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JH/ra

Geneva, February 2, 1984

To: All members of IJCIC

From: Jean Halpérin



AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Please find attached the minutes of the last WCC/IJCIC Liaison and Planning Committee which took place in Geneva on 16 January 1984.

Any comments which you would care to make will be received with much interest.

זכר אלה יעקב וישראל

Minutes of the WCC/IJCIC Liaison and Planning Committee
held in Geneva, at the WCC headquarters, on 16 January 1984

Present:

World Council of Churches

K. Stendahl
A. Brouwer
W. Ariarajah
A. Brockway
H.G. Link
G.M. Rubeiz
Ans van der Bent (p.m.)

International Jewish Committee
on Interreligious Consultations

G.M. Riegner
J. Halpérin
M. Tanenbaum
G. Wigoder
W. Wurzbürger

Prevented and excused: P. Potter E.L. Ehrlich
N. Koshy J. Lichten

Morning meeting

A. Brockway in the chair.

K. Stendahl read Psalm 121.

1. Distribution of "The Other Side"

A. Brockway said that he had received a verbal message from N. Koshy stating that there had been no new developments with respect to the CCIA pamphlet entitled "Human Rights Violations in the West Bank" since the written note from Weingärtner dated 1 November 1983, which had been transmitted to IJCIC at the time. The authors of the pamphlet were still studying the information supplied in the response entitled "The Other Side".

G. Wigoder stressed that the matter had already been discussed at the preceding LPC meeting on 15 June 1983 and expressed surprise at the long delay in taking the correcting steps requested. To the extent that IJCIC had strongly objected to the one-sidedness of the report, particularly in the introduction, and had handed their reply to Dr. Raiser through Prof. Werblowsky at Vancouver, they had clearly expected that all those who had received the original pamphlet would be apprised of IJCIC's response.

K. Stendahl had been given to understand that CCIA do not usually circulate replies to their publications. Since they were in the process of preparing a response to the response, there was little choice but awaiting their reaction.

G. Wigoder inquired as to the mailing list of the original pamphlet.

A. Brockway thought that publications of that kind were usually sent to 2000-3000 addresses including individuals and organizations.

G.M. Riegner wondered whether the list of WCC member churches was a secret or whether it could be given to IJCIC.

A. Brouwer felt that there was not enough communication between the various specialized departments in the WCC. In his opinion, rather than circulating separately IJCIC's response, it would be preferable to await the CCIA response which should resumably be completed fairly soon, so that the possibility of both responses being issued jointly could be considered.

G.M. Riegner and G. Wigoder requested that the CCIA response be shown to IJCIC before any final decision would be taken.

It was so agreed.

2. Ways and means of following up on the Mauritius meeting

J. Halpérin recalled that all those who participated in the Mauritius multi-faith consultation a year ago had been greatly impressed by the high quality of that meeting in terms of sincerity, openness and ability to listen to each other. While the main and immediate target of the Mauritius meeting had been the Vancouver Assembly, it would appear that the report and Message which emerged from Mauritius would warrant a special effort to make them better known at large and to keep that spirit alive as a lasting source of inspiration from the point of view of both education and strategy.

K. Stendahl felt that it might be a good idea to invite the guests who participated in the Vancouver Assembly to furnish an evaluation in depth of their own experience at Mauritius and Vancouver so as to build up a relationship. By the same token they could be asked to supply suggestions for a continuation of that effort.

One was never quite sure as to the actual distribution and impact of any given document. The Dialogue Sub-Unit might consider picking up "the best" of what has been produced in recent years and make it a publication that would not be lost. The Mauritius report and Message clearly belong into the category of material that should be allowed to survive and to find its way into textbooks so as to become an input for theological education. It would be a positive achievement if the Mauritius Message could be given lasting visibility.

Referring to reading lists and bibliographies, he took exception to the very biased list recently published in an ADL publication Up Front. Such methods were clearly not conducive to enhancing the dialogue.

W. Wurzbarger felt that the Mauritius Message should be reproduced in major Jewish and Christian journals.

M. Tanenbaum agreed that the Message could be the source of useful and positive strategy and should therefore be made widely known so as to stimulate further reflection.

A. Brockway agreed that ways should be found in which the spirit of the Mauritius meeting could be maintained. That a meeting of that kind could have been as successful showed that such events were indeed possible. This in itself was an encouraging fact.

G.M. Riegner felt that there was no organizational traditio to indicate how to perpetuate a particularly successful group dynamics. The main issue arises out of the fact that the whole interfaith dialogue was still moving within a very limited circle of specialists. What could be done to enlarge this circle?

3. Implications of the Vancouver Assembly

M. Tanenbaum emphasized the value of the Assembly as a human experience. He had been much impressed by the Biblical power of Dr. Potter's address delivered with prophetic strength. He also noted the radical social justice stance. On the other hand, the political resolutions had been extremely painful and had given rise to anguish. For instance the lack of any balance between resolutions aiming at American policy or the Middle East on the one hand and those dealing with Afghanistan and Poland on the other made one wonder whether, as had been said a year ago by a leading American journalist, the WCC had not become "the ecclesiastical clown of the UN". Many could only view with anxiety the impression that WCC was aligning with the radical/marxist world. Even for those who would wish to trust, pronouncements of that kind could only jeopardize the credibility of the WCC.

K. Stendahl felt that the political aspect had to be viewed in relation to the whole structure of the WCC which was bound to lead to "politicization".

G.M. Riegner stressed that we were not sitting in judgment on each other. Our task was to cooperate and to interpret each other to each other. From the reports he has received from Vancouver, he had been impressed by the strong religious fervour and by the part of prayer and liturgy in the proceedings. For instance, the Lima statement had been taken seriously. Moreover, the dialogue dimension had been given a large place in the various events which had taken place in and around the Assembly, maybe under the influence of the local Canadian environment. On the other hand, there had obviously been a lack of balance in the political statements which made one question the objectivity of the WCC. He noted in that respect with regret the ongoing one-sidedness of the resolution on the Middle East, a fact which had been drawn to the attention of Dr. Potter in the letter which had been sent to him on behalf of IJCIC.

W. Wurzbarger thought that much was a matter of perception. Greater understanding was required in order to do away with suspicion.

G. Wigoder agreed that the dialogue dimension had been impressive at Vancouver. However, the paragraph referring to the Holocaust in the Middle East resolution was bordering on obscenity. It ran counter the acknowledgment of self-identification advocated by Brockway. He regretted the lack of coordination between the various departments of WCC and thought that a more balanced point of view was required.

W. Ariarajah was grateful for the comments and criticisms voiced. It should be made clear that WCC was not to be equated with the UN. However, as a federation of churches, it could only do and say what the member churches wanted it to do and to say. Balance and advocacy implied difficult constraints.

K. Stendahl thought that one should distinguish between Assembly statements and what emerges from the house.

G.M. Riegner thought that we could learn from each other. His own experience had taught him that statements from the Assembly had to be prepared more carefully in advance.

Referring to the recent meeting at Montreux, K. Stendahl stressed that the structure specifically established for the purposes of the dialogue between the WCC and IJCIC had to be considered and was indeed considered as a prototype.

Afternoon meeting

G.M. Riegner in the chair.

4. Report by G.M. Rubeiz on his recent mission to the Middle East

G.M. Rubeiz said that he had spent 20 days in the region. He was most grateful to J. Halpérin for having made it possible for him to meet with very stimulating interlocutors. He had been most impressed by Alouph Hareven and had found the discussions with him very enlightening and informative. He had been interested in his assessment that the Palestinians were weak and had no leadership. He had also found very useful his encounters with Prof. Segre, Dr. Wigoder and Ambassador Yaish. On the other hand, he had been under the impression that Dr. Rossing did not really understand the Arab mentality.

In more general terms, he spotted a rise in fundamentalism and in the propensity for terror on both sides. (*)

G. Wigoder expressed appreciation for G.M. Rubeiz's report and conclusions with which he could almost completely identify. He would be interested to hear Rubeiz's reaction to a remark recently made by T. Kollek, according to which Christian churches were working against reconciliation and coexistence, particularly in East Jerusalem.

(*) The "conclusive observations" of G.M. Rubeiz's written report are appended as an annex to these minutes.

W. Wurzbarger felt that the report given by G.M. Rubeiz was a major step forward and pointed to the importance of making every effort to understand each other's position. Proper perception was too often marred by unwarranted value judgments.

K. Stendahl sensed a great need for meaningful contacts with Israeli personalities and Palestinians. He wondered what were the practical possibilities.

M. Tanenbaum said that the report showed increasing fanaticism in all communities as well as reserves of goodwill available in those communities. What can we do to contain the former and to find support for the latter?

G.M. Riegner was particularly happy to hear that G.M. Rubeiz had had extensive discussions with Alouph Hareven. He himself had also been impressed by the systematic efforts made by the latter to launch educational programs aiming at improving the image of the other in all communities. His scheme for a regular TV educational series in that direction sounded particularly innovative and promising and deserved active support from all sides. The WCC could play a most positive role in helping the Jewish side to establish ongoing relations with the other side.

In reply to the question raised by G. Wigoder, G.M. Rubeiz explained that the Christians were a minority, and hence felt rather insecure both demographically and psychologically. The Orthodox Arab Christians which made up the Christian majority were distant from church leadership who were not too popular. The ecumenical family had a role to play. In his opinion, Anglicans were willing to conciliate. Within the secular community, Christians were generally more moderate. Being eloquent and educated, they could be used as a bridge and he himself felt more at home with a Palestinian Christian than with a Lebanese Christian.

5. Preparation for a review of Jewish-Christian relations in various parts of the world

A. Brockway stated that a dialogue was particularly required in regions where Christians and Jews did not normally come across each other. The question was whether such a dialogue would be feasible and useful, and which areas might be selected.

G.M. Riegner noted that apart from North America, Western Germany, Holland and a little bit in France and Great Britain, no real structures for a dialogue existed elsewhere. One should either embark on a systematic study aiming at assessing the situation and the possibilities country by country, or consider arranging a regional meeting covering 4 to 5 countries. In his opinion greater efforts must be made on both sides to involve more people in the churches and in the communities to participate in the dialogue.

M. Tanenbaum recalled that a survey had been conducted by the American Jewish Committee ten years ago. It would provide a useful frame for further explorations. The survey should put an emphasis on issues of

religious education and ICCJ should therefore be actively involved. A well conducted study could have a stimulating effect.

K. Stendahl indicated that the matter should be viewed as a common concern for WCC churches, the Vatican and ICCJ. Care should be taken to avoid duplicating the existing setup and to try and obtain a global picture.

G.M. Riegner agreed that it would be advisable to enlist the active cooperation of the WCC, IJCIC and ICCJ.

M. Tanenbaum was ready to participate in a sub-committee that would be asked to pull together existing information.

W. Wurzburger thought that the scope of the study should be limited to our respective constituencies.

A. Brockway proposed to establish a team of four with two from each side to consult and come with specific proposals by 1 June 1984. They could start with what had already been collected and make suggestions for further action.

It was decided to set up a team with Brockway, Schoneveld, Riegner and Tanenbaum with terms of reference as indicated above.

6. Jewish-Christian dialogue in Africa

G.M. Riegner emphasized the enormous role of the Third World in WCC activities and thinking. It so happened that the Jewish community was now almost absent from Africa, with the exception of South Africa with its specific problems, and a few remnants of dwindling communities in North Africa. Yet, there was a need for the Jewish world community to present itself and the values it stands for to the African countries and particularly to their Christian communities. The Jews strongly believed in the unity and equality of the human family and they felt a responsibility to help the Africans who were facing so many acute problems. The WCC should help organizing a really representative meeting in Africa of Christian Africans and Jews from the world, so that both sides could genuinely get together, better understand each other and find out what they could do for each other. Moreover, he was worried by Moslem propaganda against Jews. The Christian churches who had big constituencies in Africa could play a very useful role by sponsoring such a meeting and by actively participating in it. In his opinion, this was one of the top priorities and he hoped that an approval of principle could be forthcoming without delay.

M. Tanenbaum stressed the incredible economic upheaval in Africa. The huge problems of refugees, hunger, economic and social crisis were bound to accentuate in the next years, so that every effort should be made to counter with vision and skill these major threats where the whole fabric of the African society was at stake.

S. Brown mentioned the influence of missionaries, Sunday school teachers and also the solidarity with the Palestinians. It would, therefore, be most important to dispel misconceptions and prejudices. In the light of his own experience, he would have thought that there were three places in Africa which could be used as "points d'appui", viz. Nairobi where there is a small Jewish community and a synagogue, Sierra Leone, with a solid tradition of the Old Testament in African terms and an active Council of Churches, and South Africa, where some African Christian church leaders could become useful partners. Christian groups in Senegal would also be interested in hearing more about Judaism.

G.M. Rubeiz agreed that Africa was an important area for an endeavour of that kind but warned of possible negative side effects. He referred particularly to widespread stereotypes in some countries which might make certain communities fear a kind of Christian-Jewish plot against Moslems. In order to forestall wrong perceptions, it would be advisable to undertake careful soundings with the Middle Eastern Council of Churches and some groups concerned in countries like Egypt or Sudan. One might also consider including Moslems into the dialogue which would thus be enlarged to an interfaith activity based on the moral contribution of all religions against deprivation.

W. Wurzbarger felt that it would be very difficult to bring in Moslems into the proposed encounter and that the latter would then lose much of its significance.

K. Stendahl mentioned a conference which was being prepared by Dr. Taylor and the World Conference on Religion and Peace to take place in Nairobi in 1985. Maybe some link could be sought in that direction. He recalled a meeting organized by the WCC with African Christian theologians in Jerusalem in 1977, which had not been too successful. The Dialogue Unit should be requested to offer proposals leading to the choice of the right Christian participation. Bishop Anastasios Yanoulatos, himself a great expert in African religions, was at present stationed in Kenya and his cooperation could be very useful.

S. Brown added that preparatory discussions should be conducted between IJCIC and the All African Council of Churches in Nairobi, whose leader was Marc Ratafrançois from Madagascar.

K. Stendahl felt that one should carefully look into the matter and see what could be suggested as possible scenarios, after having evaluated all the pros and cons. In his opinion, that was an enormously important aspect of dialogue, the more so that it would be the first time in history where we would face this type of dialogue between representatives of faiths who had had no live contacts. That was an added reason to make every effort to achieve success.

A. Brouwer agreed about the importance of the matter but also thought that one had to beware of the pitfalls to be avoided.

A. Brockway asked what would be the subject of the encounter and which would be the people to be invited.

G.M. Riegner replied that the subject would have to be suggested by the Africans, it being understood that the main concern would be to arrange for the human encounter as such. He was viewing this enterprise not only in terms of self-interest but rather as a way to respond to great challenges.

J. Halpérin felt that the warnings voiced in terms of caution should not be overlooked. It was precisely because of the importance and of the difficulty of the whole operation that IJCIC was anxious to operate jointly with the WCC. It might have sounded presumptuous if the Jewish side had wanted to go directly and alone to meet with the African Christians. If, however, there was a fear of giving the impression of a dubious Christian-Jewish link, IJCIC might have to reconsider its position and to envisage a direct approach towards those African Christians who would be interested to cooperate.

7. Date and subject of next formal IJCIC/WCC consultation

A. Brockway reminded the meeting that no such formal consultation had taken place since Toronto, in September 1980. He had been given to understand that money might be available for a meeting of that kind if it were held in late November 1984 or in January 1985. He wondered whether an appropriate topic could be selected.

In the course of a general discussion a number of tentative suggestions were made: particular and universal; individualism and community; integrity and caring community; having faith in the context of other faiths; man's relation to nature; religious pluralism and commitment to truth; integrism and integrity; unity of humankind; religion, politics and society.

It was felt that something like 20-25 people from each side should be invited to participate. It was hoped that the consultation could take place at the Harvard Divinity School.

It was agreed that the Geneva secretariats would elaborate within the next few weeks a concrete proposal on the subject and venue of the consultation and that this proposal would then be circulated to all members for approval or improvement.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

1. The MECC service with the Palestinians is concrete Christian witness expressed in humanitarian acts in areas of neglect. The authorities should further support MECC and extend better facilities for the continuation and developing of the work of this ecumenical body.
2. The Arab community in Israel-Palestine are determined to stay regardless of the pressures of the environment.
3. Current trends are pessimistic. Arab and Jewish terror will be on the increase. There is not much time to waste to try to reverse forces of death.
4. The forces of life (peace) in the area should not be underestimated. For every Jew and every Palestinian who has given up on peace, there is a counterpart who yearns for brotherhood.
5. Today the Palestinian voice inside Israel and the West Bank and Gaza deserves more attention than the voice of Palestinians abroad. There is relative realism in the politics of the non diaspora Palestinians. The Palestinian in Israel proper deserves the most careful hearing. The moderation of Arafat is appreciated inside the "Territories" but his inconsistency is not.
6. Religious fundamentalism is rising, particularly among the Jewish and Moslem communities. Palestinian Christians are the least sectarianized; with a "bloody nose" they carry on with dignity. Their instincts tell them that fanaticism is suicidal.
7. The Orthodox Arab Christians (the Christian majority) in the area are distant from church leadership. The ecumenical family has a role to play. This problem has for too long been shelved.
8. Western Christian hyper-activity in the area is a mixed bag of genuine spirituality and potential dynamite for Arab-Jewish relations. Ecumenical "mine detectors" are needed to sift clerical peace lovers from trouble-makers, innocent misplaced missionaries from political agents.
9. The Jewish society is in agony to prevent the erosion of its democracy in face of a threat of a double standard-equity for Jews and deprivation for Arabs. The Jewish Conscience is strong and cannot be subdued for long.
10. WCC should reflect on the feasibility of deepening and enriching further its contacts with Israeli personalities and the Jewish society at large to open new avenues of peace with justice.



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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

PROGRAMME UNIT ON FAITH AND WITNESS

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies
February 6th, 1984
SWA/lw

TO THE GUESTS OF OTHER FAITHS TO THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY AT VANCOUVER

Dear Friends,

Greetings and good wishes from the staff persons at the Dialogue sub-unit of the World Council of Churches!

Dr. John Taylor has written to you earlier to thank you for your valuable participation in and contribution to the 6th Assembly at Vancouver. As you are aware, Dr. Taylor has since become the General Secretary to the 4th World Conference on Religion and Peace. He has been in touch with you in that capacity. We are glad that his office is in Geneva, and that we can continue to be in contact with him.

While I had taken over as the Director of the sub-unit as of October 1st, 1983, we have a new colleague for the Muslim-Christian relations, Dr. Stuart Brown, whom some of you may have met in Vancouver.

There have been some enquiries as to whether the guests of other faiths have given an evaluation of the Assembly. If you wish to write an evaluation, not only of the inter-faith aspects, but of the Assembly as a whole, we would be quite happy to receive them and if possible to publish them. In fact I would urge on you to do this if time permits you. This will give some new insights and will also help in the planning of the next assembly.

I am sending you the December, 1983 issue of the 'One World', popular magazine of the World Council of Churches, which carries an evaluation by myself of the Issue I debate related to other faiths. I thought this might be of interest to you.

Please keep in touch with us; we hope that your experience at Vancouver would provide the impetus for you to initiate the concern for dialogue in your own situation.

With every greeting,

Yours sincerely,

Rev. S. Wesley Ariarajah
Director

Encl.

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

FEB 15 1984

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Geneva, February 9, 1984

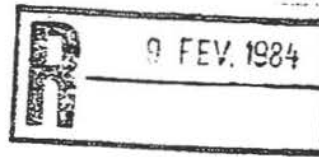
To: Dr. E.L. Ehrlich
Rabbi Jordan Pearlson
Rabbi Marc A. Tanenbaum ✓
Prof. Zwi Werblowsky
Rabbi Walter S. Wurzburger

From: Jean Halpérin

AMERICAN JEWISH
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Please find attached the reply just received from N. Koshy in response to "The Other Side".

We should decide without too much delay how to react to his suggestion as contained in the third paragraph of his covering letter.



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COMMISSION OF THE CHURCHES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
of The World Council of Churches

Moderator : Olle Dahlén

Director : Ninan Koshy

February 7, 1984

Dr. Gerhart Riegner
World Jewish Congress
1, rue de Varembe
Case postale 191
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Dear Dr. Riegner,

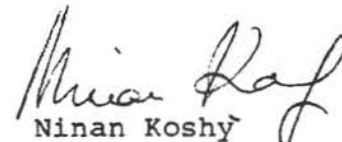
You will find enclosed our response to the IJCIC's comments (entitled "The Other Side") on our publication "In Their Own Words" (CCIA Background Information 1983/1)

We regret that this response could not be given earlier. In view of the detailed comments by IJCIC on several specific parts of the publication and the questions raised, we had to consult in addition to Law in the Service of Man other competent bodies.

We shall be happy to send to those who receive our Background Information regularly, "The Other Side" along with our response to it.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,


Ninan Koshy
Director

Enclosure

cc. Allan Brockway

CCIA DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE TO "THE OTHER SIDE"
A PAPER SUBMITTED BY THE
INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

1. The purpose of the CCIA series of Background Information is to offer to a constituency within the WCC member churches already reasonably informed about and interested in international affairs, facts, analyses and opinions on political and geopolitical trends, crisis situations, human rights problems, militarism, peace and disarmament and other current issues. These Background Informations are meant to inform and to stimulate debate and action among churches. They do not necessarily represent WCC positions. They have numerous times challenged prevailing popular wisdom.
2. When portraying any national or regional situation, care has been taken to use material emanating from the areas in question, i.e. collected, collated and often authored by those most immediately affected. Preference has been given, for instance, to allowing victims of human rights violations to speak for themselves, rather than to speak from outside on their behalf. As a rule, governments responsible for such violations have a far greater access to international media for the purpose of self-justification than have the victims for the simple purpose of telling their stories in their own words. The CCIA Background Informations seek to give such victims a voice.
3. The "Director's Introduction" in each Background Information is a reflective paper dated and signed by the CCIA Director, representing the analyses and opinions of the Director of CCIA. It stands by itself, and is not dependent solely on the information contained in each respective issue. Often it acts as an "editorial" or "leading article", intended to advance arguments and debates, in this way stimulating the reader with points of view which may not be popular, but which nevertheless are useful aids to the resolution of the problems dealt with.
4. CCIA Background Information 1983/1, "In their Own Words: Human Rights Violations in the West Bank" is a collection of primary source documents, affidavits duly testified to under penalty of perjury. It has been compiled by the reputable West Bank lawyers' group "Law in the Service of Man" (LSM), an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, in order to show the human aspects of the violations of the rights of the people in the West Bank. The brief introductions to each section were written by LSM simply in order to place the framework within which these individual instances must be seen.
5. A 10-page reply to the above Background Information has been made by the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) entitled "The Other Side". The reply begins by claiming that "Jewish public opinion" has been "shocked and dismayed" by the "overt bias" of recent CCIA publications. IJCIC believes that "many within the WCC family do not subscribe to the contents of these pamphlets - or at least are open to learning that events in the Middle East have other explanations".

6. In order to deal seriously with the subject, the CCIA has consulted a number of persons competent in the matters dealt with, including the original editors of "In Their Own Words". We are particularly indebted to the comments made by Jonathan Kuttab, Director of LSM.

7. The first pages of "The Other Side" deal with the CCIA Director's Introduction, rather than the content of "In Their Own Words". In particular, it disputes the assessment in the Introduction that Israel intends to stay in Lebanon and that Israel is not interested in any peace plan. Under a section entitled "Lebanon" (pp.1 ff) IJCIC claims "the primary purpose of the entry of the Israel Defense Force into Lebanon was to remove the menacing PLO presence and its military infrastructure from southern Lebanon". The fact that this task was accomplished, not only in southern Lebanon but in Beirut as well, is now history. And yet, Israeli forces are still in Lebanon. IJCIC states, correctly, that Israel agreed to withdraw its forces within 8 to 12 weeks from May 17, 1983. Yet by that date, it had made its withdrawal conditional on the withdrawal of Syrian and PLO forces, even though the presence of Syria was not the reason for the original invasion. Through another development, PLO chairman Arafat's forces have meanwhile withdrawn definitively from Lebanon. The Director's Introduction stated in March 1983, "The crisis continues amid growing indications that Israel intends to stay there." That statement continues to be justified.

8. The IJCIC section on Lebanon reflects a somewhat simplistic understanding of the tragedies of this country. For a brief but competent and comprehensive treatment of the same conflict, we suggest "Lebanon: A conflict of minorities" by David McDowall, recently published by the Minority Rights Group, London.

9. The IJCIC statement (p.3) that Israel has pursued peace for thirty-five years is difficult to respond to in light of Israel's repeated rejection of every comprehensive peace plan proposed, even by its staunchest supporter, the USA. Peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved without recognition of the Palestinians' right to self-determination, in addition to Israel's right to exist. The Camp David Agreements, which concluded a separate, not comprehensive peace, have been violated, for instance by Israel's settlements policies in the West Bank.

10. It serves little useful purpose to conjecture about the West Bank in the abstract. Historical arguments about possession of the land (whether by Jordan or by Israel) bypass the need to look at the facts as they present themselves today. Arguments for the annexation of the West Bank, be they historical, juridical or de facto with the creation of faits accomplis through Israeli settlements policies, fly in the face of the rights of the Palestinians living there, let alone of those who have been forced to leave. Israel's security concerns are well known and appreciated. The primary question should be whether Israel's policies have indeed served its security.

11. But how do the residents of the West Bank themselves see their problems? To show this was the purpose of "In Their Own Words". IJCIC's section on "Human Rights" (pp.4 ff) begins by saying that LSM fails to mention "Israel's determination that its military and civil organs abide by the provisions of international law (notably the Hague Regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949)". In fact, however, Israel has never made any claims or admitted that it is bound, particularly by the Geneva Conventions. Israel has merely stated that it is voluntarily willing to abide by the "humanitarian" provisions of the Geneva Conventions. Israel retains for itself the right to determine which provisions are "humanitarian" and which are "political". IJCIC goes on to state that "immediately after the 1967 war, the Israeli Attorney-General announced that all the norms and principles of natural justice, observed as a matter of course in Israel, would also be implemented in the territories administered by Israel, even where these had not found expression in international law". In fact, Israel has failed to live according to the standards of international law, which are specific, direct and relevant. Empty general expressions such as the one mentioned here are of little use to Palestinians.

12. The IJCIC reply states that the Israeli High Court of Justice has assumed jurisdiction over the military commanders in the administered territories and that thereby "whenever the rights of an individual are infringed, effective redress by the court will be available". (p.5) The paper goes on to say that international law permits preventive action to stop sabotage, sedition and terrorism, and that "the types of action attacked in the (CCIA) booklet are all endorsed by international law, in such circumstances". In fact, many of the actions attacked have been sanctioned by the Israeli High Court under its own interpretation of applicable law. Other actions have not been so sanctioned, but there has been no recourse to the Court in those cases. To the extent they were sanctioned by the Israeli High Court, this reflects on that court itself, not on the propriety of the actions.

13. The reply furthermore states that rather than a lack of confidence in the Israel judiciary, the population does not refer cases to the High Court "because of the terror employed by certain Palestinian groups against those daring to have recourse to the Israeli courts". In fact, however, there have been no threats and no terror directed against any Palestinian who took recourse to the Israeli court. On the contrary, some of the most nationalist figures have themselves appealed to the High Court. The mayors of Hebron and Halhul who were deported attempted to go to the High Court, as well as Mayor Bassam Shakah of Nablus. It is often claimed by the Israeli authorities that the PLO itself finances appeals to the High Court. There is no evidence of anyone being threatened or subjected to reprisal for appealing to the High Court. This contention is totally unfounded.

14. The IJCIC reply, in order to prove that recourse to the High Court can have positive results for the claimants, refers to the Elon More case, but the conclusions drawn are open to debate. It states that since that judgement, the Israeli authorities have refrained from

requisitioning private land for the establishment of settlements. It is difficult in a short response to explain the intricacies of land law in the West Bank, as the authors will be well aware. However, we must underline strongly that the CCIA Background Information did not address the land issue at all. Neither did it address the issue of the legality of the settlements. It merely spoke about the activities and behaviour of the settlers themselves.

15. We must object strenuously to the innuendo implied on page 6 of the IJCIC reply when it states "many of the alleged violations have never been reported to the authorities and have therefore not been investigated. They are now utilized as political propaganda without the possibility of determining their accuracy". This seems to imply that the anonymity given to certain of the affidavits is because their stories are not reliable. In fact, most of the affidavits are properly signed, their stories have appeared in the local papers, and complaints have been filed with their regard. To give a few examples, the cases reported in the affidavit of Sa'deah Al Bakri and Isam Mohammad ("In Their Own Words", pp. 16 and 17) have been covered in The Jerusalem Post, 14/3/82. The affidavit of Mohammad Abdallah Yousef Sahweel (p. 18) was reported in The Jerusalem Post, 22 & 24/3/82, and was extensively reported in the Hebrew press. Also the affidavit of Sa'id Aid Zaytun (p. 18) was reported in The Jerusalem Post on 29/10/82. The affidavit of Haytham Mohammad Muhaisen (p. 19) in addition to being reported was the subject of a complaint.

It may be worth mentioning that information leaked from the Karp report in The Jerusalem Post 12/5/83, concerned a list of incidents in which nobody has been arrested or charged, involving identified Jewish settlers acting against West Bank Arabs. Also, The Jerusalem Post of 23/5/83 reported that the Karp report lists some 75 incidents in which there was evidence of settler vigilantism in 1981-82. The claim that any case reported to the police gets properly investigated, and that settlers are charged and tried for their crimes in the West Bank is simply not true. This is borne out by the attacks on the mayors, the attacks on the Hebron Muslim University, in which 30 students were injured and 3 killed, and the almost daily incidents involving settler violence against Palestinians. The CCIA Background Information presented just such evidence, according to signed affidavits. If there is any untruth there, the authorities are free to bring criminal actions of perjury against any of the individuals who signed the affidavits. Only thus can they prove them to be lying.

16. The IJCIC reply repeatedly misinterprets the Hague Regulations with regard to the right of occupying powers to take possession of public land (p. 5 & 6f). Under Article 55 of the Hague Regulations, the occupying power must act as usufruct, as a kind of trustee to safeguard the public and state land, not however to change its corpus. The Hague Regulations permit the occupying authority to safeguard public land, but not to build on it permanent Jewish settlement.

The reference to Sabri Gharib is correct to a point. There are, in fact, several cases still pending. Their final outcome is not clear; however, the affidavit clearly refers to specific activities of the settlers during this period when the cases were still pending. Specific complaints have been made to the authorities in all these cases. Sabri Gharib still stands by every word of his affidavit and is willing to face criminal penalties, if it were shown that he is lying or exaggerating in that affidavit.

17. Clarification is necessary concerning the Village Leagues (p.7). The LSM introduction does give the Israeli view point concerning the Village Leagues, and does detail the laws according to which they were set up. The booklet does not brand them as quislings. It states, "The majority of Palestinians see the Leagues as collaborators". The point of the section is that although the Village Leagues claim to be seeking to improve conditions, according to their public statements, which are quoted, they go about it in rather unconventional ways, to say the least.

It is important to note that in this section all affiants have requested to remain anonymous. LSM continues to hold the original signed affidavits, but will not divulge the names for the protection of the affiants from retaliation by the Village Leagues.

The statement in the reply that the attack on the Orthodox Club, described in the booklet, was carried out by local Arabs does not exonerate the Village League from the responsibility, since they are the only Arabs on the West Bank who are allowed to carry weapons. Since the Village Leagues have no registered membership, it is easy (Jerusalem Post 8/3/82) to dismiss any of their activities as "actions by local Arabs".

18. The claims made in the IJCIC reply on house demolitions (p.8) need some comment. It is correct to say that international law permits the destruction of houses "when imperative military requirements so demand". However, the statement is incorrect when it adds that there are two kinds of military requirement: "(1) to destroy the physical base for military action; and (2) to serve as a deterrent against terrorist activity, which is of special importance in a country where capital punishment is not used against terrorists".

This interpretation is clearly rejected by international law, where the Fourth Geneva Convention specifically prohibits the destruction of property. Article 33 states "No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties, and likewise all measures of intimidation or terrorism are prohibited". Article 53 further goes on to state "The destruction by the occupying power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the state, or to other public authorities, or social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations".

There is obviously a question here of proportion. The occupying power in the West Bank has evidently used a very wide interpretation of "military requirement". The Geneva Conventions, however, are meant to be applied in a reasonable fashion, as evidenced by a November 25, 1981 interpretation by the ICRC of Article 53: "In the opinion of the ICRC, the expression 'military operations' must be construed to mean the movements, maneuvers and other action taken by the armed forces with a view to fighting. Destruction of property as mentioned in Article 53 cannot be justified under the terms of that article, unless such destruction is absolutely necessary - i.e., materially indispensable - for the armed forces to engage in action, such as making way for them".

This exception to the prohibition cannot justify destruction as a punishment or deterrent, since to preclude this type of destruction is an essential aim of the article.

The discrepancy in the number of houses destroyed is due to the fact that the article in The London Sunday Times, 19/6/77, quoted in the Director's Introduction, refers to demolitions in both West Bank and Gaza, whereas the figure quoted by LSM refers to the West Bank only, as stated by the Prime Minister's Office and reported in The Jerusalem Post, 23/11/81.

19. The section of IJCIC's reply dealing with universities (p.9) is particularly misleading. It must be stated clearly that Israel did not establish universities in the West Bank, All four universities already existed as colleges. They were simply upgraded, their recognition granted by the Arab Higher Education Council. The reason was the need locally for universities, since the population did not have easy access to travel to Arab universities.

We are at a loss to understand what is meant by the statement that "a great number of students from other Arab countries pursue their studies in the region". There is no appreciable number of students from other Arab countries studying in the West Bank.

Referring to the closings of Bir Zeit University, the reply states (p.10) "when a closing order was challenged in the Supreme Court, it was upheld". This statement is accurate. But does this decision indicate the propriety or legality of the closure, or is it a reflection on the Israeli High Court?

20. With regard to town arrests (p.10), the LSM introduction does in fact mention that "assigned residence" is allowed by international law, but questions whether the right of appeal is recognized by the Israeli authorities and questions whether in all cases such restrictions are necessary for "imperative reasons of security". The fact that the person affected has the right to bring his case before an appeals committee is not determinative, since these committees only have advisory power, and the High Court itself cannot discuss the motives of the Military Governor when he states that the reasons for the town arrest are "questions of security".

21. The CCIA appreciates the effort to continue a dialogue about the issues dealt with here. We regret, however, that the reply has not touched on the substance of most of the statements made in the affidavits or addressed the vast majority of the incidents related. The essence of the CCIA Background Information "In Their Own Words" is the concern for the individuals caught in a web which is not of their own making. The CCIA is no less concerned for peace in the Middle East than IJCIC, and this common concern should pave the way to fruitful dialogue. But as the WCC General Assembly stated in Vancouver in August 1983, "Peace cannot be built on foundations of injustice". In this spirit the CCIA addresses the needs of those who suffer injustice.



FEB 16 1984

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

1211 GENÈVE 20 1, RUE DE VAREMBÉ CASE POSTALE 191 TELEPH. 341325 TELEX 289876	NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016 ONE PARK AVENUE TELEPH. 679-0600 TELEX 236129	LONDON W1Y 7DX 11, HERTFORD STREET TELEPH. 491-3517 TELEX 21633	75008 PARIS 78, AV. CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES TELEPH. 359.94.63 TELEX 650320	JERUSALEM P. O. B. 4293 4, ROTENBERG STREET TELEPH. 635546-635544
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Geneva, February 10, 1984

To: All members of IJCIC
From: Jean Halpérin

IJCIC/Vatican Liaison Committee

This is to confirm that the next meeting of the IJCIC/Vatican Liaison Committee will take place in Amsterdam from 27 to 29 March 1984.

A preliminary meeting of all Jewish participants will be held on 26 March in the evening at the Garden Hotel.

The meeting of the Liaison Committee will take place at the Jewish Community Center:
Nederlands-Israëlietisch Kerkgenootschap
van der Boechorststraat 26
1081 BT Amsterdam
Telephone: (020) 44 99 68

Hotel reservations have been made for all Jewish participants at:

Garden Hotel Dikker en Thijs
Dijsselhofplantsoen 7
1077 BJ Amsterdam

Telephone: 64 21 21 Telex: Agaho nl 15453

for four nights (26 to 30 March) at the rate of f. 130.- (approximately \$42).

The provisional agenda, as agreed at an earlier IJCIC meeting, is attached.

The Jewish speakers on the main subject will be:

Rabbi Prof. Gordon Tucker (USA)
Avraham Burg (Israel)
Prof. David Kessler (France).

Representatives from the Dutch, Belgian and Luxembourg Jewish communities have been invited to participate in the discussion of Catholic-Jewish relations in the Benelux countries.

It will be much appreciated if you could confirm your participation without delay.

IJCIC/VATICAN LIAISON COMMITTEE

Amsterdam, 27-29 March 1984

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Opening statements
2. Youth and faith, and the reaction of youth to the social problems of our time (major subject of discussion)
3. The present status of Catholic-Jewish relations in the Benelux countries
4. Exchange of information:
 - a) Follow-up of the of the meeting at the Vatican (March 1982) of representatives of the various Bishops' Conferences dealing with Christian-Jewish relations, particularly progress on the problem of Catholic education and teaching
 - b) Follow-up of the circular letter from the Secretariat of State on antisemitism
 - c) Follow-up of the circular letter from the Commission to the Bishops' Conferences on Christian-Jewish relations on the local level
 - d) Review of recent statements by the Pope having a bearing on the Jewish people
 - e) The statement by Mgr. Silvestrini at the close of the Madrid Conference about the Jews in the USSR
 - f) The statement by Mgr. Etchegaray on 4 October 1983 at the Synod of Bishops
 - g) Recent reactions of the Polish Church, including the speech made in Warsaw by Bishop Maidansky, as well as the recent special issue of *Znak* and *Wiesz* devoted to Jews and Judaism

Other items could be added and would be agreed upon on the eve of the meeting.
5. Any other questions

FEB 15 1984

*International Jewish Committee
ON
Interreligious Consultations*

February 13, 1984

AMERICAN SECRETARIAT:
Synagogue Council of America
327 Lexington Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016
Tel.: (212) 686-8670

EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT:
World Jewish Congress
1 Rue de Varembe
1211 Geneve 20, Switzerland
Tel.: (022) 34 13 25

CONSTITUTENT AGENCIES:
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th Street
New York, N.Y. 10022

**Anti-Defamation League—
B'nai B'rith**
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10017

**Israel Jewish Council for
Interreligious Consultations**
12A Koresh Street, P.O.B. 2028
Jerusalem, Israel 91020

Synagogue Council of America
327 Lexington Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016

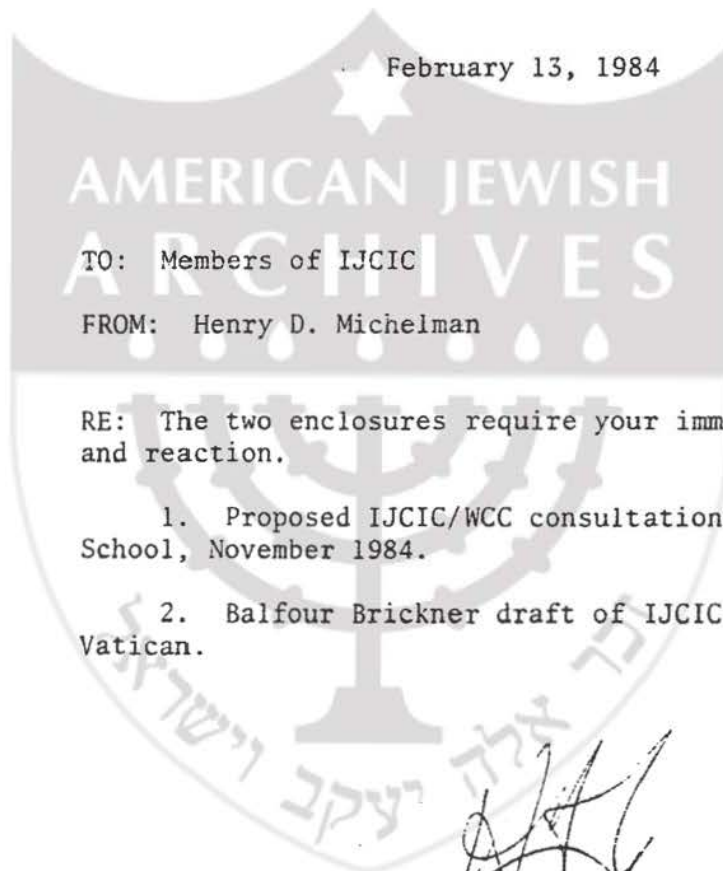
World Jewish Congress
1 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016

TO: Members of IJCIC

FROM: Henry D. Michelman

RE: The two enclosures require your immediate response and reaction.

1. Proposed IJCIC/WCC consultation Harvard Divinity School, November 1984.
2. Balfour Brickner draft of IJCIC response to the Vatican.



To the proper Vatican office

Dear _____:

Representatives of the organizations comprising the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (LJCIC) met together on January 24, 1984 to discuss the implications of the recent conference in Lucerne, Switzerland, initiated by the American Jewish Congress and the Theological Faculty of Lucerne.

As the current chairman of LJCIC, I have been authorized by its constituents to share with you the results of that discussion.

We have long cherished the special and unique relationship that ^{Relates} ~~binds~~ the Jewish community, through LJCIC, ^{to} ~~with~~ the Vatican, through your office. That bond, forged carefully over the years, has remained strong and effective, especially through some highly critical moments, thus proving both its necessity and its great value. We do not forget the many mutually productive consultations. We do not forget the fact that the ^{Vatican} Guidelines on Catholic-Jewish Relations was given by Pope Paul VI to the Jewish community and, indeed, to the world through LJCIC. We do not forget that the first official meeting Pope John Paul ^{II} had with representatives of the international Jewish community was with representatives of LJCIC. Ours is a long and, we trust, lasting relationship. One of the principles upon which our relationship was founded and, in fact, operates, is that in the arena of international Catholic-Jewish relations the Vatican and the Jewish community relate to one another exclusively through this ^{Cooperative} ~~created~~ mechanism. ~~And, indeed, we have.~~

You can imagine, then, the depth of disappointment we now feel as we view:

a) official participation in the Lucerne conference of a representative of the Vatican's office on Catholic-Jewish Relations and b) the fact that the conference was, indeed, arranged "in consultation and collaboration (italics mine) with the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the American Jewish Congress." (quoted from AS Congress press release.)

While we recognize the right of the Vatican to deal with any and all of the Jewish community and while we understand the need individual Jewish organizations might feel to maintain their contacts with the Vatican, we believe that the most productive results for strong international relationships between the Jewish community and the official Catholic community can best be achieved through the collective representation which is IJCIC. Conferences arranged by individual organizations bring together discussants who speak only for themselves but who do not, and cannot, represent the authorized Jewish community. Only IJCIC can do that. IJCIC is authoritative and authorized by virtue of the fact that the organized international Jewish community knows of its existence and grants it spokesmanship. IJCIC represents organizations and agencies, religious and lay, including a delegation from the Jewish community of Israel, with a constituency of over _____ million. It reports to that vast constituency its activities and the results of its deliberations with the official instrumentalities of Roman Catholicism. No other body can do that.

It is indeed unfortunate that the Vatican chose to be officially represented at Lucerne. By so doing, it has weakened the image of IJCIC in the international Jewish community, it has chilled those international Catholic-Jewish relationships

created by the IJCIC/Vatican Catholic-Jewish office connection and it has given the impression to those in the larger Jewish community that the Vatican seeks to divide the Jewish community, setting group against group and, thus, destroying the reality of unity that has existed until now. It must also know that by so doing, it will immeasurably complicate its own relationships with the Jewish community.

An argument has been put forward justifying participation in the meeting, cited above, on the grounds that the conference discussed theological matters -- something not possible within the IJCIC-Vatican relationship. While we recognize the Vatican's desire to discuss theological matters, we do not believe that this desire ought to be so overriding as to jeopardize the far larger goal of preserving a unique relationship with the unified Jewish community, a relationship available only through IJCIC. Moreover, we believe that, within the context of that relationship, we have always found ways to discuss all matters of significance the better to understand the nature of our two communities. Certainly, the "theological argument" does not justify the damage done to our relationship. Additionally, the official participation of the secretary of the Vatican's Commission in a meeting broadly advertised as a conference on theological matters, intensifies the concern regarding the propriety and purpose of Catholic-Jewish contact which I know you know is already extant within some sections of the Jewish community.

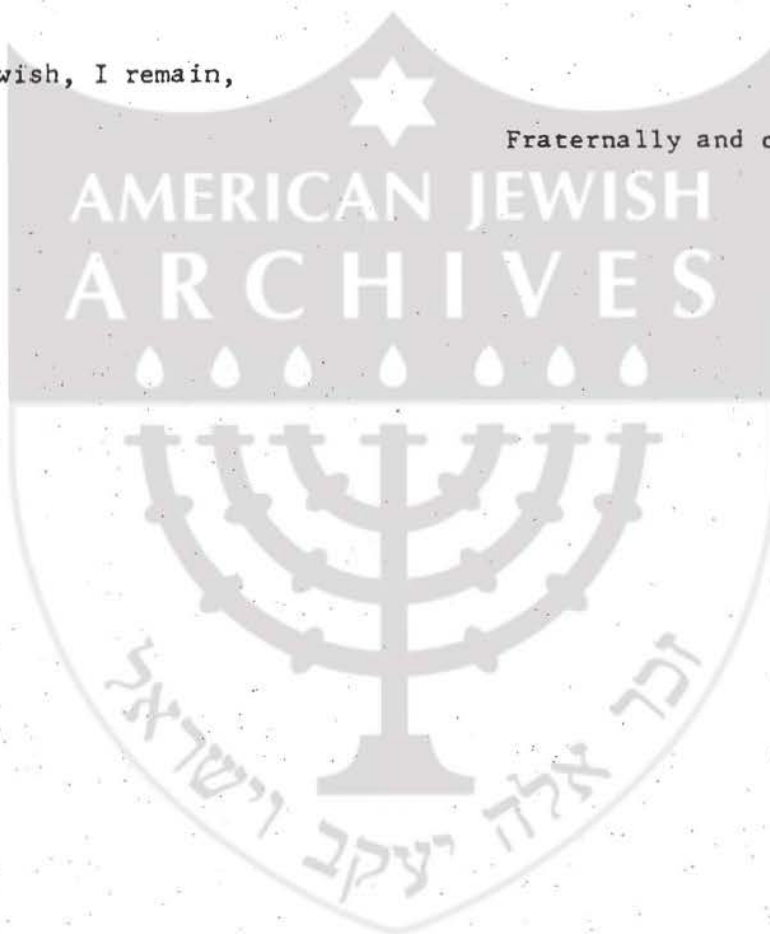
As you can ascertain from this letter, we are deeply dismayed, we are deeply troubled. We seek ways to redress the harm done. May we assume that this was

an isolated incident, one which will not again be repeated and that, in the future, we will continue to deal with one another as we have in the past.

I look forward to your response. Indeed, the Jewish community awaits your response so it might better know how to plan for the future.

With every good wish, I remain,

Fraternally and cordially,



TELEX FROM REIGNER/HALPERIN FOR SINGER/STEINBERG

DATE: February 7, 1984

Following meeting with WCC of 16 of January on which you will get minutes shortly, we discussed the Brockway next official consultation WCC/IJCIC. Proposal is to have three days meeting at Harvard Divinity School on November 26-28, 1984 on the following subjects: "RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND COMMITMENT TO TRUTH". It is intended to invite 20-25 participants from each side (as last time in Toronto in 1980). Please consult all IJCIC organizations and get their consent. WCC executive committee meeting last week of February in Geneva will be asked to endorse proposal but they would like our prior agreement.



