, even in the period of *glasnost*, *perestroika*, with all the chores that Gorbachev has, one of the ironies in giving freedom of speech now in the Soviet Union, he's also allowed for freedom of speech for *panchayat*, which is a vicious, right-wing, nationalist, anti-Semitism party, which talks about *pogroms* against the Jews in Russia. And Jews are not leaving Russia only because Israel is the Promised Land. There is an extraordinary fear developed among many Jews [01:02:00] when the *panchayat* began talking about *pogroms* on May 5<sup>th</sup>, and drive the Jews out of all of their preferred positions in universities, and academia, and the scientific institutes. Many Jews did not want to repeat the errors of waiting too long, as some of our forbears did in Nazi Germany, to see what would happen. And Jews are leaving in the hundreds of thousands, or perhaps it will be a million, if

things go well and the (inaudible) can handle the problem financially, economically, adequately in the time to come.

Well, I guess to summarize this, and I hope we can get into some of the finer points of this. We have made considerably, I would say remarkable, progress in an area that we never thought was possible prior to Vatican Council II. [01:03:00] It is possible to go into any city in the Western World, and find cardinals and bishops who will come to the aids of Jews. In France the strongest opponents of anti-Semitism, of the destruction of cemeteries, Jewish cemeteries, (inaudible) and elsewhere -- I guess it's ironic. It is Cardinal Lustiger, born of Jewish parents. His parents were killed in Auschwitz. The first time I met him was in Heppenheim, Germany at [Martin Grover's?] house, and we had known of each other. We'd had some correspondence. We both walked across the room to each other, and he embraced me, and he said, "[*Shalom aleichem?*] (inaudible)." He was wearing white stockings, and I thought for a moment he was a (inaudible). (laughter) But Lustiger, who happens to be a very close aid [01:04:00] of this pope, and has a direct pipeline to this pope, is there on every Jewish issue including the promotion of diplomatic relations between the Vatican and Israel. He's made a major campaign out of that, and that we can talk about a little bit later on.

But you will find Cardinal Arns in Sao Paulo, you'll find a cardinal of Argentina, all of whom stand against all of the forms of either left-wing anti-Semitism, or right-wing anti-Semitism, and you know that if you need a friend in any of those countries to map a campaign, you have people to go to now. In Brazil the entire Brazilian Catholic hierarchy, and Brazil is the largest Catholic country in the world -- 98% of Brazil is Catholic -- adopted a magnificent catechism in which all of the anti-Semitism references of the past are totally rejected, and there's love and respect for Judaism, calling for fraternal dialogue, [01:05:00] teaching authentically about living Jews, and Judaism, and there's seminars, colleges and universities there. But, that's also true in France, it's also true in parts of Spain, although we're not finished yet with Spain, with Queen Isabella being promoted as a saint. Although I think that's coming to an end. But we have this now in almost every country in Europe, and we have most recently, at a meeting in Prague this past September, started meetings with the Polish bishops who recently adopted an unbelievable statement of repentance, of *Tchuva*, for what Polish Catholics have done to the Jews during their history, and calling on the Polish Catholic Church to lead the struggle against anti-Semitism, and to teach (inaudible), and now they want to run seminars. With American and Israeli

Jews, and other Jews from Western Europe, are teaching Poles to fill in the blank pages on Jews, Judaism, the synagogue, and Israel, and the Nazi holocaust. [01:06:00]

Having said all that, I think we're at moments of great opportunity. But there must be no illusions. 1,900 years of demonic teaching about the Jews is not going to disappear overnight. While we've made great progress in 25 years, it may well take more than 100 years, 150 years, before that tradition becomes seriously cleansed of its anti-Jewish infection. But one Jewish psychiatrist, Dr. Theodore Isaac Rubin, in his book, *Anti-Semitism, a Non-Organic Mental Disease*, calls a non-organic mental disease that is a form of pathology. It is a pathological condition [01:07:00] which has penetrated much of Western civilization. But having said that, I believe with all these complexities, with all of the difficulties that will emerge out of the Middle East situation with the PLO, and Syria, and Saddam Hussein, there are large pockets of opportunity to continue to move this struggle forward in a way that was not possible over the past 1,900 years. Thank God for the first time in 1,900 years we have alliance, partners, friends in many parts of the Catholic Church, parts of the Protestant Church, throughout much of the evangelical Christian Church, including Dr. Billy Graham -- one of the greatest friends of Israel and the Jewish people.

And there are these opportunities. The most important thing is, that [01:08:00] we not develop fatigue, frustration, and above all, Jews much help each other in this great work of changing the course of history. And stop the nonsense of Jews attacking one another, of engaging in disrespect for one another for marginal, trivial things. The problems we face are so massive. The history we have inherited has been so traumatic in so many ways, it is criminal after the Nazi holocaust to watch rabbis attacking each other for things which are marginal, not central questions, when we have such a massive scene before us in terms of Israel and Soviet Jewry, and Ethiopian Jewry, and the education of our young. And I hope it's that kind of commitment we make to one another as we [01:09:00] enter into this new decade. Thank you. (applause)

**Moderator:**

Rabbi Tanenbaum has agreed to take, for about, oh, about 10 minutes we have some time for some questions. I'm going to begin with the first question, but I'm going to ask when you come to raise your question, if you could, come forward. We have two microphones here in the aisle so that your question can be heard.

Let me begin with a question somewhat alluded to by part of your last comments, in talking about the many friends that we have within the Christian world at large. A question which often comes up at least in my own mind. An issue of some of the evangelical Christian groups, and whether we should question their motivation for their support of Israel, as to whether they have an agenda that is not clearly an open and apparent agenda, or whether we should take it at face value -- that support [01:10:00] and [fedo?] our support totally to them, and with them.

**Marc Tanenbaum:**

He asks good questions. (laughter) There's an expression in the Talmud, which (inaudible), as well: [*kab'dehu ele Hashdehu?*]; which means, pay him respect, but be very suspect. There are 40 to 50,000 evangelical Christians in the United States. They are the fastest-growing Christian body in this country. While liberal Protestants are declining, they are growing. And they're growing because their central purpose is missionary purpose: [01:11:00] to bring the nation and the world to Jesus. They run worldwide campaigns for that. But there is a strange corner in that evangelical theology in which Jews uniquely play a special role. In evangelical theology, and incidentally, there are distinctions to be made -- there are various kinds of

evangelicals. There are fundamentalists on the right end, very traditional end, Jerry Falwell-types. Jimmy Baker, *avala shalom*. (laughter) Swaggart, (inaudible), to modern centrist evangelicals, to even left-wing evangelicals, a group called Sojourners, who are very into social action.

I have no illusion [01:12:00] that evangelical Christians, including my good friend Billy Graham, if Jews came knocking at the door they would be more than happy to receive them. But the interesting inhibition to pushing that too far is, that in evangelical theology Jews are a central player, in a way Muslims are not. Namely, in evangelical theology Jesus will not come for the Second Coming unless and until the Jews are in-gathered to the Holy Land. The biggest supporters of (inaudible) are not American Jews, are evangelical Christians. They want to hurry along the process, because if all the Jews go to the Holy Land, then the Second Coming will take place. [01:13:00] But -- and Jews must be in-gathered to the Holy Land. Jerusalem must be united under Jewish sovereignty. Then, that will lay the groundwork for the Second Coming. Tribulation will take place, the saints will be lifted up, but then Jews will have to be converted at the end of the play.