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for singer

minutes of preparatory/exploratory meeting on religious dialogue held at lateran university on 16 february 1984, from 9:30 to 5 pm with lunch offered by catholic side.

meeting chaired by mgr. rossano, rector of the lateran university.

mejia: the highest authorities have now given a written official mandate for a religious dialogue between the vatican commission and ific under the patronage of lateran university. the purpose of this meeting was to determine what we wanted to do and the method to be applied. we should also select a suitable topic and decide whether we should aim at tackling it in one encounter or in a series of successive encounters. the meetings should be at a strictly scientific and scholarly level. we should define where we now stand and how we could move towards better mutual understanding without any polemics.

halperin: at the preliminary meeting held in rome on 18 october 83 it had been agreed that this current meeting would be devoted to the specific preparation of the "religious dialogue". however, in view of what has happened in lucerne on 16-18 january and of the circumstances surrounding that event we must carefully analyse the changed situation and be aware of the steps to be taken to repair the great damage done by lucerne. read out the sca statement in full. stressed that a religious dialogue without active participation of religious constituencies of ific had little or no meaning. the other side knew that some of our partners had strong reservations and great efforts had been made on our side to enlist their support at the highest level. leaving aside personalities we felt that ajcongress did not have the proper credentials for such religious dialogue. we strongly resented the vatican commission's acting behind our back in spite of specific warnings made to mejia on several occasions including steering committee in geneva last june, and also their official involvement in lucerne. surely he knew that the careful formula evolved in milano and worked out by ific had been stolen away by another group. we simply cannot disregard the recent past particularly as neither side can afford a failure in this important and difficult endeavour, nor even an average outcome. it was not a matter of prestige or self-pride.

rossano: it appears that we now have to rethink the basic assumptions and preconditions of the dialogue. were the difficulties experienced at lucerne due to the topic or to the circumstance of that meeting?

halperin: the difficulties arose not because of the topic but because of the whole set of circumstances before, during and after lucerne, including the way in which that event was publicized.

le deaut: we must discuss in depth the objectives, the authority and the choice of participants.

mejia: would have wished to be informed beforehand that the lucerne matter will be raised, particularly since most of the other participants were not at all aware of what was now being discussed. he was taken completely by surprise and regretted that the agenda for the current meeting had been unexpectedly turned upside down. the release issued by ajcongress was erroneous. he himself had participated in lucerne in a private capacity and not as secretary of the commission. he deeply regretted what happened in lucerne, had said so already including in writing. felt that it was excessive to say that the catholic side had acted behind our back. much of the trouble originated in the freeze of communications between vatican and ific after the visit of arafat to the pope.

halperin: quoted the official invitation issued by thoma and the official list of participants which included meflia as secretary of the commission and dupuy as member of the commission. surely meflia had expected that the lucerne affair would be raised at this meeting. had it not been the case, he might have rightly suspected the other side to be hypocritical. far from disrupting the agenda it squarely belonged to it. if we are to decide what we want to do, we must also be clear as to what we do not want to happen if the dialogue is indeed to be successful and meaningful.

rossano: does the jewish side still consider the religious dialogue necessary and possible?

halperin: in the opinion of many of us it certainly is necessary, whether it is possible remains to be seen and must be discussed since the recent past has again shown how difficult it was. an added reason to face those difficulties squarely. we must in any case avoid unwarranted publicity.

le deaut: we must draw the lessons of mistakes done even if they are painful.

rossano: recalled a meeting between paul vi and a moslem delegation from iran to whom he said: if you don't speak out clearly, we shall not be able to understand you.

halperin: yes, provided one speaks truthfully.

le deaut: proposed the following objectives: institute a dialogue for a better knowledge and deepening of each of our religious traditions in itself and in the light of historical developments, at a high level of scholarly research, under the authority of the catholic church and of icic, with an official mandate. the phrase "religious tradition" to cover all relevant subjects, so that such a dialogue could lead to an improvement i.e. catechesis, education and relations with judaism at large.

rossano: would the jewish side resent mention being made of "reconciliation" and "reunion" even in purely eschatological terms?

halperin: the jewish side would probably not object to "reconciliation" in view of the past record of history. we had doubts about "reunion even in eschatological terms" unless it was taken in the meaning used by zacharia, i.e. unity for all mankind.

le deaut: agreed that unity was not limited to catholic/jewish future and could not leave the rest of the world out.

penna: stressed judaism as being at the root of christianity.

halperin: had no trouble with the root provided it was not construed in the direction of substitution and "verus israel".

meflia: agreed that the purpose of the dialogue would not be to reconstruct the unity lost.

he noted that it appeared premature to choose here and now the topic of the religious encounter. we could at best draw up a tentative list of possible themes, the main aim being to help dispelling unwarranted prejudices on both sides.

halperin: the purpose of the dialogue should be to allow each side to define itself as it really sees itself rather than being described by the other as the other thought it should be defined.

at that stage, talmon, who had been delayed by alitalia strike, joined the meeting. he explained that he had come as a scholar and not as a representative of ijic even though he had been closely connected with it for many years. if either side opens up other channels we will have difficulties in the future. we therefore need a clear statement on behalf of the church to enable ijic to continue the important and difficult task started two decades ago. talmon proposed as a suitable topic issues in canon law and jewish law, which could help discover interesting parallels. among the issues to be addressed: what are the sources of law in jewish and christian tradition? nature of authority. relative role played by natural law and positive divine law. family law. medical ethics, etc.



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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date March 7, 1984
to Marc H. Tanenbaum
from Zachariah Shuster
subject IJCIC Meeting of March 7

The main topic at the IJCIC meeting on March 7 was the manner of presenting at the forthcoming consultation with the Vatican Commission which is to take place in Holland, the position of IJCIC toward the recent actions of the American Jewish Congress. Copies of the letter already sent by IJCIC to the Vatican were distributed among those present and is enclosed herewith.

After a lengthy discussion in which strong indignation was expressed against the separatist step taken by the Congress, it was agreed that the matter be raised at the meeting in Holland both with Cardinal Willebrands and Father Dupre, the Vice-President of the Vatican Commission, at a working meeting but not at a plenary session. It was agreed that the presentation at the meeting in Holland be made by Rabbis Wurzburger and Waxman.

It was also agreed that IJCIC's demarche with the Vatican be publicized with emphasis on the request that in the future such consultations should be arranged in cooperation with IJCIC.

Israel Singer of the WJC reported that he had conversation with you on this subject and your views are identical with the views expressed by *the other* members of IJCIC. Theodore Freedman attended the meeting but was rather ambiguous as to his position, although he gave his signature under the letter to the Vatican.

Copies were distributed of the letter by Geoffrey Wigoder, of the Israel Interfaith Association, to Henry Siegman of the American Jewish Congress in which he expresses his negative attitude toward the initiative of the Congress. Copy of Wigoder's letter is attached herewith.

Israel Singer reported that ADL has arranged for an audience with Pope on March 22. The delegation includes the president of B'nai B'rith. No action was taken with regard to this matter.

Because of the late hour no discussion was held on the proposed title for the next consultation with WJC: "Religious Pluralism and the Truth."

The following were present: Rabbi Waxman, Ted Freedman, Rabbi Brickner, Marc Friedman, Israel Singer, Rabbi Michelman, William Korey and Zach Shuster.

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Letter sent by IJCIC TO The Vatican

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ROMA TELEFONO 679-5033
MAR 2 1984

FOR BECKER
FOLLOWING IS TEXT AGREED TO BY ALL:

EMINENCE,

ON BEHALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE FOR INTER-RELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS (IJCIC) WE MUST EXPRESS OUR CONCERN AT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECENT CONFERENCE IN LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND, ARRANGED "IN CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION WITH THE VATICAN COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS AND THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS" AND WHICH INVOLVED THE OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION OF A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMISSION.

WE BELIEVE THAT MORE SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES WILL BE ACHIEVED IN THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AND THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY THROUGH THE MECHANISM DEVELOPED THROUGH THE IJCIC.

IN THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR SHARED OBJECTIVES WE WOULD RESPECTFULLY URGE THAT THE "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" THAT HAS GROWN BETWEEN THE VATICAN COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS AND IJCIC SHOULD BE MORE FULLY UTILIZED IN THE FUTURE TO THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF BOTH PARTIES.

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FRIEDMAN

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Eminence,

On behalf of the International Jewish Committee for Inter-religious Consultations (IJCIC) we must express our concern at the implications of the recent conference in Lucerne, Switzerland, arranged "in consultation and collaboration with the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the American Jewish Congress" and which involved the official participation of a representative of the Commission.

We believe that more ~~simplistic~~ ^{SIGNIFICANT} advantages will be achieved in the international relationship between the Jewish community and the Catholic community through the mechanism developed through the IJCIC.

In the best interest of our shared objectives we would respectfully urge that the "special relationship" that has grown between the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations ~~and~~ ^{WITH} the Jews and IJCIC should be more fully utilized in the future to the mutual benefit of both parties.

Gerhart M. Riegner
Chairman, World Jewish Congress

Mordechai Waxman
President, Synagogue Council
of America

Ted Freedman
Anti-Defamation League --
B'nai B'rith

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
American Jewish Committee

Geoffrey Wigodor
Israel Committee on Interfaith
Relations

2/27/84

113
Glow

International Jewish Committee *ON* *Interreligious Consultations*

AMERICAN SECRETARIAT:
Synagogue Council of America
432 Park Avenue South — Suite 1000
New York, N.Y. 10016
Tel.: (212) 686-8670

Geneva, March 16, 1984

EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT:
World Jewish Congress
1 Rue de Varembe
1211 Geneve 20, Switzerland
Tel.: (022) 34 13 25

Mr. Ninan Koshy
Director
Commission of the Churches
on International Affairs
World Council of Churches
P.O.Box 66
1211 Geneva 20

CONSTITUENT AGENCIES:

American Jewish Committee
65 East 56th Street
New York, N.Y. 10022

Anti-Defamation League—
B'nai B'rith
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New York, N.Y. 10017

Israel Jewish Council for
Interreligious Consultations
12A Koresh Street, P.O.B. 2028
Jerusalem, Israel 91020

Synagogue Council of America
432 Park Avenue South
New York, N.Y. 10016

World Jewish Congress
1 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016

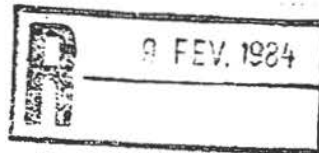
Dear Mr. Koshy,

This is to acknowledge the receipt of your delayed response of February 7, 1984 to the IJCIC's comments over the CCIA Background Information 1983/1.

For reasons which you will understand, we are now consulting with the IJCIC members about the suggestion contained in the penultimate paragraph of your letter. We shall inform you of our decision within the next fortnight or so.

Yours sincerely,

Gerhart M. Riegner
Chairman, IJCIC



Central Office
P.O. Box No. 66
150, route de Ferney
1211 Geneva 20 - Switzerland
Tel. (022) 98 94 00
Telex : 23 423 OIK CH
Cable : OIKOUMENE GENEVA

COMMISSION OF THE CHURCHES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
of The World Council of Churches

Moderator : Olle Dahlén

Director : Ninan Koshy

February 7, 1984

Dr. Gerhart Riegner
World Jewish Congress
1, rue de Varembé
Case postale 191
1211 Genève

Dear Dr. Riegner,

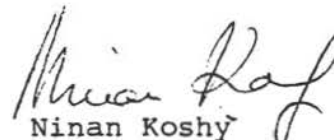
You will find enclosed our response to the IJCIC's comments (entitled "The Other Side") on our publication "In Their Own Words" (CCIA Background Information 1983/1)

We regret that this response could not be given earlier. In view of the detailed comments by IJCIC on several specific parts of the publication and the questions raised, we had to consult in addition to Law in the Service of Man other competent bodies.

We shall be happy to send to those who receive our Background Information regularly, "The Other Side" along with our response to it.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,


Ninan Koshy
Director

Enclosure

cc. Allan Brockway

CCIA DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE TO "THE OTHER SIDE"
A PAPER SUBMITTED BY THE
INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

1. The purpose of the CCIA series of Background Information is to offer to a constituency within the WCC member churches already reasonably informed about and interested in international affairs, facts, analyses and opinions on political and geopolitical trends, crisis situations, human rights problems, militarism, peace and disarmament and other current issues. These Background Informations are meant to inform and to stimulate debate and action among churches. They do not necessarily represent WCC positions. They have numerous times challenged prevailing popular wisdom.
2. When portraying any national or regional situation, care has been taken to use material emanating from the areas in question, i.e. collected, collated and often authored by those most immediately affected. Preference has been given, for instance, to allowing victims of human rights violations to speak for themselves, rather than to speak from outside on their behalf. As a rule, governments responsible for such violations have a far greater access to international media for the purpose of self-justification than have the victims for the simple purpose of telling their stories in their own words. The CCIA Background Informations seek to give such victims a voice.
3. The "Director's Introduction" in each Background Information is a reflective paper dated and signed by the CCIA Director, representing the analyses and opinions of the Director of CCIA. It stands by itself, and is not dependent solely on the information contained in each respective issue. Often it acts as an "editorial" or "leading article", intended to advance arguments and debates, in this way stimulating the reader with points of view which may not be popular, but which nevertheless are useful aids to the resolution of the problems dealt with.
4. CCIA Background Information 1983/1, "In their Own Words: Human Rights Violations in the West Bank" is a collection of primary source documents, affidavits duly testified to under penalty of perjury. It has been compiled by the reputable West Bank lawyers' group "Law in the Service of Man" (LSM), an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, in order to show the human aspects of the violations of the rights of the people in the West Bank. The brief introductions to each section were written by LSM simply in order to place the framework within which these individual instances must be seen.
5. A 10-page reply to the above Background Information has been made by the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) entitled "The Other Side". The reply begins by claiming that "Jewish public opinion" has been "shocked and dismayed" by the "overt bias" of recent CCIA publications. IJCIC believes that "many within the WCC family do not subscribe to the contents of these pamphlets - or at least are open to learning that events in the Middle East have other explanations".

6. In order to deal seriously with the subject, the CCIA has consulted a number of persons competent in the matters dealt with, including the original editors of "In Their Own Words". We are particularly indebted to the comments made by Jonathan Kuttub, Director of LSM.

7. The first pages of "The Other Side" deal with the CCIA Director's Introduction, rather than the content of "In Their Own Words". In particular, it disputes the assessment in the Introduction that Israel intends to stay in Lebanon and that Israel is not interested in any peace plan. Under a section entitled "Lebanon" (pp.1 ff) IJCIC claims "the primary purpose of the entry of the Israel Defense Force into Lebanon was to remove the menacing PLO presence and its military infrastructure from southern Lebanon". The fact that this task was accomplished, not only in southern Lebanon but in Beirut as well, is now history. And yet, Israeli forces are still in Lebanon. IJCIC states, correctly, that Israel agreed to withdraw its forces within 8 to 12 weeks from May 17, 1983. Yet by that date, it had made its withdrawal conditional on the withdrawal of Syrian and PLO forces, even though the presence of Syria was not the reason for the original invasion. Through another development, PLO chairman Arafat's forces have meanwhile withdrawn definitively from Lebanon. The Director's Introduction stated in March 1983, "The crisis continues amid growing indications that Israel intends to stay there." That statement continues to be justified.

8. The IJCIC section on Lebanon reflects a somewhat simplistic understanding of the tragedies of this country. For a brief but competent and comprehensive treatment of the same conflict, we suggest "Lebanon: A conflict of minorities" by David McDowall, recently published by the Minority Rights Group, London.

9. The IJCIC statement (p.3) that Israel has pursued peace for thirty-five years is difficult to respond to in light of Israel's repeated rejection of every comprehensive peace plan proposed, even by its staunchest supporter, the USA. Peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved without recognition of the Palestinians' right to self-determination, in addition to Israel's right to exist. The Camp David Agreements, which concluded a separate, not comprehensive peace, have been violated, for instance by Israel's settlements policies in the West Bank.

10. It serves little useful purpose to conjecture about the West Bank in the abstract. Historical arguments about possession of the land (whether by Jordan or by Israel) bypass the need to look at the facts as they present themselves today. Arguments for the annexation of the West Bank, be they historical, juridical or de facto with the creation of faits accomplis through Israeli settlements policies, fly in the face of the rights of the Palestinians living there, let alone of those who have been forced to leave. Israel's security concerns are well known and appreciated. The primary question should be whether Israel's policies have indeed served its security.

11. But how do the residents of the West Bank themselves see their problems? To show this was the purpose of "In Their Own Words". IJCIC's section on "Human Rights" (pp.4 ff) begins by saying that LSM fails to mention "Israel's determination that its military and civil organs abide by the provisions of international law (notably the Hague Regulations and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949)". In fact, however, Israel has never made any claims or admitted that it is bound, particularly by the Geneva Conventions. Israel has merely stated that it is voluntarily willing to abide by the "humanitarian" provisions of the Geneva Conventions. Israel retains for itself the right to determine which provisions are "humanitarian" and which are "political". IJCIC goes on to state that "immediately after the 1967 war, the Israeli Attorney-General announced that all the norms and principles of natural justice, observed as a matter of course in Israel, would also be implemented in the territories administered by Israel, even where these had not found expression in international law". In fact, Israel has failed to live according to the standards of international law, which are specific, direct and relevant. Empty general expressions such as the one mentioned here are of little use to Palestinians.

12. The IJCIC reply states that the Israeli High Court of Justice has assumed jurisdiction over the military commanders in the administered territories and that thereby "whenever the rights of an individual are infringed, effective redress by the court will be available". (p.5) The paper goes on to say that international law permits preventive action to stop sabotage, sedition and terrorism, and that "the types of action attacked in the (CCIA) booklet are all endorsed by international law, in such circumstances". In fact, many of the actions attacked have been sanctioned by the Israeli High Court under its own interpretation of applicable law. Other actions have not been so sanctioned, but there has been no recourse to the Court in those cases. To the extent they were sanctioned by the Israeli High Court, this reflects on that court itself, not on the propriety of the actions.

13. The reply furthermore states that rather than a lack of confidence in the Israel judiciary, the population does not refer cases to the High Court "because of the terror employed by certain Palestinian groups against those daring to have recourse to the Israeli courts". In fact, however, there have been no threats and no terror directed against any Palestinian who took recourse to the Israeli court. On the contrary, some of the most nationalist figures have themselves appealed to the High Court. The mayors of Hebron and Halhul who were deported attempted to go to the High Court, as well as Mayor Bassam Shakah of Nablus. It is often claimed by the Israeli authorities that the PLO itself finances appeals to the High Court. There is no evidence of anyone being threatened or subjected to reprisal for appealing to the High Court. This contention is totally unfounded.

14. The IJCIC reply, in order to prove that recourse to the High Court can have positive results for the claimants, refers to the Elon More case, but the conclusions drawn are open to debate. It states that since that judgement, the Israeli authorities have refrained from

requisitioning private land for the establishment of settlements. It is difficult in a short response to explain the intricacies of land law in the West Bank, as the authors will be well aware. However, we must underline strongly that the CCIA Background Information did not address the land issue at all. Neither did it address the issue of the legality of the settlements. It merely spoke about the activities and behaviour of the settlers themselves.

15. We must object strenuously to the innuendo implied on page 6 of the IJCIC reply when it states "many of the alleged violations have never been reported to the authorities and have therefore not been investigated. They are now utilized as political propaganda without the possibility of determining their accuracy". This seems to imply that the anonymity given to certain of the affidavits is because their stories are not reliable. In fact, most of the affidavits are properly signed, their stories have appeared in the local papers, and complaints have been filed with their regard. To give a few examples, the cases reported in the affidavit of Sa'deah Al Bakri and Isam Mohammad ("In Their Own Words", pp. 16 and 17) have been covered in The Jerusalem Post, 14/3/82. The affidavit of Mohammad Abdallah Yousef Sahweel (p. 18) was reported in The Jerusalem Post, 22 & 24/3/82, and was extensively reported in the Hebrew press. Also the affidavit of Sa'id Aid Zaytun (p. 18) was reported in The Jerusalem Post on 29/10/82. The affidavit of Haytham Mohammad Muhaisen (p. 19) in addition to being reported was the subject of a complaint.

It may be worth mentioning that information leaked from the Karp report in The Jerusalem Post 12/5/83, concerned a list of incidents in which nobody has been arrested or charged, involving identified Jewish settlers acting against West Bank Arabs. Also, The Jerusalem Post of 23/5/83 reported that the Karp report lists some 75 incidents in which there was evidence of settler vigilantism in 1981-82. The claim that any case reported to the police gets properly investigated, and that settlers are charged and tried for their crimes in the West Bank is simply not true. This is borne out by the attacks on the mayors, the attacks on the Hebron Muslim University, in which 30 students were injured and 3 killed, and the almost daily incidents involving settler violence against Palestinians. The CCIA Background Information presented just such evidence, according to signed affidavits. If there is any untruth there, the authorities are free to bring criminal actions of perjury against any of the individuals who signed the affidavits. Only thus can they prove them to be lying.

16. The IJCIC reply repeatedly misinterprets the Hague Regulations with regard to the right of occupying powers to take possession of public land (p. 5 & 6f). Under Article 55 of the Hague Regulations, the occupying power must act as usufruct, as a kind of trustee to safeguard the public and state land, not however to change its corpus. The Hague Regulations permit the occupying authority to safeguard public land, but not to build on it permanent Jewish settlement.

The reference to Sabri Gharib is correct to a point. There are, in fact, several cases still pending. Their final outcome is not clear; however, the affidavit clearly refers to specific activities of the settlers during this period when the cases were still pending. Specific complaints have been made to the authorities in all these cases. Sabri Gharib still stands by every word of his affidavit and is willing to face criminal penalties, if it were shown that he is lying or exaggerating in that affidavit.

17. Clarification is necessary concerning the Village Leagues (p.7). The LSM introduction does give the Israeli view point concerning the Village Leagues, and does detail the laws according to which they were set up. The booklet does not brand them as quislings. It states, "The majority of Palestinians see the Leagues as collaborators". The point of the section is that although the Village Leagues claim to be seeking to improve conditions, according to their public statements, which are quoted, they go about it in rather unconventional ways, to say the least.

It is important to note that in this section all affiants have requested to remain anonymous. LSM continues to hold the original signed affidavits, but will not divulge the names for the protection of the affiants from retaliation by the Village Leagues.

The statement in the reply that the attack on the Orthodox Club, described in the booklet, was carried out by local Arabs does not exonerate the Village League from the responsibility, since they are the only Arabs on the West Bank who are allowed to carry weapons. Since the Village Leagues have no registered membership, it is easy (Jerusalem Post 8/3/82) to dismiss any of their activities as "actions by local Arabs".

18. The claims made in the IJCIC reply on house demolitions (p.8) need some comment. It is correct to say that international law permits the destruction of houses "when imperative military requirements so demand". However, the statement is incorrect when it adds that there are two kinds of military requirement: "(1) to destroy the physical base for military action; and (2) to serve as a deterrent against terrorist activity, which is of special importance in a country where capital punishment is not used against terrorists".

This interpretation is clearly rejected by international law, where the Fourth Geneva Convention specifically prohibits the destruction of property. Article 33 states "No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties, and likewise all measures of intimidation or terrorism are prohibited". Article 53 further goes on to state "The destruction by the occupying power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the state, or to other public authorities, or social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations".

There is obviously a question here of proportion. The occupying power in the West Bank has evidently used a very wide interpretation of "military requirement". The Geneva Conventions, however, are meant to be applied in a reasonable fashion, as evidenced by a November 25, 1981 interpretation by the ICRC of Article 53: "In the opinion of the ICRC, the expression 'military operations' must be construed to mean the movements, maneuvers and other action taken by the armed forces with a view to fighting. Destruction of property as mentioned in Article 53 cannot be justified under the terms of that article, unless such destruction is absolutely necessary - i.e., materially indispensable - for the armed forces to engage in action, such as making way for them".

This exception to the prohibition cannot justify destruction as a punishment or deterrent, since to preclude this type of destruction is an essential aim of the article.

The discrepancy in the number of houses destroyed is due to the fact that the article in The London Sunday Times, 19/6/77, quoted in the Director's Introduction, refers to demolitions in both West Bank and Gaza, whereas the figure quoted by LSM refers to the West Bank only, as stated by the Prime Minister's Office and reported in The Jerusalem Post, 23/11/81.

19. The section of IJCIC's reply dealing with universities (p.9) is particularly misleading. It must be stated clearly that Israel did not establish universities in the West Bank, All four universities already existed as colleges. They were simply upgraded, their recognition granted by the Arab Higher Education Council. The reason was the need locally for universities, since the population did not have easy access to travel to Arab universities.

We are at a loss to understand what is meant by the statement that "a great number of students from other Arab countries pursue their studies in the region". There is no appreciable number of students from other Arab countries studying in the West Bank.

Referring to the closings of Bir Zeit University, the reply states (p.10) "when a closing order was challenged in the Supreme Court, it was upheld". This statement is accurate. But does this decision indicate the propriety or legality of the closure, or is it a reflection on the Israeli High Court?

20. With regard to town arrests (p.10), the LSM introduction does in fact mention that "assigned residence" is allowed by international law, but questions whether the right of appeal is recognized by the Israeli authorities and questions whether in all cases such restrictions are necessary for "imperative reasons of security". The fact that the person affected has the right to bring his case before an appeals committee is not determinative, since these committees only have advisory power, and the High Court itself cannot discuss the motives of the Military Governor when he states that the reasons for the town arrest are "questions of security".

21. The CCIA appreciates the effort to continue a dialogue about the issues dealt with here. We regret, however, that the reply has not touched on the substance of most of the statements made in the affidavits or addressed the vast majority of the incidents related. The essence of the CCIA Background Information "In Their Own Words" is the concern for the individuals caught in a web which is not of their own making. The CCIA is no less concerned for peace in the Middle East than IJCIC, and this common concern should pave the way to fruitful dialogue. But as the WCC General Assembly stated in Vancouver in August 1983, "Peace cannot be built on foundations of injustice". In this spirit the CCIA addresses the needs of those who suffer injustice.



Apr 27, 1984

G. Riegner, chairman

Chief Rabbi Rene Siegel - 625

- tribute to Willebrands - Dutch people - one of great sons of this people - relig liberty / Card. Bea
- RFP - Arafat / Israel - deep bonds / East-West - nuclear / violence

- relig fanaticism - violence - deep common responsibility

Card. Willebrands - tribute to Card. Bea [PJ XXVIII] - say something about J. people - roots of every man in God, roots of every people in God our Creator - God revealed self to Abr, Is, Jans in special way, part of that belongs to every man.

- after great suffering in this century, nuclear age
- approach in depth, new orientations, direction to Xan people, create social relations in every field for peace & justice, patience
- grow in form

- joyful return to Amsterdam to this meeting - many contacts

many memories
w. Jewish people here - relig ceremonies in houses, birth of child, death among family but holy book - keep them for us till come back

- our people gave this centuries - circumstances, sympathy to J people bring back to roots of our Creator.

- theme: youth, family - important theme / theme of Card Bea - fundamental of our relations -

young people sometimes fearful in faith - ^{frustrated} names, meaning of life / doubtful about everything - lost in generation, world will be helpless, lost command over spirit of man

Archl of Utrecht -

PAPER OF PAPE RICARDO TONOLI

- youth today - every kind of faith but no right mind
- who walked
- autonomy, cropped traditions
- Support, Encouragement, makes community for them
- monism, authoritarianism - pervasiveness of faith, ideology
- choices, needs, was ours
- Abraham BURG - Israel - PJ/PS SP.
- identification crisis - vacuum
- > Ephraim - Ashkenazic / Politics allocate - State / Israel diaspora
- Zionist Jewish / Jew - past
- Israel sovereignty - Jewish identity
- > Social tension - Islamic or European
- Divine authority - Law - accepted - common denominator
- Zionism secular - common cause - ethnic fathering
- secularization thru Zionism - ethnic accident
- humanic - crisis has its own / PJ = Jewish synthesis
- birth pangs
- Existential tension - etc -
- partial failure of Zionism - where do I belong?
- / PJ = (1) Jewish alternative - Exile or Israel?
- (2) pluralism in Israel - Western humanism & Jewish morality
Byzantine King?
- (3) Golani - stopper from destructive partisan society in Israel
- (4) not isolated - diaspora, our human bridge into universality
- present was sketch / open, universal, part of everything
- 100 yrs ago, young Zionist revolution against authority
- secular anti thesis to Jewish thesis
- revolution in continuity - changed self - will to stop being victims,
power to defend selves / ideal. nabi / scholar → balmer, pioneer, soldier
defend self

- 'ideologization of power - how to control Zionist power
- revolution of motivation ↔
- Judaism - not be persecutor
- Peace - not all components in our hand
- refuge = / struggle - belief - (a) information - knowledge; (b) comprehension
- meaning of facts, Connections - context - supreme connection -
- one explanation of reality - אלוהים אמת
- education - Hitler - אלוהים אמת - rather than אלוהים אמת
- internal self-reliance - man with liberation movement
- what give to my people - what give to God?
- break circle of anti-Semitism
- way of life - as equals
- Israel - total synthesis - Eschweiz /
- GIAUDIO BETI - (Rome) St Egidio -
- pledinnette -
- no dreams / no guilt
- DAVID KETSLER -

- 1)
- 2) אלוהים אמת, אלוהים אמת
- 3) אלוהים אמת - אלוהים אמת
- אלוהים אמת - heart of father to son
- children - massively ignorant of tradition / favouring on myself
- individualism / nihilism, amorality, death
- 1) Centrality of Israel (ethics & politics)
- 2) hope -
- 3) אלוהים אמת - dialogue, refraining evil
- 4) Care for human - w.o. exclusivity
- 5) power - Torah (most ancient & most universal) - ask right questions

Mik. M. Jensen - faith, duty word - outlaw

- where is God? in hunger? in economy?
- individuals - not groups? / mistrust other persons / economic self-realization / School-home disco
- dream - no poverty, no injustice - who is going to help us w.o. God?

R. van der Kemp - Hague -

W. K. K. -

- land, people, man
- metanatural youth / land
- kihsitz - faith on man - holiness - people, man, land
- secular faith - natural vs. supernatural
- God, man, Torah, people - universalism -

Tucker - faith as process - search, quest vs. package handed down

DOEDANTORP - 60s → Today / HOPE - after Holocaust, still believe

WK - optimistic - macro

- micro - homeless
- alienated intellectuals

PEARSON, J. - adversary culture

MESIA - God who calls us personally & collectively -

- saving God - happy in total way -

- how communicate to people who couldn't care less

Rieger - same mood ^{as} after WWII / crisis of faith

Poland - suppression of religious liberty, removal of religious feeling

East Germany - disengagement around churches

Czech - churches center of reaction to nuclear arms

- 1935 - Peace Ballot in UK - last mass movement for peace

West Germany - religious motivation - movement to save world

nuclear -
 poison gas -
 fanaticism
 death of symbolic immortality
 death of America

Church sect.
 feminism
 women
 youth/adult
 psychic membership
 relig. leadership
 1.2.1 7.1.1 1.1.1
 1.2.1 1.2.1
 1.1.1 1.1.1
 1.1.1 1.1.1

Saw Inclusion - 020 - 716 861 717 631

- Ethical, moral ~~circumstances~~
- religious intolerance, violence - cooperation - for TC
- Willebrands Faith & Youth in Social Context
- Faith in God ground of faith in man
- Abraham - father of faith - obedience of faith - semi-notas, idolatry, moved out - p 75 - he received something - followed absolutely, way of life - promised to be Father of People - source of our faith - he took whole being to God - will move - whole world
- PJP acts from source - man created in image of God - source of hope
- source of living water spring up - hope -
- voice & Providence govern our world -
- personal experiences reveal message - text - bible - living word in
community of faithful -

WED
8.15.
8 PM

ANNE FRANK HOUSE / PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE - LIBRARY

WED., MARCH 28, 1984 - Netherlands Jewish Home

M. L'Abbé O. Honels -

Jews

- 40,000 Belg; 27,000 Neth; 470 Luxembourg
- Anti-S. in Europe
- recognize Israel - many Xn people in their hearts feel v. should recognize existence of Jewish people

M. KEET / Netherlands

MARION BOLS - OJEC - Netherlands (Rabbi Rodriguez Pereira - ill)

- Diet gen (liberal J am.) - ICCJ - Amsterdam - 250 people / 15 countries
- Peace - East Europe
- research on anti-Judaic stereotypes in Xn ed / catechisms
- OJEC - 117 - hebraica / 100 groups involved in J-X Studies
- Friends of OJEC -

C.R. BULZ - Luxembourg

- Interconfessional - 1964 founded
- Jules Isaac - VCII - useful & necessary
- RCs larger number

Religion & Modern World Forum

- C.I.P.T. recognized by state
- Andre Lacogue - / Zev Falk / R. Eschenburg (Rav 13 de Paris) / Card: Suenens
- ① diffusion of Biblical message - 200 members
- ② against religious, racial hatred / passivity / Zionism & syncretism
- changed general atmosphere

Benedictine Abbey of Clairvaux -

Is 53 -

- public on Rue Copernic
- Common prayer / Radio Luxembourg - / Carmelite nun
- BRIGIAM - Grossman

- Consistoria / Card. Suenens - support of entire RC hierarchy
- Recog of Israel diplomatic - can't understand why?

I) national hierarchy (2) masses

II) international - non-recog of Israel by Vatican - anti-S - fear of anti-Zionism

theoretical to practical level -

6. RIFONRA -

Elitist group - how get more involved?

Skepticism among Jews

Region -

Hanelz - double level - (1) Academic - Inst. of Judaism

Permanent learning process on both sides / clear perception of reality of other / ghettos

Van der Kamp - Criticism of Israel - [P. Gregory - rather appropriate than Green up truth]

Dutch Jews damaged - till today - heavy responsibility - / too many open questions for RC & Jew

- PSE -
 Mass media
 O'Seminary program
 - German



van der Kamp - RC Church & Israel

- negative public ^{to} Jews of RC Church -
- OPP - still going up / Poland - RC
- Par Christi in Holland -

Soederberg - 1943 born - German-born mother saved - there is hope
100 Jews found refuge -

- more want to learn about Jews

Xan Theology After Auschwitz - Rev. Hansen

- mistrust, non-confidence - showing solidarity - around Israel

Soviet Jews - 2 ms. - 1 m. signatures - every RC Prot church spoke

about Soviet Jews - Xan youth worked

- attached synagogues - Hague (1726 - returned)

- Yom Hashoa - church meetings - grass roots - cement confidence

- 6 m. Jews isolated - 105 - remember, learn from past

DUPKEY

- Attitude of Faith

- Semitic state - not anti-S of criticism of policy

Dr. Fisher -

M.T. - Holland → Israel (Hanan)

Solomon - lack of integrity

Mejia - not our mandate / refer to proper authorities

- van der Kamp - Marginal

Willebrands / no emissaries of US of State - Public Affairs

- Peace is Part of VC C-f Relations

- relig & theological implications - Holy See & Israel - 1st time from Jewish side - not from diplomat - think over on my own mind -

- real element in people - community at large - Willebrands for all

- linguistic - V or Holy See / Holy See is important

- some states don't recognize Holy See - USSR

- ① Holland
- ② Israel - survival
- ③ U.S. - Willebrands diplomat

- Holland - Jews integrated in Holland - Jew as one of us
- hope Jews will find in Holland -
- not stir feelings alien to us

Swedenborg - we feel the pain every day -
2nd, 3rd generation suffer from aftereffects - difficult bring
up children -

- G. Rieper - grateful to Wilhebrands -
- genuinely sorry for loss of 120,000 Jews - love this country
- need for information - shared

Solomon - what about seminaries?

Education of seminaries, clergy

Hamel - integrate into catechesis, curriculum

Keet - Utrecht - seminaries

Perls - HUC - JIR -

Tucker - Humanities

Mejia - March 1982 - Episcopal Conf - on Judaism - (WCC, High
Prof
Luther, etc)

1) Theological problems Judaism to Xty (Covenants) - Gilbert - Pontifical
Biblical Inst.

2) Rev. de Bois -

Education & catechesis ~~is~~ how to improve

- draft paper - Sophia Cavalletti (SIDIC) -

Polish Church - 46th Ann Warsaw Ghetto

- anti-S in pre-war church -
- Bishop Marchewski in synog for Polish Bishops
- P.T.P.I. - in Poland
- 2 publications - Cracow mag - "Smae" NAC
- Warsaw intellectual publs - "wiscz"
- Daniel Rubenstein - in The Weekly Universal -

Am. Mag

- > The Reconciliation Bet. Pole & Jew - Wlodek Goldkorn
- > Cracow - Paris - 2 yrs - Ms. Wolf Kancwicz - (Vietnamese)
- delayed bus by gov't (ref to Israel) - finally published w.o. changes
- > apt w. USSR

ISRAEL - XAN & MUSLIM INSTITUTIONS - (Meyra)

- WIGODER - Condemned
- Tourist guides -
- Israel -
- BURG, AVRAHAM - Tensions
- MEI - Estranged
- publications - ^{Bishop} Lotman (Rosenc)

GORDON TUCKER

- Is 40³⁰⁻³¹ -

- not tenderness of youth, but ^{faith} confidence & trust

- age - security of wisdom

- religious courage -

- real youth identical w. faith

- Bible dwells little on youth, adolescence

- Bible does not talk about children & youth -

- Faith - individualized faith - Abraham obeyed God Gen 18

- The challenge of God in name of moral law

- Faith ^{analytical} dwelt on -

- youth - Faith in what? / business honesty? fixed time for study? ^{faith in} salvation?

- 1/1/1 - experience, expect certain kinds of behavior in others

- James Fowler - Stages of Faith - The Psych of Human Devel; & Quest for Meaning

- Theory of life - personal & developmental theory -

- 1) Faith - theory of life's experiences - search for meaning makes sense

- 2) Faith - ~~purpose~~ universal - interactive, social, cog. community

- most of us are in search of meaning - interactive & social

- Youth - alarm - any meaning? wrong faiths?

- Paul Johnson - materialism worldwide - jobs, sex in that order
anti-nuclear movement. agynicism ^{look. which is}

- memory, vision, faith - uncultivated/

- Jays Journal -

- The new secular religions - EST/Syngorion/Scientologists

- 60s - suspected what was deceived / today - acquiescence to absolute authority
"to capitalism - greed"

- "Belonging to precedes all"

- "Community is prior to faith" - Karklowski

- Community determine nature of faith -

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

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Geneva, April 30, 1984

To: All members of IJCIC

From: Jean Halpérin

IJCIC/WCC Consultation, November 1984

1. Following the preliminary steps which had been agreed upon at our meeting in Amsterdam, further consultations took place, in particular with Prof. Krister Stendahl and A. Brockway.
2. As a result, I can now inform you that the next IJCIC/WCC Consultation will take place at the Harvard University, from 26 to 28 November 1984.
3. The Consultation will be followed by a meeting of the IJCIC/WCC Liaison and Planning Committee which will take place on November 28 afternoon and November 29 morning. Topical issues will be tackled within the frame of the IJCIC/WCC Liaison and Planning Committee and will thus not be included in the Consultation proper.
4. The topic of the Consultation will be: "Religious pluralism: its meaning and its limits in the world to-day". As agreed in Amsterdam, the Jewish paper is being requested from Prof. David Hartman.
5. The tentative agenda would be along the following lines:

Monday

- 9.00 Greetings and Introduction
- 10.30 Paper One: "Is religious pluralism necessary? If so, is it possible?"
(David Hartman)
Questions and discussion
- 12.30 Lunch
- 15.30 Paper two: "Are there limits to religious pluralism? If so, why?"
(John Cobb ?)
Questions and discussion
- 17.30 Break
- 18.30 Dinner
- 20.30 Panel of reactors and general discussion

Tuesday

9.00 "How does pluralism work?"

The discussion will focus on papers prepared by a Jew and a Christian from each of Great Britain, United States, and Israel. These papers will have been mailed to participants prior to the Consultation and will only be briefly summarized verbally.

10.30 General discussion

11.30 Questions to the papers' authors

The intent of this session is to determine the main issues raised by the papers and thus lead to a general discussion focusing on what should and could be done separately or jointly.

12.30 Lunch

15.30 General discussion

18.30 Dinner

20.30 Religious pluralism: political science perspectives
(Roger Fisher and Stanley Hoffman)

The purpose of that particular session would be to show how the concepts of pluralism can be perceived in the secular society. What should be done to make those ideas reach political decision-making?

Wednesday

9.00 Presentation of joint statement (draft) and discussion

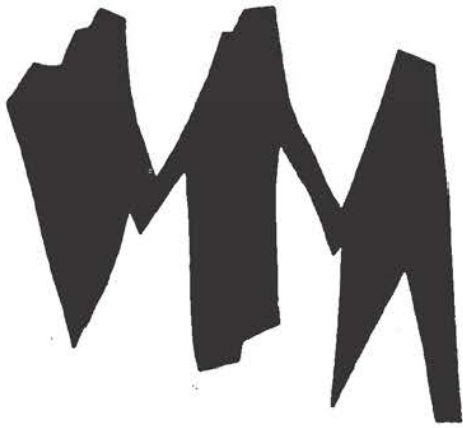
10.30 Discussion (continued)

11.30 Break

12.30 Lunch (distribution of revised joint statement)

It is planned to invited Chief Rabbi Rosen (Dublin) to act as the Jewish panelist on the situation in Great Britain and to ask Prof. Uriel Simon to do the same for Israel. Suggestions from our American colleagues regarding the Jewish panelist for the USA would be most welcome.

6. It is anticipated that, for the Consultation, some 20 members from each side will be invited to participate.



CURRENT DIALOGUE

(Continuing CCJP Newsletter)

6

SPRING 1984

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OBSERVATIONS

Since the publication of *Current Dialogue* 5 last summer, life in the World Council of Churches has been devoted to the 6th Assembly and its aftermath - which accounts, in part for the more than usual interval between no. 5 and this present number 6. In addition, the advent of the computer age in the Council has resulted in the time-consuming process of transferring the growing *Current Dialogue* list from the tried and true, though antiquated, stencils to new magnetic tapes. Now that this transfer has been completed, we have every expectation of becoming more regular.

Changes in the staff of the Dialogue sub-unit have also taken place. Dr John B. Taylor, who became responsible for Christian-Muslim relations in 1973 and then added the responsibility of sub-unit director after the retirement of Dr Stanley Samartha, has taken up the position of Secretary General of the World Conference on Religion and Peace/International. John did not move very far away - his office is just across the street from the Ecumenical Centre - and he is deeply engrossed in preparation for the 4th assembly of the WCRP that will be held in Nairobi during August.

At its final meeting before the Assembly, the Dialogue Working Group expressed its affection and appreciation for John in the following words:

Dr Taylor joined DFI in 1973 as staff member with the special assignment of building up relations with Muslims. In spite of many, and in the course of time, not decreasing difficulties, Dr John B. Taylor was successful in establishing those relations, first with Muslim individual persons and at a later stage with Islamic organisations. In that way he laid foundations on which future developments can be built. Dr Taylor was also instrumental in developing the programme of DFI with people of so-called traditional religion and culture. He was also a deeply committed member of DFI staff and showed his abilities in organising many meetings, making contacts with local churches and people of other faiths in many parts of the world, bringing out series of publications and strengthening the financial position of the sub-unit. All these abilities helped him to succeed Dr Samartha as director of DFI in October 1980 and to ensure the continuity of the work. The Working Group is deeply grateful to Dr Taylor for his splendid contribution and would also thank him and his lovely family for the many times they were host to the moderator of the Working Group and its members.

The Rev. S. Wesley Ariarajah continues to be responsible for Hindu-Buddhist-Christian relations along with his additional responsibility as director. As these words are written he is in the final preparations for an extended trip through Asia that will lead to a major meeting between Buddhists and Christians later this year.

Dr Stuart E. Brown, who introduces himself in his role as programme secretary for Muslim-Christian relations, beginning on p. 22, is a Canadian who has spent most of his adult life in various African countries, the past six of them with the International Research Centre in Dakar, Senegal. He comes to the staff with extensive experience with Muslims, as well as the Ph.D in Islamics from McGill University. We welcome him aboard.

A.R.B.

VANCOUVER AND FUTURE OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE IN THE PROGRAMME OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

ALLAN R. BROCKWAY

"The World Council of Churches not only has created a forum for Christians to meet, share and act", wrote Rabbi Jordan Pearlson during the WCC's Sixth Assembly, "but the WCC deserves full marks for the years invested in creating dialogues with Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and others."

Pearlson, rabbi of Temple Sinai in Toronto, was one of the fifteen "interfaith" guests from six different religious traditions invited by the World Council to observe and participate in the Assembly at Vancouver, 24th July - 10th August, 1983. His presence, and that of the others, was visible evidence that those invested years had paid off.

In 1975, when the WCC convened its Fifth Assembly at Nairobi, five guests from five faiths were officially present. Prior to that time none other than Christians had been admitted to Assembly deliberations and even as recently as the Third Assembly in New Delhi (1961) not even "non-Christian" press people were accredited. From zero to five to fifteen. The numbers were small, but the symbolism was big. In the paragraphs that follow an attempt will be made to examine the significance of that symbolism for the life and thought of the churches, but first a further look at the concreteness of the symbol at Vancouver.

Not only were fifteen persons of "other faiths" invited as guests, but five of them - Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Jew, Sikh - addressed plenary sessions and each was an active participant in small groups and clusters. In other words, they were much more than observers, they were participants in the life of the Assembly.

The life of the Assembly was, of course, not limited to plenary sessions or even to the small groups, clusters, committees, and worship services. In addition to the fifteen invited guests several times that number of Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Buddhists and traditional peoples participated in panel discussions conducted in the visitors and public programmes, at which standing room only attendance was the norm. Almost daily the Assembly newspaper highlighted their remarks and the discussions that followed. People of living faiths were present and visible at the Assembly. It is difficult to over-emphasize the uniqueness and importance of that fact.

There remains, however, the necessity to ask after the meaning of the living faith presence at Vancouver for the churches and the Christian faith itself. An obvious meaning was pointed out by Rabbi Pearlson when he credited the WCC with spending the past years in "creating dialogues" with people of the living faiths. Certainly the guests and others would not have been present at Vancouver had that effort not been made. But why was it made?

A major section of the 1975 Nairobi Assembly was devoted to "Seeking Community: The Common Search of People of Various Faiths, Cultures and Ideologies". For the first time dialogue between Christians and people of the world's living faiths was on the agenda of the ecumenical movement's most important body and the result was perhaps the most explosive and divisive debate of the Assembly. Central to the objections raised in the debate were the concerns, first, that dialogue might be "spiritual compromise" or lead to syncretism and, second, that it could be in "opposition to the mission of the church".

Drafters of the report that was finally accepted were careful to deny those allegations, but the Assembly ended with something of a sour taste in the mouths of those on each side of the controversy. It appeared that the lines had been drawn in the World Council of Churches. On the one side were those who maintained that the "spirit of dialogue" was central to the Christian calling in the world. On the other side were those who remained convinced that dialogue meant watering down of the Christian message so that it could scarcely be called Christian. For each, the integrity of the Christian faith was at stake.

Less than two years after the concluding service of worship at Nairobi a theological consultation was held at Chiang Mai, Thailand (1977) in which many of those who had engaged in the Fifth Assembly debate participated. The result was a report that formed the basis for "Guidelines on Dialogue" that was ultimately adopted officially by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches at Kingston, Jamaica, in 1979.

At Chiang Mai, as in Nairobi, the focus was on "dialogue in community" and within that theme the emphasis was as much on community as it was on dialogue. Dialogue was seen as a means towards community. It is important to note that dialogue was not considered as a means towards Christian mission. Indeed, the Nairobi report had stressed that dialogue "should not be seen as an alternative for mission and it should not compromise our faith". The "Guidelines on Dialogue" therefore insisted that "dialogue in community is not a secret weapon in the armoury of an aggressive Christian militancy. Rather, it is a means of living our faith in Christ in service of community with one's neighbours". Dialogue is conceived as a service. It is a fascinating notion, one that is perfectly understandable in light of the Nairobi debate.

It is effective. Through dialogue Christians and people of other living faiths have come to understand one another better, misconceptions about the intentions of one group towards another have been clarified, and common ventures leading to the alleviation of human suffering have been undertaken. The enthusiastic response to the interfaith presentations at Vancouver bears witness to the fact that there is growing support for dialogue within the membership of the churches.

Nevertheless, concern for the possible consequences of dialogue, and especially about its theological assumptions, remained. There were those among the Assembly delegates, for instance, who suspected that the influence of dialogue may have led to what they perceived as a lack of sufficient attention to the work of missionaries in the report on "Witnessing in a Divided World", while others bemoaned a drift towards "universalism" ("syncretism" was rather studiously avoided).

The report acknowledged the "need to distinguish between witness and dialogue, whilst at the same time affirming their interrelatedness." Thus, "Witness may be described as those acts and words by which a Christian or community gives testimony to Christ and invites others to make their response to him." On the other hand, "Dialogue may be described as that encounter where people holding different claims about ultimate reality can meet and explore these claims in a context of mutual respect. . . Dialogue is not a device for nor a denial of Christian witness. It is rather a mutual venture to bear witness to each other and the world in relation to different perceptions of ultimate reality."

Those words are reminiscent of some contained in "Guidelines on Dialogue": "We do not see dialogue and the giving of witness as standing in any contradiction to one another. Indeed, as Christians enter dialogue with their commitment to Jesus Christ, time and again the relationship of dialogue gives opportunity for authentic witness."

At the Nairobi Assembly the debate over dialogue centred on its theological validity and its potential threat to mission and Christian faith. At Vancouver, the affirmations made at Chiang Mai and approved as "Guidelines on Dialogue" by the Central Committee were affirmed. Now, in the post-Vancouver period, fresh initiatives are required that build on the thinking about and practice of dialogue that has proceeded through these past years.

Though it might seem that the tension between "mission" and "dialogue" has been resolved, the real tension remains. At Vancouver, one of the guests with long experience of interfaith dialogue observed to the Christians present that "I can love you exactly where you are, but you can love me only as a potential Christian". To the extent to which that observation is true, what the "Guidelines on Dialogue" call the "spirit of dialogue" has yet to permeate even the dialogue itself. For the spirit of dialogue involves allowing "participants to describe and witness to their faith in their own terms" (Guidelines) and, moreover, acknowledgment of the validity of that witness.

The difference between mission and dialogue lies in their different expectations, their hopes, their goals. In mission the expectation is that the hearers of the witness will find it so attractive that they opt to make it their own. But in dialogue the presumption is that the others will remain what they are, whether it be Hindu, Buddhist, Jew, Muslim, or whatever. It happens, occasionally, that some are so convinced by the witness of dialogue partners that they adopt the other's religion; that is a "risk" both sides must be willing to face. Christians do not enter into dialogue with Hindus expecting thereby to become Hindus themselves. And few would engage in dialogue if they thought the hidden agenda of Hindus was to convert them.

Perhaps the Christian critics of dialogue see more clearly than do its advocates where the dangers lie. Dialogue does indeed call into question the missionary enterprise and, even more significantly, calls into question a basic assumption about the church. To what extent has the church failed in its mission when the testimony it gives is rejected by those who hear it? How integral to the self-understanding of the church is the necessity for ever-increasing numbers of Christians? Is the whole truth the sole possession of the church? If the answers to these and related questions are problematic, as the spirit of dialogue at the very least implies, then dialogue may be seen as striking at the foundations of long-cherished Christian beliefs. Careful and systematic thought is required within the churches about these matters.

We are beginning to recognize that dialogue has more far-reaching implications for the church than simply a means towards world community, as necessary and important as that is. It raises, for instance, questions about Christology, about mission, about soteriology, exegesis, doctrines of God, and all the rest. The next stage in the church's discussion about dialogue, clearly, is the development of coherent Christian theologies that take fully into account the legitimate questions raised from the practice of dialogue.

Theologians have long wrestled with the significance of other world religions for Christian thought. In one of the last things he wrote before his death in 1923, Ernst Troeltsch observed that "in relation to the great world religions we need to recognize that they are expressions of the religious consciousness corresponding to certain definite types of culture, and that it is their duty to increase in depth and purity by means of their own interior impulses, a task in which the contact with Christianity may prove helpful, to them as to us . . ." (Hick and Hebblethwaite, eds. *Christianity and other Religions*, Glasgow: William Collins & Sons, 1980, p.27).

In the years since, other Christians have noted the existence of religious pluralism and have asked whether or not it is possible for Christianity to affirm it (Rahner), have believed it is not necessary to assume that God is not truly worshipped by Hindus, Jews and Muslims just because God is truly worshipped by Christians (Hick), and so on. But the ecumenical movement as such has yet to work through to a responsible understanding of the significance of the living faiths of the world for its own Christian life and thought.