Now, I discussed this once at great length with an Israeli foreign minister who was involved in religious relationships. And I said, well, it was Rabbi Cohen's question. So, I could tell it was your question, because you hadn't asked me that yet. But, (inaudible). So, he said to me, a member of the (inaudible), the foreign ministry. He says, "Look, Rabbi. We have been living with this theology for 2,000 years. They've been wanting to convert us for 2,000 years. We've been a very important part of their chess game for 2,000 years. We're still here. They're still hoping, and we're still here." [01:14:00]

And if the price we have to pay for the support of 40 or 50 million evangelical Christians, and maybe 300 million evangelical Christians all over the world is, that they're going to support Israel with the passion and the money, and the propaganda, they run broadcasts. Billy Graham produced the film on Israel which is one of the most beautiful films ever done on Israel, called *His Land*. And it's shown in Baptist churches all over America to audiences of 4,000 people on Sunday morning, and they rise up and clap, Hallelujah, Hallelujah. It shows the Jews returning to Israel, fulfilling the Bible. Now, what the Israeli foreign (inaudible) person said to me, "We've lived it for 2,000 years. We can live with their hope for another 2,000 years." In the meantime, if there are 50 million Christians in America, 300 million around the world, we say, [chepanit?]. Don't bother



Israel, and support Israel. [01:15:00] They send more tourists to Israel than American Jews do. There are Bible land tours, Holy Land tours. And it is an incredible support system.

Now, I don't approach that really cynically, because I believe that even as there have been changes, who would have thought that popes and cardinals would ever change their theology? I can tell you, I had an experience with Billy Graham when I became close friends with him in the 1960s, beginning of the 1970s, over a campaign of Jews for Jesus. And a campaign called, The Key 73. They try to convert all the Americans to Jesus. And anti-Semitism began to flow from that. So I called him up one day, and he asked me to visit him at home in Montreat, North Carolina. And I said, "How can you do this?" He said, "I'm opposed to that. I'm opposed to any organized missionary effort against the Jewish people. The Jews are God's chosen people. They are the apple [01:16:00] of God's eye." I swear to God, it happened this way. He goes over to his bookshelf, he pulls down a black Bible, opens it up, and the inscription is, "To my friend Billy. Signed, Golda." Golda Meir. He was one of her great -- she never came to the United States without calling Billy Graham, because Billy Graham is the only Christian leader who sleeps at least once a month, once every two months, in the White House. And every president of the United States of the

last seven presidents, have sought his favor, because he's the most popular Christian in America. He in turn doesn't look down on the nice charisma that comes out of being called to the White House.

The point is, in sum, that if one wants to take the ultimate absolutist position, [01:17:00] and says their ultimate purpose is the conversion of the Jews at the end of the days, therefore, I'm not going to help them in any way than you can undermine relationships that have now been going on since the 1960s, which have produced extraordinary, moral and political support, and financial support for Israel and Jewish (inaudible). My realistic sense, after working in this field for 30 years, we do not have so many friends, Israel or Jews, (inaudible), the evangelicals. We need all the friends we can get, provided we keep our eyes open. And when they step out of line, to make clear they're stepping out of line. Billy Graham, after our last conversation about the Jews for Jesus, I said, "Look. You saying this. You really believe this about opposing [01:18:00] evangelical missions to the Jews as a corporate group?" He said, "Yes." I pulled out a yellow pad. I said, "How about writing it down?" He took a yellow pad in his study, and he wrote down that, "I, Billy Graham, oppose organized missions to the Jewish people. They are the chosen people." And began quoting [sukam?]

from Golda Meir's Bible, proving that the Jews are God's chosen people. The apple of God's eye, that God's election of Israel is permanent. Deuteronomy 7. Permanent and forever.

Now, Billy Graham, as he preaches this kind of new evangelical theology, has impact on a lot of people. We just need to clone him, and get a lot more Billy Grahams. (applause)

**Moderator:**

Questions. Shirley?

**Shirley:**

I'd like to ask Rabbi Tanenbaum [01:19:00] if they have any dialogue down with (inaudible)?

**Marc Tanenbaum:**

Sort of. That is to say, the question is, do we have any dialogue with Islam, with Muslims. My smart-alecky response was, sort of. By that I mean that, some years ago we go to study -- my department did a study on the growth of Arabs and Muslims in the United States. And it really was revealing to find that, from a period of 15 years before when there were about a quarter of a million Arab Muslims in this country, there are now something like 2.5 million. Some people dispute that figure now.