One of the results of the Vancouver Assembly will be an intensive theological study of the impact the living faiths have on Christianity and the church. It will build, of course, on those years of dialogue that have gone before, during which it has become abundantly clear that Christian theology can only be done today in the physical presence of those of other religions. In other words, the study will be done in close cooperation with Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, etc.

The projected study is, of necessity, ambitious. The church's relation to and understanding of world religions is at different stages, depending on the religion, and the significance of Hinduism, for example, is quite different from the significance of Judaism, which is different from that of Islam. It is no longer adequate to develop theologies about other religions in general.

Dialogical principles have implications, also, for the churches as organizations and for organizations of churches, such as the World Council of Churches, that require new and creative thinking. The living faiths of the world do not exist in social and political vacuums. They do not normally make the distinction between religion and other spheres of existence that most Christians take for granted. It is seldom possible to have an "interfaith" dialogue today without entering into so-called political realms.

In sum, the experience of the ecumenical movement with interfaith dialogue over some years has brought it to the point where it can begin wholeheartedly to explore and practise the lessons dialogue has taught. Among these are, first, the certainty that dialogue, far from being a threat to Christian faith, offers rich opportunities to explore its farther dimensions, raising in concrete fashion theological questions that may heretofore have been the sole province of professional theologians. And, second, the ecumenical movement is beginning to appreciate the diversity of the world in its religious, social and political complexity through open, trusting and expectant encounter with those who understand their world and ours in different and often strange ways.

ISLAM IN EUROPE: EUROPEAN CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES CONFER

ST. POLTEN, AUSTRIA, 10TH MARCH 1984 (CECEN)

Christians and Muslims live side by side in almost all the countries of Europe today. While in the industrialized societies of Western Europe, the Muslim population is recent and composed largely of migrant workers, south-eastern and eastern Europe have large and long-established Muslim communities. The Conference of European Churches (CEC) has just held a second consultation on this subject to examine the challenges and tasks facing the churches in the situation in Europe today.

"Witness to God in a Secular Europe" was the main theme of the conference, held at St Pölten, Austria, from 5th to 10th March 1984, attended by more than eighty delegates from about twenty countries in Europe. The Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant member churches of CEC were joined by a strong delegation representing the Roman Catholic Church. Muslim participants from Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom were also invited to represent the Islamic communities at the conference and took an active part in the discussions.

How does contact with Islam require the churches in Europe to re-examine their self-understanding? What is their mission in relation to their Muslim neighbours? What can we say about Islam theologically? How can we, Christians and Muslims, practise our faith in a secular society and pass it on to the younger generation? What can Christians and Muslims do to promote co-existence in justice and peace? These are just some of the questions which were discussed at the conference.

Discussions centred on the fundamental theological questions which have stood between Christianity and Islam from the beginning: their understanding of God, the action of the Holy Spirit, the significance of Jesus Christ, the place of Mohammed. Participants agreed that Christians in Europe have to be loving, truthful and open in their dealings with their Muslim neighbours even if theological controversies remain unsettled. Christian witness to God has often been distorted by power-seeking and prejudice. Today Christians are called to model their lives afresh on Christ's example of service and devotion and, following him, to serve their Muslim fellow human beings.

It was repeatedly stressed in the discussions that the theological questions could not be dealt with in isolation from the present social situation in which Christians and Muslims live together. They are equally affected by the challenges of the secular industrialised world whose economic and political structures tend to exploit weak and minority sections of society and to propagate indifference and materialistic attitudes. Both Christians and Muslims know they are responsible before God for the world and its future. Both are challenged today to work together for human values, justice and peace.

Discussions at the conference took place in a spirit of frankness and open-mindedness. This atmosphere was greatly helped by the presentations and working groups, the meditations on texts from the Bible and the Qur'an and, above all, the ecumenical services of worship.

VANCOUVER: A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

The WCC has a programme intended to promote dialogue and understanding between the great religious faiths of mankind. It therefore invited representatives of the world's living religions to attend the Assembly at Vancouver. One of the four Buddhist delegates so invited was Acharn Sulak Sivaraksa, of the Asian Cultural Forum on Development.

We interviewed Acharn Sulak about his experience at the Assembly. He took part, of course, in all the combined activities, and in particular the sub-section on Justice, sponsored by the WCC Programme Unit on Justice and Service, which he addressed. On the broad front of interfaith dialogue he feels that the WCC Assembly is a valuable meeting point, with the opportunity of encountering new people, which inevitably widens interest in the subject. Quite a few people asked for taped interviews, which, back home, will achieve the same purpose. The reception of the interfaith delegates went beyond mere polite acceptance. The section in the Message on interfaith dialogue was, nevertheless, subject to strong criticism by some at the Assembly, and had to be rewritten in a more conservative way.

Asked if the theme JESUS CHRIST, THE LIFE OF THE WORLD, had triumphalist overtones which were embarrassing, Acharn Sulak said that he accepted that a Christian Assembly was just that, and such a theme, while perhaps provocative to some, was one that he personally could live with, given the limitations that surround all human language.

As a guest, Acharn Sulak said that it would be inappropriate to be critical of the World Council and its procedural methods. It still retained the Western-oriented structural patterns of its origins, and some Third World participants felt that these were still dominant and dominating. But then, many other delegates felt that too much weight was now being given to non-Western opinion.

Asked about those areas in which he is specially versed, e.g. "justice" and "development", Acharn Sulak said the Assembly came out on these topics much better than he had expected, specifying the statements on "food" and "disarmament" as prime instances of this. Since Vancouver, he had attended an FAO meeting in Italy, and a sub-committee of which he was chairman had endorsed the WCC's statement relating to food, which made thirteen specific recommendations to the churches, all of a long-term nature. Acharn Sulak said that these went far beyond the simplistic formulae that often amounted to little more than that "the poor must work harder." In the broadest sense he felt that there was no other religious organization in the world that tackles the real issues as well as the WCC. Religion, in his view, means nothing if it does not do this.

Acharn Sulak felt that it was a great honour to be at Vancouver. One interfaith service of worship - an all-night vigil for prayer and meditation - held on Hiroshima night, was tremendously impressive. But so were the daily Christian worship services, which were well thought out, and by no means dominated by Western concepts. Three weeks of such worship and fellowship had made him, for one, deeply aware of human brotherhood in the world.

(The above editorial is reprinted from Echoes, a periodical of The Church of Christ in Thailand, October 1983)

VANCOUVER: A TRADITIONAL RELIGION PERSPECTIVE

ART SOLOMON

THE BEST ASPECTS

I had a preconception of the 6th Assembly of the WCC as being perhaps a critical marking point in the present history of the world as we live out our collective lives in this part of God's creation.

For me the world was getting constantly more negative in its relations to the planet and in its human relations; somewhere back in time I saw off in the distance a set of scales that were totally and solidly unbalanced in favour of the negative; but I also saw that the time would come when the positive would begin to outweigh the negative and the situation would then become the reverse.

For a long time I have seen the period 1982-1984 as being a very critical period for the human family, but I did not know how; what I see now is that the positive is building up and will overwhelm the negative. But only we the members of the family can guarantee that it will happen that way by our faith and our prayers and our work and our determination to affirm life. Our destiny is not only in the hands of God but in our own hands also. Life is no longer a game that we can play at; we have now to get real or get lost. The pious, unreal Christianity that has come this far with so much make believe is now obsolete. So the Assembly was for me exciting particularly because WCC had sent out visiting teams around the world to search for the agenda that transcended.

The question of Church unity. One of the high points for me was the Well. Even though I only got there once I was thrilled because it existed to do its own work in its own way and it was soul-satisfying to see the full participation of women in every phase of the Assembly's work. When the femininity of every human being is in full bloom we will have arrived; then there can be peace on earth.

My worst experience was my inability to participate meaningfully in the small group because it was too bible-oriented.

Likewise I was prevented from effective participation in the issue groups, partly by time constraints and other factors and partly by the extreme aggressiveness of the woman moderator. It wasn't tragic, but regrettable.

I was very happy with the concept of the small groups, etc. because it gave opportunity for input from the bottom up type of decision-making, instead of the old way of top down.

It is always beautiful, exciting, and invigorating to meet fellow human beings of other colours and other ways from other parts of the world, and it was especially pleasant to meet those that we had gotten to know at Mauritius.

I guess by far the highest point for me was the Japanese Drum ceremony and from there to the all-night vigil. The affirmation of life and the acceptance of each other's humanity was beautiful to participate in; the acceptance of our shared humanity must grow.

VANCOUVER: A JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

JEAN GERBER

It may be that the preoccupation with the resolutions on the Middle East, and statements made about the recent events in Alberta, obscured some of the long-range implications which flow from the recent World Council of Churches Assembly held in Vancouver this summer.

I believe that in the long run other things than the headlines will be remembered and valued in retrospect, and it is these long-range events that I would like to highlight.

Certainly the final solutions on Israel and the Middle East were unsatisfactory. They showed, first, that the Middle East Council of Churches and its supporters in the World Council of Churches have not yet been able to come to terms with reality. They do little to alleviate the very real plight of Christians in the Middle East, while not changing anything for Israel at all. This is perhaps their greatest tragedy, for they do not allow the believing Christian a way of helping fellow Middle East Christians, whose greatest dangers are not those posed by Israel.

On the other hand, official representatives of the Jewish people did speak to the resolutions. Canadians along with other Western delegates voiced their objections to the wording and intent. Let us remember that for most of the delegates Israel was not a major issue. The delegates are largely lay, not clergy. Third World representatives, in particular, have had small contact with actual living Jews and the Middle East was not a major focus of Assembly discussion.

When a Christian asks us from the standpoint of his or her faith what our relationship to the State of Israel is, we often try to answer in political terms, neglecting the very real spiritual basis for our relationship to the Land of Israel.

This was brought home to me at the conference at Mauritius where guests of other faiths met to plan the interfaith component to the Assembly. When asked to prepare a section of the worship, I realized again that on each page of our prayer book we recall the Land of Israel, the City of Jerusalem, the Kingdom of David, so it is in these terms that we must speak to Christians of Israel, and if segments within the World Council of Churches cannot accept this, still many others within it can and do. It is this acceptance that we should remember, despite our disappointment with the resolutions on the Middle East.

One of the major opportunities at this Assembly was a chance to talk to believing Christians about Israel as an integral part of Judaism. This was done often and clearly during the three weeks of the Assembly by the minyan of Jews who had opportunities to speak during the Assembly programmes.

This leads me to the second event of the Assembly, and one which has vital implications for the future of dialogue with the churches. That event was the very significant step taken by this major organization of Protestant churches: namely the invitation to Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Buddhists to join them at every level of their deliberations.

How great an achievement is this? First, let me say that in the last Assembly at Nairobi in 1975 there were five non-Christian guests. Because of opposition to it, the entire programme for dialogue with people of other faiths nearly met an untimely and early end. Yet, eight years later, not only were there fifteen guests with the right to speak and attend every delegates' function, but there were twenty or thirty more visitors of other faiths, and an active programme of dialogue.

There were chances for conversation with policy makers who represent very divergent opinions about nearly every facet of these religious communities and there was standing room only at every session.

Furthermore, the governing body of the World Council of Churches, the Central Committee, endorsed the guidelines for dialogue which have been in fact the policy under which the Mauritius conference was held early this year. Through the commission for dialogue with the Jewish people headed by the world famous Protestant theologian, Krister Stendahl, the World Council of Churches has a continuing process of consultation with the Jewish people.

Think for a minute of the many Jewish organizations, both national and international, whose conferences so many of us have attended. Was dialogue on the agenda? When was there ever more than a token attendance by a non-Jew of a formal faith community? Where are the guidelines for dialogue with Christians or Muslims?

The sad fact is that we have very few, and the ones we have are so woefully inadequate that we who engage in it have very opposite counsels to listen to. We have the reactions of those who say the Holocaust means an end to Jews ever being able to speak to Christians. On the other hand, we have Irving Greenberg, who sees dialogue after the Holocaust as an imperative for both Christian and Jew. Yet, is it not true that we have often said, or implied, what have we got to learn from the Christians, those murderers of our parents and children?

Certainly we must require retreat from conversionist tactics, from the theology that says Judaism has been replaced by Christianity, from the idea that Judaism has failed as the religion of the Jews. We, in turn, must stop using dialogue as a weapon to accuse the world of persecution, stop using as weapons of self-defence organizations which have grown up to bring the religions of Abraham together.

We must stop clutching our victim status to us whenever challenged. It leads us to expect the worst, and not hear the best when it happens. The Canadian churches' Anglican and United National spokesmen denounced the Alberta incident. They were not silent! We were not listening, perhaps because to listen would mean a further step into a dialogue which would bring us face to face with what the Holocaust - and the State of Israel - mean to us as Jews. Maybe there is something we, from our secular Western tradition, cannot say just yet about both these events, but we must not distort what honest Christians were saying to us.

I can tell you that some of the most spiritually evocative things said about the Holocaust came to me this year from World Council of Churches people involved in dialogue. It is they who reach out to us over the smoke of Auschwitz. If we don't reach back, we are the poorer, not they.

Yes, I would have liked saner voices to prevail over the Middle East resolutions, and yes I would have liked the Russian churches to have had the freedom to speak their truths. But there is much pain in the world besides ours, and there were many honest people talking about it. We have to hear that pain, and at the same time reflect and share our own hopes. We are being asked to do this, and asked honestly.

We have to listen.

(Reprinted from Jewish Western Bulletin, 7th September 1983)



Dr Krister Stendahl, moderator of the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People (World Council of Churches) and Professor of New Testament Studies at Harvard University Divinity School, was awarded the Nicholas and Hedy Munk International Brotherhood Award on Tuesday evening, 29th November, 1983, during the 36th Anniversary and Award Banquet of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews. The Award is in recognition of Dr Stendahl's achievements in the "promotion of harmonious understanding between Jews and non-Jews and for his contributions to the world-wide struggle against antisemitism." The prestigious \$10,000 award is given every second year (since 1973) through the generosity of the Canadian industrialist, Nicholas Munk, who set up the Munk Charitable Trust for this.

ASSEMBLY STATEMENTS

SPECIAL AREAS OF CONCERN:
WITNESSING AMONG PEOPLE OF LIVING FAITHS

(From the 6th Assembly document "Witnessing in a Divided World")

We live as people and as Christians in a religiously and ideologically pluralistic world. Christians from all parts of the oikoumene raise questions about living alongside of, and witnessing to, neighbours of other faiths and diverse ideological commitments who have their own specific testimonies to offer. In such situations witness is not a one-way process: "from us to them". There is also a witness from "them to us", except in certain cases of martyrdom, the witness up to death, which could be understood as an extreme example of one-way testimony. However, in most normal circumstances we, as human beings, are caught up in a search for reality and fulfilment, seeing to be understood and to understand and thus discover meaning for living. Of all the things we do as Christians, witnessing among peoples of living faiths and ideologies causes the most difficulty and confusion. In this task we are hesitant learners, and need to acquire sensitivity not only to the peoples of other faiths and ideologies, but also to Christians caught up in situations of witness and dialogue in different parts of the world.

In our discussions and reflections on the question of witnessing to Christ among people of other faiths we have heard encouraging reports of many examples of dialogue in local situations. But we have also become aware of some matters which remain to be explored in the years that lie ahead. We note amongst other things the following:

- a) We wish to place on record our appreciation to our friends from other faiths who have been present with us in this Sixth Assembly. We value their contribution, and their presence has raised for us questions about the special nature of the witness Christians bring to the world community.
- b) While affirming the uniqueness of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus, to which we bear witness, we recognize God's creative work in the seeking for religious truth among people of other faiths.
- c) We acknowledge the experience of common action and cooperation between Christians and persons of other faiths and the urgency of working together, especially in areas concerning the poor, basic human dignity, justice and peace, economic reconstruction, and the eradication of hunger and disease.

We see, however, the need to distinguish between witness and dialogue, whilst at the same time affirming their inter-relatedness.

Witness may be described as those acts and words by which a Christian or community gives testimony to Christ and invites others to make their response to him. In witness we expect to share the good news of Jesus and be challenged in relation to our understanding of, and our obedience to that good news.

Dialogue may be described as that encounter where people holding different claims about ultimate reality can meet and explore these claims in a context of mutual respect. From dialogue we expect to discern more about how God is active in our world, and to appreciate for their own sake the insights and experiences people of other faiths have of ultimate reality.

Dialogue is not a device for nor a denial of Christian witness. It is rather a mutual venture to bear witness to each other and the world, in relation to different perceptions of ultimate reality.

While distinctions can be made between dialogue, cooperation and mutual witness in the real experience of living in a religiously and ideologically pluralistic situation they in practice intermingle and are closely inter-related.

All these must be seen in the context of shared responsibility for a common future, based on mutual respect, equal rights, and equal obligations.

There are still many questions remaining for further studies:

- a) When witnessing among people of living faiths, an account must be taken of the influence of the dominant ideologies on religious beliefs and practices present and active in the particular cultural context.
- b) An important concern is the degree to which Christians of different confessions can work towards sharing a common understanding of what it means to be human, an understanding of what it means to be the Church, and how these concerns relate to the witness of the Christian community and the involvement of Christians in dialogue with people of living faiths and ideologies.
- c) Meeting in Vancouver and hearing about the religious life of the Native peoples has focused attention on the need to give a higher profile to dialogue with people from traditional religions.
- d) The question of shared worship or prayer with people from other faiths needs to be explored.
- e) Another of the religious phenomena of our day is the influence of various kinds of new religious movements. We need to discover more about these.

In all these explorations of faith it is important to involve women and young people. Their self-understanding of their role in the faith community will deepen and widen the theological quest.

We are encouraged by the insights and experience which have been gradually built up through various meetings between Christians and people of other living faiths. We look forward to the fruits of further encounters. In the next seven years we anticipate theological reflection on the nature of witness and dialogue which will encourage the life of the Christian community in many different parts of the world.

* * * *

ASSEMBLY STATEMENTS

STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST

The increasingly dangerous situation in the Middle East threatens the peace of the whole world and places heavy demands on all those striving for justice and freedom.

The Middle East is a region of special interest as the birthplace of three monotheistic religions. The churches in the area have their roots from apostolic times. Their continued presence and active participation in the life of the whole area, despite suffering at various periods, is a remarkable witness to the faith. They are facing new challenges and attempting to respond through new forms of witness. While only the churches of the Middle East can determine the nature and forms of their witness, it behoves all churches to strengthen their presence and support their ministry, especially the ministry of reconciliation and witness for peace. Historical factors and certain theological interpretations have often confused Christians outside in evaluating the religious and political developments in the Middle East.

Recent developments in the region have further pushed back prospects for peace. The agony of the Lebanese war is not yet over. The integrity and independence of Lebanon are in greater danger than ever. The Israeli settlement policy on the West Bank has resulted in a *de facto* annexation, giving final touches to a discriminatory policy of development of peoples that flagrantly violates the basic rights of the Palestinian people. There are fears of relocation of the inhabitants of the West Bank and their expulsion. A large number of Palestinians are under detention in the prisons on the West Bank and in camps in Lebanon. There is escalation of tension in the occupied territories. The consensus among the Arab nations appears to have been lost. External and internal pressures have caused serious rift within the Palestinian movement. In many situations there are increasing violations of human rights, especially of minorities, and religious fanaticism is a bane of many communities. The Iran-Iraqi war continues to claim an increasing toll of lives and complicates inter-Arab relations. Tension is increasing in relation to Cyprus.

THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

We reaffirm the principles previously enunciated by the WCC as the basis on which a peaceful settlement can be reached. The UN Security Council Resolution 242 and all other relevant UN resolutions need to be revised and implemented, taking into account changes that have occurred since 1967, and such revisions should express the following principles in a manner that would ensure:

- a) the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all territories occupied in 1967;
- b) the right of all states, including Israel and Arab states, to live in peace with secure and recognized boundaries;
- c) the implementation of the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination, including the right of establishing a sovereign Palestinian state.

We reaffirm that the Middle East conflict cannot be resolved through the use of force but only through peaceful means. Negotiations for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East should include all those parties most intimately involved: the state of Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organization and neighbouring Arab states. The interests of the world at large are best represented through the United Nations, and the USA and the USSR have a special responsibility in this matter.

Churches should undertake the following with a view to facilitating processes towards negotiations:

- a) to build greater awareness among the churches about the urgency and justice of the Palestinian cause. In this connection active support should be extended to the UN International Conference on the Question of Palestine to be held at the end of August 1983 in Geneva. The churches should bring to bear their influence on states to participate in it;
- b) to encourage the dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis with a view to furthering mutual understanding and enabling recognition;
- c) to remind Christians in the Western world to recognize that their guilt over the fate of Jews in their countries may have influenced their views of the conflict in the Middle East and has often led to uncritical support of the policies of the state of Israel, thereby ignoring the plight of the Palestinian people and their rights. In this context we welcome the more open and critical stance adopted by Christian churches in the traditional Jewish-Christian dialogue, but we also urge the broadening of the dialogue to include larger segments of both Christian and Jewish communities;
- d) to support movements within Israel, which are working for peace and reconciliation.

LEBANON

The ecumenical community shares the agony of the peoples in Lebanon who have been tragically suffering over the last nine years and who have been carrying too large a burden of the problems of the region.

We reiterate that the recovery of Lebanese territorial integrity and sovereignty is a key to peace and justice in the region and that for this to be realized all foreign forces must be withdrawn from Lebanese territory.

We appeal to the ecumenical community:

- a) to support the efforts of the Lebanese government to reassert the effective exercise of its sovereignty over all Lebanese territory and to support full independence and unity of the Lebanese people;
- b) to assist the churches within Lebanon in their attempts with leaders of the religious communities for reconciliation, with a view to achieving harmony and unity among all communities in the country;

- c) to continue to support generously the Middle East Council of Churches and the churches in Lebanon in their humanitarian and social programmes of relief for all in Lebanon.
- d) to collaborate with the churches in the area in their contribution to the promotion of justice, dignity, freedom and human rights for all in Lebanon.

JERUSALEM

We reaffirm that "Jerusalem is a Holy City for three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The tendency to minimize Jerusalem's importance for any of these three religions should be avoided" (WCC Fifth Assembly, Nairobi, 1975). The WCC should implement the proposal of the WCC Central Committee (August 1980) that dialogue be initiated with Jews and Muslims so that members of the three religions can understand each other's deep religious attachment to Jerusalem and so that together they can contribute towards political processes that would lead to a mutually acceptable agreement for sharing the city. The churches should give priority to this while continuing efforts to secure a general settlement of the Middle East conflicts. The special legislation known as the *status quo* of the Holy Places must be safeguarded and confirmed in any agreement concerning Jerusalem.

- a) We call the attention of the churches to the need for:
 - actions which will ensure a continuing indigenous Christian presence and witness in Jerusalem;
 - wider ecumenical awareness of the plight of the indigenous Muslim and Christian communities suffering from the repressive actions of the occupying power in East Jerusalem and other occupied territories.
- b) We call upon all churches to express their common concern that although Israeli law guarantees free access for members of all religious traditions rooted in Jerusalem to their holy places, the state of war between Israel and Arab states, the political reality created by the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem and continuing occupation of the West Bank means that Arab Muslims and Christians continue to experience serious difficulties and are often prevented from visiting the Holy City.

We uphold the churches in the Middle East in our intercessions as they respond to the new challenges in the difficult circumstances through their witness in the service of Christ. We assure them of the solidarity of the community of faith around the world as we have gathered together here in the name of Jesus Christ, the Life of the World. We pray for the healing of the wounds in the nations of that region.

We stand together with other religious communities in a spirit of servanthood seeking to be faithful in our common calling to be peace-makers and reconcilers and to bring hope for all.

* * *

MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE IN 1984: AN OVERVIEW

STUART E. BROWN

In these opening years of Islam's fifteenth century dialogue between Muslims and Christians is almost everywhere gaining acceptance among growing circles within each community. At the same time, interfaith discussions have in many places passed beyond the essential first steps of polite introductions and respectful exchanges of basic premises to the consideration of more practical challenges or a common search for a deeper discernment of shared values and concerns. Elsewhere, encounter is at a more preliminary stage and in some countries Muslim-Christian relations wallow in polemical impasse of mutual mistrust and reciprocal fear. There are also, as we all know to our sorrow, places where these contacts fester in a crucible of hostility. Let us look at a few general situations.

The Muslims of Japan, Latin America and Iceland, for example, are so few that we in Geneva are as yet unaware of any dialogue between them and their Christian neighbours. Conversely, the virtual absence of Christians from such lands as Arabia, Somalia and Mauritania precludes interfaith endeavours with the local Muslims. China and South Africa both have sizeable Muslim and Christian populations, but political circumstances have not allowed us to reach any valid assessment of their interaction. For practical purposes, then, we can classify areas of these three groups as zones of low activity. Indiscriminate atheism in Ethiopia and zealous persecution in Iran have all but extinguished any spark of enthusiasm in these states, so they too offer scant prospects for constructive dialogue in the immediate future. On the other hand, we note with hope and joy that Muslim and Christian leaders in Lebanon are preparing an interfaith summit conference.

Slightly more hopeful is the scene in some countries of Arab Africa or the Philippines, where adherents of the majority religion are making serious efforts to offset the suffering and alienation of the minority despite the opposition of the civil authorities, who condone or even encourage harassment and persecution. Of a somewhat similar nature are the desires expressed by several Pakistani Muslims for fair treatment of Christian and other religious groups under Islamic law and the voices raised within the church in Greece on behalf of the ancient Thracian Muslim society or in Norway in defence of a much newer but equally vulnerable Islamic congregation. For all such regions, any intervention from outside must be especially discreet and take full cognizance of the sensitivities of all parties involved.

Where both Christians and Muslims form minorities they have generally cooperated on matters of mutual interest. Often, as in India, Sri Lanka or Singapore, this constructive atmosphere extends to the members of other faiths as well. Muslims and Christians in Central Asia and Eastern Europe live together in the controlled environment of dialectical materialism, and this coexistence has stimulated them to work in harness for the preservation and promotion of civil liberties, even as they faithfully endorse the peace movements sponsored by their own governments. Participants in both these types of interminority dialogue benefit greatly from contacts with interfaith agencies abroad, whether these contacts come through publications, correspondence or, best of all, visits.

The most robust instances of Muslim-Christian dialogue occur in those countries where sensitive representatives of a confident majority have won the trust and collaboration of the leaders of the minority, so that together they have undertaken the formidable tasks of dissolving prejudice, overcoming communal anxiety, nurturing understanding and building society anew on a foundation of openness, honesty and respect. Many national and local groups in North America and Western Europe have already developed strong programmes of dialogue and common action; the British Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches deserve particular recognition for their achievements in this cause. The Islam in Africa Project has contributed much to the promotion of constructive dialogue in English-speaking Africa, through a series of excellent seminars and the continuing work of its national agents. Similar endeavours by the Christian Conference of Asia and the Regional Islamic Da'wah Council of Southeast Asia and the Pacific have greatly furthered interfaith cooperation in Asia. Indonesia warrants a special mention, because there Muslims and Christians have cooperated with spokesmen from other faiths in advising the government on the scope and application of the official Pancasila ideology. It is appropriate to note here the superlative efforts of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians and Roman Catholic organizations in all parts of the world, as well as the positive interest in dialogue expressed by the World Muslim Congress and other pan-Islamic groups.

Given our inescapable constraints of time and budget, WCC staff cannot be everywhere at once, so we are most thankful for the goodwill and energy of our fellow partisans around the globe. We are grateful, too, for stimulating initiatives from the Pacific Ocean and French-speaking Africa, for in both these regions local Christian leaders have shown an eagerness to join in dialogue, seeking our support as they launch their formal activities. During the coming months therefore we intend to help the Fijian and Pacific Councils of Churches arrange a special seminar on Islam and dialogue; we also hope to gather representatives from Christian and Muslim congregations in several francophone African states for a thoughtful discussion of questions concerning intercommunal harmony. In this latter exercise we shall be working with the western regional office of the All Africa Conference of Churches and the interfaith officers on the WCC Sahel team, as well as prominent Muslims and national church leaders.

This overview of Muslim-Christian dialogue is perhaps shorter than it could be, and it may contain an occasional misstatement. An acknowledgment of these limitations affords the occasion to urge readers to write to us with their corrections, amplifications and comments. One of our most important tasks is to share information about dialogue from various sources with friends in every country, but to do this fully and properly we need your news and observations. We also welcome your questions and any possibility of working more closely with you in your own local context. Great progress has already been made in dialogue and understanding in many lands, but everywhere much remains before us. Let us go forth in peace.

* * *

CALENDAR

INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM , INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

Theme: 1984 and Beyond: Purpose and Strategy in Jewish-Christian Relations

Venue: Vallombrosa (near Florence, Italy)

Dates: 8-12 July, 1984

For information write to: International Council of Christians and Jews
Martin Buber House
Werlestrasse 2
D-6148 Heppenheim
Federal Republic of Germany

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

* * *

8TH NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON CHRISTIAN-JEWISH RELATIONS

Theme: Gateways to New Understandings

Venue: St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Dates: 29 October - 1 November, 1984

For information write to: 8th National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations
915 Chemical Building
721 Olive Street
St. Louis, MO 63101
USA

* * *

A CHRISTOLOGY SEMINAR IN JERUSALEM

Venue: Center for Theology: Shalom Hartman Institute for Judaic
Studies, Jerusalem

Dates: 14 October - 14 December, 1984

For information write to: Shalom Hartman Institute

(See over for further details)

The Shalom Hartman Institute, founded in 1976 and directed by Rabbi Dr David Hartman, exists to train young Israeli scholars to meet the challenge confronting Judaism in the birth and life of the Jewish state: that of bringing the riches of the Jewish tradition to bear upon the task of building a totally Jewish but pluralistic, modern society. Following a month-long seminar in November, 1982, conducted by Dr Paul M. van Buren, Professor at Temple University, held at the Institute with the approval of the Board of the Institute, to head a new Center for Theology within the context of the Institute. The Center is designed to provide a unique opportunity for disciplined, shared study and theological reflection on the tasks of the Jewish people and the Christian church in the new circumstances created by the founding of the State of Israel and the church's acknowledgment of the continuing validity of the covenant between God and the people of Israel.

The Center herewith announces its opening Seminar, to be held in 1984, and invites applications for Fellowships from qualified persons. Several grants for round-trip air transportation and living expenses are already available and more are being sought. Participation in the full programme will be required of all Fellows. The number of Fellowships may be limited to fifteen for the first year. Housing arrangements will be made by the Center.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR FELLOWS

Applicants must be soundly grounded in the Christian tradition, possess at least a general knowledge of talmudic Judaism, and above all demonstrate ability in creative theological reflection. An ability to read and understand spoken modern Hebrew (not necessarily to speak it) is desirable.

Preference will be given to applicants who have received or are well along towards earning a doctorate in theology or religious studies. Applicants in their late stages of working toward a first degree in theology will be considered if they can produce evidence of a sound preparation in the study of the Bible, the Christian theological tradition, and Judaism.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applications for Fellowships should be submitted by 15 May, 1984. Additional information and application forms are available from:

American Friends of the Shalom Hartman Institute
1735 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202, USA or:

Shalom Hartman Institute
Rachel Imenu 28 P.O. Box 8029
Jerusalem, Israel 93228

Churches and organizations that have any forthcoming events or publications which they would like announced in *Current Dialogue* are requested to let us know in good time so that details can be inserted in the next issue

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Swanwick, England
11-15 March 1985

DOCUMENT NO. 9.

World Council of Churches
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Geneva, July 1984

Document no. **6.7**

OUTLINE FOR A STUDY DOCUMENT ON
"CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES"

Revised title : ROLE OF RELIGION IN CONFLICTS

1. The Executive Committee of the WCC in its February 1984 meeting adopted the following minute:

"That a preliminary study document be prepared by CCIA in collaboration with the sub-unit on Dialogue with People of other Living Faiths, for consideration by the Executive Committee in July 1984, on the problems posed by the recurrent and often violent eruption of conflicts between religious communities in many parts of the world. Special attention should also be paid to the implications for people of different religions where the law of the land is drawn from the tenets of one particular religion."

2. In view of the complexity and sensitivity of the subject it was felt that it will be good if an outline of such a study document is discussed by the Executive. A preliminary study document along with analysis of a few situations will be presented to the Executive in February 1985, after discussions within CCIA and DFI. The document will then be further developed before the next Central Committee.

3. The Executive Committee had in mind a number of situations of conflict including violent conflict where apparently religious factors played a role. Several conflicts around the world are described as religious in popular and media presentation. Among them are 'classical' situations like Northern Ireland and Lebanon and new situations like Punjab (India) and Sudan. There are also situations like Sri Lanka where the religious component is present in the conflict. However, it is incorrect to say that all such conflicts are conflicts between religious communities. All these situations are complex and the conflicts are the result of a variety of socio-economic and political factors. Religion adds a volatile component to many of them.

The topic is of such a broad nature that the scope of the study document has to be limited and defined carefully. However, a few general indications of some of the new political and religious trends may be necessary to provide the context.

4. On the political level as a result of a variety of reasons there is a whole series of upheavals against established state structures, especially in the developing regions of the world.

In several instances they reflect demands for greater participation of people and recognition of identity. Such demands have been often channelled into ethnic, regional or religious opposition and even revolt. Primordial identities like nation, religion, language, and ethnicity are being reinforced partly as a result of insecurity, discriminatory treatment suffered by minorities and often as an authentic search for identity. The affirmation of subnational, autonomous or independent identities should not be condemned right away, though they may appear to have a negative communal image. But in several cases this has led to violent conflicts.

The challenge to the nation state comes from numerically significant ethnic groups which have retained or have developed or are in the process of developing self-awareness and which demand formal recognition of their distinct identities. Ethno-nationalism, also called sub-nationalism has two varieties, one, the national self-awareness of ethnic groups concentrated in compact geographical areas and the other, temporarily scattered ethnic minorities which nevertheless claim to form a national identity. In many instances religion is a social base of ethno-nationalism and there is a mixing of religious and political symbols.

5. These tensions and upheavals are taking place at a time characterized by violence and militarism. Therefore many conflicts which could be resolved peacefully have become violent. The arms race, open and clandestine, accelerating in most parts of the world also contributes to this.

6. In the CCIA Study Paper on Religious Liberty (Central Committee 1) it was said "The present era is characterized by what might be called 'a crisis of the secular'". The predominant trend in Western industrial culture during the twentieth century has been an ever expanding secularization of society, progressively pushing the religious dimension from operative participation towards the fringes of society, into the private realm. Secularization became an integral part of the dominant ideological systems whose developmental models were exported throughout the world. The last decade has seen an amazing resurgence of religion. It appears we are in an era of religious revival and return of the sacral. Not everything about the resurgence of religions is a blessing. While there is on one hand the search for deeper understanding of the liberating, humanitarian aspects of religion, on the other there is the ugly face of fanaticism and antagonism involving suppression of minority rights and large-scale violation of human rights.

7. In the Introduction to "Nairobi to Vancouver" it is stated "But what is significant about the present religiosity is its politicization. This is reflected in a variety of phenomena around the world. Religious fundamentalism has asserted itself in politics either by the transformation of political institutions or by attempting to exert direct influence on political decision-making. This has led to new tensions within and between nations. In some regions of the world it has added new dimensions to already existing conflicts".

8. While this religious resurgence has political implications in various ways the most significant is what is known as 'political Islam'. The Islamic world, like the rest of the 'Third World' has been struggling to free itself from Western political and economic domination, to redefine its own identity and to formulate its own response to Western ideas. In the process a great number of new Muslim states have come into being, and some have been transformed.

9. The Executive Committee minute refers to "the implications for people of different religions in states where the law of the land is drawn from the tenets of one particular religion". This also applies to a number of situations but is perhaps more directly related to the Islamic revival and the adoption of Islamic law by some countries. "Sharia-Divine Law. An important example of a system of law which is religious in meaning, and which applies not by virtue of citizenship or allegiance to a state, but by virtue of religious application and on condition that there is an Islamic ruler to enforce it. It is applicable primarily between Muslims (although it contains provision for non-Muslims within the jurisdiction) and takes the concept of obligation, rather than that of right as central. The law originated in the Koran and the traditions attributed to Muhammed and is regarded as immutable, since it consists in what Muhammed knew, by revelation of the divine will." (Roger Scruton - A Dictionary of Political Thought) The implementation of Sharia with respect to non-Muslims has to be analyzed with reference to a few countries.

10. It is proposed to analyze the religious components in a few selected situations of conflict.

11. In a preliminary way, several ways in which religion plays a role in conflicts can be identified:

- Religion as a component of nationalism, especially ethno-nationalism,
- Religious factors exacerbating tensions or conflicts whose root causes are socio-political and economic,
- Religious factors and sentiments being deliberately used to heighten tensions,
- Religious notions of state transforming political institutions and leading to conflicts,
- Religious fundamentalism or fanaticism influencing state policies substantially.

12. Some aspects of the following also have to be dealt with in developing the study document:

- Religious pluralism (some of the religious traditions do not have a theological or ideological base to deal with religious pluralism),
- Religious liberty,
- Church, state, community relations,
- Role of religion in reconciliation and peace,
- Role of the churches.

World Council of Churches
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Geneva, Switzerland
4 - 8 February 1985

Document no. **6.2**

ROLE OF RELIGION IN CONFLICTS

1. The preliminary outline had identified the following ways in which religion plays a role in conflicts can be identified:

- Religion as a component of nationalism, especially ethno-nationalism,
- Religious factors exacerbating tensions or conflicts whose root-causes are socio-political and economic,
- Religious factors and sentiments being deliberately used to heighten tensions,
- Religious notions of state transforming political institutions and leading to conflicts,
- Religious fundamentalism or fanaticism influencing state policy substantially.

2. The Executive Committee in July 1984 pointed out that the following aspects should receive special attention:

- erosion of the secular and the identification of the secular with the West,
- use of religion in political processes and in influencing policies of governments,
- growing lack of confidence in governments in many parts of the world by minorities leading to opposition and conflict, making use of religion,
- tensions resulting from new financial power acquired (from outside) by previously marginalized sections,
- religious conflicts used by outside forces to destabilize countries.

3. Further work has begun in the analysis of the role of religion in the following situations of conflicts:

- Lebanon
- Sri Lanka
- Northern Ireland
- Sudan
- Punjab

A lot of information is available and studies have been made on these situations. The attempt is to point out some of the ways in which religion has played a role in the conflicts.

4. A small group (seven persons) will be convened in May/June to work on a draft study document.

Harvard - 11/26-28

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

Ruth Lapides

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TELEX 650320

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4, ROTENBERG STREET
TELEPH. 635546-635544

JH/ra

Geneva, July 31, 1984

To: All members of IJCIC
From: Jean Halpérin

IJCIC/WCC Consultation, Harvard, 26-28 November 1984

1. Since my first circular letter of 30 April 1984 on this subject, matters have been shaping up and I am anxious to provide you with an updated report on the current stage of the preparatory work done so far.
2. The revised agenda is attached.
3. Dr. Solomon and Prof. Marvin Fox have kindly agreed to prepare papers on the case studies dealing with Great Britain and the USA respectively, from the Jewish point of view. We should know soon who will be preparing the Jewish paper on Israel.
4. Arrangements have been made for blocked booking at the Holiday Inn for all participants. The prices quoted are \$63 for a double room and \$54 for a single room. Could you please kindly indicate soonest whether a room should be reserved for you and, if so, in which category.
5. It is suggested that all participants should register at the Harvard Divinity School, 45 Francis Ave., Cambridge, Mass. and then go to the hotel to obtain their room.
6. Provision should be made in your time-table for a preparatory meeting of all Jewish participants on Sunday evening, 25 November. Further details on that specific subject will be communicated at a later stage.
7. Please let me know soonest who will be representing your organization at Harvard.
8. A meeting of the IJCIC/WCC Liaison and Planning Committee will be held on November 28 afternoon and November 29 morning as indicated in my preceding

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TO: Jean Halperin
FROM: Theodore Freedman
DATE: August 6, 1984

This will acknowledge your memo of July 31 providing additional details relative to the IJCIC/WCC Consultation to be held at Harvard University, November 26-28, 1984.

I want to take this opportunity to remind you that at previous IJCIC meetings in New York and Amsterdam I took exception to IJCIC's involvement in joint programming based on the World Council of Churches continuing activities with the World Muslim Congress.

On those occasions I shared with IJCIC representatives the fact that the World Muslim Congress was responsible for the distribution to members of the United States Senate of unsolicited and unsigned hate materials including the book "The Six Million Reconsidered," a volume asserting that the Nazi murder of Jews never occurred.

Further, our investigation disclosed that the books were sent by the World Muslim Congress whose president is Dr. Macuf Dawalibi. He has had a long and unsavory past having worked closely with his predecessor, Hajj Amin Al Hussein who worked for Hitler during World War II. In an interview given in Paris in October of 1983, Dr. Dawalibi traced all forms of Moslem/Christian tensions to the Jews and I quote:

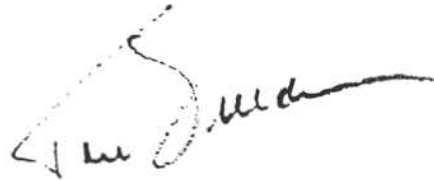
"It is an indisputable fact that the Jews have succeeded in penetrating the highest offices of the church. There was a Cardinal of Jewish origin who was at the head of the campaign to initiate a Christian opening to Judaism at Vatican II in 1962. Jewish penetration of the church has reached still further, to the point that the Bishop recently appointed here in Paris is of Jewish origin."

Given this information which we first shared with the World Council of Churches leadership in the summer of 1983 and the failure of the WCC to formally and publicly disassociate itself from the World Muslim Congress, and given that organization's anti-Semitic activities, it is highly inappropriate for Jewish organizations to continue the so-called "dialogue" with the World Council of Churches until such time as there is a satisfactory resolution of the matter.

Accordingly, as previously stated, the Anti-Defamation League will not participate in the Harvard program, and at the appropriate time will make public the reasons for not doing so.

TF/mj

cc: Rabbi Leon Klenicki
Rabbi Henry Michelman



WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

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Geneva, August 14, 1984

Mr. Theodore Freedman
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10017
U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Freedman,

I have read with much attention and care your memorandum to me of 6 August which reached me yesterday. You will no doubt understand that it calls for some reactions on my part.

We are certainly not less concerned than you are with respect to unpleasant, obnoxious and sometimes obscene pronouncements made about Jews, Judaism and the Jewish people. I also certainly agree with you that one has to be continuously vigilant on that score.

Incidentally, some rather more positive statements can also be found including among Moslems. A case in point is, for instance, a short brochure which I have received today and which you may also have seen. It is called *Bridgebuilding between Christian and Muslim* - A seminar at Warner Pacific College, containing papers by Jamal Badawi and Harry Almond.

You must have heard from our mutual friend Allan Brockway that his colleague, Dr. Stuart Brown, has specifically raised quite emphatically this issue with Inamullah Khan and with the representative of the World Muslim Congress here, Dr. Abdul Haain Tabibi, whom I had known personally from the time during which I have been associated with the United Nations. He was then a member of the International Law Commission and he had established for himself a very good reputation.

Further, as you probably know, the general climate may well improve within the WCC as a result of the elections which have recently taken place there. We have had useful contacts with the new Moderator of the WCC, Dr. Held, and from what we hear we may find in the forthcoming General

Secretary an interesting partner for dialogue. I have spotted in his biography that Dr. Castro had been chairman of the Jewish-Christian Friendship in Uruguay in the sixties, and this may be a good omen for the future.

I, therefore, have every reason to think that it would be most inappropriate and unwise, particularly at this precise juncture, to adopt an aggressive or offensive attitude towards the WCC, at a time when we might expect a turn to the better.

Yours sincerely,



Jean Halpérin

AUG 20 1984 **WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS**

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Geneva, August 15, 1984

פסל ל 20 '84

Rabbi Marc A. Tanenbaum
The American Jewish Committee
New York

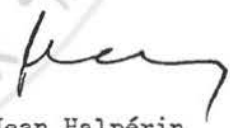
AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Dear colleague,

Please find attached copy of a memo which I have just received from the ADL. I am also attaching for your information a copy of my reply to T. Freedman.

With best personal regards,

Yours sincerely,


Jean Halpérin

Encl.

SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA

327 LEXINGTON AVENUE
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016 • (212) 686-8670



September 7, 1984
9 Ellul 5744

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United Synagogue of America
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Prof. Jean Halperin
World Jewish Congress
Case Postale 191
1211 Geneva 20

Dear Professor Halperin:

I was honored to receive your kind letter of August 27, 1984 to which I hasten to reply.

I am familiar with the background of IJCIC and the exploratory contacts with the Lateran University, including the problems related to arranging a scholarly meeting in Rome.

I had immediately a preliminary discussion with Rabbi Walter Wurzburger and I hope to be able to communicate a workable suggestion as we should not wait much longer.

My view on the subject is that if the conference is under Lateran University auspices, i.e., an academic body, in cooperation with IJCIC, then we should participate with a limited number of suitable speakers, and not to give this meeting too much publicity. Furthermore, the subject for discussion will have to be properly packaged; I am taking guidance from the last paragraph of the memorandum which you enclosed, as follows: the purpose of the dialogue here is not to be a religious encounter... but a selection of topics or issues which could help discover interesting parallels in canon law and Jewish law. Among the issues may be what are the sources of Jewish law and in Canon law (Christian law; nature of authority; family law, medical ethics etc.)

Hopefully it will be a successful meeting and we could subsequently review the lessons learned to guide our future relationships in this area with the Vatican.

With all good wishes for the New Year and looking forward to meeting you in person, I am,

Yours very sincerely,

Leon A. Feldman
Consultant on Interreligious Activities



CURRENT 7

DIALOGUE

(Continuing CCJP Newsletter)

AUTUMN 1984

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New telephone numbers:

WCC switchboard 916 111; Wesley Ariarajah 916 328; Allan Brockway 916 343; Stuart Brown 916 346
Jean Spechter 916 344; Luzia Wehrle 916 345

OBSERVATIONS

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE...

In the last issue of *Current Dialogue* we gave the dialogue news related to the 6th Assembly at Vancouver. The Assembly, which meets once in seven years, is primarily a celebration. But it also deliberates on the future programmes of the World Council of Churches for the ensuing seven years. The broad programme outlines drawn by the Assembly have now been spelt out in more detail by the Central Committee - the governing body of the Council - which met in July 1984. The sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths is now ready to launch its programme for the period until the next Assembly with the help and guidance of its new Working Group.

PROGRAMME EMPHASES

Actual dialogues with people of living faiths continue to be the major emphasis of the sub-unit. The concept and the practice of dialogue as a way of expressing the relationship between faith communities have now become a reality in many places. The sub-unit, therefore, will have to concentrate on specific areas of the world, both local and regional, where dialogue needs to be initiated or encouraged; it needs to make the interest in dialogue at international levels have a local base and reality; it should select specific areas where dialogue is desperately needed, and where the lack of contact between the communities of faith has led them to a state of alienation and conflict. This will not be an easy task nor a spectacular one. But this needs to be done urgently. For dialogue is also a fundamental service that people do to their communities; community today cannot be assumed. It needs to be built, sustained and preserved.

SPECIAL STUDY

Those who were at both the Nairobi Assembly (1975) and Vancouver (1983) would have noticed a fundamental shift in the dialogue debate among the churches. At Nairobi, the concept and practice of dialogue itself was under attack - will this not lead to syncretism? What happens to the mission of the church? What is the witness we give to Christ?

The *Guidelines on Dialogue* developed after the Nairobi Assembly faced some of these questions and set out the practice of dialogue as a mutual encounter of faiths.

At Vancouver, the practice of dialogue itself was not under attack. Rather, the issue ran into problems whenever the report spoke about God's dealing with people of other living faiths. The debate led to some confusion and considerable disagreement among Christians on how they understand the relationship of God, whom they serve and worship, and the people who live by other

faith perspectives. This is a theological issue for Christians and it is now important that the churches should face this question more directly and in new ways.

The sub-unit therefore plans to initiate a five-year programme on the "Theological significance of people of other faiths, and their convictions". This study will be an inner dialogue among the churches. But it is a study relevant to all religious communities that seek to live together in a religiously plural world. It is our hope that the study, utilizing an inductive methodology at local and regional levels, will help the churches to grapple with the issue and to come up with concerns that could be shared among all the churches, and culminating in an international meeting.

PROGRAMMES IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHER SUB-UNITS

The concern for dialogue spills over into a number of other programmes of the WCC. How are theology and religions taught in the seminaries? What is the task of education in multi-faith and multi-cultural societies, and how is it carried out? What can be the response of the religious communities together to the threats some aspects of technology make to life and survival? How can the religions respond to issues related to the place and participation of women in society and in the life of religious communities? What is the relation between faith and culture? These are some of the issues in which the sub-unit will cooperate with other sub-units of the WCC in initial explorations. It will also have the benefit of giving a broader base for the concern for dialogue within the work of the WCC.

ISSUES THAT NEED ATTENTION

The growing number of New Religious Movements has evoked a variety of responses within religious communities. Some have seen them as a serious challenge to long-established religious traditions; others have seen them as growing points of a new spirituality for our time. There are conflicting views held on how much the major religious traditions should relate to them. The New Religious Movements themselves vary a great deal from genuine search for a true spiritual foundation to sects that manipulate and use the spiritual sensitivity of persons. The whole issue has been made complex also by the rise in many places of extreme and sometimes militant religious expressions. Religions are increasingly used for political ends by those who care little or nothing about them.

There have been many requests - even pressure - that the sub-unit should take up this issue for study and dialogue. There is no doubt

that the issue is of prime importance and should be addressed. The resources within the sub-unit however are so limited that it is in a continuing crisis about carrying out even its normal programme. There is commitment, however, to continue to have a watching brief on these issues and to bring recommendations on a future date.

AND IDEOLOGIES?

Dialogue with ideologies has continually presented problems, mainly because we did not have a full-time staff person to deal with the issue. But the nature of the subject was itself a problem. The same Christian sometimes clings to a socialist or capitalist ideology, and at the same time claims that the ideology he or she holds is in fact the social expression of the faith he or she confesses. Some Christians even deny that they have an ideology even though, for example, they may be absolutely convinced that capitalist or a socialist ideology is the right one to order society. Others always treat marxism as the only ideology. The whole issue leads to the problem of "partners" for dialogue.

This issue was discussed in much detail during the consultation on Churches among Ideologies (December 1981) and subsequent meetings of the Dialogue Working Group and the Executive Committee.

There is also an increasing awareness that some of the ideologies presenting themselves today need to be critically analysed and studied and that this should be done in other sub-units of the Council where this issue is dealt with.

The result of all the discussion has been that the emphasis on critical and analytical study on ideologies has been placed within a different sub-unit (CCPD) with the specific responsibility for ideologies. The name of the dialogue sub-unit has been changed to "Sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths". But the sub-unit continues to carry responsibility for dialogue with persons (like marxists) for whom the ideology functions as a religion.

Unsatisfactory solution?

Well, there were as many views as there were persons in this debate, and the sub-unit accepts the final verdict of the Central Committee!

All this is to keep you informed of what has happened and where we hope to be heading in the future. We are pleased that you are our partners in this pilgrimage.

S. Wesley Ariarajah

+ + + + +

COMING EVENTS

DIALOGUE WITH LIVING FAITHS (WCC)

Religious Pluralism: Its Meaning and Limits in the World Today:

A consultation jointly planned and sponsored with the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC). Participation limited to twenty Jews and twenty Christians, selected by the sponsoring bodies, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA, 25-28 November, 1984.

Conflict and Reconciliation - Resources Within our Religious Traditions:

A small Buddhist-Christian consultation on inter-faith relations and dialogue in North Asia, Hong Kong, 10-15 December, 1984.

(Reports on these two consultations will appear in the next *Current Dialogue*.)

ISLAM IN AFRICA PROJECT

Sudan: Third week of October 1984 in Khartoum
Liberia: Consultation on "Islam in West Africa and the Sudan" (for Christian Council General Secretaries in West Africa, in Monrovia, 27-30 November 1984.

Zaire (Eastern): At Bunia Theological Institute, 10-13 December, 1984.

Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

An Orthodox Christian-Muslim Dialogue, Brookline, Massachusetts, USA, 17-19 March, 1985. For information contact: Rev. Dr. George Papademetriou, Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, 50 Goddard Avenue, Brookline MA 02146.

N.B. Readers who would like coming events announced are invited to send details to the editor 6 months in advance.

A pastor in a multi-faith community offers his

REFLECTIONS ON THREE EVENTS

WILLIAM K. HARMAN

Encinitas, California -

Shortly after arrival at this small Lutheran parish in the coastal area of southern California, my ten years of overseas, ecumenical and inter-national ministries were given new relevance by three events.

The first event was the transfer of a Lutheran man, married to a Jewish woman, from the east coast to our area. He immediately joined our congregation which hitherto had known only the anomaly of one of its members married to an American Buddhist woman.

The second event was the request after a Sunday morning worship service by a young couple for a religious marriage ceremony. This would not be an unusual request for a pastor, except that the woman was a committed Lutheran Christian and the man was an equally committed Jew.

The third event was the request by a local cultural and educational arts centre to share in an open discussion and dialogue with a visiting Tibetan Buddhist Lama on the subject of spirituality.

These three events, among others, have increasingly propelled me to view ecumenical and interfaith dialogue with new relevance for the local level of church life. Perhaps my three years in Africa among a mixture of Christians, Muslims and African traditional religionists and my four years serving an ecumenical experiment by Presbyterian, Methodist and Moravians among Christian, Hindu and Muslim peoples prepared me uniquely for the events facing me in southern California. Perhaps the world of diversity and pluralism is increasingly coming to affect the average congregation in the USA more than we know. In either case, events such as these show the need for other than traditional seminary education offered in most major seminaries in the US in order to deal creatively with demands that require an interfaith awareness in local pastoral ministry.

To minister to a Lutheran Christian man married to a Jewish woman who was raising her children in the Jewish faith, required of me an openness to and interest in the Jewish tradition, which meant being present at various significant events for the children such as the boy's Bar Mitzvah. A month of sessions in the Sunday morning adult forum hour on Luther and Jews during the Luther 500th Anniversary year was especially well received when our Lutheran/Jewish couple shared their experiences as an interfaith family. From these discussions has evolved a plan for Jewish-Christian dialogues with the neighbouring Temple Soleil.

Planning for a religious wedding ceremony for a Lutheran Christian and a Jew was more problematic. The first issue was the necessity to ensure that the service would be truly inter-faith in its witness to the commitments of both participants. It was their service, but the traditions of the Christian church and the Jewish faith should witness equally in the service. Was it possible to find clergy of both traditions to participate in such a service? I expressed my openness as a Lutheran pastor who felt comfortable witnessing by my very presence and identity to the Christian tradition. Finding a rabbi willing to be involved required some searching. Finally, it became known that there was a rabbi in San Diego who broadcasts weekly radio and TV shows on Jewish concerns and sees his ministry as a mission to Jews no longer related to temples and synagogues.

Initial meetings with the rabbi by the couple revealed that Rabbi Gottesmann saw his ministry especially in relation to Jews who marry Gentiles. He felt he could witness well to the Jewish tradition by participating in a Jewish-Christian wedding in order to affirm the Jewishness of the man entering into the relationship. It was agreed by all of us that there could be no conversions to either side in the process or our grand experiment would be ruined.

The service itself included elements of both faiths, with the understanding that traditional references in standardized language to Jesus Christ would be offensive to the Jewish participants. I wore my robes and stoles and cross, which I felt bore adequate visual witness to the central reality of Jesus Christ in our Lutheran Christian faith. The traditional wine drinking, Hebrew words of blessing, and breaking of the glass at the end of the ceremony were present. The vows were doubled so that I did the traditional Christian vows with the couple and then the traditional Jewish vows were done with the couple. Readings from both the Old and New Testaments were read. The Lord's Prayer was included (at the insistence of the Christian bride) after an introduction by myself that this was a Jewish prayer addressed to the God who is Father of us all and stating that those who wished to do so might pray it in unison. (A quick peek from my lowered head revealed that the rabbi remained apart from the praying aloud of the Lord's Prayer, but the parents and several relatives of the Jewish groom were participating with great gusto.) The final blessing was chanted in Hebrew by the rabbi and then in English by myself, line after line.

What did it all mean? The couple are committed to further pursuit of understanding each

other's faith more deeply. The Lutheran woman has attended temple and celebrated Passover; the Jewish man wanted to participate in Christmas to understand it better (he had grown up having a Christmas tree in his house) and attended all the Holy Week services and Easter in order to "get the flavour" (his words) of this central season of the Christian faith. So far they envision their children being baptised Christian, but receiving Jewish instruction as well. He is intending to remain Jewish, but hopes both of them grow in their understanding of faith in a God who is the source of all faiths.

The request to dialogue with a Tibetan Buddhist lama came as a bit of a surprise, but a natural result of exposure as the Lutheran pastor who participated in the Jewish-Christian wedding ceremony. It meant for me a fresh field of study and research since the fertile field of American interest in Buddhism had developed during my years in overseas ministry. The presence of a new Buddhist University only ten miles from my parish opened my eyes to a new reality for interfaith relations, at least in southern California.

Making much use of John Cobb's work, *Beyond Dialogue*, published by Fortress Press, I attempted to discover where there might be common ground for discussion. Spirituality became the code word for our discussions, since that term

embraced not only our two religious traditions but also is the word used to describe a new interest among the American population in matters other than material.

Operating from a concept of "convinced openness" as spelled out by Lutheran theologian Martin Marty and others, I attempted to suggest that it is possible for Christians like myself to remain personally committed to faith in Jesus Christ as way, truth, and life and still remain open to fresh revelations of God in other religious traditions. This stance brought most surprise and delight not only from the Buddhist lama and his devotees, but from the Christians with enquiring minds who formed the bulk of the audiences in the discussion series.

I concluded from this and other interfaith dialogue experiences, that there exists in the United States a greatly undernourished congregation of culturally and confessionally committed Christians with enquiring minds who are searching for a way to be both committed and open in their faith. Tools that will better define this stance and discussions along this line at the grass roots level would increasingly feed peoples of all faiths.

William Harman is pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Encinitas, California, USA.

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PHILIPPINE MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

A STATEMENT BY THE (PHILIPPINES) COMMITTEE FOR MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE (CMCD)

Beginning 1979 a number of Protestant and Catholic church-related groups have, without much public notice, observed Duyog Ramadhan (duyog in Cebuano means 'to accompany'). This annual educational campaign, conducted at the time of the Muslim fast month of Ramadhan, initially started in areas in Mindanao-Sulu populated by Christian and Muslim communities, and by 1982 has spread north to Luzon, specifically Metro Manila, and in central Philippines, specifically in Cebu City.

Duyog Ramadhan aimed at the building and deepening of Christians' awareness and understanding of Muslims in the Philippines - their faith, their history, their concrete life situations and struggles. This was especially so in view of the virtual war situation in the first half of the 70s in Mindanao-Sulu, particularly in the Muslim areas. The volatile situation was exacerbated by the already prevailing Christian-Muslim tensions that were brought about by the historical wedges of colonialism and, in its modern janus face, imperialism. Continuously to stress the aims of the campaign, the theme adopted over the years was: Paqtoo Nagkadalaya sa Pakigbisog Maghiusa! (Cebuano for "Two Faiths, One Struggle!")

Activities have consisted of holding symposia/lectures as well as group discussions, circulation of reading materials on Muslim Filipinos, promotion of sectoral Muslim-Christian

dialogues and exposure trips to Muslim communities, encouragement of justice and peace groups to delve into issues that greatly affect the Moro people, sponsorship of photo exhibits, audio-visual presentations and productions by community theatre groups, the integration of Muslim concerns in sermons and orders of worship/liturgy and many other creative forms.

Much has transpired since then. Given the escalating socio-economic crisis, the lot of the Muslim and Christian Filipino masses has turned for the worse. All the more now, whatever differences there were have been overshadowed as both communities are suffering under the yoke of exploitation and political oppression unleashed by local and foreign corporate interests abetted by military and para-military groups.

These conditions have led to further development of the educational campaign's focus. Whereas before Christian Filipinos were called to be in solidarity with their Muslim brothers and sisters, it is significant to note that the majority Filipino and Moro peoples have now begun to express solidarity with each other. The heightening solidarity can also be properly attributed to the positive response and learning from the educational experience, enabling people and communities concerned, involved and committed to grow together in the "dialogue of life".

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I WAS NO STRANGER AT VANCOUVER

TISSA GNANATILAKE

The sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches was held from 26th July to 10th August 1983 at the British Columbia University in Vancouver, Canada. Representatives from more than 300 Christian churches from over 100 countries participated in this meeting. Among this assembly of about 3,500 representatives were children, young people and the aged as well as persons from various stations in life. In addition to the delegates a special feature of the Assembly was the participation of representatives from other world religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. Although the number of invited guests who participated was a small company in terms of numbers it may be said that they enjoyed an important place in the life of the Assembly.

Among the representatives of other religions who participated in this Assembly there were about four of us who were Buddhists. I feel I should place on record my feelings and valuable experience both as a Sri Lankan Theravada Buddhist who participated in the Assembly as well as a stranger who witnessed this event. I believe that this will be of use both to Sri Lankan Buddhists as well as Christian friends who live with us.

We must accept the somewhat unpleasant truth that in Sri Lanka, which has a multiracial and multireligious community, although different races and religions generally join together in carrying out their day-to-day activities, between the Buddhist monks and Christian clergy who represent their respective religious traditions there is still in fact no close link. We can say, however, that this situation is now gradually changing for the better. It is my own individual view that this should be so. Therefore I cannot say that the experience I had of mixing with persons of other faiths was a completely new experience for me. The opportunity of joining such a huge assembly representing so many nations and races was indeed an experience that engendered much joy for me. In this great Assembly I was the only one representing my own religious tradition. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to think that I was a stranger among them. From the very first day of the Assembly, all of us there including myself were fortunate enough to consider one another simply as one human gathering. We had assembled from the North, South, East and West; we were black, white, brown, and yellow. Yet transcending all these differences we became partakers of one human race.

In fact this universal atmosphere which was created by religious reasons aroused in us a happy dream of what the future of the world might be. We live today in a world that is divided by questions of economics, politics, society and religion. If we consider particularly the question of religious organizations built on

religious foundations we see how they have separated people from one another in the name of religion. For that very reason we have engaged in various dreadful deeds to propagate our own religions. It is the religions that can remove the tendency towards separatism, which is visible even today, and right the wrongs of the past. We have to retrace our steps towards the wisdom disclosed to us in the religions. At the Vancouver Assembly one of the facts that I realized is that it can really be done.

I must state very clearly that by this I do not mean that all the religions of the world should be gathered together and made into one religion, or that one religion which has organizational ability and power should swallow up all the other religions.

At these sessions of the Assembly on various occasions we had the opportunity to engage in inter-religious dialogue. Many persons do not clearly understand the nature and the objectives of inter-religious dialogue. It was evident that many who talk much about this had not understood what inter-religious dialogue is all about, or perhaps it may be that they were reluctant to speak out their real thoughts. However, on all these occasions my stand was that inter-religious dialogue should be aimed at restoring the unity of the human race, once religions have been responsible for raising barriers that prevent people from joining together with their fellows. The objective of inter-religious dialogue should not be the production of a 'salad of religions'. We should refrain from raising religious disputations and quarrelling with one another and with the blessing of the religions we should accept the various world challenges that are before us, like the food question, disarmament, and the pollution of the environment, which should be solved by the whole human race. Religions must bring people together for the fulfilment of these great tasks. I said on one occasion that inter-religious dialogue will be meaningful only if it fulfils this role. At this Assembly on various occasions we openly expressed our opinions to one another. To put it in different words we agreed to disagree. Not only were they not angry that this pagan did not accept belief in God, they were not even so unkind as to commit him to everlasting hell!

I had the opportunity at the Vancouver Assembly to meet some distinguished personalities of the Christian world. Among them was Dr Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Philip Potter, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches; Dr John Taylor, and our own Rev. Wesley Ariyaratne of Sri Lanka. In the Christian world the person who may be regarded as the highest personality next to the Pope is the Archbishop of Canterbury. No one can forget his simple unassuming ways after one has met him. When I saw him queuing

up to obtain his lunch and after that walking about here and there looking for a place at table where he could eat it, or when I saw him sitting on a wall talking to a group of friends, there welled within me the deep respect that anyone would feel towards a truly humble person. I could see that he did not expect from others nor did others show him very much outward deference. For me who belongs to a country with an eastern tradition this was a considerable surprise. Should we respect another by exalting him to the skies or by bringing him down to earth? Does one win our respect merely because one is over us or because while being over us one is willing to be one with us? Does one lose the respect that others have for one by being accessible to others or does the fact that one is unapproachable diminish the respect due to one?

The great tent that had been erected at Vancouver for daily services and the inspiring services of worship held there were moving enough to transport one to another world. I was not so transported but I must admit that I was a most interested spectator. On the first day at the end of the service a certain mother offered her infant child as an offering to God. This event was able to move me, who am not easily moved by external displays of human faith. From time to time I went to see novel forms of worship that were tried out day by day. I found it difficult to understand the high regard the delegates had for worship. In the context of western civilization I expected to find a group of people who gave first place to the intellect. I did not think that they would be attracted much by aesthetics, the sublime and extravagant display. But I realized that I was wrong. I saw how even today, even in societies considered highly developed, people are fascinated by externals. I saw how they are captivated by outward happiness generated by song and music. I found it difficult to understand how among this number there could be certain persons whom by then I had come to recognize through discussion as intellectuals. Even now I find it difficult to understand this phenomenon, especially because I belong to the Therevada tradition, which does not regard externals highly. I have no doubt that religion is something connected with the heart. But in the Therevada tradition religion has come to be associated very largely with the intellect. In modern Sri Lanka certain popular sentimental practices appear to be creeping into religious life. But it will be a long time before they enter the Therevada tradition. I would have been more appreciative if the effort the Assembly put into worship services by the introduction of novel elements day by day had been diverted to bring out the significance of certain Biblical insights more arrestingly. I remember I expressed this thought once in a small discussion group to which I belonged. It is my impression that while a certain number of those who uphold the Christian faith favour the inspirational aspects described above, many favour an intellectual diet.

With regard to the practice of religion in Sri Lanka many Buddhist policy makers and leaders

hold that it should be devoid of economic, social and political considerations. This contradicts the outlook of the Buddha. The Buddha accepted that the religious principles of humanity are under the influence of economic, social and political factors. I must say that this faulty understanding which we often come across makes religious teaching appear ridiculous.

One of the important things that I noted in the Vancouver Assembly was how the participants were intensely alive to the influence of the factors described above on religious practice. Indeed this is praiseworthy. There are many lessons we can learn from this. Before one speaks about submission and discipline we must consider whether there exists in society an atmosphere that is conducive to the maintenance of a submissive discipline. Before we praise the practice of making offerings, we must consider whether people have anything to offer, at least we must consider whether a person has enough food to live on. But in all this there is one thing we must not forget. We must act in all these matters remembering that we are people of religion and observing the appropriate limits. I remember that in my small discussion group, when someone spoke about these problems in a state of high excitement, I had to explain to him that as a Buddhist my attitude was not one of intense agitation.

The attention paid to the natives of Canada at this assembly cannot easily be forgotten. The dance they performed on the "Canadian native night" was indeed unforgettable. The speech made by the elderly native leader to the large crowd that assembled that night was considered by many to be needlessly too long. But who is to be blamed for the fact that the "purposeless hurry" of the developed world was something incomprehensible to this elder? Perhaps for him time like the universe was endless. That day he told us how the land of his forefathers had been taken over by the "civilized" world. There was no anger in his words but there was evident in his speech a warm feeling of closeness to the environment, the trees, the rivers, the mountains, the beasts and the birds. As I listened to his words I was reminded of the historic letter written by a Red Indian leader to an American President who offered to buy the land on which they lived. I felt that the shades of those who belonged to the generation of Hiawatha would be discerned among them.

If one were to ask me what I contributed to the Vancouver Assembly there is nothing that I could say by way of reply. But if I were asked what I received from Vancouver there is very much that I could say.

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(Translated from Sinhala by Rev. Kenneth Fernando,
Director of the Ecumenical Institute, Colombo)

Venerable Tissa Gnanatilake is a Buddhist monk from Sri Lanka. He was one of the interfaith Guests at the 6th Assembly.

YOUNG JEWS AND CHRISTIANS DEAL WITH LIBERATION ISSUES

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

A call to support the dignity of women was one of the results of a conference of young Jews and Christians that dealt with the theme "Liberation - Impulses from Jewish Passover and Christian Easter".

At the invitation of the International Council of Christians and Jews, fifty-one young people from twelve (mostly European) countries (Austria, Belgium, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland) - 22 Jews, 29 Christians, 22 women and 29 men - had come together from 26th April to 1st May, 1984, at the "Evangelisches Bergheim", Unterjoch/Allgäu, Federal Republic of Germany, near the Austrian border. They dealt with different aspects of the need for liberation in the world of today and tomorrow against the background of the just-concluded feasts of Passover and Easter. This was done in discussions, role plays, non-verbal communication, in the joyous celebration of the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sunday, in the observance of the Holocaust remembrance day, which fell in the time of the conference, and in informal conversations.

The biblical story of the Exodus from Egypt and Paul's letter to the Romans, Chapter 8, dealing with the liberation of God's creation provided the basis for the discussion of contemporary liberation issues, such as liberation in the socio-economic situation of today, the liberation of the foreigner among us in modern society. On the basis of the study of the fourth chapter of the Book of Micah that deals with making swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning-hooks, political issues were focused on, and the need for

liberation from fear through reconciliation was perceived, especially in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Special attention was paid to the liberation of women and men. Regarding the dignity of women, the conference issued this statement of support:

Our society's obsession with sex and violence, especially pornography that exploits women, makes women fearful (even to walk outside alone) and pollutes the minds and hearts of all of us. Our religious communities, believing in the creation of women and men in God's image, must lead the protest against this spiritual cancer that threatens all human relations.

Just as Jews and Christians have begun to listen to each other's distinct testimonies, so we should encourage men and women to receive and respect each other's witnesses, so that each is enriched by the unique insights of the other sex. In this regard, the religious needs of single Jews and Christians, both women and men, should be addressed.

Jews and Christians must actively work to overcome discrimination against women, to ensure their full rights and opportunities, in their own religious communities and in the wider society.

Justice for women is a necessary requirement for the liberation of men, too. Men need the help of women in their own struggle to liberate themselves from their own stereotyped attitudes and social roles.

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PEOPLE

Krister Stendahl, moderator of the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People (CCJP) and currently Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Divinity at Harvard Divinity School, will be installed as Bishop of Stockholm (Church of Sweden) on 7th October, 1984. After 19th September his address will be: Artillerigatan 30, S-114 51 Stockholm, Sweden.

Wesley Brown, for the past five years at the Ecumenical Institute at Tantur (Jerusalem) and author of the *Jerusalem Post* column "Oikoumenikós" has transferred to Berkeley, California, USA, where he is head of the American Baptist Seminary of the West.

Gerhart M. Riegner, co-chairman of the World Jewish Congress Governing Board and former General Secretary of the WJC, was awarded the Roger E. Joseph Prize at the commencement exercises of the Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion in Temple Emanuel, New York, on 22nd May 1984 "for the uncompromising moral determination he displayed in pursuing the human rights of Jews when an indifferent or hostile work was bent on disregarding and abrogating them."

Frances B. Manson, CCJP member and pastor of the Stilwell United Methodist Church, Stilwell, Kansas, USA, was honoured as Outstanding Woman in Religion by the Kansas City Metropolitan Commission on the Status and Role of Women, 28th June 1984.

Francis Palmer has assumed the post, previously held by the late Peter Schneider, of Secretary to the Interfaith Dialogue Trust and editor of *Ends and Odds*. He may be reached at 14 Gorway Gardens, Walsall WS1 3BJ, England.

LUTHERANS AND JEWS: A REPORT FROM THE 7TH LWF ASSEMBLY

ARNE SOVIK

For the first time a person of other than Christian faith addressed a Lutheran World Federation General Assembly when that body met for the seventh time in Budapest last month. The speaker was Dr Gerhart M. Riegner, long-time general secretary and now co-chairman of the World Jewish Congress and chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations. It was also the first time that Lutheran-Jewish relations appeared on an Assembly agenda, although the Federation through one of its commissions had been working on the subject for more than two decades.

In his address Dr Riegner expressed his gratification at the way Lutheran-Jewish conversations had developed in recent years, noting that "interreligious dialogue is a very delicate and complicated enterprise, particularly when it is heavily burdened by past history. It can only succeed if it is based on full trust and confidence, if the partners are prompted by faith, sincerity and courage, and if they understand the sensitivities of the other side".

It was especially the latest Jewish-Lutheran conversation, a meeting which took place in July 1983 in Stockholm, which drew Dr Riegner's attention and which was the most important element in the Assembly discussion. The theme of the Stockholm meeting - the second in what will undoubtedly be a continuing series of official dialogues analogous to those which the IJCIC conducts with other Christian confessional bodies - was "Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews". It was a theme appropriate to 1983 - the 500th anniversary of the Reformer's birth - but also difficult because of the burden of past history, not only, but of course especially, in the 20th century.

The Stockholm Consultation had produced a statement; more accurately, it had produced three statements: one Jewish, one Lutheran and one that expressed the mind of the whole group. The document has been widely published, but because the fifteen Lutherans who took part in the Consultation were not specifically authorized to speak on behalf of the LWF it could not be said to be an official statement. It spoke to rather than for the Federation. It required an endorsement, which was the immediate occasion for a place on the agenda. At the Assembly an ad hoc committee was appointed to bring recommendations for action on the question of Lutheran-Jewish relations.

The book of reports on LWF activities since the last Assembly (in *Dar es Salaam* in 1977) included several pages on the subject of Christian-Jewish relations, for which the Department of Studies had been responsible. It was a limited programme that was intended to supplement rather than replace the work of the WCC and various regional structures; yet it had included an international Consultation (Bossey 1982), a seminar on the Jewish roots of Christian worship

(Tantur 1982), an earlier Consultation with IJCIC (Copenhagen 1981) and two travelling lectureships.

The committee recommended to the Assembly (after Dr Riegner's address, which had been very well received) that the Stockholm Statements be "gratefully received" and referred to the member churches to "guide them" in their relationships with the Jewish people. But the matter was not to be approved without discussion. The Statement was in general welcomed, but there were some who felt that there lurked in the common rejection by the Stockholm group of "organized proselytism" a subtle rejection of the missionary commission; they voiced this fear from the floor. More to the point - and reflecting the highly developed (to say the least) sensitivity of some member churches to anything that might infringe on their absolute sovereignty - was a questioning of the phrase "to guide them". The Assembly amended the recommendation and resolved: That the Assembly gratefully receive the Statement on "Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews" and commend it to the member churches for study and consideration in their relationships with the Jewish people. If this phrasing seems weak it must be seen against the background of general LWF practice. An LWF vice-president in a note to Dr Riegner said that "the assembly mood regarding Lutheran-Jewish relations was altogether positive". That this was a fair assessment may be judged from the headline on the Assembly's daily paper's report, which read, "Stockholm Statement Gets Approval". It does not seem unreasonable today to believe that the Stockholm Consultation and the action of the Assembly constitute, in Dr Riegner's words, "a real turning point in our relationship".

In a second resolution the Assembly recommended continuation of the work the LWF is doing on Christian-Jewish relations.

What will be next on the agenda? No formal decisions have been made. But the Stockholm Consultation proposed, and informal discussion in Budapest encouraged the proposal, that a thorough discussion between Lutherans and Jews on the question of mission and witness be given a high priority.

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An 80-page record of the Stockholm Consultation, edited by Jean Halpérin and Arne Sovik was published by the LWF Department of Studies in July 1984 and is available on request without charge for single copies. Reports of the 4th (Oslo 1975) and 5th (Bossey 1982) International Consultations on the Church and the Jewish People, in English or German, are also available. Orders should be sent to Dr Eugene Brand, Dept. of Studies LWF, Geneva.

(Arne Sovik, consultant to the LWF Studies Dept., for many years served on the staff of the LWF in various capacities.)

MIDDLE EAST DIALOGUE:

A WAY TO EXPLORE THE PATHS TOWARD PEACE

This statement describes a continuing dialogue undertaken in Syracuse, during the past two and a half years in the effort to contribute to mutual understanding and peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours. All of the participants in the dialogue are residents of central New York, centring around Syracuse. Though distant in location from the eastern Mediterranean, we are all deeply concerned over the violence and bloodshed that have troubled that area for thirty-five years and more. We are hopeful that through goodwill, restraint, and mutual understanding, it might at last be possible to find the way towards a workable peace.

To further this cause, the Middle East Dialogue Group will describe its experience in meeting, speaking, learning and acting for peace. Our purpose in doing so is to suggest to others that they consider undertaking similar activities. Although we assume that others will not repeat the identical pattern we have followed, we hope that they will learn from our experience and be encouraged to undertake comparable activities. If dialogue for peace were to occur in 100 cities instead of only one, its effects would undoubtedly be more than 100 times greater than the effect we have had so far. We therefore invite those who are interested in searching for peace in the Middle East to join us in a common effort.

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS

We have assumed that dialogue requires face to face, continuing meetings between partisans of the opposing factions. For this reason, we sought to form a group that included Jews who were committed to the Israeli cause and Palestinians who were committed to the Palestinian cause.

In order to arrange such a dialogue, we needed some way of making contact between the two groups. For this purpose, people who were not clearly identified with either side provided a valuable link. In the Syracuse area there were some Christians who, though not Palestinian, had good contacts with Palestinians and with Jews. They helped to arrange meetings between Jews and Palestinians interested in dialogue and they joined as a third group.

From the beginning, it was agreed that the numbers from each of the three groups ought to be roughly equal. A small planning committee, with members from each of the three groups, located and invited five Jews, five Palestinians, and five "others" to participate in the first dialogue. The conditions of participation were extremely important in shaping the Dialogue Group.

Those invited were asked to join only if they agreed on a basic approach. This was stated as follows:

The basic assumption of the conversation is that all participants accept the legitimacy of both the State of Israel and self-determination for Palestinians, including the option of a sovereign West Bank-Gaza Strip state.

The formulation of that initial assumption meant that many supporters of Israel and many supporters of the Palestinian cause could not conscientiously join the Dialogue. As a result, the group did not represent the "main stream" of thinking in either camp. Rather it selected those who were inclined, distinctively and unusually, towards the path of reconciliation. This type of selection seemed to be necessary, if the group were to achieve its basic purpose:

To provide a forum for Syracuse-area residents from Arab, Jewish and other communities to discuss a variety of United States initiatives furthering a peaceful accommodation between Israelis and Palestinians.

One other point should be added about the composition of the group. While all of its members were oriented toward accommodation, each of the Jews and Palestinians was strongly committed to the interests of their people. Thus none of the Palestinians considered the activities of the PLO as "terrorist" and none of the Jews accepted the accusations of Zionist-racism or genocide levelled against Israel. All of the participants believed that the basic interest of the nation with which they identified could best be served by accommodation with the interests of the other side.

ORGANIZATION

The Dialogue Group has met regularly since its start in September, 1981. Some of its initial members have resigned - for personal reasons, or out of a belief that the Group had embarked on a mistaken or useless course. But each time one has dropped, another has been found to join the Group. Recently, the numbers have been increased from five of each group to seven. While the new number, twenty-one, gives greater strength, it preserves the important feature of face-to-face knowledge which we have found to be important, if not essential, for mutual trust.

The Group originally met on the average of once every six weeks, until recently when it has met once a month. Its meetings are planned by a tripartite Steering Committee, which meets in advance and circulates an agenda with appropriate materials. The meetings have generally been chaired by a member of the "other" group, although this choice now seems less necessary - because of increased mutual trust - than it once did.

Several conventions have been adopted to

facilitate free discussion, while protecting the individual from external embarrassment. It is understood that no member will be personally quoted outside for any statement made or position taken within the Group. If the Dialogue Group is to issue any statement in the name of the Group, the statement would have to be agreed to by at least four out of five (or five of seven) of each of the three groups. This rule proved important in allaying fears. As it turned out, no statement has been issued except where there was complete unanimity.

ACTIVITIES

In the first eight months, prime attention was given to the drafting of a statement of position. The statement that was eventually issued sounded very much like the initial condition for membership. It was agreed to in July, 1982, shortly after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. It read as follows:

"We are a group of fifteen United States citizens of Jewish, Christian and Palestinian (Muslim and Christian) backgrounds. We have gathered in dialogue for eight months to try to bring action to our serious concerns about the tragic situation in the Middle East.

We believe that the current Lebanese crisis is derived from the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We call for the immediate cessation of shooting and killing by all sides in Lebanon. An adequate resolution of the crisis, however, must look toward a solution of that underlying conflict.

In the interest of peace and human rights, we urge the United States government and United States citizens to help create the conditions that would enable the Palestinians, the Israelis and the neighbouring Arab countries mutually to accept the legitimacy of the state of Israel, and, in the West Bank and Gaza, of an independent Palestinian state or other structure as determined by Palestinians.

The primary goal of any Middle East settlement must be peace, justice and security for all the people of the area.

After months of dialogue we affirmed these principles before the current crisis. We reaffirm them today."

The significance of our statement was found more in its effects on the Group than on those who received it. While it was acknowledged politely in Washington, we had no reason to suppose it was even considered in policy formation. The only possible effect might have been to add to the increasing number of voices raised in favour of America assuming a vigorous stance in favour of mutual accommodation for peace.

It proved important for the Dialogue Group to have reached an agreed upon, public position. That achievement, which took many months, signalled basic agreement and trust. It was achieved even though we did not, and do not, agree on

everything. We have not, for example, reached a common position concerning the PLO, or concerning the eventual boundaries, or on the status of Jerusalem. Even so, we have found ourselves able to communicate and to act - by accentuating the positions on which we agree.

When the Reagan plan was enunciated, for example, we were quickly able to agree to its support. It seemed to us to provide a basis that could lead to a negotiated settlement close to, if not identical with, our initial position.

We have now begun to speak in synagogues, churches, mosques - as well as other forums, such as UNA/USA - on this subject. Sometimes we send a team representing the three groups. Sometimes we go alone. Increasingly, we are asked to give our views. The Syracuse newspapers have interviewed us, reported on our activities, and commented favourably. We believe that we are respected as sincere, realistic people seeking a lasting peace that will be to the advantage of all.

We would like to see similar activity undertaken by others. We continue to explore ways by which we can encourage like-minded people to undertake comparable dialogue efforts. We are currently developing plans for contacting and bringing together people in other cities who might join in a tripartite dialogue in each of those cities.

If this pattern could occur elsewhere, we believe that our efforts would be far more effective. This statement has been prepared to convey that idea. If anyone seeks our advice, we are available. We are prepared to respond by phone or letter, to attend an organizational meeting, or to help in any other way possible. To contact us, please write or telephone any of the following:

T. William Hall
Department of Religion
Syracuse University
Syracuse
New York 13210
Tel: (315) 423-3861

Ahmad El-Hindi
Filter Tech
Fairgrounds Road
Manlius New York 13104
Tel: (315) 682-8815

Alexander Holstein
314 Kimber Road
Syracuse, New York 13210
Tel: (315) 446-2482

We hope to hear from you soon. Whether you want our advice or not, please let us know of your own activities. All of us, concerned with the pursuit of peace, should encourage each other until at last we succeed!

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CHRISTIAN MINORITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

AREND BOERSMA

One of the permanent questions facing the Jewish State is how to find the way in the continuing Arab-Jewish conflict. The situation is a very complicated one. There are hostile Muslim Arab countries, and there are Lebanese Christians who hope for good relations with Israel. There are hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living in the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and the Gaza strip - the vast majority of which maintain Jordanian citizenship, and there are hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living throughout the country as citizens of the State of Israel.

In the north of the country, in Galilee, there are approximately equal numbers of both Arabs and Jews. Nes Ammim is surrounded by both Arab and Jewish villages and towns. A question sometimes raised by our Jewish neighbours, but most often raised by our Christian friends in Europe is: Could Nes Ammim form a bridge between Jews and Arabs by, for example, drawing the Arab Christians into the dialogue with Israel? We have always maintained, and continue to maintain, friendships with several Arab neighbours. Should Nes Ammim take on the role of bridge-builder?

This is a question which we recently discussed with Dr Daniel Rossing, head of the division in the Israeli Ministry for Religious Affairs, which is responsible for preserving the interests of the Christian minorities in the country. In that context, he is also, on behalf of the Government of Israel, an important adviser and contact for Nes Ammim. During the week of the Working Committee sessions, held in November 1983, he spent two days in the village in order to be present for some of the meetings. One evening he gave a lecture for the entire village community, about how he, as a Jew, sees the situation of the Christian communities in the Middle East.

His work consists of making contacts with the most varying Christian groups, about which many European Christians have little, if any, knowledge or understanding. Although one can speak of different "churches" in the Middle East, the concept of "church" is just one aspect in the life of a group of Christians in the region. Cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences also play a dominant role.

In many ways, the history of the Christian communities in the Middle East is analogous with the history of the Jews in Europe. These minorities, today are the remnants of groups possessing long, rich traditions, which have been preserved throughout centuries of persecution. The Syrian and Greek Orthodox, the Armenians and Ethiopians, the Copts and Chaldeans,

the Maronites and Melkites, all trace their origins to the early centuries of our era. The Armenians were a nation even before Constantine the Great declared Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. Today they are a people without a homeland, a people who, like the Jews, have lived through a holocaust of their own in which, at the beginning of this century, hundreds of their villages were destroyed and one and a half million Armenians were murdered. Most Eastern Christian groups in Syria, Lebanon and Iraq experienced a fate similar to that of the Jews, both before and after the turn of the century.

Rossing drew further parallels between the historical situation of the Christians in the Middle East and that of the Jews during the Diaspora in Europe. As Jews have been continually faced with the struggle of preserving their existence in the midst of Christian 'triumphalism' so have Christians in the Middle East been forced to fight for their survival in the midst of a Muslim triumphalism.

The various ways in which Christian minorities in the Islamic world have attempted to deal with their situation especially in the last century and a half, are parallel to many incidents in modern Jewish history in Europe, especially since the Enlightenment:

- a) Assimilation: Conversion of Jews to Christianity, and Christians to Islam, in order to save their lives and to be considered full citizens. The phenomenon of assimilation can also be noted in the tendency among some European Jews, as well as Middle Eastern Christians, to abandon typical Jewish, or Christian, names in the hope that one's particularity will thus become less conspicuous in the dominant society.
- b) Attempts to change society, to detach it from its Christian or Islamic underpinnings, and to create a new secular society in which Jews, or Christians, could be accepted as equal citizens. Jews have been prominent in various cultural, socialist and 'revolutionary' movements throughout modern European history, so have Arab Christians played a central role in manifesting the 'Arab Awakening' and the rise of nationalist movements in the Middle East. In Europe and the Middle East, Jews and Christians respectively have very often been rejected by their erstwhile Christian and Muslim partners in the very movements to which they gave birth.
- c) Striving for autonomy or national independence, which for Jews was expressed in Zionism. Among Christians in the Middle East, the Maronites have been foremost in following this path, although earlier in this century other indigenous Christian groups in the region also sought -

(See p. 16)

NOTES ON INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

ALLAN R. BROCKWAY

When it met in July 1984 the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches authorized a long-term study of the theological significance of the world's religions. The following reflections are offered as an initial contribution to that study.

The comments that follow are divided into two parts, the first of which is a brief examination of inter-religious dialogue as it has been worked out in the programmes of the World Council of Churches. The second part calls for the development of a Christian theology that takes seriously the lessons learned through inter-religious dialogue. Those who are familiar with the work of John B. Cobb, Jr., especially his *Beyond Dialogue* (Philadelphia, 1982), will recognize the debt I owe to his perceptive analysis of the current state of inter-religious dialogue and suggestions for next steps. Otherwise unidentified parenthetical numbers indicate pages in Cobb's volume.

The Theory of Dialogue

Since 1971, when the sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths was formally established within the World Council of Churches, inter-religious dialogue has been recognized as a necessary and integral part of the ecumenical task. In 1971 inter-religious dialogue was a new idea for the Christian institutional agenda, though what came to be called dialogue had been practised for many years.

There had been, of course, inter-religious relations from the very beginning of the Christian movement, first with Judaism and then with the various religions and philosophies of the Roman Empire. But until the nineteenth century of the common era those relations had largely been characterized by hostility or uneasy tolerance. With the missionary movement, however, a greater knowledge of the world's religions began to produce some appreciation of the values inherent in other traditions for the cultures of which they are a part. Missionaries frequently found themselves more in dialogue than they were in overt efforts at conversion to Christianity, though their formal reports to sponsoring mission boards did not always reflect that fact.

The seed for dialogue had been sown, though it did not sprout until only a relatively few years ago and has yet to come anywhere near to full flower. "Despite the acceptance of dialogue as a major programme emphasis of the World Council of Churches, the theological grounds for dialogue

are still undeveloped. This is because of a tension between two basic Christian positions. One group, and this includes many of those who participate most actively in dialogue with persons of other faiths, takes the religious convictions of these persons with great seriousness and wants to understand them better. For these Christians, dialogue is a profound spiritual sharing on the basis of full mutuality between religious movements" (18).

But there is another group for whom there "cannot be full mutuality between, for example, Christians as Christians and Muslims as Muslims. That is, the Christian cannot view what the Muslim has to say about Muslim beliefs as on a par with the Christian witness to the act of God in Christ, and Christians cannot be interested in religious sharing as such. Hence the mutuality essential for dialogue must be *human* mutuality. Although much, probably most, of the actual dialogue is carried out by persons in the first group, the official justification can only be expressed in a way that commands the assent of the second" (18f).

With these words John Cobb identifies the present state of the Protestant and Orthodox ecumenical movement's dilemma with inter-religious dialogue. It is a state that may accurately be called an impasse.

The operating theory has been enshrined in the WCC's *Guidelines on Dialogue*, which was adopted by the Central Committee in 1979, where dialogue is defined as "a fundamental part of Christian service within Community ... It is a joyful affirmation of life against chaos, and a participation with all who are allies of life in seeking the provisional goals of a better human community. Thus 'dialogue in community' is not a secret weapon in the armoury of an aggressive Christian militancy. Rather it is a means of living our faith in Christ in service of community with one's neighbours" (Part II, §18).

The emphasis in those sentences clearly is upon community and service and, as such, represents what was at the time a necessary accommodation, a ground acceptable to both groups within the WCC constituency, for it avoided almost entirely the question of inter-religious encounter. The very name of the sub-unit on dialogue embodies this accommodation: Dialogue with People of Living Faiths. The *Guidelines* say it explicitly: "So dialogue should proceed in terms of people of other faiths and ideologies rather than in terms of theoretical, impersonal systems. This is not to deny the importance of religious traditions and their inter-relationships but it is vital to examine how faiths and ideologies have given direction to the daily living of individuals

and groups and actually affect dialogue on both sides" (Part II, §20).

There are times in history when events move more rapidly than institutions are capable of adjusting. These recent years are one of those times. Tensions and actual physical combat have broken out between and among religious groups. Sikhs fight Hindus in India; Muslims battle Christians in Lebanon; Jews and Muslims fight in Israel; Muslims, Christians and Hindus combat one another in Indonesia. In Europe, Muslims and Christians try to come to terms with a new social situation. It goes on and on. These are not situations that are amenable to solution solely by dialogue between and among individuals who happen to be adherents of different religions; they are conflicts that derive, at least in part, from the religions themselves.

Inter-religious dialogue is now being asked to do more than help "neighbours of different faiths" learn to accept each other as part of the human community. It is asked to be a vehicle for the resolution of centuries-old conflicts that have assumed terrible lethal forms in a world that has grown close together as a result of technological innovation at the same time it has rigidified in historic religious identifications. Whether we like it or not, inter-religious dialogue must increasingly become inter-religious as well as inter-personal.

Those "theoretical, impersonal systems" have turned out to be not so theoretical and impersonal after all. Their conflict makes wars in which real people die and families are decimated and communities are torn apart. "Dialogue in community" assumes that there is a community to begin with. We now know that that community, when it exists, is extremely fragile and depends, not so much on the good will and desire of individual persons as on the dynamics of the religious faiths themselves. We should have known it all along, but now we know for sure: when Christians dialogue with Muslims, they dialogue with Islam, just as Muslims, when they dialogue with Christians, dialogue with Christianity. Certainly, there are a host of different versions of both Islam and Christianity and no single individual adherent of either religion is fully representative of the entire spectrum. There is all the more reason, therefore, for inter-religious dialogue on the international level to be conducted between and among representative bodies of the religions concerned.

The theory of inter-religious dialogue that is emerging does not deny the validity of dialogue among people of living faiths, but it puts a new emphasis on the religions of those who, as individuals, live by them. So-called fundamentalism, particularly in Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, has raised religious belief and practice to the critical level for dialogue, but actually it was there all along. What is at stake is the purpose of inter-religious dialogue itself. Why do it? Specifically, what is its value for Christians? (Muslims, Hindus, Jews, etc. ask the same question.)

Transformation of Christian Theology

From a Christian perspective there are two reasons for inter-religious dialogue. One is the stated purpose of the *Guidelines on Dialogue*: to cement human community. Without identity with the human community everyone is lost in the one-world of today. All contact between individuals of different religions that facilitates such identity is to be encouraged. But proponents of inter-religious dialogue can hardly be satisfied with that, satisfying as it may be, as the sole goal of dialogue.

The Christian purpose in inter-religious dialogue is to change Christianity. Inter-religious dialogue is a theological enterprise and, like other theological enterprises, is an endeavour to comprehend Christian faith more completely in the context of the age in which we live. All constructive theological formulations are attempts to change Christianity, to make it something it was not, in favour of what it might be.

Much has been said and written about the dialogue of Christians with those of other religions and even about the relation of Christianity to other religious traditions. Efforts need to continue toward understanding the relation Christianity has with the other religious traditions of the world, but the time has come to affirm that general conceptions about Christianity and other religions are not sufficient for the needs of today's church and world. We desperately require specific theologies for each religion, which is to say we need to understand each of the world's religions as a valuable discrete reality. The changes in Christian theology resulting from dialogue with Judaism are not the same as those resulting from dialogue with Hinduism or with Islam or with Buddhism. Each confrontation requires a separate re-evaluation of Christian faith. For instance, in the dialogue with Jews and Judaism Christians have learned that their understanding of Judaism has been wrong from the very beginning. In regard to any other world religion that might not make much difference; but the incorporation into Christian faith of the fact that the church's understanding of Judaism has been wrong has theological consequences that are genuinely revolutionary.

It is important to remember a section of the *Guidelines on Dialogue* that is often cited as the foundation of interfaith dialogue, the *sine qua non* of responsible inter-religious encounter: "One of the functions of dialogue is to allow participants to describe and witness to their faith in their own terms. This is of primary importance since self-serving descriptions of other peoples' faith are one of the roots of prejudice, stereotyping and condescension (Part III, §4).

A result of dialogue in the days, months, and years since those two sentences were joined is the knowledge that the second sentence does not do justice to the first. Of course,

it is true that self-serving descriptions of other peoples' faiths do indeed lead to prejudice and all the rest, and that such descriptions should, on that basis if no other, be eschewed. But, more importantly, we have learned through dialogue that participants in dialogue have the right to define themselves in their own terms. It is a right that does not depend for its validation on any adverse consequences that may result from its denial, but is a right in and of itself. Actually, the church has learned this lesson in other ways as well. What it comes to is the fundamental Gospel affirmation that each human being and each community of human beings is valuable as a consequence of God's good creation - and that, therefore, they are to be held valuable by the church and all Christians.

The next sentence in the same paragraph of the *Guidelines* reads: "Listening carefully to the neighbours' self-understanding enables Christians better to obey the commandment not to bear false witness against their neighbours, whether those neighbours be of long established religious, cultural, or ideological traditions or members of new religious groups". It is good not to bear false witness against one's neighbour and it is true that freely allowing the neighbours to define themselves mitigates against such false testimony. But that observation adds nothing essential to the original statement except a reference to the Commandments. People of other faiths have the right to define themselves and have that self-definition accepted. It is an intrinsic right. It is an incontrovertible right.

Some Conclusions

Whether or not contemporary missiologists will agree, the common conception of Christian mission is the endeavour to be an agent for the change of peoples' faith commitment from whatever it may currently be to Christianity, and thus to

(Contd from p.13)

albeit unsuccessfully - some form of political autonomy or independence.

Within the various Christian communities, including those in Israel, there still exists a certain ambiguity of identity. Inasmuch as one emphasizes his identity within his own particular Christian community and his concomitant ties with the Western Christian world, he remains highly suspect in the eyes of his Muslim Arab neighbours. The Maronites, for example, have maintained close links with European Christians in France and Italy since the time of the Crusaders. On the other hand, the ever-present need to justify one's existence in the dominantly Muslim Arab world demands that one's Arab identity be emphasized and ties with the Christian West dismissed. At the same time, one is constantly under heavy pressure to assume an anti-Israel stance to prove loyalty to the Arab cause.

These Christian communities have often fallen prey to such pressures, perhaps because their own theological traditions, like the Western heritage, are far from being free of strong anti-Jewish elements. Nonetheless, Daniel Rossing spoke to us about their history and their present with a feeling of affinity,

bring them into the church. Historically, the corollary of mission has been contempt for the religious understanding and commitment of those to whom the mission has been addressed. Dialogue; or the theory of dialogue, calls that endeavour and corollary into question, because it asserts the right of every people to sustain the validity and integrity of their own religious identity. The dialogical principle wants a Hindu to be a better Hindu, a Buddhist to be a better Buddhist, a Jew to be a better Jew, a Muslim to be a better Muslim, a Christian to be a better Christian.

At the same time, it asks the Hindu, Buddhist, Jew, Muslim to listen carefully to the testimony of the Christian, just as the Christian is required to listen carefully to their testimony. In the dialogue, each partner runs the "risk" of being "converted" to the other religion. But there is the possibility short of that radical break, which is that insights from another religious tradition may be incorporated to the enhancement of one's own belief structure. In other words, we Christians may actually have something to learn from other faiths that will change our Christianity. What do we have to learn? We don't know until we engage in serious dialogue.

John Cobb believes that "The difference between dialogue and more conventional forms of witness...is that dialogue is associated with making a contribution to religious communities as communities rather than with the conversion of individual members of the community to Christianity" (50). That is a promising idea, one that could conceivably cut through the controversy between "mission" and "dialogue". When other religious communities meet for dialogue with the Christian community there is no possibility of the "conversion" of any of them. But learning? and correction? Yes, indeed. In the process each community could be changed. And who is to say that that would not be beneficial to each of them?

exposing us to the similarities in the respective threats and challenges posed to both these Christian communities and the Jewish people by the triumphalistic world view of the surrounding culture. "I do find possibilities to enter into dialogue with them", he said, "but most often this takes place behind closed doors". As minorities who have suffered so greatly, they still find it threatening publicly to participate in a dialogue which they understandably fear will elicit accusations of unfaithfulness to the Arab cause. Rossing stressed that a minority group that has so often been wounded in the course of history, is often suspicious and even bitter. At the same time, clinging to and upholding its own faith, despite persecution, calls for an infinite source of dignity. This also is certainly valid for the Christian communities with which Rossing works and about which he spoke to us.

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THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS THE FOLLOWERS OF OTHER RELIGIONS

(REFLECTIONS AND ORIENTATIONS ON DIALOGUE AND MISSION)

INTRODUCTION

A new landmark

1. The Second Vatican Council has marked a new landmark in the relations of the church with the followers of other religions. Many Conciliar documents made explicit reference to them, and one in particular, the declaration *Nostra Aetate*, is entirely dedicated to "the relations between the Catholic church and non-Christian religions".

in a world of change

2. The rapid changes in the world and the deeper consideration of the mystery of the church as "the universal sacrament of salvation" (LG 48) have fostered this attitude towards non-Christian religions. "Thanks to the opening made by the Council, the church and all Christians have been able to come to a more complete awareness of the mystery of Christ" (RH 11).

is the ideal of dialogue.

3. This new attitude has taken the name of dialogue. This term, which is both the norm and ideal, was made known to the church by Paul VI in the encyclical *"Ecclesiam Suam"* (6 August 1964). Since that time, it has been frequently used by the Council as well as in other church teachings. It means not only discussion, but also included all positive and constructive interreligious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths which are directed at mutual understanding and enrichment.