They say it's no more than a million and half. But, the study we did indicated that rise. [01:20:00] It grew out of Arab Muslims, Arab Christians coming from Egypt. Nasser set out to create a diaspora of Egyptians in the United States. Many Jordanians. The oldest families were Syrians and Lebanese. So, we began organizing dialogues with Muslims in a number of communities around the country. The difficulty with that, is that Arab Muslims especially, but also Arab Christians, saw this dialogue was an opportunity to propagandize for the PLO. We would start off talking about religion, theology, the common covenant of Abraham, which is central to the Koran. We're all children of Abraham. And there's great respect for the Bible. But after we go through Islam supports human fraternity, Islam recognizes the covenant of Abraham, [01:21:00] has great respect -- bang! The PLO is the sole legitimate representative of (inaudible). So, we made it clear in a number of situations, if that's the game you want to play, there's no game. You're exploiting religion, you're not supporting religion.

Now, there are dialogues going on. In Los Angeles there's a very strong one going on. There's a strong Muslim community. I did something in Detroit some months ago with Shiite Muslims which I couldn't believe. But, one of the workshops, I have to tell you, exploded when one of the Shiite Muslims came in and began

playing his PLO games, and [PLFB?] games. So, it's there. It has to be paid attention to. My own sense is, that unless and until peace negotiations really begin taking place, and there is some genuine relationship developing between Israel, and Egypt, maybe even Saudi Arabia, Jordan -- it's [01:22:00] going to be extremely difficult because most of the Arab Muslims in this country feel that their first loyalty is to the pan-Arab cause. But one has to keep their door open, because if peace ultimately will come, it's going to come about through the same long, difficult process that came about with Vatican Council II.

**Moderator:**

Although Rabbi Tanenbaum is (inaudible) the second data, there is a group that meets here in this community. Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogue Group. Very small. A few of us, perhaps 15, 20 of us that meet on a monthly basis, and very frequently, what he has described takes place when it comes to the issue that the rhetoric of the politics intrudes on the dialogue. But, at least there's an attempt at a discussion itself.

We have time for about two more questions. AJ?

**AJ:**

Rabbi, if you had your -- the final say-so, how would you  
[01:23:00] answer the question of trading land for peace, and  
why? In Israel, of course.

**Marc Tanenbaum:**

First of all, I don't have the final say-so anywhere, especially  
with my wife. (laughter) I tend to be moderate and centrist on  
the issue. Which is to say that, I believe with the late  
(inaudible) that Israel needs certain security defense bases in  
the West Bank. I think any of us who have gone up and down the  
West Bank often wonder, what is all the fuss about? There's so  
much barren, desert land with hills, [01:24:00] and nobody  
living on it. There is the issue of really nationalism, and  
conflicting ideologies. And the terrible anger and displacement  
of the Palestinians, much of which is displaced anger because of  
the way in which they've been exploited by their own people. You  
look at what has happened now. They supported Saddam Hussein  
because they were abandoned also by their own people, and they  
thought Saddam Hussein would give them -- which neither Saudi  
Arabia was able to give them, or Kuwait, or the PLO. Said in a  
nutshell, I think it's absolutely unjust and unrealistic to  
believe that a million and a half Palestinians are going to live  
in an occupied condition indefinitely. Look, if any people  
understands the meaning of statelessness, and of being victims

of other people's [01:25:00] power and control, we're the veterans of that.

This issue is essentially a balance between doing justice, and Israel's legitimate security and defense interests. Those are the balances which have to be worked out, which is to say that, if there can be agreement for Israel to retain defense bases on large parts of the West Bank where it's necessary to keep Jordanians from coming in now, to keep PLO from coming in. And perhaps even on the Golan Heights when anybody has gone up there and see what they did, where they were shooting down on the kibbutzim, those are reasonable adjustments between reasonable people. Bigger adjustments have been made between East Germany and West Germany. Between Poland and Germany. But the real problem is the -- and we've got to face this -- it is not unlike the demonization [01:26:00] of the Catholic Church, and Western Christianity toward the Jews.