The Vatican Secretariat

4. As an institutional sign of this desire to meet and relate to the followers of other religious traditions of the world, the same Pope Paul VI instituted, on Pentecost, 1964, in the climate of the Second Vatican Council, the Secretariat for Non-Christians as an organism distinct from the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. Its competence was defined in the constitution *Regimini Ecclesiae*:

To search for the method and the ways of opening a suitable dialogue with non-Christians. It should strive, therefore, in order that non-Christians come to be known honestly and esteemed

justly by Christians, and that in their turn non-Christians can adequately know and esteem Christian doctrine and life" (AAS 59, 1967, p. 919-920).

after 20 years of experience

5. Today, 20 years after the publication of *Ecclesiam Suam*, and its own foundation, the Secretariat, gathered in plenary assembly, has evaluated the experiences of dialogue which are occurring everywhere in the church. It has reflected on the church's attitudes towards other believers, and especially on the relationship which exists between dialogue and mission.

offers a document

6. The theological vision of this document is inspired by the Second Vatican Council and the subsequent magisterium. A further study in depth by theologians remains, however, both desirable and necessary. Drawn from and enriched by experience, this reflection is mainly pastoral in character. It intends to encourage behaviour formed by the Gospel in its encounters with believers of other faiths with whom Christians live in the city, at work, and in the family.

for Christian communities

7. This document, therefore, is proposed in order to help Christian communities and especially their leaders to live according to the directives of the Council. It offers elements of a solution to the difficulties which can arise from the duties of evangelization and dialogue which are found together in the mission of the church. Through this document, the members of other religions might also come to understand better how the church views them and how it intends to behave towards them.

in an ecumenical spirit.

8. Many Christian churches have had similar experiences in their encounters with other believers. Within the ambit of its Unit I on "Faith and Witness" the World Council of Churches has a sub-unit for "Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies". With this latter body, the Secretariat for non-Christians has stable and fraternal

contacts of consultation and collaboration.

1. MISSION

The love of God

9. God is love (I John 4:8,16). This saving love of God has been revealed and communicated to mankind in Christ and is present and active throughout the world by means of the Holy Spirit. The church is the living sign of that love in such a way as to render it the norm of life for all. This mission, Christ's own, is one of love because in him it finds its source, goal and way of proceeding (cf. AG 2,5,12; EN 26). Each aspect and activity of the church's mission must therefore be imbued with the spirit of love if it is to be faithful to Christ who commanded the mission and continues to make it possible throughout history.

gives the church

10. The church, as the Council has stressed, is a messianic people, a visible assembly and spiritual community, and a pilgrim people who go forward together with all of mankind with whom they share the human experience. They ought to be the leaven and a "soul" for society as it is to be renewed in Christ and transformed into the family of God. (Cf. LG 9; GS 9,40). This messianic people has as its law "the new commandment to love as Christ has loved us and as its goal the kingdom of God which was already begun by Him" (LG 9). The pilgrim church is therefore "missionary by its very nature" (AG 2, cf. also 6,35,36). For every Christian, the missionary duty is the normal expression of his lived faith.

a mission,

11. "The mission of the church is carried out by means of that activity through which, in obedience to Christ's command and moved by the grace and love of the Holy Spirit, the church makes itself fully present to all persons and peoples..." (AG 5). The task is one but comes to be exercised in different ways according to the conditions in which mission unfolds. "These circumstances depend sometimes on the church itself, sometimes on the peoples or groups or individuals to whom the mission is directed...The appropriate actions or tools must be brought to bear on any given circumstances or situations...The special end of this missionary activity is the evangelization and the foundation of the church among peoples or groups in which it has not yet taken root" (AG 6). Other passages of the same Council have stressed that the mission "of the church is also to work for the extension of the Kingdom and its values among all men and women (Cf. LG 5,9,35; GS 39, 40-45, 91,92; UR 2; DH 14; AA 5).

often reiterated,

12. The different aspects and manners of mission have been broadly delineated by the Second Vatican Council. The acts and documents of subsequent ecclesiastical teaching, such as the Bishops' Synod on Social Justice (1971) and those dedicated to evangelization (1974) and catechetics (1977), numerous addresses of Pope Paul VI and John Paul II, and statements of the episcopal conferences of Asia, Africa, and Latin America have developed various aspects of conciliar teaching, adding, for example, "as an essential element of the mission of the church and indissolubly connected to it" (RH 15) the commitment to mankind, to social justice, to liberty and the rights of man, and the reform of unjust social structures.

and expressing itself in many ways.

13. Mission is thus presented in the consciousness of the church as a single but complex and articulated reality. Its principal elements can be mentioned. Mission is already constituted by the simple presence and living witness of the Christian life (Cf. EN 21), although it must be recognized that "we bear this treasure in earthen vessels" (II Cor. 4:7). Thus the difference between the way the Christian existentially appears and that which he declares himself to be is never fully overcome. There is also the concrete commitment to the service of mankind and all forms of activity for social development and for the struggle against poverty and the structures which produce it. Also, there is liturgical life and that of prayer and contemplation, eloquent testimonies to a living and liberating relationship with the active and true God who calls us to His kingdom and to His glory (cf. Acts 2:42). There is as well the dialogue in which Christians meet the followers of other religious traditions in order to walk together towards truth and to work together in projects of common concern. Finally, there is announcement and catechesis in which the good news of the Gospel is proclaimed and its consequences for life and culture are analysed. The totality of Christian mission embraces all these elements.

It is the duty of all,

14. Every local church is responsible for the the totality of mission. Moreover, every Christian, by virtue of his faith and baptism, is called to carry out to some degree the whole mission of the church. The needs of the situation, the particular position of the people of God, and an individual's personal charism dispose the Christian to direct his efforts principally to one or another aspect of that mission.

according to the example of Jesus,

15. The life of Jesus contains all the

elements of mission. In the Gospels, Jesus is shown in silence, in action, in prayer, in dialogue, and in teaching. His message is inseparable from his deeds; he announces God and His reign not only by word but by his deeds and works which complete his preaching. Accepting contradiction, failure and death, his victory passes through the gift of life. Everything in him is the means and way of revelation and salvation (Cf. EN 6-12); everything is the expression of his love (Cf. John 3:16; 13:1; I John 4:17-19). Christians ought to act in the same way: "By this will they know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another".

as expressed in the early church,

16. Moreover, the New Testament gives a composite yet differentiated picture of mission. There is a plurality of services and functions which arise from a variety of charisms (Cf. I Cor. 12:28-30; Eph. 4:11-12; Rom. 12:6-8). St. Paul himself noted the particular character of his missionary vocation when he declared that he was not sent by Christ to baptize but to announce the Gospel (I Cor. 1:17). For this reason, alongside the "apostles", the "prophets", and the "evangelists", we find those who are called to deeds for the community and the assistance of those who suffer. There are the duties of masters and servants. Each person has a task of particular witness in society. The First Letter of Peter, sent to Christians living in situations of diaspora, gives indications which never cease to surprise by their relevance today. A passage of this letter was cited by Pope John Paul II in 1979 to the Catholic community of Ankara as "the golden rule of contacts between Christians and their fellow citizens of other faiths: 'Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope which is in you. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience'" (I Pet. 3:15-16).

and in the lives of saints

17. Among the many examples which could be drawn from the history of Christian mission the norms given by St Francis of Assisi, in the "Regola non bollata" of 1221, are significant. The friars who "through divine inspiration would desire to go among the Muslims...can establish spiritual contact with them (Muslims) in two ways: a way which does not raise arguments and disputes, but rather they should be subject to every human creature for the love of God and confess themselves to be Christians. The other way is that when they see that it would be pleasing to the Lord, they should announce the word of God".

Our own century has seen the rise and affirmation, especially in the Islamic world, of the experience of Charles de Foucauld, who carried out mission in a humble and silent attitude of union with God, in communion with the poor, and in universal brotherhood.

in respect for the freedom of conscience

18. Mission must always revolve about man in full respect for his freedom. For this reason, the Second Vatican Council, while having affirmed for the whole church the necessity and urgency of announcing Christ, "the light of life", with all apostolic faithfulness and fortitude, even, when necessary, to the shedding of one's own blood (DH 14), confirms the need to promote and respect the true freedom of other persons, rejecting any form of coercion whatsoever, most especially in the religious sphere.

"Truth, however, is to be sought in a manner proper to the dignity of the human person and his social nature. The inquiry is to be free, carried on with the aid of teaching or instruction, communication, and dialogue. In the course of these, men explain to one another the truth they have discovered or claim to have discovered in order to help one another in their search for the truth. Moreover, as truth is discovered, it is by personal assent that men are to adhere to it" (DH 3).

"In spreading religious faith and introducing religious practices, everyone ought at all times to refrain from any manner of action which could seem to carry a hint of coercion or of a kind of persuasion that would be dishonourable or unworthy, especially when dealing with poor or uneducated people. Such a manner of action would have to be considered an abuse of one's right and a violation of the right of others" (DH 4).

of the human person.

19. This respect for every person ought to characterize the missionary activity of the church today (Cf. ES 77; AAS 1964, pp. 642-643; EN 79-80; RH 12). "Man is the first path which the church ought to traverse in carrying out its mission" (RH 14). These values, which the church continues to learn from Christ its teacher, should lead the Christian to love and respect all that is good in the culture and the religious commitment of the other. "It concerns respect for everything which the Spirit, who blows where he wills, has produced in man" (RH 12; cf. EN 79). The fact that Christian mission can never be separated from love and respect for others is proof for Christians of the place of dialogue within that mission.

II. DIALOGUE

A) Foundations

20. Dialogue does not grow out of the opportunism of the tactics of the moment, but arises from reasons which experience and reflection, and even the difficulties themselves, have deepened.

Based on personal and social needs

21. The church opens itself to dialogue through fidelity to man. In every person and in every human group there is the aspiration and the need to be considered responsible subjects and to be able to act as such. This is the case whether one regards the need to receive or, even more, when one is conscious of possessing something which is to be communicated.

As the human sciences have emphasized, in interpersonal dialogue one experiences one's own limitations as well as the possibility of overcoming them. A person discovers that he does not possess the truth in a perfect and total way but can walk together with others towards that goal. Mutual affirmation, reciprocal correction, and fraternal exchange lead the partners in dialogue to an ever greater maturity which in turn generates interpersonal communion. Religious experiences and outlooks can themselves be purified and enriched in this process of encounter.

The dynamic of human encounter should lead us Christians to listen to and strive to understand that which other believers communicate to us in order to profit from the gifts which God bestows so generously. Socio-cultural changes in the world, with their inherent tensions and difficulties, as well as the growing interdependence in all sectors of society necessary for living together, for human promotion, and, above all, for pursuing the demands of peace all render a dialogical style of human relationships today ever more urgent.

and rooted in the faith in God, the Father,

22. The church, however, feels itself called to dialogue principally because of its faith. In the Trinitarian mystery, Christian revelation allows us to glimpse in God a life of communion and interchange.

In God, the Father, we contemplate a pervasive love unlimited by space and time. The universe and history are filled with His gifts. Every reality and every event are surrounded by His love. In spite of the sometimes violent manifestation of evil, in the vicissitudes in the life of each individual and every people there is present the

power of grace which elevates and redeems.

The church has the duty of discovering and bringing to light and fullness all the richness which the Father has hidden in creation and history, not only to celebrate the glory of God in its liturgy but also to promote among all mankind the movement of the gifts of the Father.

in the Son who is united to every person,

23. In God the Son we are given the Word and Wisdom in whom everything was already contained and subsisting even from the beginning of time. Christ is the Word who enlightens every person because in Him is manifested at the same time the mystery of God and the mystery of mankind (Cf. RH 8, 10, 11, 13). He is the redeemer present with grace in every human encounter to liberate us from our selfishness and to make us love one another as he has loved us. As Pope John Paul II has said:

"Every person, without exception, has been redeemed by Christ, and with each person, without any exception, Christ is in some way united, even when that person is not aware of that. Christ, died and resurrected for all, always gives to mankind - to every individual as well as to the whole of mankind - guidance and strength to respond to his highest calling" (RH 14).

and in the Spirit who is at work

24. In God, the Holy Spirit, our faith allows us to perceive the force of life and movement and continuous regeneration (Cf. LG 4) who acts in the depth of people's consciences and accompanies them on the secret path of hearts towards the truth (Cf. GS 22). The Spirit also works "outside the visible confines of the Mystical Body" (RH 6; cf. LG 16; GS 22; AG 15). The Spirit both anticipates and accompanies the path of the church which, nevertheless, feels itself impelled to discern the signs of Her presence, to follow Her wherever She leads and to serve Her as a humble and discreet collaborator.

for bringing about the Kingdom,

25. The reign of God is the final end of all persons. The church, which is to be "its seed and beginning" (LG 5,9), is called from the first to start out on this path towards the kingdom and, along with the rest of humanity, to advance towards that goal.

This duty includes the struggle against and the victory over evil and sin, beginning always with oneself and embracing the mystery of the cross. The church is thus

oriented towards God's reign until its fulfilment in the perfect communion of all mankind as brothers in God.

Christ is the guarantee for the church and the world that the "last days" have already begun, that the final age of history is already fixed (LG 48), and that, therefore, the church is equipped and commissioned to work so that there come about the progressive fulfilment of all things in Christ.

the seeds are sown

26. This vision induced the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council to affirm that in the religious traditions of non-Christians there exist "elements which are true and good" (OT 16), "precious things, both religious and human" (GS 92), "seeds of contemplation" (AG 18), "elements of truth and grace" (AG 9), "seeds of the Word" (AG 11, 15), and "rays of the truth which illumines all mankind" (NA 2). According to explicit conciliar indications, these values are found preserved in the great religious traditions of humanity. Therefore, they merit the attention and the esteem of Christians, and their spiritual patrimony is a genuine invitation to dialogue (Cf. NA 2, 3; AG 11), not only in those things which unite us, but also in our differences.

of a sincere dialogue

27. The Second Vatican Council has thus been able to draw from this consequences of a concrete obligation, which it expresses in the following terms:

"That they may be able to give this witness to Christ fruitfully, (Christians) ought to be joined to the people of their time by esteem and love, and acknowledge themselves to be members of the group of people among whom they live. Let them share in cultural and social life by the various exchanges and enterprises of human living. Thus, they ought to know well the religious and cultural traditions of others, happy to discover and ready to respect the seeds of the Word which are hidden in them... As Christ himself, ...so also His disciples should know the people among whom they live and should establish contact with them, to learn by sincere and patient dialogue what treasures a bountiful God has distributed among the nations of the earth. At the same time, let them try to illuminate these treasures with the light of the gospel, to set them free, and to bring them under the dominion of God their Saviour" (AG 11; cf. AG 41; AA 14, 29).

B) Forms of dialogue

The experience of recent years given evidence of the many ways in which dialogue is expressed. The most important and typical forms which are listed below are seen as distinct from one another yet at the same time connected.

The dialogue of life

29. Before all else, dialogue is a manner of acting, an attitude and a spirit which guides one's conduct. It implies concern, respect, and hospitality towards the other. It leaves room for the other person's identity, his modes of expression, and his values. Dialogue is thus the norm and necessary manner of every form of Christian mission, as well as of every aspect of it, whether one speaks of simple presence and witness, service, or direct proclamation (CJC 787 no. 1). Any sense of mission not permeated by such a dialogical spirit would go against the demands of true humanity and against the teachings of the Gospel.

for all,

30. Every follower of Christ, by reason of his human and Christian vocation, is called to live dialogue in his daily life, whether he finds himself in a majority situation or in that of a minority. He ought to bring the spirit of the Gospel into any environment in which he lives and works, that of family, social, educational, artistic, economic, or political life. Dialogue thus finds its place in the great dynamism of the church's mission.

the dialogue of deeds

31. A further level of dialogue is that of deeds and collaboration with others for goals of a humanitarian, social, economic or political nature which are directed towards the liberation and advancement of mankind. This kind of dialogue often occurs today in the context of international organizations, where Christians and followers of other religions confront together the problems of the world.

for working together,

32. The field of collaboration can be extremely wide. Referring in particular to Muslims, the Second Vatican Council exhorts both parties to "forget the past" and to "defend and promote together social justice, moral values, peace and liberty". (NA 3; cf. AG 11, 12, 15, 21). In the same sense there are the statements of Pope Paul VI, especially in *Ecclesiam Suam* (AAS 56, 1964, p. 655), and of John Paul II in numerous meetings with the heads and representatives

of various religions. The great problems with which humanity is struggling call on Christians to work together with other believers by virtue of their respective faiths.

the dialogue of specialists

33. Of particular interest is dialogue at the level of specialists, whether it be to confront, deepen, and enrich their respective religious heritages or to apply something of their expertise to the problems which must be faced by mankind in the course of its history.

Such a dialogue normally occurs where one's partner already has his own vision of the world and adheres to a religion which inspires him to action. This is more easily accomplished in pluralistic societies where diverse traditions and ideologies coexist and sometimes come into contact.

for understanding,

34. In this type of encounter, the partners come to mutual understanding and appreciation of each other's spiritual values and cultural categories and promote communion and fellowship among people (Cf. NA 1). The Christian in this manner can also work together for the evangelical transformation of cultures (Cf. EN 18-20, 63).

and the dialogue of religious experience.

35. At a deeper level, persons rooted in their own religious traditions can share their experiences of prayer, contemplation, faith and duty, as well as their expressions and ways of searching for the Absolute. This type of dialogue can be a mutual enrichment and fruitful cooperation for promoting and preserving the highest values and spiritual ideals of man. It leads naturally to each partner communicating to the other the reasons for his own faith. The sometimes profound differences between the faiths do not prevent this dialogue. Those differences, rather, must be referred back in humility and confidence to God who "is greater than our heart" (I John 3:20). In this way also the Christian has the opportunity of offering to the other the possibility of experimenting in an existential way with the values of the Gospel.

III. DIALOGUE AND MISSION

36. The relationship between dialogue and mission is multiple. We dwell here on several aspects which at the present time have greater relevance because of the challenges and problems they pose and the attitudes which they demand.

A) Mission and Conversion

The call to conversion

37. According to the Second Vatican Council, missionary proclamation has conversion as its goal: "that non-Christians be freely converted to the Lord under the action of the Holy Spirit who opens their hearts so that they may adhere to Him". (AG 13; CJC 787, no. 2). In the context of dialogue between believers of various faiths, one cannot avoid reflecting on the spiritual process of conversion.

In Biblical language and that of the Christian tradition, conversion is the humble and penitent return of the heart to God in the desire to submit one's life more generously to Him. All persons are constantly called to this conversion. In the course of this process, the decision may be made to leave one's previous spiritual or religious situation in order to direct oneself towards another. Thus, for example, from a particular love the heart can open itself to one that is more universal.

Every authentic call from God always carries with it an overcoming of oneself. There is no new life without death, as the dynamic of the Paschal mystery shows (Cf. GS 22). Moreover, every conversion is the work of grace, in which a person ought fully to find himself again" (RH 12).

in respect for people's conscience

38. In this process of conversion, the law of conscience is sovereign, because "no one must be constrained to act against his conscience, nor ought he to be impeded in acting according to his conscience, especially in religious matters" (DH 3).

and in the life-giving Spirit

39. In the Christian view, the principal agent of conversion is not man, but the Holy Spirit. "It is He who drives one to announce the Gospel and in the depths of one's conscience makes one welcome and understand the word of salvation" (EN 75). It is He who determines the movement of hearts and gives rise to the act of faith in Jesus the Lord (Cf. I Cor. 2:4). The Christian is but a simple instrument and co-worker of God (Cf. I Cor. 3:9).

comes from the mutual desire for growth.

40. In dialogue also, the Christian normally nourishes in his heart the desire of sharing his experience of Christ with his brother of another religion (Cf. Acts 26:29; ES 46). On the other hand, it is natural that another believer would similarly desire to share his faith.

CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS TOGETHER IN EUROPE

The document that follows comes from the Consultation on "Witness to God in Secular Europe" of the Conference of European Churches, which took place in St. Pölten, Austria, from 5th to 10th March 1984. The paper was received by the Joint Meeting of Presidium and Advisory Committee on 5th May, 1984, and recommended to the CEC member churches for appropriate action. The Joint Meeting underlines the necessity, in any meeting with Muslims, of introducing the full truth of Christian belief. Questions that create tensions and conflicts require special attention.

Preamble

Invited by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) we met, eighty-four Christians and four Muslims, at St. Pölten in Austria from 5th to 10th March, 1984. Before us was the topic "Witness to God in a Secular Europe". We were together in a spirit of frankness and openmindedness, of mutual respect and common concern.

We represented churches from about twenty different European countries reaching from Portugal to Romania and from Finland to Greece. Some feel themselves to be a minority church in a once Muslim environment, whilst other churches in West Europe respond in different ways to the recent presence of Muslims who are a minority in their midst.

This second consultation of the CEC on Islam and Christian-Muslim relations had set itself the task of continuing the work on the theological agenda of a first conference held in February 1978 in Salzburg. In the meantime both practical activities and theological reflections have been carried on in many ways and on many levels. On the CEC Consultative Committee on Islam in Europe, which prepared our consultation, churches from all over Europe are represented.

At noon every day we gathered in ecumenical services of worship reflecting the riches of our different Christian traditions. In the morning we were led into meditation by a Muslim contemplating on Biblical and a Christian on Qur'anic texts. These studies took the theme of God's being light and guide of all humankind. Such was the feeling of community that on the second day it was suggested that we should worship together. This, however, did not prove to be possible. Nevertheless, Christians and Muslims were willing to stand together in the presence of God.

We want to share the issues we discussed during our consultation with our neighbours, be they Christians or Muslims, and in particular with the member churches of the Conference of European Churches. We hope that the churches

will put the concerns of this consultation on their agenda for reflection and action.

Absence of God

We live at a time when "common sense" is the criterion by which modern men and women form their views of life. "Common sense" tells us that the existence of God cannot be proved.

God plays no part in the consciousness of most people for whom the meaning and purpose of life is expressed in enjoyment, in possessions and in social, political and economic power structures. These power structures are often manipulated at the cost of the weak in society, young people, the poor, handicapped, ethnic minorities etc.

For many life has no spiritual dimension. Others, in particular young people, are sensitive to the lack of spirituality and seek ultimate meaning for their lives.

How do we speak of our faith in a seemingly God-less world?

Affirming God

There comes another challenge to the churches in Europe, that of the presence of Islam in our midst. The challenge is not that of the faith alone but the manner in which we respond to Muslims, their beliefs, their ways of life and their participation in our society.

Christians will need to reaffirm their faith in God who revealed himself in the crucified and risen Jesus Christ, not in a triumphalist way, but in being vulnerable and open to risk. Just as we perceive Christ on the cross totally stripped of all human resources, so we too must be prepared to follow that example.

We would humbly call upon churches and Christians in Europe to allow Jesus Christ to permeate all of their attitude and life-style. In this way we will more truly demonstrate the Gospel to our Muslim neighbours by being Good Friday people, as one of the Muslim participants put it.

There are Muslims who may find that they share our insights because the experience of pain is common to every human being whatever his or her religion. Yet the frequent affirmations by the Muslims of God's presence in all of life challenge our materialism and forgetfulness of God. So we will be glad for the witness to the Transcendent God given by Muslims in our midst. It may help us to examine whether our faith is really centred upon the one and only God.

Being true to oneself

The Christian needs to express his or her deepest feeling with conviction and must expect that the Muslim will do the same. Therefore there can be no "watering down" of either message. This means that no one need fear the consequences of sharing his or her faith, nor the search for it, nor its expression.

In the past there has been a tendency to emphasize the differences between Christian and Muslim traditions. On closer scrutiny, however, these differences seem to have been intensified more by economic and political competition than by theological concerns. Today Christians and Muslims without denying their own distinctiveness are discovering a greater unity of concern in the context of an increasingly secular world.

Central questions

This situation demands deep, careful and patient theological reflection and discernment in which participants remain loyal to their own tradition, yet show respect for the tradition of the other.

For Christians a number of questions must arise. Is the Holy Spirit at work in Islam? Can a Muslim be saved as a Muslim? Is it God's will that every Muslim become a Christian? Is the God of the Muslim the same as the God of the Christian? Do Christians and Muslims form a community of faith under the sovereignty of the will of God?

We were not able to find clear-cut answers to all these questions. They need further study in our theological faculties and seminaries. Yet some of the results of our discussions may be noted:

Some Christians, for instance, have come to recognize that it is God, the Holy Spirit, who - beyond the boundaries of the visible church - is at work amongst Muslims to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness . . . (Galatians 5:22-23). Yet others stressed that glorifying Jesus Christ is one of the most important functions of the Holy Spirit.

As Christians we believe that although all humankind has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, he offers salvation to all who accept it on the basis of Christ's redemptive work. At the same time no Christian dares usurp God's prerogative to decide the ultimate destiny of any of his creatures.

"Allah" has always been the term used for "God", the Father of Jesus Christ, by most Arabic-speaking Christians. To assert that Christians and Muslims worship different gods is to suggest either polytheism or idolatry. There can be only one God although people may have different concepts of him. It is the Christian's responsibility

to share with Muslims his or her belief about God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At the same time it is his or her responsibility to seek to understand the Muslim's belief about God.

Christians respect the prophetic tradition of the Old Testament. It calls people to repentance in the service of the one God. It is unjust to dismiss Muhammad out of hand as a false prophet. Christians may recognize Muhammad as part of the same prophetic tradition and in the past some have done so. We must nevertheless ensure that our Muslim friends understand the subtle differences between the two perspectives, for Christians confess that the Word became flesh and dwelled among us (John 1:14).

Questions of peace and social justice

Confronted by the depersonalisation of society the alienation caused by an increasing mobility of people and a fast-expanding technology, believers of both faiths have to find a means of expression relevant to today. There are many, especially among the young generation, who are searching for guidance and meaning in life. We are aware that there is criticism of the institutions of Church and State and a search for new forms of community.

Crucial questions are put to society such as: How can we preserve our environment for future generations? How can we work for peace in a Europe full of weapons of destruction? How can we avoid that those being in political, cultural and economic power discriminate and exploit the weak in society?

Muslims, where they live as recently arrived minorities, encounter many problems common to all migrants; but as Muslims they also envisage specific ones. We can only hope to help solving some of these problems by cooperating with persons and groups outside the churches, primarily, of course, with our Muslim neighbours themselves. Wherever we feel that decision and policy makers fail in respect and justice to Muslims, we have an obvious task to make use of all available resources in order to rectify what we perceive as injustices. In particular such problems relate to young Muslims of the second and third generation who often suffer from a basic lack of identity and do not have adequate chances of education and social participation.

The Bible and the Qur'an emphasize the rights of human beings to live in peace and to experience justice. The life and preaching of Jesus Christ proclaims the intervention of God on behalf of the needy and the oppressed. In questions such as those raised we see the main challenge of our times to all people including both Christians and Muslims.

Partners in stewardship

The call to peace and justice is for human

beings to enter into a right relationship with God which enables us to stand in a right relationship with one another. The cross of Christ has freed us to be open to all fellow human beings. In our lives we should make apparent our belief that life is God's gift to us. Thus no one has the right to take another's life, injure or be disrespectful to another person, nor to sustain injustices in the societies where we live.

As believers Christians and Muslims stand together, partners in stewardship of God's creation. To us that means the physical and human environment of Europe where we intend to live together in peace. We welcome the presence of Muslim believers in our midst which may lead us to common action so that - by his grace - we may be good stewards of all that has been entrusted to us.

Proposal for a prayer

During our meeting we have been deeply aware of the theological and political tensions amongst Christians as well as between Christians and Muslims in Europe. But we have also realized sources of unity. Some of the participants summing up our experiences proposed the following prayer:

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(Contd from p.22)

B) Dialogue for the building of God's reign

Persons in dialogue collaborate in God's plan

41. God never ceases to reconcile persons to Himself by the work of His Spirit. The church relies on the promise made by Christ that the Spirit will guide it in history towards the fullness of truth (John 16:13). For this reason it goes out to meet individuals, peoples, and their cultures, aware that in every human community are found the seeds of goodness and truth, and conscious that God has a loving plan for every nation (Acts 17:26-27). The church therefore wants to work together with all in order to fulfil this plan and by doing so recognizes the value of the infinite and varied wisdom of God and contributes to the evangelization of cultures (Cf. ES 18-20).

for the promotion of universal peace

42. "We also turn our thoughts to all who acknowledge God and who preserve in their traditions precious elements of religion and humanity. We want open dialogue to compel us all to receive the inspirations of the Spirit faithfully and to measure up to them energetically. The desire for such dialogue, conducted with appropriate discretion and leading to truth by way of love alone, excludes nobody. We include in this those who respect high-minded human values, without recognizing who the author of those values is, as well as those who oppose the Church and persecute it in various ways. Since God the Father is the origin and purpose of all mankind, we are all called to

"Lord, as divided Christians we confess to you you that we cannot yet give witness to you in unity. We are deeply aware and are concerned that divisions still persist between us and our Muslim neighbours. All our human efforts to overcome these divisions, to create understanding and to build bridges are of no avail if your Holy Spirit is not at work.

You are the Lord God Almighty who leads us through our days of work, disappointments, sufferings and joys, yet providing us with the promise of the everlasting hope to be in your company. Let us therefore walk through the days of the week and the days of rest with your Holy Spirit, so that the end of the road for us will not be darkness, but light, justice, love and peace in your communion."

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Copies of this statement are available upon request from the Conference of European Churches General Secretariat, 150 route de Ferney, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

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be brothers and sisters. Therefore, if we have been summoned to the same destiny, which is both human and divine, we can and should work together without violence and deceit, in order to build up in the world in genuine peace" (GS 92; cf. also, the messages of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II for the World Day of Peace).

in hope

43. Dialogue thus becomes a source of hope and a factor of communion in mutual transformation. It is the Holy Spirit who directs the carrying out of God's design in the history of individuals and all humanity until the time when God's children who are dispersed by sin will be reunited as one (Cf. John 11:52).

in conformity with the patience of God.

44. God alone knows those days, He to whom nothing is impossible, he whose mysterious and silent Spirit opens the paths of dialogue to individuals and peoples in order to overcome racial, social and religious differences and to bring about mutual enrichment. We live therefore in the age of the patience of God for the church and every Christian community, for no one can oblige God to act more quickly than He has chosen to do.

However, before the new humanity of the 21st century, the church should radiate a Christianity open to awaiting in patience the maturation of the seeds sown in tears and in trust (Cf. James 5:7-8; Mark 4:26-30).

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MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS ON THE ROAD TOGETHER

A group of Christians from Jerusalem and the West Bank, meeting in the framework of the "Justice and Peace" Commission of the Roman Catholic Church, has been reflecting for some time on the meaning and the implications of their presence in this part of the world, in the light of history and in the face of the present situation. They would now wish to share their vision and their hopes with those who feel themselves addressed by the same questions. In a first stage, these reflections are mainly concentrated on the relations between Muslims and Christians. This is of course only one aspect of the whole situation. But it is impossible to say everything at the same time. If these pages are concerned directly with the co-existence and collaboration between Christians and Muslims, they do not exclude anyone; a true dialogue is never against anybody. The call to brotherhood in pluralism is open to all.

MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS ON THE ROAD TOGETHER

In the Arab world Christians and Muslims have shared a long history together: the same language, culture, national feeling, have united them at a level that transcends the differences of forms and beliefs by which they devote themselves to the service of one God, for the good of their brothers and sisters. A single cultural entity has been produced by this common march through history, and it has contributed to an interaction between both sides in their formation over the passage of centuries.

This is the fact which constitutes the starting point of our march; this is the common entity which calls us continually, as Muslims and Christians, to ask one another whether we cannot exchange ideas in view of a more concerted action.

In its recent history the Palestinian people has become more conscious of its identity and has forged its unity by passing through many trials. All the Palestinians, both Muslims and Christians, have suffered together and are still suffering together; they have fought together, and they are still fighting together. Together they look toward the future with confidence and hope. How do we envision the construction of a common future? Palestine has always been a crucible of cultures, the site of coexistence among the monotheistic religions. Above all else, Palestine has been a land of welcome. However, the hospitable Palestinian people have been evicted into the roads, have lost their homes, their lands, which were once open to every passing guest. This is why Palestine truly constitutes such a challenge and an appeal to us. A challenge, for how is it possible to live together in harmony, despite the differences? An appeal: for are we really capable of living a religious pluralism and preserving the human values proper to each community in their universal richness, in order to integrate that pluralism and those values into the construction of a new society?

Perhaps this challenge and appeal find in Jerusalem their clearest and most vital representation, for it is there that the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Resurrection constitute two poles of attraction which continually remind us of the transcendent value of the human person and the human community as a whole. As Christian and Muslim Palestinians, rooted in this reality,

do we not have a common and irreplaceable message to deliver to the whole region in which we live, and to the entire world?

A group of Christians in Jerusalem has picked up this challenge, has become attentive to the appeal, and wishes to propose its reflections. For several years this group, which is part of the Justice and Peace Commission, has been debating these questions, and it would now wish to share its vision with all those who also feel themselves troubled by these questions, and who are disposed to work together towards fuller answers and more solid realizations.

A COMMON HISTORY FOR A FUTURE OF GREATER SOLIDARITY

The long centuries in which Christians and Muslims have lived together in the Arab Middle East, and in particular in Palestine, are part of their history, their cultural heritage, and their national consciousness. This common history, one must admit, has had its ups and downs. It is instructive to note that the epochs of the highest cultural flowering, of the greatest creativity and vitality, were equally marked by a high quality of coexistence and cooperation among the diverse communities and religions. The most famous example is the intense and fecund cooperation between Christian and Muslim scholars in the times of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs. The same was true in the 19th century, at the time of the Arab Renaissance, when Christians and Muslims worked together for the renewal of literature and for the development of the national movement in the Arab world. On the contrary, the least glorious moments in this common history - those characterized by cultural decline and isolation - were generally accompanied by the breakdown of the social equilibrium and harmony that existed in relations between the two communities. As a result, the consequences could only be distrust, reciprocal hostility, and the will to dominate. It should also be recalled that outside interferences sometimes poisoned the situation even more.

This common history has greatly contributed to modelling the personality that is proper to the Arabs of the Middle East, both Christians as well as Muslims. On the one hand, it has been by daily contact with believing Muslims that the Arab Christians have acquired those characteristics and their specific way of living and

expressing their faith. These characteristics distinguish them from other Christians, who live out their evangelical commitment within other civilizations and cultural contexts throughout the world. Thus they have better grasped their identity as Arab Christians, and they have also become more conscious of their vocation and mission. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that these centuries of common history have given to Islam in the Middle East a special expression unique among the different expressions of Islam around the world.

It is in light of this centuries-long experience that we, as Palestinian Christians and Muslims, are called upon better to discern factors of our present situation so that we can more confidently face our future. We are convinced that the vital forces which unite us are capable of helping us to overcome the obstacles; we are strengthened by taking courage from our faith, so that we can make a coherent development of our future that is really worthy of the Arab personality and community.

A NEW PERCEPTION OF THINGS, FOR A MORE DECISIVE COMMITMENT

History is not neutral; its psychological and social factors, its political and economic aspects, its religious presuppositions, do not leave us indifferent. History continues to condition our judgments and our behaviour. In the course of ages, a complex package of unreflected spontaneous attitudes, of fixed ideas, of tenacious prejudices, has taken root in our most intimate selves, as Christians and Muslims. Neither of us should think that he is above reproach, neither of us should believe he is better than the other, for we both repeat all too easily the stereotyped slogans that we have received about one another, the "sides taken" in all kinds of ways. Often they are vague, simplistic notions, generally negative, either in the social and cultural sphere, or in the areas of religion and morality. It is clear that this set of attitudes inevitably nourishes in both of us the blind fanaticism which is really a falsified image of true religious faith.

Such reciprocal and negative reactions are transmitted from generation to generation, without our taking the trouble to analyse them nor to verify them. They influence our attitudes and the perception that we have of one another, without our being conscious of the secret and blind mechanisms which guide them. These mechanisms often aim at tranquillizing our consciences, at peace in our own isolation and self-satisfied in our reflection of the other. That is why they lead us to distrust one another, to avoid looking squarely at one another, and to consider one another as a threat. Thus we are brought to interpret words and gestures in a negative way, and to remember only those historical events which burden and shame the others: discriminations, crusades, persecutions, etc.

No one is about to ignore the difficulties of the past. To try to pretend they are not there would be to play the ostrich, hiding one's head in the sand; this would only lead to perpetuating the old situation of hypocrisy and lies. But these difficulties should not set themselves up as insurmountable barriers, to obstruct every meeting and agreement. In order to eliminate them progressively, we need a new perception of things, a perception freed of traditional prejudices; but we also need a courageous willingness to be more decisive. This attitude can take us very far, even to the very origins of our personal and communal existence. It is good to become conscious of the different mechanisms which regulate our reactions and relations, for we must carefully bring them to the light and recognize them honestly and squarely. These mechanisms arise from social classes, political parties, generation gaps, denominationalism, clericalism, or secularism. By patient conscientization it will be possible to heal our wounded memories, to surmount these obstacles so that we can develop beyond our inherited and instinctive reactions.

As Palestinian Muslims and Christians, we are called to be courageous and sincere enough to respond to the demands of the present, and especially to the imperatives of the future. It takes courage to be sincere, but this courage is liberating. The painful experiences of these last years have already united us in a community of suffering and resistance. It is the effective commitment of today which will fashion the coexistence and cooperation of tomorrow. As Palestinians we have suffered cruelly from expulsion, and we have known the humiliation of being rejected, because we were demanding our right to be different and our right to be ourselves. This is why we have such a concrete knowledge of the evil of discrimination and exclusivism, which in their turn lead us to put such a high value on the richness of living together pluralistically, in so far as this is an essential contribution to building a modern world that is more just and more fraternal. Together we want to commit ourselves to the service of those who are the least protected, to those who are without rights and without a voice; we want to found our future society on the recognition of all and in the service of all.

The future belongs to those who have the courage to break out of the unreflected mechanism which regulates our attitudes and reactions - to those who have the courage to grow out of their small mindedness, and to accept others as different from themselves. It is at this level that we discover that men are enemies only of those whom they do not really understand, that the others - in their very differences - complete us and enrich us.

FAITH LIBERATES AND STRENGTHENS

As Christian and Muslim Palestinians we are a single people. But at the same time we are also believers. Our faith is never absent from our

commitment. Certainly, the origin of our differences and oppositions is also found in a certain conception of religion, or, to put it more exactly, in a mistaken idea of religion. More than once in history, it is religion that has been invoked abusively to justify harrassments, persecutions, and wars of all kinds. In the name of religion we sometimes scorn others, we judge them as our inferiors, we refuse them their basic rights. But we are convinced that that is certainly not the true religion which God has willed and planned for us.

On the contrary, we know that a true and living faith is liberating; it gives us a more open perception of persons and realities, as well as a new confidence in the future. This is why faith makes us capable of opening the question of our relations with one another as Christians and Muslims, without complexes - for the truth liberates.

Faith makes us capable of realism, without overlooking the difficulties. Faith gives us hope, for coexistence and cooperation are possible, since they are a response to the plan of God and to the expectations of men and women.

It is clear that such a positive and confident approach requires of all believers a veritable conversion, an inner purification, a patient education, and a conscious effort to know the other and his faith better, in order to recognize him and to love him. We believe that both Islam and Christianity possess the resources required to inspire their believers to discover new attitudes and to open new ways of advancing, remaining at the same time faithful to one's own faith.

For Islam as well as for Christianity, the human person has a unique and irreplaceable value, having his origin in God and his existence guaranteed by God. Mankind has been created and delegated by God to work and to develop the earth; it has been called to open its heart to the word of God and to believe in his all-powerful mercy towards all peoples and persons. Mankind is destined to a life without end, which physical death can never destroy. Are not such principles capable of inspiring believing Christians and Muslims to defend the freedom, the dignity, and the rights of the human person, who finds himself in the heart of all the conflicts? He is also the criterion allowing us to judge of the justice of the events and their causes.

For thirteen centuries, it is history that has united us as Christian and Muslim Arabs in the same language, the same culture, and the same destiny. This is not without significance. Since for us, as believers, God is the Lord of history, we also believe that this community in which we live together is part of God's will for us. As Arab Christians, who consider ourselves both Arabs and Christians, it is by no mere historical accident that we are such, but it is

by God's grace and will - the will of his love, accepted with joy. It is precisely here that God has placed us. Our Arabism and our relations with Islam are an integral part of our Christian personality, of our vocation and our mission, which we are called upon to live out personally, as well as within the community of the Church. Our churches are called to commit themselves effectively, by word and deed, by prayer and sacrifice, to the coming of the Kingdom of God. This new creation is envisioned in Scripture as a community in which each people will have its place, bringing its own honour and glory to the joyous communion of all.

Thus our faith gives us a firmer foundation from which all of us can find a deeper meaning to our coexistence and cooperation. In a world which suffers from discrimination, racism, injustice, violence, war and oppression, people are searching for any ray of hope. Together, as Christians and Muslims, we are called to offer them the possibility of a true hope. In the past, religions were too often a factor of division and confrontation. Today they are called upon to work together to construct peace and unity. And they are capable of this, in so far as they are faithful to themselves and to God.

EVERYTHING BECOMES POSSIBLE

These few reflections cannot be said and do not intend to be complete. We should like them to be an invitation to others to search with us for new ways of advancing together, to adopt a new perception of things, to create a new mentality. Then everything becomes possible. This invitation is addressed to all, in the hope that it will solicit reflections and exchanges with others.

In effect these reflections are inspired by a spirit of dialogue. And a true dialogue is never against anybody, nor does it exclude anyone. If these pages are concerned directly with the dialogue between Palestinian Muslims and Christians, we want to stress that this dialogue is open to all, no matter what their religion or conviction may be. We are thinking especially of those among us who are using all their intelligence and their energies to transform society on the basis of purely secularist and materialist criticisms and viewpoints. We also have need of their presence and their cooperation. Together we find ourselves face to face with the Jews, both believers and non-believers, whose most authentic tradition calls for the respect of persons and the acceptance of those who are different.

We have had a uniquely Palestinian experience of suffering through injustice, expulsion, the loss of identity, the temptation to violence. But this has taught us, in a painful way, the inestimable value of brotherhood in pluralism, as it has taught us the cruelty of living in the absence of such brotherhood. As a result, is

(See next page)

RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND WITH PEOPLE OF OTHER FAITHS

The following statement is an excerpt from a longer report by the Board of World Mission and Unity to the 1984 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Since October, 1982, representatives of the Church of Scotland and the of the Jewish Community in Scotland have been engaged in Consultations initiated by a Deliverance of the General Assembly which evoked a positive response from the Chief Rabbi. Conducted from the beginning in an atmosphere of cordiality, the series of meetings has contributed significantly to a deepening of understanding and a growth of mutual respect. The participants have discussed a wide range of issues affecting the relationships between Jews and Christians today. While differences have been frankly acknowledged, there has been an increasing awareness of common values derived from a shared reverence for the One God who has revealed Himself in the Hebrew Scriptures. Accordingly, those who have taken part in the Consultations wish to address this COMMON STATEMENT to their respective communities:

- 1) Believing in God the Creator of all things, we rejoice together in all His gifts and His continuing covenant of love and mercy with His world.
- 2) Acknowledging that God has made all people in His own image, we affirm our concern for human rights and our opposition to all forms of racism.
- 3) As a group of Christians and Jews, we have paid particular attention to the evil of antisemitism which in its extreme form resulted in the Holocaust in which six million Jews died in Europe. We are agreed that antisemitism must be combated in all its manifestations. Those of us who are Christians recognise our need to acknowledge the Church's guilt through many centuries of fostering anti-Jewish attitudes and to seek the forgiveness of God and of our Jewish brothers and sisters.
- 4) Our studies have made us more aware of situations throughout the world in which

religious liberty is denied. We call on our two communities to join in common action in support of those who are deprived of the right to worship and to practise their religion in freedom.

- 5) We have also become aware of the enduring centrality of Zion in Jewish liturgy and theology throughout the ages and of how Zion is seen as an expression of the fulfilment of Biblical prophecy, a home for the dispersed, and a spiritual centre.
- 6) We remind both communities of the emphasis laid by the Prophets on God's call for righteousness and justice, mercy and peace among all peoples. In our present society the need for compassion towards the disadvantaged and the stranger within the gates is imperative. We would encourage our communities to seek further opportunities of cooperating in efforts to promote the welfare of all.
- 7) Living as we do by hope in the promises of God, we look to the day when His peace will be manifested among the nations. Meanwhile we urge our communities to re-commit themselves to the advancement of world peace and the promotion of reconciliation and understanding.
- 8) In face of the prevailing materialism of our age, we join in re-asserting the importance of spiritual values. In particular, we call on our communities to explore together the social implications of our common reverence for human life as the creation of God.
- 9) Our consultations have shown us the value of regular contact between representatives of our two communities. We therefore propose that a continuing framework of liaison should be established to maintain relationships and to facilitate cooperation in matters of mutual concern.

(Contd from previous page)

it not precisely our vocation to be more open to the needs of the world today, and to be ready to bring our own irreplaceable contribution to the construction of a human society that is more just and more fraternal?

At this point our reflection joins that of the unique and universal vocation of Jerusalem, a city of mutual presence to one another, a city of dialogue between man and God, and between man and man. Jerusalem has too often been the object of confrontations, of violence and fanaticism. Nevertheless, it remains a place where all men come to search for some ray of hope, because of the profound significance it embodies. Fraternal harmony lived out in plurality is the special witness that our beloved Holy City is called upon to propose to the world. Our ability to advance together here in Jerusalem and in the Holy Land might well be the starting point of a common progress that will bring about a stirring of all mankind.

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In Memory of

PROFESSOR URIEL TAL

23 December 1929 - 6 June 1984

Good friend and faithful colleague

THE NAIROBI DECLARATION OF WCRP IV

The World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) held its Fourth Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya, in August/September this year. The earlier assemblies were held in Kyōto (1970), Louvain (1974), and Princeton (1979). The six hundred persons from over sixty countries, who gathered around the theme "Religions for Human Dignity and World Peace", came from all the major religious traditions of the world and from all cultures and represent an important voice for human dignity and peace. The declaration of this multi-faith meeting is given below and shows some of the challenges that the religious communities have to face together today.

In Nairobi in 1984, we of the World Conference on Religion and Peace have met in our Fourth World Assembly. We have come, nearly six hundred of us, from sixty countries and from most of the world's religious traditions - Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Shinto, Sikh, Zoroastrian, the traditional cultures of Africa, North America, and others. From our diversity of cultures and traditions, we have come to address a theme of urgent common concern: Religions for Human Dignity and World Peace. We address these goals of human dignity and world peace together, for they are inextricably linked and must be pursued together.

Our previous Assemblies in Kyoto in 1970, Louvain in 1974 and Princeton in 1979 have been milestones in the growth and work of WCRP as we strive for peace, united by a spirit of cooperation. In Nairobi in 1984, we find ourselves at a major turning point.

In the five years since we last met, the world has seen little progress in either the cherishing of human dignity or the movement toward world peace. While the nuclear arms race has continued to escalate in its staggering expenditures, in its rhetoric, and in its incalculable danger, the massive human needs of poverty, hunger, unemployment, and lack of education have been grossly neglected. Militarization of societies, trade in arms, recourse to violence, religious and ideological intolerance, and assaults on human rights continue. The structures of economic and political oppression which perpetuate the privilege of a few at the expense of the masses are still firmly in place.

We are encouraged, however, by the widening awareness and public consciousness of the dangers and costs of our present world situation, and by the world-wide growth of grassroots movements expressing the determination of people everywhere for change. It is time for new strategies and priorities for peace-making, and for renewed commitment to our work.

We have met in Nairobi as men and women rooted in our own religious traditions, and linked to one another in vision and action. We acknowledge the painful fact that religion too often has been misused in areas of strife and conflict to intensify division and polarization. Religious people have too often failed

to take the lead in speaking to the most important ethical and moral issues of our day and, more importantly, in taking practical steps toward change. In meeting together, we have not turned from self-criticism or from very difficult discussions of sensitive issues. And yet our affirmation is one of hope.

The Nairobi Assembly has changed us. The new participation of over 100 youth delegates has given us the vitality and vision of a new generation, eager to join hands in concrete inter-religious projects for peace. The strong and energetic contribution of over a hundred and fifty women has made clear the necessity of women's equal partnership, not only in family life, but in the leadership of religious communities and social and political institutions. Over half of us here are participants from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, who have called the WCRP to a deeper understanding of our global interrelatedness in working for peace.

Through our struggle, we have been able to build trust. We have shared in worship and meditation. We have discovered once again that our differences of culture and religion, far from being a threat to one another, are a treasure. Our multiplicity is a source of strength. We bear the testimony of experience that world community is possible. From our diversity of traditions, we are united in faith and hope, and in our common pursuit of human dignity and world peace.

THE CONTEXT OF AFRICA

Africa has not only been the place of this Assembly; Africa and the concerns of its peoples have shaped the very context and perspective of our discussions. The African traditional cultures have a strong spirit of community and family, and a vibrant sense of the wholeness of life. Many religious traditions now live together in the continent of Africa - the traditional religions, along with Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Judaism. The many religious communities of Nairobi have welcomed us and given us a sense of the riches and challenges of living together in the pluralistic society of Kenya.

The peoples of Africa have also experienced sharply the very issues we have addressed in our Assembly and have helped us all to see these issues more clearly. The affront to human dignity of the apartheid regime in South Africa calls us

to repudiate separation and division and to seek the community of all races. The cry of human needs in drought and famine, the growing militarism of African governments, the increasing armstrade in Africa, the instances of political intolerance, the penetration of East-West rivalry into African political affairs - all call us to a wide understanding of the dynamics of global insecurity and the effect of global political and economic structures on the emerging African states.

The new WCRP/Africa is beginning to articulate the common values religious people bring to the creation of a just society. It stresses the need for active engagement in struggles for change and is committed to the realization of a new Africa.

RECONCILIATION IN REGIONAL CONFLICT

We are convinced that a major new priority of WCRP must be to address ourselves to areas of chronic regional tension and conflict - in Southern Africa, the Middle East, South and South-east Asia, Central America, and Europe. Since World War II, over one hundred and fifty wars, most of them in the Third World, have claimed at least ten million lives. Regional conflicts become swiftly polarized by East and West, and raise the level of instability and insecurity in the entire world.