The Arab Muslim world is filled with demonized images of Jews, and Israel. Israel is not a sovereign state, it is an entity. And Jews are looked upon as enemies who must be driven into the sea. Well, what is there to talk about? They're their own worst enemies. The truth of the matter, if the Arabs were really wise and smart, they would declare peace today, tomorrow, and then

(inaudible) have to fight with all the other political parties, to try to put together a government. But, they provide a common front for unity in Israel. The parties that would never talk to each other have to be unified to deal with a common enemy. One can only hope, and I've become frankly less optimistic day after day when Saudi Arabia says they're not going to sit down with Israel. And we save Saudi Arabia's life. [01:27:00] Even though they paid for it, the United States government saved Saudi Arabia from invasion from Saddam Hussein, and the same destruction that happened to Kuwait. And for them to have the hutzpah to tell us that, no, we're not going to make peace; we'll do it on our own terms. We want the United States here essentially as mercenaries to defend us. We'll pay you \$50 billion, and you send your mercenaries to take care of us, but don't let any Christians walk around with crosses, and don't let Jews walk around with a Magen David. And keep your women away from the cities.

So there is something perverse in our own attitudes, our own policies. But, one must hope and pray that if anything has changed at all, when thought something had changed -- we won a brilliant military victory, and I think President Bush deserves a very great credit, historic credit, for that achievement. But, boy, we seem to be in the process of frittering away every



victory. Snatching defeat from victory. We were going to reinstate Saddam Hussein, [01:28:00] and in five years Saddam Hussein will have chemical, biological and nuclear warfare again. So what are we going to do? We start all over again, and send another half million soldiers there? There's some kind of idiocy going on. Which is to say that no one can really have final answers. This is in such a state of flux and process. There's so many intangibles that have to be considered. And if the United States now gangs up with the Soviet Union to impose something on Israel, then *saurus* really begins for all of us. Let's hope and pray to God that, that does not happen.

**Moderator:**

I'm going to, because of the hour I think, say that we'll stop at this point. We certainly will have an opportunity afterwards for some informal chatting, and so forth.

I want to again, thank Rabbi Tanenbaum. And with those words, I want to call upon our host for this evening, Mert Hersh, for some comments. I'll ask you though, to [01:29:00] remain seated afterwards. I've asked Mert for the prerogative to come back for a couple last-minute comments afterwards. So, let me first call on Mert, and go from there.

**Merton Hersh:**

We've certainly waited a long time for this evening, and it's been worth the wait for sure. It's an honor for me to share this podium for even a brief moment with someone who has established an international reputation of combatting anti-Semitism, and enhancing human rights. Thank you, Dr. Tanenbaum, for making the effort to be with us this evening.

We also wish to thank all of those who have volunteered their time and services on our behalf, including of course, Rabbi Cohen, Patsy Shaumburg, [Meyer Pactor?], and the *Jewish Chronicle*. [01:30:00]

This is the thirteenth Stuart J. Hersh Memorial Lecture. Our bar mitzvah year. And on October 25, 1947 our brother Stu was bar mitzvahed, and at that time in that public ceremony my brother Stuart declared his intention of becoming a responsible member of his community, and he did exactly that. He was a very, very active young person. President of his high school fraternity, varsity caliber in three sports: golf, basketball, baseball. A better than average singer, a member of the glee club. A good piano player. Perhaps most important of all, he mixed well with all types of people at all levels. Unfortunately, however, his active life, along with two of his friends', was cut short by a

tragic automobile accident at the age of 19, in the year 1954, his sophomore year in college.

This is the face of the watch that my brother Stuart was wearing at the time of his untimely accident. It was a bar mitzvah gift from my parents. His initials SJH are engraved on the back, and the date of his bar mitzvah, 10/25/47. And although the hands of this watch have stopped moving, our family, which includes my compassionate, [01:32:00] loving, understanding wife Barbara, and our very thoughtful children Michelle and Marci. Marci's with us tonight. Michelle's finishing up studying for finals at University of Arizona where she'll graduate. And I will say for the record, with honors. We'll be attending May 11<sup>th</sup>. Our family is committed in keeping the essence and spirit of our brother Stuart's life still ticking. Thank you all for coming. Thank you for supporting us for the first 13 years. Thank you for making this a very special day for our family. (applause)

**Moderator:**

Part of what I want to share with you for a couple minutes is rather procedural, and the other is something that even Mert is not aware of, [01:33:00] and I want to take the opportunity to conclude with that. But first, let me use the opportunity here to first of all, acknowledge the presence of colleagues and

newly-made friends and acquaintances who are here in the community. [Cantor Neil Newman?] who is from Bethel Congregation in Minneapolis, and has been with us for the last couple days, and working when meeting with members of the congregation on a project. Cantor Newman if you want to stand, and just be recognized. (applause) And his wife, [Saranay Newman?] who is also a colleague, the Director of the United Synagogue for our region. Saranay is with us, as well, (applause) and we'll be in fact with us with the community for the women's league conference, which will begin tomorrow at the Ramada Inn Southwest, and we'll be in attendance. So, welcome both of them. I know earlier Rabbi [Mandel?] was here as well, and I'm sorry that he's not here to recognize him at this particular point. I want to remind you of two upcoming events, very special events. One that is on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May, Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. [01:34:00] The [Anariva Shaumberg?] Memorial Program, which will take place in the Quality Heights area of our community, where we will take a number of our families to join with a number of the families there to plant trees in a beautifying effort for the community, and a way of reaching out to that community, and of extending our hands to their hands and creating a sense of sharing in a very appropriate way in a community in which Anariva, her blessed memory, grew up herself. So, we invite all of you to

join with us to call the office and to sign up without delay to join in that project.

The second is, our semi-annual blood drive which will take place on Thursday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, here at the synagogue between 3:00] and 7:00] in the afternoon, and [Rosalee Alpert?] who is the back table, graciously there to take care of the sign-up list for anyone who may wish to commit himself at this particular moment.

Mert, I want to conclude with a letter, a note, which you're not aware of, that Michelle wrote, and asked me if I would read this evening to share with everybody. As Mert said, Michelle is unable to be here because she's [01:35:00] concluding the year, getting ready for exams. But she felt very strongly about wanting to share these words with her family, with her mother, her sister, and her dad in honor of this occasion.

Before I do so, let me mention that upon conclusion, first of all, we do have some lovely refreshments that [Cheryl Cantor?] has prepared, and we want to invite everyone to join with us for the reception afterwards, as part of our evening. And to also acknowledge one other person. I want to thank personally, as this year draws to a close, [Dr. Marvin Goldstein?] who has chaired our adult education committee, and overseen many of our

adult studies programs, and lectures, and talks through the year. Marvin, thank you very much for your help. (applause)

"Unfortunately, I am unable to attend this year's Stuart J. Hersh Memorial Lecture. Each year that I have attended, I have learned something valuable from each speaker. But what makes each lecture memorable to me is, hearing my father tell the tragic story of his brother's death. I can hear the love that he has for his late brother [01:36:00] in his voice. I know that the community has always regarded this lecture series highly, yet I never really felt its true meaning until last December. While I was home from college, my dad received a package from his sister Susan. Enclosed were pictures of Stuart and my dad as young children, newspaper clippings about the accident, and various personal effects of Stuart's. As I went through these things with my dad, tears came to my eyes. I realized that some of my dad's traits, like being organized, were also traits of Stuart's. Stuart carried phone numbers of all relatives in his wallet, which to me means that his family was important to him, just as family is important to my dad. I realized that my dad carries Stuart with him every day. Because of my newly-found knowledge, I have a better understanding of what the Stuart J. Hersh Memorial Lecture is all about. It's about a brother who left this world too early to accomplish his goals, and another

brother who is trying and succeeding in stimulating an entire community on Stuart's behalf to learn and grow. What a wonderful way to perpetuate a memory. Well, another generation has been positively [01:37:00] affected, speaking especially for myself and I'm sure for Marci, too, we got the message.

And I think this evening we all got the message very nicely. And to that, we are indebted to the Hersh family, and to Michelle for these very lovely words with which we conclude this evening. Thank you all for being with us. (applause)

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