The roots of these conflicts vary and are complex. But wherever such conflict takes on the language and symbolism of our religious traditions, pitting one against the other, it must be the business of WCRP to be involved, both regionally and with WCRP/International support.

We commit ourselves, as religious men and women, to undertaking the work of reconciliation and peace-making. We must deal with the issues of religious discord where they arise. We must deal with the economic and political struggles which take on religious rhetoric for narrow or chauvinistic purposes. We must take action as a multi-religious body committed to peace, in the very areas where religion and peace seem to be in opposition.

DISARMAMENT

Disarmament has long been a priority for the work of WCRP, and the urgent necessity of working for disarmament today is undiminished. With one voice, from our various traditions of faith, we insist that nuclear weapons, and all weapons of mass and indiscriminate destruction, are immoral and criminal, and that the stockpiling of such weapons with intent or threat to use them, erodes the very foundation of moral civilization.

We join with scientists, physicians, educators, and statesmen who have taken an active role

in opposing the arms race. We pledge our determined commitment to disarmament as we continue our work as a Non-governmental Organization at the United Nations, and as we work to influence our religious communities and our nations.

Specifically, we call for an immediate freeze on all further nuclear weapons research, production and deployment; the strengthening of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; a Comprehensive Test-ban Treaty; and a No First Use commitment on the part of nuclear nations as essential initial steps towards the dismantling of all nuclear arsenals.

Conventional weapons are also instruments of death and oppression. Halting the spread of militarization and the commercial exploitation of developing countries by trade in arms, leading to military and political dependency, is a crucial part of our commitment to disarmament.

It is a sign of our hope for the future that the youth of this Assembly have called for the establishment of ministries and departments of peace to work for the global security that ministries and departments of defence have been unable to realize.

DEVELOPMENT

Delegates from Asia, Africa and Latin America have given us all a new perspective on the arms race, as seen through the eyes of the poor. For the poor, survival is not primarily a question of the future in a nuclear world, but an urgent question of the present in a world beset with hunger, drought, and disease. Our common commitment to peace is based upon the clear interrelationship between disarmament and development.

Disarmament means liberation, not only from arsenals of weapons ready for use, but from the perpetual fear and insecurity which have accompanied our obsession with the instruments of death. Development means liberation from hunger and poverty; it means a just sharing of the natural and economic resources of the world, and the investment of our energies in life, and in the future.

As men and women of religion, we cannot tolerate the priorities of a world in which there are at least three tons of explosives, but not enough food, for every man, woman, and child on earth. We pledge ourselves, through our religious communities and our governments, and through continued WCRP cooperation with the U.N., radically to reverse these priorities.

We have a vision of a world in which the economic and political structures which perpetuate injustice and poverty are completely changed, and in which the armaments necessary to maintain these structures of injustice and oppression may be turned to ploughshares for the work of peace.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Along with Disarmament and Development, Human Rights are an essential part of the total and holistic peace we seek. We mean not only civil and political rights, but the right to live with all the basic economic, social and cultural rights of a life of fullness and freedom, including religious freedom. We reaffirm our commitment to the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and we insist that these rights are the very basis and foundation of a just and humane society and can never be postponed or suspended in the name of national security.

Our support for human rights must be consistent. Wherever human rights are trampled upon, we must speak out and act. We must resist and unmask the selective and tactical use of human rights issues by nations, especially the United States and the USSR, which raise their voice in one instance and ignore violations in another, as suits their political ends.

Our South African delegates - Hindu, Muslim and Christian - have all made us sharply aware of the suffering and incalculable violence done to individuals, families, and whole peoples by the racist ideology and theology of apartheid. We commit ourselves to work toward changing the international political and economic structures which support the South African regime.

In our concern for human rights, we must also work regionally and internationally on many other affronts to human dignity. Despite efforts being made by political leaders and religious people, there is deep-seated prejudice resulting in many forms of discrimination against scheduled castes and economically oppressed and socially stigmatized classes in South Asia, against the Burakumin of Japan and against the indigenous peoples of the Americas, Australia, the Philippines and elsewhere. The world has many millions of refugees, with no right to the roots of home, four million of them in Africa alone. And there are countless human beings stripped of their human rights behind closed doors. They have disappeared; they have been imprisoned without trial; they have been victims of torture. Wherever, and in whatever way, human rights violations occur, it is our concern, internationally and interreligiously.

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We support with conviction and hope the 1981 U.N. Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and we pledge to support its implementation.

PEACE EDUCATION

Education for peace is more urgent than ever before. As religious men and women, we pledge ourselves to stressing and raising to public consciousness the foundations of peacemaking within our own religious traditions, through education in temples, churches, mosques, synagogues, and homes. This will require our commitment to planning, training, and funding for peace education programmes. As religious people of action, we must deliberately link our personal lives and daily choices to our wider work as peacemakers.

In our religious institutions, and in schools, colleges and universities, we will encourage new initiatives for peace education. Our public and community life must include knowledge and discussion of the realities of the arms race, the conflicts that lead to war, the means and strategies for non-violent resolution of conflict, and the work of the United Nations and UNESCO.

Essential to peace education is learning about and coming to understand those of different religions, ideologies, and cultures with whom we share our communities, our nations and our world. In many cases, the opposite of conflict and violence is knowledge. Efforts must be made so that fear may begin to give way to trust. We must strengthen and deepen mutual understanding by sustained dialogue, and by undertaking common work together. We need to understand one another. We need one another in order to see and understand ourselves more clearly. And we need one another in order to undertake together work that will require the resources and energies of peoples throughout the world.

The spiritual resources of our religious traditions give us strength to dedicate ourselves to the task ahead. We are compelled to turn the faith and hope that sustains us into dynamic action for human dignity and world peace.

NOTICE TO READERS

In order to ensure that our mailing list is accurate, we should be grateful if you would check your name and address and let us know if there are any errors

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

Production and mailing costs for *Current Dialogue* continue to escalate. Contributions towards these annual expenses (SF20; \$US10; £7) would be gratefully received.

Pr
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International Jewish Committee
ON
Interreligious Consultations

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October 23, 1984

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To: Members of IJCIC
From: Rabbi Henry D. Michelman
Subject: IJCIC Meeting
Date: November 14, 1984
Time: 9:00 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Re-Examination of structure and procedures of IJCIC
2. Discussion of emerging relationships with Vatican
3. Preparation for IJCIC/WCC Consultation Harvard Divinity School, November 26-28, 1984
4. Miscellaneous

The meeting will be held at the Synagogue Council of America offices on the 2nd Floor.

E. S. Allen

To the average churchgoer brought up on parochial and very much British-centred Christianity the past 40 years have brought rapid and traumatic changes. First there has been the unprecedented fall in church attendance and commitment - less than 10% in this very secularized society now attend the mainstream churches, even though, for example, in England the "Church of England" is by law established and many non-attenders would claim some nominal link and expect a religious burial service. Secondly, there now exists a new situation in society - not just the religious pluralism between the Christian denominations but, through immigration, the creation of a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-faith society. In the British Council of Churches booklet prepared by the "Committee for Relations with Other Faiths" to implement the WCC Guidelines on Dialogue, the new situation is dramatically introduced by typical headlines and then followed with some vital statistics and background information which I quote below:

The British situation

"More Muslims than Methodists in Britain now...Leicester the largest Hindu city outside India...more Jews to the square mile in Redbridge than in Israel...Southall the new capital city of the Sikhs...Buddhist monks in Sussex...redundant churches being turned into mosques and temples."

These are some of the things that are said: What are the facts?

1. There are no accurate statistics for membership of religious groups; so far it has proved impossible to ask a question concerning religious adherence in the National Census.
2. There are, however, community figures but these need to be read discriminatingly. The Union of Muslim Organizations claims that there are now 1,500,000 Muslims in Britain. The Jewish Board of Deputies gives a known Jewish community of 412,000. Hindu and Sikh sources suggest that there are approximately 400,000 Hindus and 200,000 Sikhs. There are no reliable figures for Buddhists, but one well-informed source suggests the figure here may be as high as 100,000, for the second largest ethnic community in Britain is the Chinese, and many of the Vietnamese Boat People are Buddhist. There are smaller communities of Zoroastrians and Jains, say 5,000 each. There is a Baha'i community with 167 local assemblies totalling some thousands of members.
3. The degree of religious observance within these communities is hard to assess. Some evidence suggests that among ethnic minority groups attendance at mosque, temple or gurdwara is much greater than would be the case in the original country, and many adherents of other faiths have become much more committed to their beliefs through experiences in this country. There is among them deep concern for the transmission of belief and practice to the rising generation. But other evidence shows that none of these communities is exempt from the "acids of modernity" and the prevalent secularist tone of our culture. There are many nominal adherents of other religious systems who have neither personal faith nor serious ethical or ritual commitment.
4. Adherents of other faiths are also from white, Protestant and Catholic, backgrounds, who have made a conscious decision to live by a faith other

than Christian. A large number are followers of forms of Hinduism, either deliberately having chosen to embrace the teachings of one or other of the swamis or gurus who offer various forms of neo-Hinduism, or, as is the case with much larger numbers, having unconsciously absorbed Hindu teachings through the practice of Yoga and Transcendental Meditation. Buddhism in one of its several forms claims the allegiance of many, while others are Muslims. It is also possible to meet, though rarely, people of both Catholic and Protestant origin, who are now Jews, Sikhs, or Jains. People with this background also appear to make up the British Baha'i community.

(From "Relations with people of other faiths : Guidelines on dialogue in Britain" 1981 BCC, 2 Eaton Gate, London SW1W 9BL, 6Op)

What have the churches done to adjust to religious pluralism?

It is the usual sad story of "too little and too late"! e.g. it has taken over 30 years - since the first arrivals of Christians from the Caribbean in 1948 - for the white churches in Britain to acknowledge their presence, and accord respect and equal partnership to the Black-led churches. These holiness and pentecostal congregations have drawn large followings from those who were Anglicans, Methodist or Congregational in the Caribbean but have felt rejected by their equivalent brand-name churches in the UK. They experienced either the aloofness of middle-class members who still commuted back to their city-centre churches from the white suburbs, or the depressing weakness of inner-city congregations with inadequate and unimaginative leadership to cope with the pastoral care of the immigrants. So the indigenous churches lost out on an opportunity which could possibly have revitalised their congregations in working class areas and built bridges of understanding between black and white Christians. There have been notable exceptions and a white Methodist minister, Tony Holden, set up the Zebra Project to try and bring the two communities together, face to face, in partnership and dialogue. A woman minister from the German Protestant Church (Roswith Gerloff and Walter Hollenweger) set up the "Project in Partnership between Black and White" - a centre for training black Christian leaders and pastors leading to a certificate in Theology in Birmingham University. The Rev. Wilfred Woods came from Barbados to serve his curacy at St Paul's Cathedral and fight racism - he was for a time Moderator of the WCC Programme to Combat Racism. He is now my local Archdeacon of Southwark and is still convinced that racism in society and in the churches is the most destructive of evils.

I have begun with that piece of history to illustrate the difficulties the British churches have with religious pluralism amongst themselves - even when their ecumenism is restricted to their own white culture. It was William Temple who hailed the formation of the ecumenical movement as the great new fact of our era. In 1942 he was a founder of the British Council of Churches and when we celebrated its 40th anniversary with a service in St Paul's Cathedral an anthem was sung, not by the white boy sopranos of that famous church choir but by the black Shiloh choir. That different sound of harmony was the result of years of patient, persistent dialogue by BCC staff member Martin Conway, and the regard given by the black community to the BCC Community and Race Relations Unit since it was set up in 1971. So ecumenism (i.e. religious pluralism within the churches) moves at a slow pace in the UK. I haven't the space or expertise to point out the regional differences, the quite different ecumenical mix in Wales, or Scotland, or Northern Ireland. The latter is a testimony to how deep the wounds of history can go, and how myths and exaggerated fears can divide society and breed sectarian violence of a most persistent and depressing kind. In Ulster, terms like 'ecumenism' and 'religious pluralism' mean little in practice to the majority of churchgoers who

are still obsessed with tribal religion, patriotism and "them against us" attitudes. I honour those in the Irish Council of Churches who try to build bridges between north and south, protestant and catholic, and centres of reconciliation like the Corrymeela Community. It is these same people who respond to what we call nowadays 'the wider ecumenism' of dialogue between Christians and Jews and other faiths. It is significant that the delegation from the Birmingham Multi-Faith Resource Unit, consisting of a Sikh, a Hindu, a Muslim, a Christian and a Jew, which visited a large gathering of religious superiors in Dublin to share their lively experience of grass-roots dialogue were invited later to Belfast ... for the MUFRU team had challenged in a unique way a country where dialogue between Christians themselves has a long way to go! Perhaps this is an answer to the old joke about conflict in the Middle East "I wish these Jews and Arabs would settle their differences in a Christian way"!

Further factors which mitigate against an acceptance of religious pluralism in present-day British society

1. Secularism

Most of the immigrants coming to England had some experience of church presence and missionary work which originated in the UK. Therefore, it was a shock to peoples of all faiths to discover how irreligious and unbelieving the British have become. It is not just the impact of materialism and permissiveness that makes Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus fearful that their own young people will be corroded by the "acids of modernity". It is the lack of any feeling of transcendence, any reverence and respect for religious values and holy people and holy places. It is a religious trauma, not just a racial one, to have mosques and temples daubed, and sacrilegious acts perpetrated after the manner still accorded by National Front type of people to Jewish synagogues and cemeteries. Now that the communities of other faiths have become established they increasingly see they have a mission to the ungodly British, as well as lapsed members of their own communities. They are also concerned to set up their own "denominational schools", single sex, to propagate their religion and to have teaching of Arabic for Qur'anic learning etc. Meanwhile, they usually withdraw their children from the day school Assembly and Religious Education lessons, as is the right of any parent. Fortunately, those who receive R.E. from progressive teachers working to the new Agreed Syllabi of authorities like Birmingham, can make their own contribution to, and learn a great deal from, the teaching of world religions. Most teachers would testify to the new importance and interest in Christianity when it is taught as a world religion with its universal rather than a British parochial dimension. The other factor is that Marxism and other philosophies are treated seriously, for the new challenges facing all living faiths include secularist interpretations of life on planet earth, a deep sense of hopelessness and meaninglessness facing young people under the shadow of a nuclear holocaust, issues of law and order, oppressive structures and democratic freedom. The secular, closed, materialistic system of thought seems as impervious to religion as once Islam seemed to the advances of Christianity. Here religious pluralism finds common ground in witnessing to the long history of human civilisations, rich in music, art and architecture, as well as the saintly living of generations of holy men and women, because their societies were rooted and grounded in experiences of the Living God. The great divide in British society is between the sacred and the secular interpretations of life.

2. Divisions in society

To the outsider Britain may have once looked like a homogenous society with its towns and villages centred on the parish church. As we have seen, that myth has been shattered. Likewise all this talk about British values of fair play, tolerance and

good neighbourliness have been shown to be lacking in today's multi-racial tensions. Every wave of immigration to this country has met with a cool, if not a hostile, welcome, and over the centuries the Jews suffered most from "immigration laws", sometimes experiencing wholesale deportation, as in 1920 (was it called repatriation?). However, because of our common European cultures, Huguenots, Jews, Irish, Poles, Greek Cypriots, have been integrated into British society as were the Angles, Saxons, Danes, Norsemen and Normans of earlier centuries. The advent of coloured immigrants exposed irrational fears and institutional racism, quickly exploited by politicians like Enoch Powell, whose constituency was Wolverhampton, where in decaying housing of the inner city Asian immigrants were trying to salvage some quality of life for themselves and eventually - if immigration laws allowed - for their dependants. So we were threatened with "rivers of blood" unless immigration was halted and repatriation encouraged - all because of this "alien wedge" that darkened our cities. Even Margaret Thatcher was reported as saying on TV on 31st January 1978: "The British character has done so much for democracy, for law, and done so much throughout the world, that if there is any fear that it might be swamped, then people are going to be rather hostile to those coming in." Faced with people who spoke different languages, worshipped different deities, but above all whose skin colour made them stand out, then one million black or coloured in a total population of fifty-five million was a divisive threat to the fabric of society! As Elliott Kendall has pointed out, the Asian immigrants, like the Caribbeans before them, provided Britain with a visibly pluralist society - but they did not create the problems of British society, its class divisions, its unequal opportunities, poor housing, bad schools and the other deprivations of working class neighbourhoods. By their presence in these situations they made them more visible. Moreover, they did not initiate racism, they merely revealed its latent presence! Religious pluralism has a tough time in such a divided society, for religious differences themselves are often regarded as divisive. So the silent majority does not get involved in encounters with other faiths; they have seen what has happened in Paisley's Ulster, in Khomeini's Iran, in Kahane's Israel. The fear of fanaticism suppresses inter-faith dialogue. The latest appeals by the Archbishop of Canterbury - and doubtless leaders of other faith communities could give voice in similar vein - to bring reconciliation to bear upon the divisions within British society, to stop pursuing policies of confrontation and to try and govern through consensus, to ameliorate the injustices and inequalities, and especially to redress the plight of the large numbers of long-term unemployed, should be acted upon.

How fares religious pluralism in a polarised society? Two illustrations come to mind. First, how Queen Elizabeth II was criticized by press and politicians for the style of her Christmas broadcast 1983. Her theme was the multi-cultural, multi-racial values of the Commonwealth, and she illustrated this from films of visits to India and other countries. She was taken to task for not giving a "traditional Christmas Day broadcast", that she had become the tool of the "race relations industry", that she had omitted to emphasize the unique Christian message at Christmas and diluted our heritage with sights and sounds of other cultures and other faiths. This is an all-too familiar ploy of right wing "one nation under God" patriots, but for the first time they took issue in public to tell the monarch how she ought to speak to her nation!

Secondly, a few weeks back in September, a member of the Iranian Embassy hit the headlines in all the media by slaughtering a sheep in view of his suburban, respectable and animal-loving neighbours. This event gave Members of Parliament a chance to appear on television and questions were asked of the Home Secretary in the House of Commons, which resulted in obtaining a full public apology from the Iranian Embassy. During all this instant furore no voice was heard explaining that it could be a thanksgiving offering by one who had completed the pilgrimage to Mecca. Clearly the press, yes, even the Guardian, saw this "bizarre and gruesome" incident the last straw in race relations, and went on to offer their support to the campaign of the RSPCA to change the laws to enforce the stunning of animals prior to Islamic or

Jewish slaughter. In secular society the religious scruples expressed in Shechita are treated with ridicule and contempt. This is a dangerous omen. As someone so wisely remarked at the first gathering of inter-faith organizations in England in November 1979, "one of the prime causes of racialism is the despising of other peoples' religion."

3. Proselytism - one faith (or many?) for this one world

One could add many other factors to those listed above, especially the fear and basic insecurity that cause members of the faith communities to prefer a ghetto situation to a wider ecumenism - for oikoumene means "all under one roof" and perhaps no religion is yet "spacious enough to be the home for the human race" (Lesslie Newbigin). Most churchgoers, for example, are not confident enough about their own faith either to share it with those who have none, or to dialogue with those who have a different faith. Those Christians who are over-confident end up proselytising other faiths without any attempt to understand or appreciate the other religion. This sets up a backlash of recrimination much of which is quite justified, e.g. Jews who react against the infiltration of missionaries, for to lose members of their community to another faith is viewed after the Holocaust as a form of spiritual genocide. Proselytism is the most sensitive issue relating to religious pluralism.

Signs of hope and agents of peaceful change in religiously plural Britain

After the lengthy recital of the problems of a multi-faith, multi-cultural society - a useful antidote to wishful thinking! - I must now list some of the positive, encouraging and enriching experiences.

1. The moderation and good sense of most people, who try to be good neighbours to those they work with and live amongst. When the United Reformed Church published its own contributions to the WCC Guidelines on Dialogue with people of other faiths it included a section of personal experiences. These simple testimonies to everyday encounters encourage the ordinary reader to take similar steps to understand and appreciate his new neighbours. I quote from Peter Loveitt's script:

"Dialogue should proceed in terms of people of other faiths, rarely than of theoretical impersonal systems" (WCC Guidelines, para 20)

It began the day we moved in. As the removal van drew up, children and adults appeared as if from nowhere and helped to carry furniture and fittings into our new home. And we had met none of them previously. Afterwards we went round to express our thanks. Their welcome was overwhelming, and soon we were talking like old friends; even our lack of Urdu and their limited English only added to the fun. Since then we have sampled one another's traditional foods, exchanged gifts, shared in parties and discussed the similarities and differences we'd noticed about our separate faiths.

(With People of Other Faiths in Britain
published by URC, 86 Tavistock Place London WC1 95p)

2. The patience, good humour and hospitality of the immigrant communities. Despite all the harrassment and discrimination they have suffered from certain sections of society, the faith communities have been so welcoming to groups of

women's organizations and men's clubs and especially Christian congregations in hosting visits to synagogues, Sikh temples, mosques and Hindu temples. They are over-generous in thanking individuals and groups who sympathise with their needs for, for example, more space on radio for information broadcasts in their own languages, for the women from churches who visit their homes to teach the women-folk some English, for the use or sale of redundant churches or halls for their own worship or community centres. Likewise among the Jewish community a Gentile who supports the campaign for Soviet Jewry, or shows friendship and support for the State of Israel, is welcomed as a true friend of their community and often this is the first necessary step towards inter-faith dialogue.

3. The existence of inter-faith organizations: like the London Society of Christians and Jews, founded in 1920, the Council of Christians and Jews founded by Chief Rabbi Hertz and William Temple in 1942, the World Congress of Faiths and the Inter-Faith Project and local branches of CCJ and a rapid and recent growth of inter-faith councils like Redbridge or Leeds Concord, or MUFRU in Birmingham. This year Brian Pearce, secretary of South London Inter-Faith Group, is taking a sabbatical to visit and coordinate these scattered groups hoping thereby to strengthen them in resources of material and imagination.

4. The renewed interest by the churches. Through the formation of the BCC Committee for Relations with Other Faiths in 1978 with David Brown, Islamic scholar and Anglican Bishop as its Chairman and Kenneth as its much-travelled, always-dialoguing Secretary, the mainstream churches have been challenged to respond through their official structures and not leave inter-faith work to a few enthusiasts who support CCJ etc. The United Reformed Church was the first denomination to form a Committee for "Mission and Other Faiths" whose chairman was David Kerr, the Director of the Centre for the Study of Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations at Selly Oak, Birmingham. Reference has already been made to the first booklet this committee published, which led to annual consultations between a group of 24 participants, Jewish and Christian, who wrestled with key concepts like Covenant, Torah, Messiah, Eretz Israel, as well as sharing prayer and bible studies and personal experiences of dialogue. Three smaller writing groups were formed and resulted in the publication of "With Jews and Christians in Britain" in May 1983 when Rabbi Norman Solomon and Dr Edie Friedman, two of the Jewish participants, addressed the Church's General Assembly. In the meantime, the sending down of the WCC Guidelines to churches was given impetus by the BCC publications Why Dialogue? by Kenneth Cracknell, 1980; Relations with People of Other Faiths, 1981 and Can We Pray Together? - Guidelines on worship in a multi-faith society, 1983. The precursor to all these was David Brown's 1976 BCC booklet: A New Threshold: Guidelines for the churches in their relations with Muslim communities. It was a great loss to the inter-faith work when Bishop Brown died in 1982, and as a tangible memorial to his life and scholarship the Church of England in June this year had before their Synod a report which has been sent to all dioceses for study entitled "Towards a Theology for Inter-Faith Dialogue". This is a deep and challenging piece of writing, introducing British churches to a Copernician revolution in the theology of their religion and in their relationships to other faiths. Obviously this report will prove threatening to the theologically insecure, but it represents the most thorough attempt by any of the British mainstream churches to take religious pluralism seriously.

5. The provision of centres for inter-faith study: Professor Ninian Smart pioneered the teaching of world religions as a full academic discipline in Lancaster University, giving a lead to the many colleges of education, devising similar courses for what was once called "Comparative Religion Studies". These colleges, like Westhill,

Birmingham, or St John's Ripon and York, soon created religious resource centres that could loan out the many artefacts and excellent books, maps, posters, slides and video programmes that abound today for religious education teaching. Other centres like Trinity Salford Manchester, provided space for lectures and seminars and the MUFRU centre at Selly Oak has a whole multi-faith way of life focused on its premises in Selly Oak Road. Similar projects like these are in hand in Leeds by Concord, and we are glad that they cater for grass-roots encounters of the less intellectual kind, places where multi-faith, multi-racial and multi-cultural dialogue can be celebrated.

Last but not least, we rejoice that alongside the well-established Centre for the Study of Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations at Selly Oak, Birmingham, there has now been established the European Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations under its Director, an Orthodox Rabbi, Dr Norman Solomon, one of our participants.

Eric S. Allen
November, 1984



Ref. mess. etc

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

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Geneva, November 1st, 1984

To: Mr. Mark Friedman
From: Jean Halpérin

IJCIC/WCC Consultation, Harvard, 25-28 November 1984

1. All participants will be accommodated at the Quality Inn, 1651 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Mass. 02138, (Tel.: [617] 491-10.00). Rooms have been booked for all those who have indicated their participation. Those who have not yet done so are requested to contact immediately Mark Friedman, WJC, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016 (Tel.: [212] 679-0600) so that the necessary arrangements could be made.
2. It would seem advisable for each of you to go directly to the hotel and to check in there, before registering at the Harvard Divinity School (less than 5 minutes' walking distance from the hotel) where the meetings will be held.
3. The programme of the consultation is attached. While the consultation proper is scheduled to start on Monday 26 November, 9:30 a.m., a reception for all participants will take place on Sunday at 4 p.m. to meet with the Boston area Jewish/Christian community. It would be much appreciated if you could attend.
4. A closed preparatory meeting for all Jewish participants will be held on Sunday evening, 8:30 p.m., at the Quality Inn.
5. It is planned to wind up the consultation by Wednesday 28 November lunch time. For those of you who are members of the IJCIC/WCC Liaison and Planning Committee, please note that the Liaison and Planning Committee will meet on Wednesday afternoon and evening. Non-members will thus be able to leave Cambridge on Wednesday afternoon.
6. Please find attached a preliminary list of Christian participants as well as the paper prepared by Rabbi Dr. Norman Solomon on Great Britain, together with an additional paper by Chief Rabbi Rosen on Ireland. It is hoped that other papers can be forwarded to you prior to the consultation.
7. I am looking forward to seeing you soon at Harvard.

Halpérin

IJCIC-WCC Consultation

Harvard, 25-28 November 1984

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM: ITS MEANING AND LIMITS IN THE WORLD TODAY

SUNDAY 25 NOVEMBER

16.00 Reception with Boston area Jewish/Christian community
Evening Pre-consultation separate meetings of participants

MONDAY 26 NOVEMBER

9.30 Opening of Consultation
Paper 1: "Is religious pluralism necessary?
If so, is it possible?" - Michael Rosenack
Questions and discussion

12.30 Lunch

15.30 Paper 2: "Are there limits to religious
pluralism? If so, why?" - George Lindbeck
Questions and discussion

18.30 Dinner

20.30 General discussion

TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER

9.00 "Religious pluralism: Political
science perspectives" - David Sidorsky
Questions and discussion - Roger Fisher

10.00 Coffee

11.00 "How does religious pluralism work?"
Brief summaries of papers prepared by a Jew and a Christian
from each of three countries: Great Britain (David Rosen/Norman
Solomon, Eric Allen), USA (Marvin Fox, Mary Edwardsen), and
Israel (Ruth Lapidot, Ibrahim Sim'an)

12.30 Lunch

15.30 General discussion

18.30 ¹³⁰ Dinner

20.30 ¹³⁰ General discussion

WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER

9.00 Presentation of draft joint statement and discussion

10.00 Coffee

10.30 Discussion continued

11.30 Break

12.30 Lunch (Distribution of revised joint statement)

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES/INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

"RELIGIOUS PLURALISM: ITS MEANING AND LIMITS IN THE WORLD TODAY".

Harvard, 25-28 November 1984

CHRISTIAN PARTICIPANTS

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ms Mary Edwardsen (USA) | Rev. Ake Skoog (Israel) |
| Dr Theodore Stylianopoulos (USA) | Bishop Krister Stendahl (Sweden) |
| Fr. Paul Ischi (USA) | Dr George Lindbeck (USA) |
| Rev. Frances Manson (USA) | Rev. Hans Ucko (Sweden) |
| Dr William Weiler (USA) | Fr. Jorge Mejia (Argentine/Vatican) |
| Rev. David Simpson (USA) | Dr Gerald Anderson (USA) |
| Dr Diana Eck (USA) | Rev. Ibrahim Sim'an (Israel) |
| Dr Coos Schoneveld (FRG) | Dr Kofi Opoku (Nigeria) |
| Rev. Eric Allen (UK) | Dr Rolf Rendtorff (FRG) |
| Rev. Ulrike Berger (FRG) | Rev. Bertalan Tamas (Hungary) |
| Rev. Ron Lewis (UK) | Rev. Allan Brockway (USA) |
| Mr Bruce Beck (USA) | |

U H-1146 Budapest
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Hungary
Tel. 228-479

International Jewish Committee ON Interreligious Consultations

AMERICAN SECRETARIAT:
Synagogue Council of America
 327 Lexington Avenue
 New York, N.Y. 10016
 Tel.: (212) 686-8670

EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT:
World Jewish Congress
 1 Rue de Varembe
 1211 Geneve 20, Switzerland
 Tel.: (022) 34 13 25

CONSTITUTENT AGENCIES:
American Jewish Committee
 165 East 56th Street
 New York, N.Y. 10022

**Anti-Defamation League—
 B'nai B'rith**
 823 United Nations Plaza
 New York, N.Y. 10017

**Israel Jewish Council for
 Interreligious Consultations**
 12A Koresh Street, P.O.B. 2028
 Jerusalem, Israel 91020

Synagogue Council of America
 327 Lexington Avenue
 New York, N.Y. 10016

World Jewish Congress
 1 Park Avenue
 New York, N.Y. 10016

AGENDA

NOVEMBER 7, 1984 IJCIC MEETING

- I. RE-EXAMINATION OF STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES OF IJCIC.
- II. PREPARATION FOR IJCIC/WCC CONSULTATION
 HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL, NOVEMBER 26-28, 1984
- III. POST-HARVARD PREPARATION FOR MEETING WITH DR. RIEGNER.

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ARE THERE LIMITS TO RELIGIOUS PLURALISM? IF SO, WHY?
IJCIC-WCC Consultation, Harvard, Nov. 25-28, 1984

George Lindbeck

Judging by the assigned titles of our papers, Prof. Rosenack and I have been asked to cover much the same ground, but in reverse directions. His title moves from non-pluralism to pluralism, and mine, from unlimited to limited pluralism. Further, both of us are supposed to speak from a point of view other than that of the social sciences: otherwise there would be no reason for devoting a later session specifically to political science perspectives. In my case, needless to say, the approach is that of a Christian theologian.

This paper is not intended to be either primarily constructive or primarily descriptive, but rather analytic. I shall not describe what Christians think nor argue about what they should think, but rather analyze what seems to me the strongest available specifically Christian case for unlimited pluralism. Towards the end I fear I slip into advocacy, but that was not my original intention.

The order of presentation is that suggested by the title. I shall first characterize what might be meant by "unlimited religious pluralism," next mention some problems in legitimating it, and third, make a proposal. Then I shall deal briefly with practical limits, and finally with the theological limitations of the proposal.

I

Totally unlimited pluralism is presumably impossible, but let us try to describe the closest imaginable and approvable approximation. First, it would embrace mutually exclusive claims to absolute truth. Most traditional religions at least appear to make such claims, and an unlimited pluralism would have to accommodate them. Otherwise most adherents of the three Western monotheisms would be excluded as well as proponents of quasi-religions such as Marxism, and the same applies, it seems safe to say, to many adherents of Eastern religions.

Second, if pluralism is looked at in global terms, there would have to be room for religions which restrict pluralism in the societies in which they are dominant. There

Relationship
- suffering - mita vchuyadi
- violence
- Nazism
- abortion
- women
- superstition
X vs anti X
Mehlan power ambiguity
seef - low
relatives

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no treatment to violence
sanctity of life, unity of human life

would have to be a place for those for whom it is a matter of faith that the full and free practice of their religion is possible only in a Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, or Christian (for example, Amish) social environment. Such arrangements, I take it, need not be incompatible with freedom of practise for religious minorities, but restrictions on winning converts from the majority, such as exist in Malaysia, are likely to be present. Anomalies like these are no doubt untidy, but they seem unavoidable if one thinks of unlimited pluralism on a world-wide scale.

Third, and even more difficult, there must be room for the evil as well as the good. This could be discussed in international terms, but I shall simplify by mentioning only what this means internally for those societies which seek to be as open as possible. They must, no doubt, forbid certain kinds of actions, but they will put as few limits as feasible on the advocacy of these actions. They will have a place for cults which extoll human sacrifice, for the Ku Klux Klan, and for Nazis, not to mention Khomeini-type Islamic fundamentalists, Moral Majoritarians, or the JDL and the IRA. Unlimited pluralism, in short, allows its own worst enemies to flourish as much as they can manage providing they do not actually engage in widow-burning, pogroms, or other forms of physical violence.

II

The next item on the agenda is the theological legitimation of unlimited pluralism, but before discussing a particular instance, it will be useful to make some preliminary observations.

First, many of the theological justifications for religious pluralism do not cover the unlimited case. This seems to be true of pro-pluralistic positions based, for example, on the hellenized logos Christologies of the early church, or on the idealistic view (e.g., in its Troeltschian form) that all religions are diverse and possibly equal objectifications of experiences of the Absolute, or on the conviction that all religions are different paths to the same goal. Such outlooks are useful in arguing for the peaceful and cooperative co-existence or the mutually enriching dialogue of religious groups which are prepared to respect or appreciate each other, but they provide little or no help in dealing with problems of mutually exclusive absolute claims or of irreconcilable opposition and open hostility. In brief, theologies which only legitimate what I shall call dialogical pluralism are irrelevant to unlimited pluralism. A quite different set of ideas is needed.

Second, this different set of ideas may be compatible or incompatible with those used to provide backing for interreligious dialogue. If compatible, there is no problem except that of systematic neatness and economy. It would obviously be desirable to deal with the two types of pluralism in a unified way, but if independent considerations must be invoked, so be it. The real difficulty arises if the warrants for the two types of pluralism are incompatible as, indeed, they easily could be. One may, for example, justify that respect for exclusive and competing truth claims which seems necessary for unlimited pluralism on the grounds that one of the claimants may be right, but this admission would then make it impossible to accept a theology of interreligious dialogue which denies the legitimacy of claims to absolute truth. Those confronted with such a dilemma may find they have to choose between what they consider two goods: either dialogical or unlimited pluralism.

In the third place, however, it may be possible to find a way of legitimating unlimited pluralism which also supports interreligious dialogue. If so, it could be expected to replace the usual theologies of dialogue just as (if I may be allowed the comparison) Einstein's theories replaced Newton's, and for a similar reason: we naturally prefer outlooks which cover new ranges of data while continuing to account for the old. My own proposal is not presented as a candidate for this Einsteinian role (I say too little about its potential usefulness as backing for interreligious dialogue), but in my more optimistic moods I think it could serve.

III

The candidate I have in mind is in one sense primitively Christian, but it has not been much considered, especially not in the present context. I am not aware that the ideas I shall discuss have before been used in support of pluralism, and one reason for this may be that they seem at first glance antithetical to dialogue -- at least to dialogue in the technical sense this term has now acquired. Whether the antithesis is real will be briefly considered in this and the last section of this paper, but for the most part the focus will be on unlimited pluralism.

The proposal is that a specifically Christian commitment to unlimited pluralism can be most effectively grounded by construing the Christian situation as closely analogous to that of Israel. When this is done, texts such as Amos 9:7 become the hermeneutical key to interpreting what the bible has to say about pluralism. God's question as reported by the prophet, "Did I not bring up Israel from the

land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?" challenges the easy assumption of Israel and the church that they alone have been guided and chosen by God to fulfill his purposes in the world. They may believe that they are the only peoples elected to testify to the proper identity of the one true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and, for Christians, supremely of Jesus Christ, but this does not exclude the possibility that other nations, other religions, have also been appointed to their particular though quite different God-given missions.

These missions may at times intersect with those of Israel and the church, but they may also be independent. Sometimes the others may be sent to chastize the elect peoples, but they may also prepare the way, or teach new truths, or in other ways support the missions of the Jews and Christians. No universally valid generalizations can be made in this biblical outlook regarding the nature and role of other religions and quasi-religions except that God in his ruling and overruling providence uses them for his own purposes. (*case by case*)

When looked at in eschatological perspective, one may summarize this first point by saying that God is now preparing the cosmos in all its innumerable aspects for the final coming of the Kingdom. The role of the peoples of God in that preparatory work may be essential without being in most respects central. These peoples, to be sure, understandably see themselves as the axis of history, but from God's perspective their contribution to the shaping of humanity for the consummation may at times be marginal. They are the only ones to whom the proper identity of the Lord of all has been revealed, but that is no cause for boasting.

and to write all
A corollary of this first point, applicable specifically to Christians, is that they have a commission to witness to all, but not to convert all. It is for God to choose whom he will add to the company of witnesses, and clearly not all are elected for that purpose. He has other purposes and other missions for the vast majority which they (like Christians) fulfill with varying degrees of faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Faithfulness for some may hinge on not becoming a part of the church -- though it seems clear that from most New Testament perspectives, salvation for those in the community of faith depends somehow on remaining within it. (This is a point to which we shall briefly return in the last section.)

The need for modesty on the part of God's peoples is reinforced when one considers the gap between their calling and their response, their election and their faithfulness. Egyptians, Philistines, and Syrians, not to mention Muslims, Marxists, and Buddhists, may often do better than Jews and

Christians in performing what God asks of them. More than that, when the elect peoples fail, they become worse than other nations. That is what Ezechial says regarding Israel, and we can see the beginnings of the same judgment on the church in Paul's excoriations of the Corinthians, or in his warnings to the Gentile Christians that they also can be severed from the olive tree, or in the letters to the seven churches in the Apocalypse. Nothing in the N.T., to be sure, matches the harshness of Ezechial, but that, we may surmise, was because the church was in its infancy and Christians had not yet begun to compile their grisly record of crimes against fellow Christians, Jews, and heathen. To be elect is to stand in special measure under God's judgment, and when the elect peoples fail, it is not infrequently to unheard of depths. The corruption of the best is the worst, as even classical wisdom testifies.

A third restraint against the triumphalism which threatens those who claim to be God's special people can be derived from the scriptural emphasis on the servant role. A specifically Christian way of developing this point is to argue that the witness of the church must take the form of selfless and sacrificial concern for the needs of all human beings whether they are outside or inside the community of faith. Only thus can authentic testimony be given to the one who died that others might live. The primary motive of mission on this view cannot be to win converts (with all the communal self-interest and self-assertion which that inevitably involves). If conversions take place, this must be a by-product of efforts to help human beings be better human beings, Buddhists better Buddhists, Jews better Jews, Marxists better Marxists. It is legitimate to hope that other religions will be able to find their own reasons for also defining their missions in terms of service, and that thus competition between them might take the form of attempts to outdo each other in mutual helpfulness. Each religion will, of course, have its own way of understanding what is involved in helping others to become "better," but these different understandings need not always be incompatible. In any case, it is not unbiblical to argue, first, that the function of being a "light to the Gentiles" does not always involve conversions, second, that it is compatible with a willingness, not only to enlighten but be enlightened by the Gentiles (as the Wisdom literature illustrates), and lastly, that it is independent of whether the Gentiles wish to enlighten or be enlightened. This, in brief, is the rationale for interreligious dialogue in the view we are considering.

A fourth consideration has to do with the diaspora character of of Christianity. There is nothing in the New Testament to suggest that Christians will anywhere become a majority before the end of history, much less convert the world. From this point of view, the 1500 years of Constanti-

nian Christendom were an anomalous interlude which, while not excluded by the logic of faith, is also not integral to it. Unlike Jews, furthermore, Christians have no promised land within history, and are thus authorized by their scriptures to think of themselves even more than do Jews as pilgrims and wanderers who have here no abiding city. In Constantinian situations this emphasis has normally been interpreted in individualistic and therefore other-worldly terms, but once freed of the incubus of social, cultural, or political establishment, an essentially diaspora understanding of Christianity seems bound to re-assert itself.

The moral of the story is clear: strangers in foreign lands are naturally inclined to favor unlimited pluralism. When, in addition, the strangers see themselves elected to the special task of witnessing to the one true God, not necessarily through converting others, but by service, when they think that God has other and perhaps crucial missions for other religions, and when they look at themselves as deeply prone to unfaithfulness, the premises are present for uniquely strong support of unlimited pluralism.

This strength is evident, not only in comparison to what is necessary for dialogical pluralism (for this need not extend to the enemies of dialogue), but also in reference to the unlimited pluralism favored by Enlightenment liberalism. One need not be a Marxist to agree that liberal tolerance has a repressive aspect. It has no alternative but to treat the religious and irreligious unenlightened as victims of outworn superstitions. It may vigorously defend their rights to exist and to proselytize, but it has no grounds for evaluating them positively. It lacks anything comparable to the biblical conviction that God uses even the enemies of the chosen people to advance his purposes.

Furthermore, the grounds for liberal tolerance are vulnerable to empirical falsification. These grounds include the counter-factual axiom that the universal truths of reason will in the long run triumph over all competitors in the free market place of ideas. When this does not happen, liberalism can easily succumb, as Marxism has generally done, to totalitarian impulses. In contrast to this, a biblically based commitment to pluralism is immune to disproof; or, to put the same point more diffusely, it is possible to find Christian reasons for favoring maximum openness to diversity which are unaffected when diversity works to the church's disadvantage.

A cautionary word is needed in concluding this section. The biblical themes of election, witness, service, unfaithfulness, and pilgrimage can be used to justify unrestricted pluralism, but they do not by themselves require it. The relation between premises and conclusion is not one of

deductive necessity. All that can be maintained is that these themes provide a conceptual vocabulary for constructing, if one so wishes, a powerful legitimation for seeking as much openness to pluralism as is practically feasible. How much is feasible, however, is another question.

IV

The investigation of feasibility, of the practical limits of pluralism, is primarily the business of social and political scientists), not of theologians. Yet theologians do have responsibility for considering what attitudes Christians should adopt towards the limits.

This problem is not unlike the one discussed in the terminology of "thesis" and "hypothesis" by pre-Vatican II theologians. The thesis, it will be recalled, was that Roman Catholicism should have special privileges and all other religious groups be restricted, while the hypothesis, in contrast, was that the church can adjust when practically necessary to the separation of church and state and freedom of religion. As was said by a Parisian wag during the Second Empire, the thesis is that the papal legate presides at the burning of Jews, while the hypothesis is that he dines with Baron Rothschild.

It is easy to see that advocacy of unlimited pluralism in effect changes the hypothesis into the thesis: what was once regarded as an unfortunate necessity, dining with Baron Rothschild, now becomes a desideratum. This, however, does not settle the question of what happens to the thesis. If this simply turns into the hypothesis, then the burning of Jews and heretics (or some milder version thereof) would be a theologically legitimate hypothetical possibility. It is not immediately clear what should be said, for example, about homogeneous and hermetically closed societies such as primitive tribes in which pluralism produces chaos, the destruction of a humanly livable order. Should the church acquiesce to closure (for example, by refraining from missionary work) when the society is non-Christian, and, if so, should it also consent to closure when the society is Christian?

In the second case, to start with that, the answer is a qualified "no". If the church is seen as remaining theologically or "essentially" a diaspora even when it is by historical accident the dominant religion, then it should always seek in such situations to promote greater and greater openness to pluralism. This may lead it to side with liberals on some issues and with conservatives on others. On abortion it might favor a liberal pro-choice position for

society at large (even while rejecting this for its own membership) on the grounds that anti-abortion legislation limits pluralism. Or, conversely, it might side with "conservative" Moral Majoritarians in favor of a voucher system of financing education because this is supportive of pluralism.

Yet the endorsement of pro-pluralistic policies need not be unqualified. If one believes, for example, that vouchers would so weaken public schools that they would no longer be able to play what one regards as their essential role in maintaining the civil consensus on which the viability of this society depends, then one might very well oppose their introduction. Yet this opposition would itself be qualified: the ultimate goal would continue to be a society capable of sustaining that unlimited pluralism which an educational voucher system favors.

Paradoxically, however, the imperative to struggle for maximum openness does not apply in societies in which Christians are disadvantaged and have little influence. The church should seek for whatever freedom is necessary in order to carry out its mission of selfless service and suffering witness to the God of Jesus Christ, but this does not require equality of treatment with whatever happens to be the dominant religion or ideology. It may even be theologically and not simply pragmatically proper on occasion to acquiesce for the sake of the common good to restrictions on Christianity such as exist in contemporary Communist countries, or even to approve the exclusion of Christians from such countries as Nepal (where, to be sure, missionaries are admitted, but only if they confine themselves strictly to medical, educational, and social work). In short, if the Christian mission is one of service, then the church is not authorized to promote pluralism in ways which promote its own interests to the detriment of the common good. Like everything else in its life, its commitment to unlimited pluralism should be shaped by the imagery of the suffering servant and based on the cross (Nietzsche would use less flattering language). Christians, so the argument goes, should grant full freedom to others but not insist on it for themselves.

We previously noted that a distinctively Christian commitment to pluralism is stronger than a liberal one because it is less vulnerable to disproof, but we now see that the liberal commitment is superior in extension or universality. The Christian argues in terms of what is appropriate policy for Christians, the liberal on the basis of universal human rights. Thus liberals in comparison to Christians of the type we are considering are better authorized to apply external pressure towards greater pluralism on societies in which they are not an internal culture-forming force; or, to

put it another way, liberalism can better legitimate a world-wide struggle for human rights.

To be sure, Christians can also be liberals or, more broadly, they can adopt an ethics of natural law or of inherent human rights. Yet even if such positions are consistent with the biblical case for support of unlimited pluralism which we are examining, they are not implied by it. That case authorizes a struggle for greater and greater openness to diversity where Christians have internal and not simply external influence, but not always elsewhere. As was earlier noted, their commitment is to unlimited pluralism on a global scale, not necessarily within every culture or society.

Finally, it should be observed that similar limitations on the universality of the struggle for pluralism are congenial to the particularistic, communal, "ecological" outlook promoted by much modern anthropology and sociology. Unlike universalistic liberalism, this outlook is respectful of, for example, primitive societies with their anti-pluralistic values. Yet while Christians of the type we are considering may share this respect, they may also be resistant to some of the applications of communal and particularistic themes to situations such as that in this country in the form, for example, in which someone like Robert Nesbit presents them. Sometimes, as was suggested in reference to legislation on abortion, they may side with the liberal ACLU rather than with neo-conservatives.

V

After this brief discussion of the practical constraints on pluralism, we shall conclude with a consideration of theological limitations on its legitimation. These limitations have a practical aspect (Could Christians ever learn to think in the proposed way?), but it is conceptual problems which will chiefly concern us. As I have discussed these elsewhere, most recently in The Nature of Doctrine (Westminster and SPCK, 1984), I shall confine myself to the merest sketch.

The first problem concerns the apparent contradiction between maintaining, as Jews in their own way have done, that not all are called to membership in the elect people, while yet holding, as Christians traditionally do, that salvation is only through Christ. The first of these theses, it will be recalled, is basic to the position we are considering, while the second is necessary if this position is to be available for use by that large majority of Christians who continue to make exclusivist claims. My own suggestion for dealing with this difficulty, put succinctly and

hyperbolically, is that it is damnation rather than salvation which is possible only within the church. Ultimate destiny may hinge on whether one rejects the One whom one has met as Savior, but such an encounter is normally possible in this life only for those within the community of faith. It may be that all human beings meet the crucified Messiah in the eschatological coming of the Kingdom, in death, or after death, but in this life it is not amiss for the elect peoples to be as sanguine or more sanguine about the salvation of non-believers than about their own. To be chosen to keep the Torah or to witness to Christ is an immense and wholly gracious privilege, but also a dangerous one. This view, I have elsewhere argued, is more consonant with the New Testament and with Christian attitudes in the first centuries than is the later interpretation of the extra ecclesiam nulla salus, but the discrepancy with traditional soteriological triumphalism is so great that one must here speak of a limitation.

A second limitation is of the opposite kind. From the perspective of some of the usual justifications of dialogical pluralism, the view we are exploring is too traditional rather than untraditional. It cannot be harmonized with the type of interreligious dialogue which is generally supposed to be critically important in our shrinking world. The great religions need to join together in a mutually enriching exploration of their heritages and a common search for the goodness, truth and beauty which surpasses and relativizes all partial insights. In some countries, such as Indonesia, governmental policy is premised on the assumption that the survival of the polity requires that all religions define themselves as simply different paths to the same goal, and what is needed in this one instance may well be crucial for humankind as a whole. In the very nature of the case, however, as we noted earlier, unlimited pluralism must encompass those who are unwilling to accept such premises for dialogical pluralism, and its legitimation depends (at least in the cases of Enlightenment liberalism and of the biblical outlook we are examining) on exclusivist claims.

The degree to which this limitation is truly a disadvantage is open to debate. Perhaps, as I have argued elsewhere, interreligious dialogue would benefit if it were not tied to outlooks which require the participants to compromise their traditional exclusivism. It might then no longer be confined to a small elite, and might gain in realism and effectiveness. Yet, even if this is true, it must be admitted that the exclusion of the usual legitimations for interreligious dialogue is a prima facie limitation. Some would regard it as a fatal flaw.

The third difficulty has already been touched upon: the break with tradition is too sharp. The proposal view I

have outlined is intended to be consistent with the bible and with historic Christian claims, and yet the biblical interpretation is idiosyncratic, and the recasting of the tradition radical.

Two points may be made in defense. First, the recasting of the tradition is no more radical than the changes which have already taken place in all major Christian traditions in regard, for example, to slavery and freedom of religion. In both these cases, so it can be maintained, the inner logic of the Christian story has from the beginning favored liberty, but it was inevitably supposed, in the absence of counter-examples, that sin had so corrupted human beings that slavery and limitations on religious liberty are necessary for social order and welfare. Once, however, the course of history disproves this assumption, once societies without chattel slavery and with religious liberty develop, the grammar of the faith forces Christians to recognize that such social orders are to be preferred, and that there is a God-given obligation to help create the conditions which make them possible. These instances are not altogether parallel to that of unlimited pluralism (for the abolition of slavery is a universal demand of justice, and religious liberty refers to groups already existing within a society rather than to openness to new groups) but the similarities are sufficient to suggest the plausibility of viewing the case for unlimited pluralism as continuous rather than discontinuous with the tradition.

A second consideration has to do with the parallelism between Israel and the church involved in this case for unlimited pluralism. Anyone who believes that Gentile Christianity became in some respects fundamentally untraditional, fundamentally distorted, by its loss of contact with its Jewish roots is likely to be sympathetic with the view that this parallelism is implicit in the normative tradition rather than a departure from it. Yet those who have a different understanding of the relation of the church to Israel will be unpersuaded, and this is a limitation.

It is evident that the conceptual and practical difficulties are closely interrelated, and perhaps only one point needs to be added on the practical side. I have from the beginning of this paper assumed that legitimations for a policy become persuasive only to the degree that the community is open to the correlative praxis. Praxis, to be sure, is only a necessary and not a sufficient condition. To think otherwise is to reduce theological rationales to ideological rationalizations. Policies often cannot be conceived or seriously entertained unless there are present in the communal life the beliefs and conceptual and symbolic vocabularies needed to construct an effective legitimation; but in reference to our question, there is no shortage of these in the

mainstream Christian tradition. What is required as the next step, therefore, are practical developments which will induce Christians to abandon their increasingly illusory Constantinian dreams (still paradoxically powerful, perhaps, in some professedly anti-Constantinian theologies of dialogue and liberation) and see their corporate role as that of selfless service of human needs. When and if this happens, they will want a ~~cruciform~~, a suffering servant, understanding to support their commitment to unlimited pluralism, and they will find it. The limits of pluralism for Christians exist, but they ~~are~~ perhaps less than for anyone else.

can be

- liberal pluralistic phenomenon in world of Bible



A CHRISTIAN VIEWPOINT OF RELIGIOUSLY PLURALIST SOCIETY IN BRITAIN

E. S. Allen

To the average churchgoer brought up on parochial and very much British-centred Christianity the past 40 years have brought rapid and traumatic changes. First there has been the unprecedented fall in church attendance and commitment - less than 10% in this very secularized society now attend the mainstream churches, even though, for example, in England the "Church of England" is by law established and many non-attenders would claim some nominal link and expect a religious burial service. Secondly, there now exists a new situation in society - not just the religious pluralism between the Christian denominations but, through immigration, the creation of a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-faith society. In the British Council of Churches booklet prepared by the "Committee for Relations with Other Faiths" to implement the WCC Guidelines on Dialogue, the new situation is dramatically introduced by typical headlines and then followed with some vital statistics and background information which I quote below:

dissent - various forms - mixture

The British situation

"More Muslims than Methodists in Britain now...Leicester the largest Hindu city outside India...more Jews to the square mile in Redbridge than in Israel...Southall the new capital city of the Sikhs...Buddhist monks in Sussex...redundant churches being turned into mosques and temples."

These are some of the things that are said: What are the facts?

1. There are no accurate statistics for membership of religious groups; so far it has proved impossible to ask a question concerning religious adherence in the National Census.
2. There are, however, community figures but these need to be read discriminatingly. The Union of Muslim Organizations claims that there are now 1,500,000 Muslims in Britain. The Jewish Board of Deputies gives a known Jewish community of 412,000. Hindu and Sikh sources suggest that there are approximately 400,000 Hindus and 200,000 Sikhs. There are no reliable figures for Buddhists, but one well-informed source suggests the figure here may be as high as 100,000 for the second largest ethnic community in Britain is the Chinese, and many of the Vietnamese Boat People are Buddhist. There are smaller communities of Zoroastrians and Jains, say 5,000 each. There is a Baha'i community with 167 local assemblies totalling some thousands of members.
3. The degree of religious observance within these communities is hard to assess. Some evidence suggests that among ethnic minority groups attendance at mosque, temple or gurdwara is much greater than would be the case in the original country, and many adherents of other faiths have become much more committed to their beliefs through experiences in this country. There is among them deep concern for the transmission of belief and practice to the rising generation. But other evidence shows that none of these communities is exempt from the "acids of modernity" and the prevalent secularist tone of our culture. There are many nominal adherents of other religious systems who have neither personal faith nor serious ethical or ritual commitment.
4. Adherents of other faiths are also from white, Protestant and Catholic, backgrounds, who have made a conscious decision to live by a faith other

than Christian. A large number are followers of forms of Hinduism, either deliberately having chosen to embrace the teachings of one or other of the swamis or gurus who offer various forms of neo-Hinduism, or, as is the case with much larger numbers, having unconsciously absorbed Hindu teachings through the practice of Yoga and Transcendental Meditation. Buddhism in one of its several forms claims the allegiance of many, while others are Muslims. It is also possible to meet, though rarely, people of both Catholic and Protestant origin, who are now Jews, Sikhs, or Jains. People with this background also appear to make up the British Baha'i community.

(From "Relations with people of other faiths : Guidelines on dialogue in Britain" 1981 BCC, 2 Eaton Gate, London SW1W 9BL, 6Op)

What have the churches done to adjust to religious pluralism?

It is the usual sad story of "too little and too late"! e.g. it has taken over 30 years - since the first arrivals of Christians from the Caribbean in 1948 - for the white churches in Britain to acknowledge their presence, and accord respect and equal partnership to the Black-led churches. These holiness and pentecostal congregations have drawn large followings from those who were Anglicans, Methodist or Congregational in the Caribbean but have felt rejected by their equivalent brand-name churches in the UK. They experienced either the aloofness of middle-class members who still commuted back to their city-centre churches from the white suburbs, or the depressing weakness of inner-city congregations with inadequate and unimaginative leadership to cope with the pastoral care of the immigrants. So the indigenous churches lost out on an opportunity which could possibly have revitalised their congregations in working class areas and built bridges of understanding between black and white Christians. There have been notable exceptions and a white Methodist minister, Tony Holden, set up the Zebra Project to try and bring the two communities together, face to face, in partnership and dialogue. A woman minister from the German Protestant Church (Roswith Gerloff and Walter Hollenweger) set up the "Project in Partnership between Black and White" - a centre for training black Christian leaders and pastors leading to a certificate in Theology in Birmingham University. The Rev. Wilfred Woods came from Barbados to serve his curacy at St Paul's Cathedral and fight racism - he was for a time Moderator of the WCC Programme to Combat Racism. He is now my local Archdeacon of Southwark and is still convinced that racism in society and in the churches is the most destructive of evils.

I have begun with that piece of history to illustrate the difficulties the British churches have with religious pluralism amongst themselves - even when their ecumenism is restricted to their own white culture. It was William Temple who hailed the formation of the ecumenical movement as the great new fact of our era. In 1942 he was a founder of the British Council of Churches and when we celebrated its 40th anniversary with a service in St Paul's Cathedral an anthem was sung, not by the white boy sopranos of that famous church choir but by the black Shiloh choir. That different sound of harmony was the result of years of patient, persistent dialogue by BCC staff member Martin Conway, and the regard given by the black community to the BCC Community and Race Relations Unit since it was set up in 1971. So ecumenism (i.e. religious pluralism within the churches) moves at a slow pace in the UK. I haven't the space or expertise to point out the regional differences, the quite different ecumenical mix in Wales, or Scotland, or Northern Ireland. The latter is a testimony to how deep the wounds of history can go, and how myths and exaggerated fears can divide society and breed sectarian violence of a most persistent and depressing kind. In Ulster, terms like 'ecumenism' and 'religious pluralism' mean little in practice to the majority of churchgoers who

are still obsessed with tribal religion, patriotism and "them against us" attitudes. I honour those in the Irish Council of Churches who try to build bridges between north and south, protestant and catholic, and centres of reconciliation like the Corrymeela Community. It is these same people who respond to what we call nowadays 'the wider ecumenism' of dialogue between Christians and Jews and other faiths. It is significant that the delegation from the Birmingham Multi-Faith Resource Unit, consisting of a Sikh, a Hindu, a Muslim, a Christian and a Jew, which visited a large gathering of religious superiors in Dublin to share their lively experience of grass-roots dialogue were invited later to Belfast ... for the MUFRU team had challenged in a unique way a country where dialogue between Christians themselves has a long way to go! Perhaps this is an answer to the old joke about conflict in the Middle East "I wish these Jews and Arabs would settle their differences in a Christian way"!

Further factors which mitigate against an acceptance of religious pluralism in present-day British society

1. Secularism

Most of the immigrants coming to England had some experience of church presence and missionary work which originated in the UK. Therefore, it was a shock to peoples of all faiths to discover how irreligious and unbelieving the British have become. It is not just the impact of materialism and permissiveness that makes Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus fearful that their own young people will be corroded by the "acids of modernity". It is the lack of any feeling of transcendence, any reverence and respect for religious values and holy people and holy places. It is a religious trauma, not just a racial one, to have mosques and temples daubed, and sacrilegious acts perpetrated after the manner still accorded by National Front type of people to Jewish synagogues and cemeteries. Now that the communities of other faiths have become established they increasingly see they have a mission to the ungodly British, as well as lapsed members of their own communities. They are also concerned to set up their own "denominational schools", single sex, to propagate their religion and to have teaching of Arabic for Qur'anic learning etc. Meanwhile, they usually withdraw their children from the day school Assembly and Religious Education lessons, as is the right of any parent. Fortunately, those who receive R.E. from progressive teachers working to the new Agreed Syllabi of authorities like Birmingham, can make their own contribution to, and learn a great deal from, the teaching of world religions. Most teachers would testify to the new importance and interest in Christianity when it is taught as a world religion with its universal rather than a British parochial dimension. The other factor is that Marxism and other philosophies are treated seriously, for the new challenges facing all living faiths include secularist interpretations of life on planet earth, a deep sense of hopelessness and meaninglessness facing young people under the shadow of a nuclear holocaust, issues of law and order, oppressive structures and democratic freedom. The secular, closed, materialistic system of thought seems as impervious to religion as once Islam seemed to the advances of Christianity. Here religious pluralism finds common ground in witnessing to the long history of human civilisations, rich in music, art and architecture, as well as the saintly living of generations of holy men and women, because their societies were rooted and grounded in experiences of the Living God. The great divide in British society is between the sacred and the secular interpretations of life.

2. Divisions in society

To the outsider Britain may have once looked like a homogenous society with its towns and villages centred on the parish church. As we have seen, that myth has been shattered. Likewise all this talk about British values of fair play, tolerance and

good neighbourliness have been shown to be lacking in today's multi-racial tensions. Every wave of immigration to this country has met with a cool, if not a hostile, welcome, and over the centuries the Jews suffered most from "immigration laws", sometimes experiencing wholesale deportation, as in 1920 (was it called repatriation?). However, because of our common European cultures, Huguenots, Jews, Irish, Poles, Greek Cypriots, have been integrated into British society as were the Angles, Saxons, Danes, Norsemen and Normans of earlier centuries. The advent of coloured immigrants exposed irrational fears and institutional racism, quickly exploited by politicians like Enoch Powell, whose constituency was Wolverhampton, where in decaying housing of the inner city Asian immigrants were trying to salvage some quality of life for themselves and eventually - if immigration laws allowed - for their dependants. So we were threatened with "rivers of blood" unless immigration was halted and repatriation encouraged - all because of this "alien wedge" that darkened our cities. Even Margaret Thatcher was reported as saying on TV on 31st January 1978: "The British character has done so much for democracy, for law, and done so much throughout the world, that if there is any fear that it might be swamped, then people are going to be rather hostile to those coming in." Faced with people who spoke different languages, worshipped different deities, but above all whose skin colour made them stand out, then one million black or coloured in a total population of fifty-five million was a divisive threat to the fabric of society! As Elliott Kendall has pointed out, the Asian immigrants, like the Caribbeans before them, provided Britain with a visibly pluralist society - but they did not create the problems of British society, its class divisions, its unequal opportunities, poor housing, bad schools and the other deprivations of working class neighbourhoods. By their presence in these situations they made them more visible. Moreover, they did not initiate racism, they merely revealed its latent presence! Religious pluralism has a tough time in such a divided society, for religious differences themselves are often regarded as divisive. So the silent majority does not get involved in encounters with other faiths; they have seen what has happened in Paisley's Ulster, in Khomeini's Iran, in Kahane's Israel. The fear of fanaticism suppresses inter-faith dialogue. The latest appeals by the Archbishop of Canterbury - and doubtless leaders of other faith communities could give voice in similar vein - to bring reconciliation to bear upon the divisions within British society, to stop pursuing policies of confrontation and to try and govern through consensus, to ameliorate the injustices and inequalities, and especially to redress the plight of the large numbers of long-term unemployed, should be acted upon.

How fares religious pluralism in a polarised society? Two illustrations come to mind. First, how Queen Elizabeth II was criticized by press and politicians for the style of her Christmas broadcast 1983. Her theme was the multi-cultural, multi-racial values of the Commonwealth, and she illustrated this from films of visits to India and other countries. She was taken to task for not giving a "traditional Christmas Day broadcast", that she had become the tool of the "race relations industry", that she had omitted to emphasize the unique Christian message at Christmas and diluted our heritage with sights and sounds of other cultures and other faiths. This is an all-too familiar ploy of right wing "one nation under God" patriots, but for the first time they took issue in public to tell the monarch how she ought to speak to her nation!

Secondly, a few weeks back in September, a member of the Iranian Embassy hit the headlines in all the media by slaughtering a sheep in view of his suburban, respectable and animal-loving neighbours. This event gave Members of Parliament a chance to appear on television and questions were asked of the Home Secretary in the House of Commons, which resulted in obtaining a full public apology from the Iranian Embassy. During all this instant furore no voice was heard explaining that it could be a thanksgiving offering by one who had completed the pilgrimage to Mecca. Clearly the press, yes, even the Guardian, saw this "bizarre and gruesome" incident the last straw in race relations, and went on to offer their support to the campaign of the RSPCA to change the laws to enforce the stunning of animals prior to Islamic or

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS--
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

"RELIGIOUS PLURALISM: ITS MEANING AND LIMITS IN THE WORLD TODAY"
HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL, 25-28 NOV 1984

JEWISH PARTICIPANTS:



Rabbi Balfour Brickner
Prof. Leon Feldman
Prof. Marvin Fox
Mr. Mark Friedman
Dr. David Gordis
Prof. Jean Halperin
Prof. Ruth Lapidot
Mr. Sidney Liskofsky
Rabbi Henry Michelman
Rabbi Michael Monson
Rabbi Jordan Pearlson
Dr. Gerhart Riegner
Rabbi David Rosen
Prof Michael Rosenack
Rabbi James Rudin
Dr. Marc Saperstein
Prof. David Sidorsky
Prof. Norman Solomon
Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum
Rabbi Mordecai Waxman
Prof. Geoffrey Wigoder
Rabbi Walter Wurzbarger

IJCIC-WCC Consultation

Harvard, 25-28 November 1984

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM: ITS MEANING AND LIMITS IN THE WORLD TODAY

SUNDAY 25 NOVEMBER

15.00 Reception with Boston area Jewish/Christian community
Evening Pre-consultation separate meetings of participants

MONDAY 26 NOVEMBER

9.30 Opening of Consultation
Paper 1: "Is religious pluralism necessary?
If so, is it possible?" - Michael Rosenack
Questions and discussion
12.30 Lunch
15.30 Paper 2: "Are there limits to religious
pluralism? If so, why?" - George Lindbeck
Questions and discussion
18.30 Dinner
20.30 General discussion

TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER

9.00 "Religious pluralism: Political
science perspectives" - David Sidorsky
Questions and discussion - Roger Fisher
10.00 Coffee
11.00 "How does religious pluralism work?"
Brief summaries of papers prepared by a Jew and a Christian
from each of three countries: Great Britain (David Rosen/Norman
Solomon, Eric Allen), USA (~~Marvin Fox~~, Mary Edwardsen), and
Israel (Ruth Lapidot, Ibrahim Sim'an)
12.30 Lunch
15.30 General discussion
18.30 Dinner
20.30 General discussion

WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER

9.00 Presentation of draft joint statement and discussion
10.00 Coffee
10.30 Discussion continued
11.30 Break
12.30 Lunch (Distribution of revised joint statement)

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES/INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

"RELIGIOUS PLURALISM: ITS MEANING AND LIMITS IN THE WORLD TODAY"

Harvard, 25-28 November 1984

CHRISTIAN PARTICIPANTS

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Ms Mary Edwardsen (USA) | Rev. Ake Skoog (Israel) |
| Dr Theodore Stylianopoulos (USA) | Bishop Krister Stendahl (Sweden) |
| Fr. Paul Ischi (USA) | Dr George Lindbeck (USA) |
| Rev. Frances Manson (USA) | Rev. Hans Ucko (Sweden) |
| Dr William Weiler (USA) | Fr. Jorge Medina (Argentine/Vatican) |
| Rev. David Simpson (USA) | Dr Gerald Anderson (USA) |
| Dr Diana Eck (USA) | Rev. Ibrahim Sim'an (Israel) |
| Dr Coos Schoneveld (FRG) | Dr Kofi Opoku (Nigeria) |
| Rev. Eric Allen (UK) | Dr Rolf Rendtorff (FRG) |
| Rev. Ulrike Berger (FRG) | Rev. Bertalan Tamas (Hungary) |
| Rev. Ron Lewis (UK) | Rev. Allan Brockway (USA) |
| Mr Bruce Beck (USA) | |

Draft

Joint statement of the participants at the ...Consultation of WCC and IJCI, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., November 25-28, 1984

We have gathered at Harvard, Jews and Christians from 12 different countries, to reflect on RELIGIOUS PLURALISM - ITS MEANING AND LIMITS IN THE WORLD TODAY. We have gathered in a world at a time that is more endangered and frightening than ever. For the first time in history, man has the power to destroy all human life and the earth as such. And in this situation we have to notice a rise of fanaticism, intolerance and radical terrorism in both religions and in political ideologies, that threatens the very survival of all earthly life.

In this dangerous situation we call upon our respective communities of faith:

- let not the values of religious freedom and pluralism be endangered by old or new intolerant, fanatic developments in our religious communities;
- stand up for the human right of every individual and/or group to live its religious convictions, as long as they do not threaten the rights of others;
- be not lured by the seeming strength of those zealots who claim monopolies on truth. In reality they only project their own inner doubts and fears to an outside "enemy". Remember what our God has said about the power of the weak, about the strength of love and about the trust in Him, who is the only one to give security and peace against all human or demonic forces of evil;
- be firm in your affirmation of faith, but do not forget that an affirmation of your faith must not, implicitly or explicitly, include the negation or denigration of the faith of others;
- let us all try to live up to the Commandment we share in our common Bible: Thou shalt not give false witness against your neighbour! An actual interpretation of this commandment today will help us find the ways to respect the otherness of the other, to enjoy the diversity of the whole people of God, to rejoice in the manifold differences of human lives and to resist the evil of intolerance, degradation and discrimination of others.

Let us listen, before we speak; let us pray, before we judge others; and let us all remember who is the Holy One to rule the world and to whom we are responsible for what we have done to the most humble and weak of his creatures!

draft no.2

Joint statement of Wcc/Ijcc consultation,
Harvard University, Nov.25/28, 1984

① We see religious and political fanaticism as increasing threats to the welfare of human kind. Therefore we have gathered, Jews and Christians from 12 countries, to reflect on RELIGIOUS PLURALISM - ITS MEANING AND LIMITS IN THE WORLD TODAY. After our deliberations we affirm with new conviction the indispensable value of religious pluralism in the societies in which we live.

We view with apprehension the spread of religious and political fanaticism in many parts of the world. ~~Assimilationist~~ ^{Absolutist} ideologies are a threat to humanity.

③ Such fanaticisms invariably attribute to themselves all virtue and demonize others as evil deserving of destruction. Their effect is to undermine mutual respect between members of different religious groups, thereby eroding the social solidarity of the human family.

As believers who give ^T to God alone our ultimate loyalties, we reject those movements which idolatrously claim ^{belongs} total ^{submission to} veneration for their ideological systems.

There is a humane alternative to that destructive path. It is the way of religious pluralism. We affirm religious pluralism as that tested effort for providing social compact that respects diversity as a source of enrichment.

We are mindful of the many efforts still required at various levels to fully implement the UN=Declaration on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion and belief; and we hope that our encounter can make a contribution to that effect.

WCC-IJCIC CONSULTATION
HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL, 25-28 NOV 1984

GENERAL INFORMATION

Sunday Reception: There is a reception this afternoon for all consultation participants beginning at 4:00 in the home of the Dean of the Divinity School, 44 Francis Ave. Dean and Mrs. George Rupp have invited several of the Jewish and Christian leaders and scholars from the Boston area and Harvard University to attend. There will probably be a group going over together from the Quality Inn around 3:45, or you can consult the map in your folder for directions.

Meals during the consultation: Lunch will be provided Mon - Wed in the Braun room of the Divinity School. On Tuesday evening, we will be having supper at the Harvard-Radcliff Hillel, and then remain there for the 8:30 discussion. Coffee and tea will be provided in the morning both before the meetings and for the break; breakfast arrangements should be made individually.

On Monday evening, arrangements have been made with the Harvard Hillel for those who would like to have a Kosher dinner. A sign-up sheet will be circulated on Monday morning for those who would like to have dinner there to sign; (we need to let the cook know how many to expect.) Also, if you are not planning to attend the dinner on Tuesday evening, please notify Mr. Bruce Beck on Monday.

The consultation sessions will take place at Harvard Divinity School (except for the Tuesday evening discussion at Hillel); the specific location of the meetings will be given later.

draft no.2

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draft no.3
joint statement...

Terrace

Religious and political fanaticism are increasing threats to human welfare. They deny freedom and conscience, reject the variety and richness of human experience, engender hatred and breed violence. (~~We, Jews and Christians from 12 countries, therefore have met at Harvard to reflect on the meaning and limits of religious pluralism in the world today.~~) Strong in our respective faiths, but convinced that we are enriched by dialogue and openness to one another, we re-affirm the need for religious pluralism in the societies in which we live. We reject fanaticism and zealotry, both within and ^{among} between faiths, as products of weakness of belief rather than strength of conviction. The human family has paid a heavy price in suffering to learn the lesson that "have we not all one father, has not one God created us all?" must be translated from the book into life. The task of religion today is to recognize the reality of religious variety, to emphasize the things that unite us and to ^{confront constructively} (accept ^{comes} without denigration) the things that divide us. In a free society pluralism in ideas and behaviour are both inevitable and desirable. In such societies people of faith are called upon to ^{uplift conscience} (teach rather than to enforce ^{dominate}) and to persuade rather than to mandate.

We are mindful of the fact that the task of promoting real dedication to religious pluralism is a great one. But significant steps have already been taken. The UN-declaration on the elimination of all forms of ^{Religious and racial} intolerance, based on religion, ^{race} or belief, represented a great advance. In the last 30 or 40 years there has been more communication between faiths than there ever was before in human history. We are committed to the idea that though we may not complete the entire task, we are obliged to attempt it, because the work is urgent, the rewards to the human family will be great and the master of the universe summons us to do it.

Religious pluralism provides the capacity to appreciate differences & particular groups of people within it - religious, ethnic, political, and racial - and makes available a cohesive context for the maximizing of the freedom of individuals and groups. The interaction of diverse groups generates a vitality and imagination that energizes an even stronger human community.

Draft

Joint statement of the participants at the ...Consultation of WCC and IJCIC,
Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., November 25-28, 1984

We have gathered at Harvard, Jews and Christians from 12 different countries, to reflect on RELIGIOUS PLURALISM - ITS MEANING AND LIMITS IN THE WORLD TODAY. We have gathered in a world at a time that is more endangered and frightening than ever. For the first time in history, man has the power to destroy all human life and the earth as such. And in this situation we have to notice a rise of fanaticism, intolerance and radical terrorism in both religions and in political ideologies, that threatens the very survival of all earthly life.

In this dangerous situation we call upon our respective communities of faith:

- let not the values of religious freedom and pluralism be endangered by old or new intolerant, fanatic developments in our religious communities;
- stand up for the human right of every individual and/or group to live its religious convictions, as long as they do not threaten the rights of others;
- be not lured by the seeming strength of those zealots who claim monopolies on truth. In reality they only project their own inner doubts and fears to an outside "enemy". Remember what our God has said about the power of the weak, about the strength of love and about the trust in Him, who is the only one to give security and peace against all human or demonic forces of evil;
- be firm in your affirmation of faith, but do not forget that an affirmation of your faith must not, implicitly or explicitly, include the negation or denigration of the faith of others;
- let us all try to live up to the Commandment we share in our common Bible: Thou shalt not give false witness against your neighbour! An actual interpretation of this commandment today will help us find the ways to respect the otherness of the other, to enjoy the diversity of the whole people of God, to rejoice in the manifold differences of human lives and to resist the evil of intolerance, degradation and discrimination of others.

Let us listen, before we speak; let us pray, before we judge others; and let us all remember who is the Holy One to rule the world and to whom we are responsible for what we have done to the most humble and weak of his creatures!

HOW RELIGIOUS PLURALISM OPERATES IN ENGLAND

by Norman Solomon

for Consultation with the
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
at
Harvard Divinity School

26-28 November 1984

May I open with some words taken from the 1982 Christmas broadcast of HM Queen Elizabeth II:

"Colour is no longer an indication of national origin. It has often been claimed that the Commonwealth is multi-racial and multi-religious, but until this century most racial and religious groups remained concentrated in their homelands. Today, almost every country of the Commonwealth has become multi-racial and multi-religious. This change has not been without its difficulties, but I believe that for those with a sense of tolerance the arrival and proximity of different races and religions have provided a much better chance for each to appreciate the value of the others."

Note the positive attitude Her Majesty evidently wishes to encourage amongst the varied citizens of her kingdom; she stresses not the problems of integration but the enhanced opportunity for mutual understanding..

To what extent is this attitude reflected in the institutions and society of Britain today in particular as they affect Jews and Judaism? In asking this we must be aware that Jews are no longer the largest non-Christian religious minority in Britain; there are possibly twice as many Muslims as Jews, as well as very substantial numbers of Sikhs and Hindus. Moreover, in ways which are difficult to define, there is some ambivalence in the so-called 'minority' status of Jews; a Sikh from Amritsar, for instance, insofar as he has any image of Jews, tends to see them as part of the white European majority rather than as an ethnic or religious minority with problems similar to his own. Further confusion arises from the absurdity of classifying Jews exclusively either as an ethnic or as a religious group - a problem which has had important legal repercussions. Let us explore some of the areas in which Jews are affected by being part of the multi-faith society of contemporary Britain.

1. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Let us look first at some recent developments in religious education in Britain, particularly in England and Wales. Our education system is devised to set standards whilst allowing the maximum possible diversity on a local and individual basis. The 1944 Education Act which is the foundation of our post-war education system does not itself lay down detailed curricula. It states (Section 26) that religious instruction shall be given in accordance with an 'agreed syllabus'. This syllabus itself is not laid down centrally; each local authority must devise its own (Section 29). The Act forbids the inclusion in any such syllabus of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination. It grants parents the right to withdraw their children from Religious Instruction in school; this right is the only clear expression by the Act of its recognition that peoples of other faiths attend British schools.

Curricula, then, are set by head teachers in response to two main influences; the decentralized public examination system, and the 'agreed syllabus', or 'guidelines' as they are often now known, laid down as a statutory duty by local education authorities in each county or major city. By studying these local guidelines we can gauge how religious education in the schools has changed in recent years, but we must take great care not to generalise about what is by its very nature a piecemeal, pragmatic system.

Let us look at the Guidelines for Religious Education published in 1982 by the Education Department of the Royal County of Berkshire. Its title, 'Religious Heritage and Personal Quest', sets the tone, and this is further articulated in the opening statement on the importance of religious education. The statement justifies religious education on the grounds that it 'contributes to international understanding in the world as a whole, and to community relations within Britain It is vital that citizens should be familiar with a variety of beliefs and customs, and that they should have insight into the underlying values and concerns which different cultures and societies have in common.' The short statement of the Aims of Religious Education defines them as 'to help pupils understand religious beliefs, practices and insights, in order that they may form their own beliefs and judgments, and their own allegiances and commitments'. Whereas this type of document, until the 60's, was concerned with ways of presenting Christianity meaningfully to the young, whilst recognising the right of minorities to absent themselves from such lessons, most of the more recent Guidelines share the Berkshire attitude that the classroom should provide a forum for the understanding of the phenomenon of religion in general. Pupils should be taught about Christianity, for it remains the dominant religion of the country and central to our cultural heritage; but it should be taught as one facet, if an important one, of a multi-faceted phenomenon.

The documentary evidence suggests that the teaching of Religious

non-essential though relevant conditions. The first essential condition is a 'long, shared, history ...', and the second 'a cultural tradition of its own often but not necessarily associated with religious observance'. I find this a more satisfactory solution than an explicit reference to discrimination on the grounds of religion. So far as Jews (or Sikhs) are concerned, they are included irrespective of their personal adherence to religious traditions; yet at the same time the law does not allow any crazy or even anti-social (or antisemitic?) group to set itself up as a 'religion' and claim protection. *Tax exemptions - Religion as charitable concern - equal for all religions - (Muslims refused)*

3. SOCIETY

'In a pluralistic society ethnic minority groups desire and need to keep their cultural identity (religious practices, distinguishing patterns of family life, mother-tongue and other aspects) while adapting to various modes of the dominant culture such as language, educational system, employment patterns and civic life. For them, integration means acceptance by the majority of their separate ethnic and cultural identity.' (Muhammad Anwar)

'Certainly the 400,000 strong Jewish population today appears a secure and established element in British society. Few would maintain that they suffer unduly from discrimination or prejudice in their everyday lives. No longer does the appointment of a Jew to the Cabinet, a judgeship, a chair at a university, membership of some distinguished society, or even a national sports team, evoke the interest or fuss it once did among Jews and in the media. On the other hand, their historical experience in Britain does not lead Jews to regard the present harmony as inevitable or necessarily permanent, since the political balance between the tolerant liberal, humanitarian forces in British society and the xenophobic, exclusionary and intolerant ones has swung backwards and forwards over the centuries and so has the condition of the vulnerable Jewish minority.' (Barry Kosmin)

These paragraphs, one by a British Muslim, one by a British Jew, are taken from papers delivered at recent Conference of Jews and Muslims on 'The Immigration Experience'. It was hard for the Muslims, to whom British Jews seem to be the epitome of integration without the loss of religious/cultural identity, to understand the nervousness Jews feel about continuation of the present public readiness to accept as essentially the same as themselves people who belong to different cultural groups. It was hard for the Jews to realise what price they had paid - on the whole willingly - for the integration they have achieved. Have Jews preserved their 'cultural identity (religious practices, distinguishing patterns of family life, mother-tongue and other aspects)'? Part of Jewish unease surely arises from the very circumstance of not knowing how far to go in adaptation of such matters to the prevailing norm.

The Christian culture of Britain inheres in its language and social habits even more than in specifically religious belief and practice. There is nothing odd in England about not going to church, but there is something odd about not celebrating Christmas (what has it to do with religion? the cynic might ask), or about leaving work early on Friday

afternoons for Shabbat, or about refusing 'normal' food and drink or 'ritually slaughtering' beasts (Muslims have just been going through a sticky patch on this one). If 'integration means acceptance by the majority of their separate ethnic and cultural identity' then it would be accurate to say, not that Jews are unreservedly integrated in British society, but that those of what the majority considers 'reasonable' eccentricity are integrated. The 'norm' remains that of the dominant, nominally Christian, society.

The village exacts a higher price for integration than the city. Many Jews live very happily in charming English villages and act the 'country squire'. But the twin pillars of English village life are the church and the pub, and the orthodox Jew won't feel happy in either. On the other hand, the orthodox Jew looks for fairness and equality rather than social integration; his significant social relationships are those within his own community.

The media do try to present an image of 'ethnic communities', not least Jews, within the context of British society. Representatives of Jews and others are often, though not consistently, invited to serve on advisory boards, and are sometimes taken notice of.

I found out the other day that there are still some golf clubs to which Jews are not admitted (this is never expressed in the club rules, only in its practice, so it can be denied). Maybe this troubles somebody.

Right-wing extremists are said to be antisemitic - indeed, many of them admit it, and to the shame of Britain one of Europe's main fascist printing houses churns out anti-Jewish caricatures and 'revisionist history' in rural Sussex. We were warned that when unemployment in Britain reached a million the National Front would take over. Unemployment is now over 3 million and rising, and the National Front is not powerful. But it is plotting very hard, and who knows what happens when things get even worse, or if the National Front should get itself an effective leader ?

RECOMMENDATIONS

I pass.
Church of England
Scotland
no est. church in Wales

Education in British schools has moved from the 1944 concept of broadly Christian teaching in a broadly Christian society to the concept of understanding the multiplicity of the faith phenomenon in the multi-faith society of contemporary Britain. To what extent does this reflect the reality of the classroom? The answer to this question depends on an assessment of the availability of suitable resources for multi-faith teaching and on the willingness and capability of teachers to carry out such a programme. As to resources, not only has a large amount of material, much of it of excellent quality, appeared in recent years, but the government has funded the setting up of Regional Religious Education Resource Centres to encourage greater professionalism in the teaching of Religious Education, and these Centres are now playing a major part in implementing the new multi-faith concept of the teaching of religion. At the Selly Oak Colleges, where I am based, we have on campus the Religious Education Resource Centre for the Midlands. Amongst the projects in which I co-operate with them are in-service training courses for Religious Education teachers, where we advise on the presentation of the different faiths and on the availability and use of classroom materials. Courses are arranged for sixth form students from all over the country, and participants take advantage of the exceptionally good opportunity Birmingham provides for visits to communities of many faiths. These and other ways in which the Centre and others like it facilitate the new approach to the teaching of religion are certainly bearing fruit, and so far as the Jewish community is concerned are contributing to a better understanding of Jews and Judaism. One hopes that the enlightened majority who espouse this approach will not succumb to the attacks of fundamentalist evangelists who see it as undermining what they believe to be the certainty and exclusiveness of Christian doctrine.

2. LAW

The Concordat signed on 18 February 1984 between Italy and the Holy See explicitly rejects the principle of Catholicism as state religion. Moves to disestablish the Church of England in Britain have, on the contrary, not aroused wide enthusiasm or even interest. The Church of England remains the established church of the country. Of course, this no longer carries the implication that non-communicants are subject to any civil disabilities. But there are vestiges of the earlier situation. For instance, a Jew would be guilty of a high misdemeanour were he to advise the Crown concerning the appointment to or disposal of any preferment or office in the Church of England. This question would arise should a Jew become Prime Minister or Lord Chancellor - and indeed it is not clear in law whether a confessing Jew might hold either offices. A similar constitutional problem would arise should a member of the royal family wish to marry a Jew or convert to Judaism - or for that matter to any faith other than that of the Church of England. No doubt our pragmatic British lawyers would find solutions should any of these cases arise.

From time to time special laws have been passed to regularize the situation of Jews and other non-establishment groups. By 1858, when the

bill for Jewish emancipation proposed 27 years earlier finally became law, Jews could already be freemen of the City of London (1829), members of the bar (1833), knights, baronets, graduates of the University of London, even Lord Mayor of London.

Since the middle of the last century Jews have been authorised to register their own marriages, though not divorces; since about 1969 some progress has been made in providing for the delivery of a 'get' to be part of the divorce settlement. The Oaths Act 1978 officially sanctioned a special form of oath to be taken by those Jews who did not prefer merely to 'affirm'. There are regulations protecting Jews or affording them certain rights where this is needed to enable them to comply with their Sabbath and Festival laws. On the other hand, no-one has yet discovered a way of registering 'kosher' as a protected description of goods. These piecemeal rules reflect the pragmatic nature of the development of English law. At no stage has there been a dramatic change, disestablishing the Church, for instance. Yet as society has broadened in its acceptance of other churches and now other faiths the law has usually made appropriate provision.

Undoubtedly one of the most contentious areas of legislation present is that of race relations, covered in English law by the Race Relations Act 1976. The words and concepts of men and the realities of society sometimes fail to converge. For some reason or other our language disposes us to categorise groups of people as races or religions. However, neither of these terms is easy to define, and there is no reason to assume that any particular group of people will fall neatly into one or other category. Many countries (eg Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden) protect their citizens by law from discrimination on the grounds of race or religion, but Britain outlaws only discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or 'ethnic origins'. Britain is indeed a party to the European Convention on Human Rights, which in Article 14 clearly covers discrimination on the grounds of religion; however, it is rarely practicable and always daunting for the ordinary litigant to have recourse to European or international forums. A recent 'cause celebre' (*Mandla v. Dowell Lee* [1982] 3 WLR 932) concerned a Sikh who complained of racial discrimination. The Court of Appeal rejected the plea on the grounds that the Sikhs constituted a religious community, not a race, and the then Master of the Rolls, Lord Denning, in the course of his remarks, explained at great length that the word 'race' was, (on historical grounds, inserted in the Act expressly for to cover Jews. 'There is nothing in their culture or language to mark out Jews in England from others,' he wrote. 'The Jews in England share all of these characteristics equally with the rest of us. Apart from religion, the one characteristic which is different is a racial characteristic.' Though Lord Denning's remarks were highly controversial, it remains that Jews in the UK are protected against discrimination not on account of their distinctive religion but under the Race Relations Act. This was confirmed by the House of Lords judgment in the *Mandla v. Lee* case on 24 March 1983. In overturning the Court of Appeal's ruling the House of Lords, whilst reaffirming that the term 'ethnic' in the Act was intended to cover Jews, broadened the definition of 'ethnic' to incorporate two essential and five

non-essential though relevant conditions. The first essential condition is a 'long, shared, history ...', and the second 'a cultural tradition of its own often but not necessarily associated with religious observance'. I find this a more satisfactory solution than an explicit reference to discrimination on the grounds of religion. So far as Jews (or Sikhs) are concerned, they are included irrespective of their personal adherence to religious traditions; yet at the same time the law does not allow any crazy or even anti-social (or antisemitic?) group to set itself up as a 'religion' and claim protection.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

I pass.

Religious Pluralism in Israel

by

Prof. Ruth Lapidot^{*}

From various points of view Israel is a pluralistic society. The country is inhabited by people of different religions, belonging to various ethnic groups, speaking several languages, having different cultural and social traditions, and with many different political allegiances and ideologies. These manifold sources of pluralism make it somewhat difficult to single out the element of religious pluralism, in particular since in Israel religious affiliation is often connected with ethnic origin, language, culture and political allegiance. However, an attempt will be made to concentrate on the religious aspects.

In order to understand the status of the various religious groups in Israel, a few preliminary remarks may be helpful.

1) The country is not only inhabited by adherents of various religions, it is also holy to four major faiths: Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Bahai. For Judaism, the country as such is holy, for Christianity and Islam several places in the country are holy, and for the Bahais it is not only the site of various holy places but also of their spiritual and administrative world center.

2) There is a Jewish majority in the country but Judaism has not been proclaimed the official religion of the State, although in the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed "the establishment of a Jewish State in the Land of Israel - The State of Israel."

3) The term "Jewish" has both a religious as well as an ethnic connotation, and the two aspects are interwoven.⁽¹⁾ It is almost impossible to make a clear distinction between them.

The basic attitude of the State towards religious pluralism has found its expression in the Declaration of Independence of 1948: "It [i.e. the State] will guarantee freedom of religion and conscience, of language, education and culture. It will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions..." The Declaration of Independence is neither a constitution nor a law, but the Supreme Court has decided, that it "expresses the nation's vision and its credo", and should be

taken into consideration "when we attempt to interpret or clarify the laws of the state"⁽²⁾ In this context one may also refer to a legislative text enacted at the time of the British Mandate, in 1922, and which is still in force in Israel: "All persons in Palestine shall enjoy full liberty of conscience, and the free exercise of their forms of worship subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals. Each religious community shall enjoy autonomy for the internal affairs of the community subject to the provisions of any Ordinance or Order issued by the High Commission".⁽³⁾

Obedience to these principles has been assured by criminal law which has made it a punishable offence to hurt religious sentiments, to disturb worshipping, and to desecrate holy places.⁽⁴⁾ These rights and the protection of criminal law have been granted to "all religions", without distinction.

In order to be able to evaluate religious pluralism, we have to study how it has been implemented and materialized in various areas: in matters of worship and protection of holy places; equality of civil and political rights for members of the various religions; the possibility to change one's religion; the right to proselytize; matters of education, and matters of personal status.

Temple Mount
As mentioned, the right to worship has been granted to members of all religions. It is protected by the Penal Law, 5737-1977, and by the Protection of Holy Places Law of 5727-1967,⁽⁵⁾ as well as by the Basic Law: Jerusalem Capital of Israel of 5740-1980.⁽⁶⁾ This legislation has ensured freedom of access to the Holy Places and freedom of worship. The Holy Places are administered by members of the faith for whom they are holy. In practice, Israel has been very careful to carry out this policy of respect for the Holy Places of all religions. At the entrance to each holy place the Ministry of Religious Affairs has posted an announcement in several languages asking visitors not to desecrate the place, to be properly dressed and to behave becomingly. In the few cases of violations against the sanctity of holy places, the police has acted diligently in order to apprehend the offenders and to bring them to justice.

Sometimes it is difficult to strike the right balance between the granting of autonomy to the administrators of the holy place, on the one hand, and assuring adequate protection, on the other hand. Too much protection might be interpreted as interference. ^{PA}A question resulting from religious pluralism concerning freedom of worship has been raised in several cases concerning bigamy. In Israel,

bigamy is forbidden by criminal law, but it is permitted according to Islamic law and according to the custom of several Jewish sects. In some cases, people accused of bigamy tried to defend themselves by claiming that the law against bigamy was contrary to the principle of freedom of worship. The Court has rejected this argument, by making a distinction between what religion allows on the one hand, and what it commands, on the other hand. Since bigamy is at the most allowed by religious law and not commanded, hence its outlawing by the secular legislature is not contrary to freedom of worship.⁽⁷⁾

The second aspect under which religious pluralism has to be examined is the question of the civil and political rights of the members of the various communities. Again, the Declaration on Independence of 1948 has proclaimed that "It [i.e. the State of Israel] will maintain complete equality of social and political rights for all its citizens, without distinction of creed, race or sex..." An interesting example demonstrating this equality is the provision in the Basic Law on the President of the State which lays down only two conditions for a person to qualify as a candidate for this office: he must be a citizen and a resident of Israel.^(7a) An amendment proposed at the time, which would have reserved this office for Jews, was not adopted by the Knesseth.

A certain de facto inequality is sometimes seen in the fact that only Jewish citizens are subject to compulsory military service. However, this special treatment given to non-Jews is designed to prevent a conflict of conscience, most of the non-Jews being Arabs (Moslem or Christian). Moreover, many non-Jewish youths serve in the Israeli army on a voluntary basis.

Respect for religious pluralism is at the base of various laws which reject automatic equality in order to preserve the collective rights of a religious community. Thus, the Law on Adoption of 5741-1981⁽⁸⁾ has prescribed that the adopting person has to be of the same religion as the one to be adopted, and in the matter of weekly rest it has been permitted for non-Jews to rest on Sunday or Friday instead of the Shabbath.⁽⁹⁾

It is of course true that equality cannot be measured only by reference to the legal system, and some inequality on the social level may exist despite the law. But it seems that in hardly any heterogeneous society social relations between members of the various groups are based on complete equality.

Among the specific provisions of Israel's laws which are intended to guarantee equality to members of the various religions, let us mention the law on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide/5711-1951,⁽¹⁰⁾ the Employment Service Law, 5719-1959,⁽¹¹⁾ Succession Law, 5725-1965⁽¹²⁾ the Rules on recognition of institutions of higher education made in 1964 under the Council for Higher Education Law, 5718-1958, and the Defamation (Prohibition) Law, 5725-1965 .⁽¹⁴⁾

Equality among the members of various faiths has to be supplemented by provisions against intolerance. But a prohibition of intolerance may easily be interpreted as a violation of the principle of freedom of opinion and of expression, which is the cornerstone of every democratic society. Hence the legislature interferes only when the intolerance reaches the level of incitement: in the Penal Law, 5737-1977,⁽¹⁵⁾ the offense of sedition includes the promotion of feelings of ill-will and enmity between different sections of the population. The Law also prohibits the publication or reproduction of publications of a seditious nature. Sedition is considered a serious offence, and the perpetrator is liable to up to 5 years imprisonment.⁽¹⁶⁾

Despite these legal provisions, incitement to hatred on religious (or ethnic) grounds occurs among members of extremist groups, and one may deplore that the State has not been more diligent in prosecuting the offenders.

It has been alleged that there is discrimination against non-Jews in the fields of immigration and nationality. The Declaration on Independence has stated that "The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and for the ingathering of the exiles". Consequently, the Law of Return of 5710-1950⁽¹⁷⁾ provided that "every Jew has the right to come to this country as an immigrant," and according to the Nationality Law, 5712-1952⁽¹⁸⁾ he automatically acquires Israeli nationality unless he does not wish to. However, this privilege does not involve improper discrimination on religious grounds for several reasons:

1) By analogy it may be deduced from the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, that in matters of nationality, citizenship and naturalization, States are free to prefer certain groups, on condition that there is no discrimination against any particular religion (Article 1);

2) Moreover, the law does not close the State's doors to anybody, but only creates a preference in favour of the Jews.⁽¹⁹⁾ Such preference can be considered as an affirmative action plan.

3) It should be underlined that everybody, including non-Jews, may apply for permission to enter Israel, and for naturalization. It is only the automatic right to enter and the automatic acquisition of nationality that is reserved for Jews.

4) Moreover, not only the Jew enjoys those automatic rights, but also the members of his family, whether they are Jewish or not.⁽²⁰⁾

In this matter of immigration and nationality, the dual nature of Judaism as a religion and as an ethnic origin, is of particular relevance. Despite the semi-religious definition of a Jew, the relevant laws are basically concerned with the return of members of the Jewish people to their homeland, in accordance with the principle of self-determination.

A third aspect of religious pluralism concerns the possibility to change one's religion. This right has been the subject of a special enactment - the Religious Community (Conversion) Ordinance, of 1927, which is still in force. Since - as will be seen later - the belonging to a religious community has important consequences in matters of personal status and the jurisdiction of the courts, it was laid down that a change in religion has to be registered. Hence, everyone is free to change his religion, but in order for that conversion to have legal consequences, he needs the consent of the new community which he joins. The head of this community will provide him with an appropriate certificate, and he has to notify the District Commissioner of the change. The consent of the community which he leaves is not needed.

The right to proselytize has been the subject of some misunderstanding. Proselytizing is legal, but since 1977 it is prohibited to promise money or other material advantages in order to induce somebody to change his religion. Similarly it is prohibited to receive material advantages in exchange for a promise to change one's religion.⁽²¹⁾ It should be underlined that proselytizing is allowed, but the practice of buying souls for money has been prohibited, a practice which is also condemned by various religions. This law applies equally

to all religions. According to an instruction of the Attorney General, nobody shall be prosecuted under this law without prior authorisation of the State Attorney. In fact, the law has never been applied.

From time to time tension rises because of overzealous attempts to proselytize, probably because of the differing attitudes of the various religions to proselytizing: for instance, the Jewish and the Druze religion do not encourage people to join their ranks, while some Christian groups consider proselytizing a holy mission. It can be understood that members of a religion who do not try to influence others to join it, are irritated if members of other religions try to proselytize among its own ranks.

The right to a religious education has been guaranteed by law.⁽²²⁾ Thus, the parents of a child may choose to send it to a secular State school, a religious State school, or a private religious school.

It is perhaps in matters of personal status that religious pluralism in Israel is most complicated and controversial. Under the Ottoman rule, the recognized religious communities (Milletts) were granted autonomy in matters of personal status. This system was taken over with some modifications by the Mandatory government and later by the State of Israel. Today there are 13 recognized religious communities in Israel: the Moslem community, the Jewish, Eastern (Orthodox), Latin (Catholic), Gregorian Armenian, Armenian (Catholic), Syrian (Catholic), Chaldean (Uniate), Greek (Catholic) Melkite, Maronite, Syrian Orthodox, Druze (since 1962), Episcopal-Evangelical (since 1970) and Bahai (since 1971) communities. The last two don't have their own religious tribunals. Officers of the various communities are in charge of the registration of marriages,⁽²³⁾ and their tribunals have jurisdiction in matters of personal status, sometimes to the exclusion of the civil courts. There are differences in the scope of jurisdiction of the various communities. The Moslem tribunal has the broadest powers: exclusive jurisdiction in most matters of personal status, i.e. marriage and divorce, alimony, maintenance, guardianship, legitimation of minors, inhibition from dealing with property of persons who are legally incompetent, and the administration of the property of absent persons. In addition, they have exclusive jurisdiction in matters concerning religious endowments.⁽²⁴⁾ The Jewish religious tribunal, like the Druze one, has exclusive jurisdiction in matters of marriage and divorce of Jews in Israel who are citizens or residents of the State.⁽²⁵⁾ In other matters of personal Status, there is concurrent jurisdiction, subject to the consent of

the parties. The tribunal is also competent to deal with religious endowments.⁽²⁶⁾ The Christian tribunals have exclusive jurisdiction in matters of marriage, divorce and alimony, of members of their communities other than foreigners, as well as in matters of the administration of a religious endowment.⁽²⁷⁾ In other matters of personal status, they have concurrent jurisdiction, depending upon the consent of the parties.

With regard to some of the tribunals, every adherent to the specific faith is subject to their jurisdiction, while others may exercise jurisdiction only over members of the community.⁽²⁸⁾ This, again, is a vestige of Ottoman rule.

Although the jurisdiction of the Rabbinical tribunals is not broader than that of some of the other communities, it has given rise to special problems and strong opposition from many Jews, while it seems that no such resentment with regard to tribunals of other religious communities has been recorded. Probably the opposition to the Jewish religious tribunals stems from two reasons: Jewish law is very strict on matters of marriage and divorce, and contains several restrictions in this field which may be considered outdated and may create hardship. Secondly, while the other religious communities in Israel are rather homogeneous, the Jewish population is very heterogeneous, but so far the State has in fact given the Orthodox movement a monopoly over official activities, i.e. the registration of marriages and jurisdiction in matters of personal status. This has engendered resentment from adherents of other movements.⁽²⁹⁾

It may thus be concluded that religious pluralism in Israel is recognized and protected by the law, in matters of freedom of worship and protection of holy places, civil and political rights of the members of the various faiths, the right to conversion, to proselytizing and to religious education, as well as in the sphere of personal status. However, while most of the above rights are granted to members of all religions, in matters of personal status the jurisdiction of the religious tribunals applies only to the recognized communities, and the scope of the jurisdiction of the various tribunals is not the same.

Religious pluralism creates tensions sometimes, mainly when the intolerance of extremist religious groups leads them to seditious and aggressive behaviour. This aggressiveness is sometimes directed against another religion, sometimes against members of a different movement within the same faith. Religious tension is often exacerbated by political ideologies and fears.

However, it may be asserted that despite the political tension, religious pluralism is generally respected in Israel. This pluralism has many advantages: it widens the horizons of people who live in the country and teaches them that tolerance is not only an important ideological aim, but also a practical need.

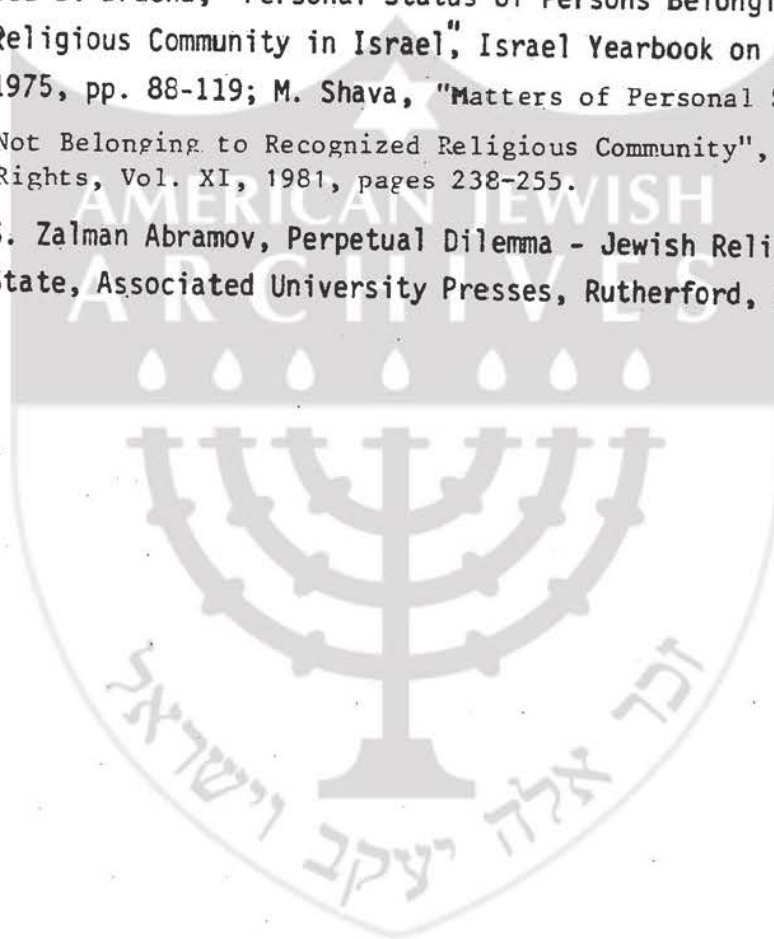


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ROLE OF RELIGION IN CONFLICTS

(Preparation of a Study Document)

1. The Executive Committee of the WCC in its February 1984 meeting adopted the following minute:

"That a preliminary study document be prepared by CCIA in collaboration with the sub-unit on Dialogue with People of other Living Faiths, for consideration by the Executive Committee in July 1984, on the problems posed by the recurrent and often violent eruption of conflicts between religious communities in many parts of the world. Special attention should also be paid to the implications for people of different religions where the law of the land is drawn from the tenets of one particular religion."

2. The Executive Committee had in mind a number of situations of conflict including violent conflicts where apparently religious factors played a role. Several conflicts around the world are described as religious in popular and media presentation. Among them are 'classical' situations like Northern Ireland and Lebanon and new situations like Punjab (India). There are also situations like Sri Lanka where the religious dimension is present in the conflict. However it is incorrect to say that all such conflicts are conflicts between religious communities. All these situations are complex and the conflicts are the result of a variety of socio-economic and political factors. Religion adds a volatile component to many of them.
3. In the preliminary outline for the study document given to the Executive in July 1984, some of the ways in which religion plays a role in conflicts were identified:
 - Religion as a component of nationalism, especially ethno-nationalism.
 - Religious factors exacerbating tensions or conflicts whose root causes are socio-political and economic.
 - Religious factors and sentiments being deliberately used to heighten tensions.
 - Religious notions of state transforming political institutions and leading to conflicts.
 - Religious fundamentalism or fanaticism influencing state policies substantially.
4. The Executive has proposed that the following aspects also should receive special attention:
 - Erosion of the secular and the identification of the secular with the west.
 - Use of religion in political processes and in influencing policies of governments.

- Growing lack of confidence in governments in many parts of the world by minorities, leading opposition and conflict making use of religion.
 - Tensions resulting from new financial power acquired (from outside) by previously marginalised sections.
 - Religious conflicts used by outside forces to destabilize countries.
5. Some aspects of the following also have to be dealt with in developing the study document:
- Religious pluralism
 - Religious liberty
 - Church, state, community relations
 - Role of religion in reconciliation and peace
 - Role of the churches.



Religious Pluralism: Necessary? Possible?

Michael Rosenak

H.U. - Diaspora J. Ed.

I - Aspects of the issue:

A. Diverse Understandings and Approaches:

1. liberal - all legitimate, be respected - no monopoly on truth
W. Lippman - Public Philosophy - freedom, to enable people to arrive at truth
2. universalistic-theological - no relig system has entire truth
3. sociological - particularistic traditions - (congenial to Judaism)
4. secular - indifferent or antagonistic - truth claims not taken seriously
5. pragmatic - (Keep all zealousness under restraint, restrain, neutralize)

B. Questions that arise in the consideration of pluralism:

1. truth claims and pluralism - coexistence or relativism (anything goes)
2. de facto and de jure pluralism - enjoy difference - love & respect / not along side of / friendship
3. "mistaken acts" and "wicked people" - relig ignorance or rebellion?
4. pluralism as response / and as surrender - FALKENHEIM - FANATICISM OF WILL / projection of doubts - destroy doubts

C. Pluralism between religious faiths and within them - legit within religion? are diverse views dialogue or segregation

D. Ways of applying and evaluating pluralism:

1. Civic-Political-juridical - leave to individual / leave to individual
2. Non-Propositional-Theological - propositional - statements - nonprop - experiential - pluralism way of seeing what God is saying to this generation
3. Deliberative-Valuative - Ben-Sassoon - God has decided to let go of old way - we're right, they're wrong
4. Propositional-Theological - what is most valuable at given moment, most urgent? different principle of reality,

intense, idiosyncratic

- Deliberative / valuative - what is most valuable at given moment, most urgent? different principle of reality, but share

- suspect secularity

- loyal & intelligent - sacred charge

II - A view from within the Jewish religious community: Personal reflections on two simplistic views of pluralism:

1. The simplistic religious approach - propositional w. vengeance [P. Berger - The Sacred Imperative] - more universalistic, less tolerant - truth for all
2. The simplistic secular approach - where coercion not possible, segregation
3. Distortions in simplistic approaches - pluralism: self-understood - not important, ∴ no right to impose on others

III - Clarifying the Issue of Pluralism: Uses of Jewish Doctrine

Noah. Covenant (PPH) - used in courts

1. Revelation - to mankind and the Israel (comprehensive Torah)
2. The binding nature of the covenant [demand - coercive]
3. Parameters of the Noahide commandments [covenant - accessible to all mankind] - may not serve idols, not serve God not suffer martyrdom, except against bloodshed
4. Criteria for legitimate religion; religion and nation
5. The purpose of the covenant [chosen people, no negative reflection on peoples, only on nations who did not accept - ascent of all nations] - Is. 19 - Triple Covenant - Syria, Egypt, Israel
6. The "perfect Torah" and its relationship to ongoing experience Israel - paradigmatic - sovereignty over all nations - one covenant - אלהים אחד

IV - Traditional religious principles and the modern consciousness:

1. Areas of potential conflict and disagreement in principle
2. Distinguishing between cultural discontinuities and principled disagreement
3. Secularized humanism as distinguished from paganism

Cultural crisis
 - man's aloneness
 - normative authority (insensitivity of authority)

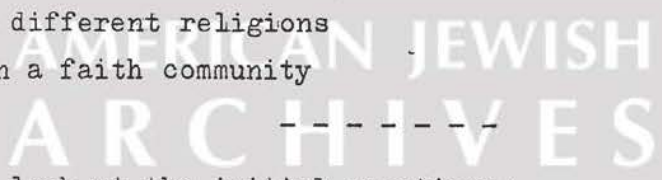
lives on doubt, lack of certainties

V - The Noahide category in the modern world: (individuals - פרטים / בתי דין - in courts)

1. "The righteous of the nations" as a collective-confessional concept
 Smith - churches, refuted recent / 13th cent. - Me'orot - אור החיים = אור החיים
2. The definition of idolatry in the modern context
 c.R. Kook - אור החיים - orient "hearts to heaven" - פירוש פסוק

VI - The possibility and necessity of pluralism

1. Among different religions
2. Within a faith community



VII - A brief look at the initial questions:

1. truth claims and pluralism - not relinquish life of community testifies to truth as it believes
 God's truth/walk humbly with thy God - not with idols - or
2. de jure and de facto pluralism
3. religion and secular society

unbridled power: arbitrary, cruel behavior; (Orwell, Beethoven)
 - deserve respect, because legitimacy of their religions
 - פרט פרטי אור החיים אור החיים - [אור החיים - differed on laws of marriage, but intermarried]
 - אור החיים - אור החיים - incense among nations - intention to reach God
 - secular pluralism - you're all wrong, so keep quiet.
 - Noah - paradigm - Father of mankind (Cain - Abel - Killers & killed)
 - Adam - "a righteous man" (not Jew)
 - Fowler - "SAGES OF FAITH" - (6th stage - universal responsibility in particular community)

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN AMERICA:

DEMOCRACY, DESPOTISM, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND MAJORITY RULE

Mary Edwardsen

In this paper I shall address the state of religious pluralism from two distinct, though related perspectives: first, from a political view that encompasses the constitutional status of religious freedom, religious pluralism, and the principle of the separation of church and state; second, from a religious view that encompasses the nature and position of religion in society and inter-religious relations. Throughout this paper the reader will find posited a tension - if not a conflict - between 'the public,' or 'public opinion,' and both the political and religious realms. Though I am by no means a populist, I do regret the Whiggish or elitist connotations of this division and ask that the reader bear with me as I attempt to clarify the distinction between religious and political spheres - properly conceived - and the 'public' against which I oppose these spheres to a certain extent.

My principal thesis is, stated simply, that religious pluralism is threatened today less by a wilful force that is somehow disrupting our pristine socio-political structure than by a general erosion of the distinctiveness and significance of both the political and religious realms. Moreover, I maintain that this loss of distinctiveness has been a gradual, though persistent, process throughout American history.

THE POLITICAL REALM

The 'American experiment' regarded religious pluralism as itself a societal good. It was toward the establishment of this good that the First Amendment was written. The Constitution stipulates that the interpretation of this amendment remains the domain of the Supreme Court, or that branch of government Hamilton describes as the weakest in so far as its powers are limited to the "authority" of judgment and it "is possessed of neither Force or Will." Hannah Arendt explains the exclusion of interpretation from the functions of the 'political realm' of representative debate as follows: "The Supreme Court's very authority made it unfit for power, just as, conversely, the power of the legislature made the Senate unfit to exact authority" (*On Revolution*, p.201).

The importance of the content and authority of the Constitution as well as the system of protections it affords to its interpretation cannot be underestimated in a discussion of religious pluralism in America. Furthermore, one can argue that the Constitution has not only framed and regulated the activities of this nation, it has also led and directed them. One can easily see the application of this point in regards to the First Amendment if we recall with church historian Robert Handy that "it took a few decades before all the states caught up to what had happened nationally, and it was a century and more before a good many Americans saw the full implications of the change that had taken place" (*USQR*, p.302). How the authority of such amendment could be maintained - despite the American public's knowledge of its implications - can be explained only in terms of the nature and authority of the US Constitution itself.

The authority of the Constitution is, quite simply, the authority of foundation: it is the beginning of the US as a nation-state. Its authority is not sanctioned by religion: rather, its content is posited as "truthes which we hold to be self-evident." This wording takes the Constitution out of the arena of public debate. It is no less compelling than despotic power nor less absolute than the revealed

truths of religion or the axiomatic verities of mathematics (Arendt, *On Revolution*, p. 193). This authority thus protects the citizen from the despotism of the one, i.e. the absolute monarch who would be placed above the Constitution, and the "despotism of the majority" wherein public opinion would be the nation's highest authority. In other words, it is the authority of the Constitution that alone prevents the technical device of majority decision from degenerating into "majority rule." Such protection was the basis for the establishment of a republican form of government. Unlike a simple democracy, a republic is founded upon the principle of representation, and posits a distinct political realm that looks upon the exchange of ideas as the basis for legislative action. The absence of this exchange would be despotism, either in the form of monarchy or the mass rule of public opinion. Arendt articulates the importance of this distinction as follows:

The so-called will of the multitude (if this is to be more than a legal fiction) is ever-changing by definition, and . . . a structure built on it as a foundation is built on quicksand. . . In America (the Constitution was) . . . framed with the expressed purpose and conscious intention to prevent as far as humanly possible, the procedures of majority decisions from degenerating into "elective despotism" of majority rule. . . (There is) a decisive incompatibility between the rule of the unanimously held "public opinion" and freedom of opinion, for the truth of the matter is that no formation of opinion is even possible where all opinions have become the same. . . It is not only, and perhaps not even primarily, because of the overwhelming power of the many that the voice of the few loses all strength and all plausibility under such circumstances, public opinion, by virtue of its unanimity, provokes a unanimous opposition and thus kills true opinions everywhere. This is the reason why the Founding Fathers tended to equate rule based on public opinion with tyranny; democracy in this sense was to them but a new fangled form of despotism. (*On Revolution*, pp. 162-164)

The significance of Arendt's position for a discussion of religious pluralism in the US can be easily grasped by a brief look at the Second Great Awakening of the early 19th century. This stage of American history marked a radical shift from the elite 'classical' principles of republicanism held by the Founding Fathers to a 'romantic democracy' that understood the best authority to be the authority of 'the people.'

Despite American mythology to the contrary, the pull toward a democracy frightened the Founding Fathers. Indeed, in 1776, John Adams stated, "there must be a Decency, and Respect, and Veneration introduced for persons in Authority of every Rank or we are undone." "During the 'Critical Period'," write McLoughlin, when the masses seemed to support David Shays, paper money, and thriftless self-indulgence, the wise and well-born used every ounce of their prestige and power to persuade the citizenry to accept a constitution with carefully built in checks and balances against 'a factious, turbulent democracy'" (*USQR*, p.330). From 1789 to 1829, a general timidity prevailed among the populace. Apparently they did not yet quite trust themselves with the power that lay in their hands. By 1830, however, this timidity fell aside, completing the change of the flow of authority

from the elite to that which flows from the people. Gordon Wood refers to this shift as the "real American revolution," McLoughlin describes this period as follows:

Americans had become like gods. The revolt against a patriarchal, hierarchical corporate feudal world that began in 1730 had been resolved in a new consensus which constituted the true birth of the nation in 1830. The expansion of power, prosperity and territory in America was "the manifest destiny" of God for his people. . . . Temporal and spiritual power were fused even while Americans proclaimed to the world that they were the first nation on earth to truly understand that religious freedom meant the separation of church and state. Perry Miller concluded that in 1830, "religious liberty opened the highway to a greater uniformity than the Church of Rome ever contemplated." (USQR, p.334)

McLoughlin's description, presented in 1978 as part of a symposium, "From Religious Tolerance to Religious Freedom," leads historian John Wilson to the conclusion that the democratizing and Americanizing of the culture, which included the formal denominationalizing of religious institutions, can be seen to result in a lessened commitment to religious toleration." Wilson states that "what is denominated as the Second Great Awakening entails less a movement towards greater religious freedom than a substantial diminishing of the effective religious toleration of the post-revolutionary era" (USQR, p.348). Arendt, I believe, would see this relation between intolerance and "democratizing" of religion as simply a classic illustration of the "despotism of majority 'public opinion.'"

I have dwelled on the Second Great Awakening because it helps to clarify why the dissolving of the political and religious realms into the 'public' arena cannot be justifiably cast as merely a contemporary change in public sentiment. Throughout most of American history, the constitutional establishment of a distinct 'political realm' in which the change of opinion is protected and valued has been foreign to the prevailing ideology of democracy as majority rule. What is more, the separation of church and state has been upheld in the Constitution despite a tradition of 'religious populism' in this country.

THE RELIGIOUS REALM

Religious freedom, the possibility of religious pluralism, is protected by the Constitution (thus far, at least) from both the 'political realm' and public opinion. Such a dual protection is clarified by Wilson who distinguishes our religious freedom from the notion of toleration, defined as "essentially a social policy regarding 'externals'" and from liberty of conscience, which "concerns persons and represents a respect for individual beliefs and perhaps behavior associate with them" (USQR, p. 437). According to Wilson, religious freedom in the US represents a "collective recognition that there is a species of social activity generally labelled as or understood as 'religious'. Thus it calls for something we might think of as 'zones of neutrality' within social life broadly construed. In the name of 'religion' some behavior might be permitted that otherwise would not" (USQR, p.437). The significance of Wilson's distinction lies in its insistence that religious freedom entails the recognition of religion as positive or substantive and as distinguished from society as a "neutral zone", or as a "realm of permissible social deviance," within society.

Pluralism has been sustained in this context primarily because religious groups have "understood themselves to be self-supporting and ready to accept their religious claims as binding only on their members" (USQR, p.438). The significance of this

self-containment of religious authority is made clear if we briefly contemplate the vulnerability of religious pluralism to non-tolerant groups such as those that constitute the contemporary phenomenon known as the 'religious right,' which defy the restrictive label of a 'religion' and claim a universal truth that calls into question the whole of our culture. This vulnerability stems from the simple fact that religion does not function in a vacuum or in a purely 'secular' context. Something like a 'civil religion' functions in America as the religious aspect of our culture. By definition, a civil religion, however, requires that it not be another 'religion' like the positive religious traditions, for it is, by definition, the religious aspect of culture as a whole, derived from a general synthesis of the diverse religious influences. To the extent that we have lost sight of the political nature (i.e. a nature that is grounded in debate, synthesis, and compromise) of civil religion, which requires the maintenance of religious pluralism, and have interpreted civil religion as the 'religion of the majority of the populace,' religious pluralism has come to mean little more than a begrudging form of religious toleration.

I believe that the current unsettled state of religious pluralism is the inevitable result of an erosion of religious identity and integrity. To clarify this position, it is only necessary briefly to compare the quality of Catholic-Jewish relations with Protestant-Jewish relations. Such a comparison shows us that the clarity with which Roman Catholicism has understood its religious identity has enabled the development of an interreligious relationship with Judaism that Protestants and Jews are together not able to achieve. I suggest that the lack of a distinct religious identity or integrity (in the form of a blurring of religious and political realms and public opinion) that has been a part of Protestant denominations since their 'democratization' during the Second Great Awakening threatens the very principle of religious pluralism and complicates and confuses current Christian-Jewish relations. Protestantism equates itself - to a large extent - with either 'public morality' (if on the political right) or a form of American civil religion (if on the political left). What has been obscured is a sense of 'religion' as a positive, substantive species of activity that is constitutionally recognized and distinguished from the public realm and public opinion.

This self-dissolving of American Protestantism into the American socio-political culture as a whole is, at present, causing interreligious relations to be equated with a pseudo religio-political advocacy (of the religious right) or interracial or intercultural relations (of the political left). (See Leo Pfeffer's book, *Creeks in Competition*, for discussion.) This tendency to cast Christian-Jewish relations strictly as a socio-political phenomenon is further complicated by the multi-dimensional nature of Judaism itself. The fact that Judaism encompasses race, culture, and religion in the notion of a 'people' contributes to restricting the meaning of Christian-Jewish relations to that of relations between Jew and Gentile, in the etymologically accurate sense of the word. By so casting the protagonists, however, the substantive integrity of Christianity is ignored, and, it should be added, the very reality of Judaism as a religion is often forgotten.

By relinquishing the basic premise that Judaism and Christianity are 'real,' i.e. that they are positive religious traditions, we dismiss not only our shared biblical tradition - the core that binds Christianity to Judaism - but also the importance of our role as religions within society and within the world.

The tragic irony of the present situation, in which Protestants and Jews ignore the distinctiveness of a religious realm, lies in the fact that it is only in this realm that the depth of Judaism's influence upon Christianity can be seen. It is only here that the nature of religious truths, as opposed to

scientific truths, political truths, and majority opinion, is preserved and protected. Christianity inherited from Judaism a God who could not be 'possessed' or 'grasped' - a God whom humanity could not see and live. This separation of God and humanity is not the separation imposed by doubt or scepticism; rather, it is the very possibility of human existence. Philosopher Jacques Derrida, in a discussion of the contemporary Jewish novelist Edmond Jabes, writes:

God separated himself from himself in order to let us speak, in order to astonish and to interrogate us. He did so not by speaking but by letting silence interrupt his voice and his signs, by letting the Tables be broken. In *Exodus* God repented and said so at least twice before the first and before the new Tables, between original speech and writing and, within Scripture, between origin and repetition (Ex. 32:14; 33:17). Writing is, thus, originally hermetic and secondary. Our writing, certainly, but already His, which starts with the stifling of his voice and the dissimulation of his Face. This difference, this negativity in God is our freedom, the transcendence and verb which can relocate the purity of their negative origin only in the possibility of the Question.

(*Writing and Difference*, p.67)

This 'absence' can only be preserved given the presence of a distinctly religious realm. If such a realm does not exist, all our talk of religious pluralism - as a good that ought to be pursued - is meaningless. If there is no distinctly religious realm, then there are only political reasons for not allowing the fundamentalists their sway, because religious truth has dwindled to something of the order of public opinion, and the kingdoms of God and Caesar have merged.

Religious writing is the writing of exile. It is the writing in the sand. It is the commentary that grows between the cracks of the broken Tables. It is the speaking of parables - a language that withholds and resists our intellectual grasp. And it is in this brokenness and withholding that the possibility of meaning can be found - a meaning that runs "between the too warm flesh of the literal event and the cold skin of the concept." (*Writing and Difference*, p.75).

I fear that we have lost sight of the significance of religion and the nature of religious truths. We view religious freedom as if it were but a derivative form of 'freedom of speech' i.e. a freedom that is not substantive and that has no distinct positive significance for society and humanity. We may still speak and pray in terms of a separation of the sacred and the profane; but I suggest that this distinction has become little more than a clamorous debate over the righteousness or profanity of the 'moral majority.'

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A VISIT TO CHAPELTOWN AND HAREHILLS: MULTI-CULTURAL, MULTI-FAITH AREAS OF
THE INNER-CITY OF LEEDS

BACKGROUND NOTES:

1. Chapeltown and Harehills are about 1½ miles NNE of Leeds City Centre. Chapeltown lies on either side of Chapeltown Road (which continues north as Harrogate Road - A61), and Harehills is on both sides of Roundhay Road (which continues NE as Wetherby Road - A58)
2. Chapeltown's appearance is still affected by its origin, in the last decades of the 19th Century, as a new residential area occupied by successful business people and manufacturers moving to better housing from the central area of Leeds. Even though subsequently it was built up with rows of terrace housing, it still has many large houses (which have passed through various stages of use) and wide streets, some of which are pleasantly tree-lined. Harehills on the other hand developed in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century as an area of high density, working class housing, with narrower streets and rows of back-to-back houses, many of which have now been demolished, leaving open areas due for redevelopment.
3. With the expansion of Leeds both areas became part of the inner city, into which a succession of non-U.K. immigrants have come to form a mixed population of ethnic groups of different origins, cultures and religions. The general succession of immigration has been Irish, followed by Jews, and then East Europeans, Afro-Caribbean people, South Asians and East Asians, of whom Vietnamese are the latest group of incomers. These are the major groups, within which there are subdivisions of nationality, language and culture. In all some 30 different languages are spoken in the area. In Leeds, as a whole, there are perhaps 40,000 people of Irish descent, 16,000 Jews (the third largest community in Britain), 15,000 of Caribbean origin (West Indian), 10,000 Muslims, 6000 Sikhs, 4,000 Hindus, 3,000+ East Europeans, with Poles as the largest group, perhaps 2,000 Chinese and Vietnamese, and many smaller groups. A very good proportion of these live in Chapeltown and Harehills. Most of these came to Britain at least several decades ago and their children and grandchildren have been born here, so that they are well-established British people.
4. The succession of immigration has greatly affected the religious composition of Chapeltown and Harehills. The advent of Irish, East European and West Indian people has added to the range of Christian churches, so that all the main branches of the Christian Church are now found in this part of Leeds - Anglican, Methodist, United Reformed, Baptist, Lutheran, Roman Catholic (including Polish Catholic), Orthodox and Pentecostal churches.
Exak
In addition, adherents of most of the other major world religions live here - Jews (Orthodox and Reform), Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists - so that synagogues, mosques, temples add to the range of places of worship in Chapeltown and Harehills. In addition to these there are many new cultural and social centres and a variety of shops bearing witness to a multi-ethnic society. As some of the earlier immigrants, in particular the Jews, have moved north out of Chapeltown into suburban areas, many of their houses, buildings and shops have been bought and reoccupied by later immigrants.
5. Immigrants, seeking to maintain a real identity within the majority host community, naturally hold to their own ethnic groups and seek to maintain their own religion, institutions, culture and languages. The problem is how to integrate with British society while retaining their proper identity within it. This problem is felt most acutely in relation to the second and third generations. The schools in the area are now multi-cultural and the task facing them is to ensure real multi-cultural education. In Chapeltown and Harehills a great deal of successful pioneer work has been done by teachers in primary and middle schools in this vital area and Leeds Community Relations Council, in cooperation with some City councillors, is seeking to make much greater practical advance in meeting the educational needs of the ethnic communities.

C.

6. In Chapeltown and Harehills - as within other parts of Leeds Inner City - the Churches have been brought face-to-face with many new ~~xxx~~ challenges in the evolution of a multi-cultural, multi-faith society. Some of these might be listed as follows:-

- (a) Relationships with fellow Christians over the wide range of Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and Pentecostal churches in the area.
- (b) Relationships of black and white Christians in the same church and between 'white' and 'black' churches.
- (c) Christian relationships with peoples of other world faiths.
- (d) Christian service and contribution in a society in which there is real poverty, high unemployment and racial discrimination.
- (e) Christian contribution to the creation of fuller community life and a just, peaceful society.

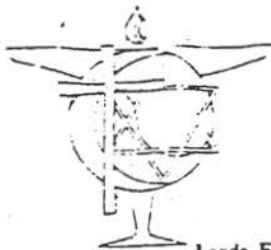
In this area nearly all churches are aware of these and other challenges and tasks and there is an ongoing movement of Christian thinking, work and sacrifice in Chapeltown and Harehills related to the local community situation. This sense of challenge to the Christian churches is, however, only slowly being felt by the larger, wealthier-in-resources, and generally middle-class churches of the suburbs beyond the inner city.

E.

KEY TO CHAPELTOWN MAP

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Polish Catholic Church | 28. Chapeltown Boys' Club |
| 2. St Martin's Church of England | 29. The West Indian Centre |
| 3. Hope Hall (Pentecostal) | 30. The Harehills Place Community Centre |
| 4. New Testament Ch. of God (P'costal) | 31. Roscoe West Indian Family Counselling Service |
| 5. Roscoe Methodist Ch. | 32. Chapeltown Citizens Advice Bureau |
| 6. Holy Rosary R.C. Ch. | 33. Roscoe Day Centre |
| 7. Wesleyan Holiness Ch. (Pentecostal) | 34. Browning House Hostel for mothers & children |
| 8. Harehills Lane Baptist Ch. | 35. Mary Sunley House: Housing Asscn. |
| 9. Harehills Ave. Greek Orthodox Ch. | 36. Montague Burton Day Centre |
| 10. Harehills Ave. U. R. Ch. | 37. Chapeltown Housing Management Office |
| 11. Harehills Trinity Ch. (Methodist + U.R.C. + Ch. of Christ) | 38. Student Hostel (Former Herzl Jewish Hospital) |
| 12. St. Augustine R.C. Ch. | 39. Leeds Trades Council Club (Former Jewish Institute) |
| 13. St. Luke's Lutheran Ch. (?Vietnamese Centre) | 40. Barrack House Day Centre |
| 14. St. Aidan's Ch. of England | 41. Refugee Action (and Vietnamese Support Gp. office) |
| 15. The Sikh Gurdwara | 42. Chapeltown Library |
| 16. The New Synagogue | 43. Earl Cowper Middle School |
| 17. Leeds Islamic Centre | 44. Hamilton Primary School |
| 18. Central Jamia Mosque | 45. Leopold St. Primary School |
| 19. Mosque (Bangladeshi Muslim) | 46. St. Dominic's R. C. Middle School |
| 20. Bilal Mosque - - - | 47. Harehills Primary School |
| 21. Polish Social Centre | 48. Harehills Middle School |
| 22. St. Martin's Church Institute | 49. Elmhurst Middle School |
| 23. Chapeltown Community Centre | 50. Chapel Allerton Hospital |
| 24. Sikh Community and Sports Centre area | 51. Newton Green Wing |
| 25. Ukrainian Asscn. of Gt. Britain | 52. Ramgharia Board Centre |
| 26. Latvian Welfare Social Club | 53. Bhatra Asscn. |
| 27. Serbian Welfare Social Club | 54. 'Jewish Telegraph' Office |
| | 55. Leeds Jewish Workers Coop. Socy. |
| | 56. Chapeltown Health Centre |

This modern school -closed July 1984 because of falling nos of children - is to be used, under City Council management, for community activities and especially for the Concord "Multi-faith, multi-cultural Resource Centre."



F.

LEEDS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE

A MULTI-FAITH / MULTI-CULTURAL
PROJECT OF
CONCORD

Hon Secretary
Dr Peter G E Bell
19 Gledhow Park Drive
Leeds LS7 4SJ
Tel. (0532) 629140

Leeds Fellowship of Jews, Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists,
and Other Communities

The Leeds City Education Committee is making available space in former school premises - Elmhurst in Harehills Lane/Potternewton Park - which they will continue to manage & provide upkeep & caretaking for. The Local Authority is convinced of the need of such a Multi-faith, multi-cultural centre under the auspices of Concord.

A. The aims and purpose of such a Centre are:

1. To provide a large practical library of books, audio-visual aids and exhibition materials on all aspects of the religions and cultures of the City for the use of schools, teachers, students, churches and other faith groups, and members of all Leeds communities.
2. To provide a base and context for study, exhibitions and a range of courses on religions and cultures, inter-faith dialogue and multi-cultural problems.
3. To ally the Resources Centre in strong cooperation with other units which may use the premises - Multi-Cultural Education, Multi-Cultural Arts, etc.
4. To provide a further base in Leeds for the on-going work of Concord.

In all, the purpose of the Resources Centre is to be an agency for breaking down religious and cultural barriers and creating understanding and cooperation among the Leeds communities.

B. The requirements for setting-up such a Resources Centre in Elmhurst are:

1. (a) Use of three large rooms for (i) the Library; (ii) for Audio-visuals and Exhibitions; (iii) for study, seminars, group work.
(b) Occasional use of the Hall for conferences, cultural occasions, etc.
(c) An office or office space.
2. Books and materials by purchase, or donation from the various faith and cultural communities in Leeds and beyond.
3. Staffing: (a) (Part-time) Director; (b) Librarian; (c) Secretary. These will be augmented by voluntary help from members of all the communities.
4. Organisation of the work of the Resources Centre will be the task of a Concord Resources Centre Committee which will act in cooperation with the General Management Committee of the whole Elmhurst Centre.

C. The work and activities of the Resources Centre will include:

1. Regular courses, seminars, conferences, exhibitions, covering all aspects of religions and cultures of Leeds, for schools, students, teachers, churches and faith community groups, etc.
2. In-service courses for teachers on multi-faith, multi-cultural studies.
3. Courses for other agencies - police, hospital staff, social workers, etc.
4. Arranged visits and urban trails for schools and other groups to places of worship, social and community centres in the city.
5. Concord inter-faith meetings and multi-cultural occasions.
6. Cooperative courses with other units in aspects of multi-cultural education.
7. Preparation of materials and organisation of speakers for schools, etc.

D. The establishment of such a Resources Centre is strongly supported by:

- (a) Teachers and schools: (b) Leeds Metropolitan Council of Churches, Ripon and Leeds Dioceses: (c) All the faith communities in Leeds: (d) The Community Relations Council: (e) Relevant Departments of University and Polytechnic.
- Financial support is already promised to initiate the Centre in 1984. It is hoped that the opening will be November '84.

Significant indication of the general approach towards religious pluralism in Britain may be perceived in Trevor Beeson's admirable winnowing and sifting of the British Council of Churches harvest of reports in 'Britain Today and Tomorrow' (published under that title by Collins, Paperbacks).

After all, there can surely be few better means by which one may obtain a viewpoint of as broad a cross-section as possible of at least the religious establishment if not the grass roots.

Yet the most remarkable thing as far as religious pluralism is concerned is the glaring omission of the whole subject of inter-faith relations in a body of reports and documents concerned with the challenges of a modern plural society.

While the work does include in its scope the report of an earlier B.C.C. Working Party on "Britain as a multi-racial society", no reference is ever made to inter-faith complexity within the racial context, let alone any debate on how to approach diversity of religious adherence in itself.

Beeson does quote Ninian Smart's admirable pluralist expression of Christian faith (p.247) but he does so only in a much broader context of the role of religion in relation to contemporary complexity and alienation, and the practical implications of religious multiplicity in our society are apparently ignored.

This very silence appears to me to say something of significance about the matter of religious pluralism in Britain.

There is a ^{variety} ~~plethora~~ of inter-faith activities throughout the country of a very variable quantity and substance: There are some excellent materials and programmes that have been designed for use in schools throughout Britain; and there are some outstanding notable individuals and institutions in the field. However, generally speaking, the relationships between religions, and the opportunity for others' religious freedom and growth, are subjects that are overwhelmingly ignored even by the majority of committed members of the dominant faith and even its leadership, who see the issues concerned almost exclusively in racial and thus secular terms.

I do of course accept that the racial issue in Britain today is of far greater significance and urgency, yet it itself cannot be adequately handled without attention to the question of religious pluralism in practice.

This very omission in "Britain Today and Tomorrow", to my mind reflects British society's lack of conduciveness to genuine pluralism. Amidst the pressures for maximal conformity, religious-cultural diversity is seen as a problem which must be reduced to its most obvious minimal and secular component, i.e. race.

Accordingly, while British law has been enlightened and advanced in providing for the protection and interests of minorities, the atmosphere within British society has not lent itself to the development of an authentic religious pluralism that encourages different faith/cultures to promote their own heritages.

I believe that this is very much reflected in the present condition of British Jewry, the majority of whom in seeking to integrate themselves into British society have sought to minimalise their Jewishness to as great an extent as they find possible, a process which naturally increases with each generation.

On the other hand, the counter-reaction to such assimilation and vacuity may be seen in a marked minority trend towards increased Jewish commitment study and practice, but rarely of a kind which seeks integration within the spectrum of British cultural and political life. In fact more often than not the contrary is the case as this element tends to see insularity as part and parcel of its metier.

The failure of an identifiable proportion of British Jewry to emerge committed in practice to its own religious and cultural heritage and at the same time committed to playing the fullest possible role within British cultural and political society, is ^{I believe} in no small part a reflection of the country's very character which has not been conducive to such a self-confident symbiosis. (This may well be true ^{from a strictly} of the overwhelming majority of Europe as opposed to the USA and other ^{immigrant} modern countries made-up of composite-immigrations).

Very much in consonance with the general weltanschauung reflected in "Britain Today & Tomorrow" are the Working Party's recommendations on education which present the more laudable side of the coin which seeks to minimalise distinctiveness.

"We are critical of schools which appear to be socially selective" as "inappropriate in an era when society as a whole is involved in a search for values that will sustain a dynamic and plural culture".

In as much as this comment is directed at the British Public School system, the criticism is well taken and the sentiments expressed appear admirable. However the full implications do not appear to have been properly examined of such a reductionist conception of "plural" as that implied by the recommendation.

The problem is highlighted by Beeson's important introduction of the earlier B.C.C. Working Party report on Britain as a multi-racial society in the context of Britain Today & Tomorrow in order to give the racial situation its due focus.

He (Beeson) supports, with the aid of hierarchical endorsements, the Working Party's recommendation for "movement towards a pluriform concept of society" in which "the various racial and cultural groups should be encouraged to maintain and develop their distinctive identities and contribute their particular insights and gifts to the life of the nation as a whole."

Moreover it declared that "far from being an unfortunate necessity and a second best, (it) would lead to a richer and more inclusive British life." (p. 135)

Now this more genuinely pluralistic perspective would appear to contradict, to some extent, the above mentioned recommendation on education. For whereas the latter implies that schooling for the needs of one particular section of society would be divisive; if, as the report on race relations advocates, distinctive identities are to be promoted and nurtured, then specialist education becomes as essential tool in the pursuit of such objectives.

The fact of course is that (as already indicated) we are comparing here the recommendations of two different working parties, but the contradiction does highlight the inevitable problem of reconciling pluriformity with integration in a society that is so predisposed to maximal conformity.

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CENTER
FOR
THE STUDY
OF
WORLD
RELIGIONS

Harvard University
42 Francis Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138
U.S.A.

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

PARADISUS
Cristoas
Mont Timorvus
Carmenia
Fl. Tigris
Turrus Babel
Eufrates
Fialus
fons Nili
Montes Nibile
Capharica ins.
HIRCANI
MARE CASPIUM
MARE CINCENSEM
Antiochia
Ierusalem
Alexandria
TERRA ETHIOPIE
Oraculum Iovis
Locus caelestis
CANOPUS
BIZANCIUM
ACAYA
ITALIA
ROMA
G BELGICA
PARISIUS
Fl. Liguris
HISPANIA INFERIOR
BRITANNIA INSULAE
HIBERNIA
MAURITANIA TINGITANA
MONTES VESPERUS

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WORLD RELIGIONS

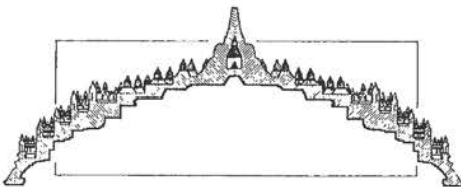


is the focus of an academic community engaged in the comparative study of religion. It utilizes the resources of the University to encourage study of many of the religious communities of the world and to further the understanding of the living faith of their members.

The Center is administratively linked with the Divinity School; its faculty and student members are drawn from various departments of Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences as well as from the Divinity School. The Center regularly welcomes Visiting Professors and Scholars from around the world who come here for teaching and research respectively.

As a residence, the Center constitutes a small international and inter-religious community of students and scholars and their families. Here those who are studying together complement their academic work with the experience of living in direct contact with members from a wide variety of religious traditions.

The Center attempts to furnish a meeting point for an ever-growing network of scholars all over the world. The Center's traditions are young — those that it touches are ancient. Each member is free to explore the past and expand the present. It is hoped that each will also be touched and changed by the persons and ideals encountered here.



MEMBERSHIP

The Center for the Study of World Religions, like other Centers at Harvard, is not itself a teaching institution. Its senior membership is drawn from those who are teaching in various departments of the University. Its student membership is primarily made up of Ph.D. and Th.D. candidates in comparative religion and includes foreign students in the Certificate Program. Visiting faculty, scholars, research fellows and doctoral candidates in fields related to the study of religion are also eligible for membership.

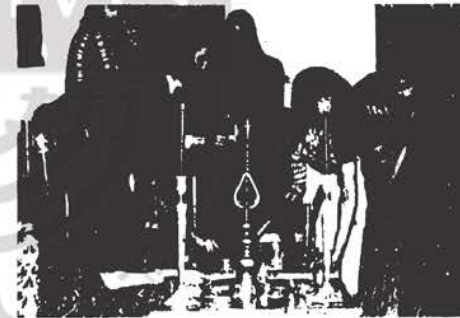
Students in the Divinity School and undergraduate concentrators in Religion as well as others connected with the University who are interested in more active participation in Center events may request to have their names placed on the CSWR mailing list for announcements of academic events sponsored by the Center.

The Center also has an Advisory Council, an international group of academic, diplomatic and business leaders interested in furthering the Center's aims and programs. Actively supporting the Center are the CSWR Associates, a group of benefactors who make annual contributions towards the Center's work.



ACTIVITIES

Resident and non-resident members come together both socially and academically through a regular series of events sponsored by the Center. Films, lectures, discussions, in-house colloquia, international dinners, and conferences on special topics are but a part of the Center's yearly calendar of events. Throughout the year the Center seeks to call attention to and sometimes observe major festivals of the religious traditions represented by its members. Such occasional celebrations combine fellowship, deepened understanding and learning, and emphasize the Center's continuing interest in the multi-dimensional aspects of human religiousness.



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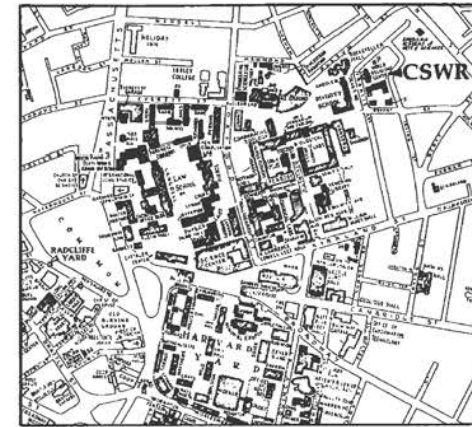
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DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMS



Two doctoral programs in Comparative Religion are offered at Harvard.

The Ph.D in Comparative Religion

(Option I under the Committee on the Study of Religion), is offered under the Faculty of Harvard's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS). This program, while not in every case requiring previous work in religious studies, assumes that a student will come to the program having completed substantial study in at least one major tradition.

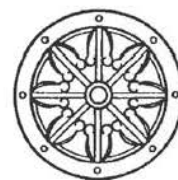
The Th.D in Comparative Religion

is offered by the Divinity School and presupposes a previous theological degree. The Th.D. program has most of the same requirements as the Ph.D. and in addition certain requirements in Christian languages, as well as a component emphasizing issues in the Christian understanding of non-Christian religions.

In both programs a doctoral candidate selects two traditions for special emphasis. The study of one's *major* and *minor* traditions takes place in the context of the broader study of human religious history. Some doctoral seminars are shared with candidates in allied fields and other areas of specialization such as Biblical Studies, Church History, Ethics, and Theology. Each candidate in the comparative study of religion is also required to attain an advanced reading level in a principal language of the *major* tradition (Sanskrit, Arabic, Chinese, etc.) This is in addition to knowledge of German and French as languages of scholarship in the field.

Normally a student takes general examinations at the end of three years of courses and then begins work on the dissertation. During the fourth or fifth year many students spend a year abroad in a cultural area closely related to their *major* religious tradition. While not required, such a year is strongly encouraged during the doctoral program.

MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS



Three Master's degrees are offered through the Divinity School in which one can do work in the area of Comparative Religion.

The M.T.S. (Master of Theological Studies)

is a two-year program in which a student elects to major in one of the three areas of study at the Divinity School, one of which is Religions of the World.

The M.Div. (Master of Divinity)

is a three-year ministerial training program that requires some course work in world religions.

The Th.M. (Master of Theology)

is a one-year program of advanced theological studies which presupposes a previous theological degree. History of Religion (Comparative Religion) is one of the areas available for concentrated study toward the Th.M.

There is no separate M.A. program under the GSAS Committee on the Study of Religion, though students in the Ph.D. program may obtain an M.A. in the course of their studies.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

On ☞ Visiting Scholars, the Certificate program, CSWR Associates, Membership, Residency, Mailing List, CSWR Studies in World Religions, contact *The Administrative Assistant, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, 42 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA.*

On all Divinity School degrees ☞ Th.D., Th.M., M.T.S., M.Div., for information on applications, admissions and financial aid, contact *The Registrar, Harvard Divinity School, 45 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA.*

Concerning the Ph.D. in Comparative Religion, for information on ☞ the Program of Study, contact *The Chairman, Committee on the Study of Religion, 61 Kirkland Street, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA;* for further information on ☞ applications and financial aid for the Ph.D., contact *Admissions Office, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University, Byerly Hall Rm. 203, 8 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA.*

N.B. Financial assistance to eligible students is available through the school at Harvard in which they are registered. Consult the Divinity School or GSAS as listed above for specific conditions and information.

SPECIAL NON-DEGREE PROGRAMS



The Visiting Scholars Program

at the Center brings to the University for one term or for one academic year scholars already holding a doctorate or equivalent degree who are usually on leave from a teaching position at another university. While this program does not normally presuppose specific course work or provide formal teaching opportunities, applicants are expected to propose work on a project involving a topic concerned with comparative religion.

A Certificate of Advanced Study

is offered through the Center itself for the successful completion of a one-year program of study. Especially designed for foreign students, this certificate is offered under the Resident Graduate Unclassified (R.G.U.) category of Harvard Divinity School, though it is administered by the Center. The purpose of this program is to enable graduate students or faculty at other institutions (normally not in the United States or Canada) to develop further teaching capabilities in comparative religion through course work supervised by the CSWR Faculty.

Through the Visiting Scholar and the Certificate of Advanced Study programs, the Center strives to bring to Harvard scholars from abroad, as well as from the United States, whose active and broad participation in Center activities enhances and strengthens both the academic and personal aspects of the study of religion.

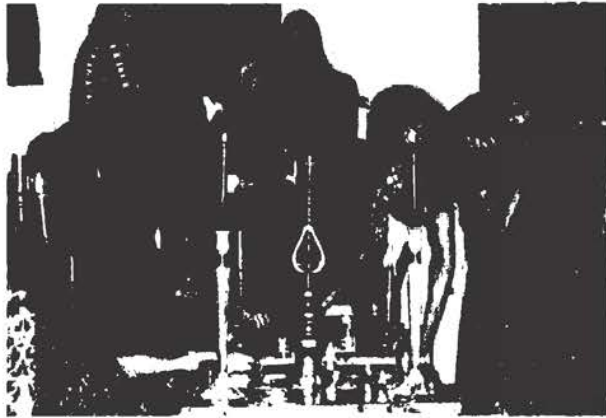
Limited financing for both programs is available through the Center.

COVER MAP: an outline of Richard of Waldingham's Hereford Map circa A.D. 1285, courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society, London. PHOTO CREDITS: Divali Celebration by Diana L. Eck; The Center by Sert, Jackson & Associates, Architects.



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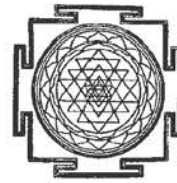
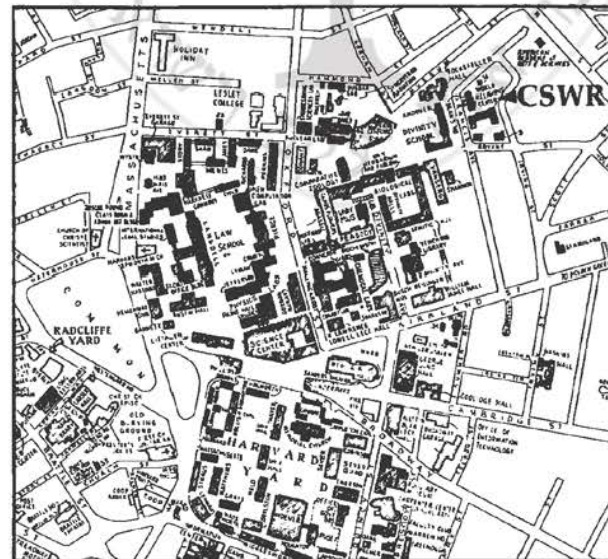
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FACULTY 1984-1985

ADMINISTRATION

John B. Carman, *Director*
Professor of Comparative Religion and Parkman Professor of Divinity (on leave spring term)
M. David Eckel, *Assistant Director*
Assistant Professor of the History of Religion
Susan McCaslin, *Administrative Assistant*
and Administrator for Program in Religion and Secondary Education at the Divinity School
Helen Schultz, *Staff Assistant*
Robyn Tanzman, *Staff Assistant*

FACULTY

Diana L. Eck, *Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies*
William A. Graham, *Senior Lecturer on the Comparative History of Religion*
T.N. Madan, *Visiting Professor of Anthropology and the History of Religion (fall term)*
Muhsin S. Mahdi, *James Richard Jewett Professor of Arabic, and Chairman, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (on leave)*
Masatoshi Nagatomi, *Professor of Buddhist Studies*
Jacob Petuchowski, *Albert A. List Visiting Professor of Jewish Studies (spring term)*
Ada Rapoport-Albert, *Visiting Lecturer and Research Associate in Women's Studies in the History of Religion*
George E. Rupp, *Dean of the Divinity School and John Lord O'Brian Professor of Divinity*
Lamin O. Sanneh, *Assistant Professor of the History of Religion (on leave fall term)*
Marc E. Saperstein, *Associate Professor of Jewish Studies*
Annemarie Schimmel, *Professor of Indo-Muslim Culture (spring term)*
Jane Idleman Smith, *Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, The Divinity School, and Lecturer on Comparative Religion*
Stanley J. Tambiah, *Professor of Anthropology and Chairman, Department of Anthropology*
Wei-Ming Tu, *Professor of Chinese History and Philosophy and Chairman, Committee on the Study of Religion*
Gary Tubb, *Associate Professor of Sanskrit, and Chairman, Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies (on leave spring term)*

VISITING SCHOLARS

Sekandar Amanolahi, *Iran*
Avraham Grossman, *Israel (fall term)*
Raphael Israeli, *Israel*
Anwarul Karim, *Bangladesh (spring term)*
Charles Keyes, *USA (fall term)*
Yehia Raef, *Egypt (spring term)*
Minor Rogers, *USA*
Michio Tokunaga, *Japan (spring term)*

