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MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series C: Interreligious Activities. 1952-1992

Box 38, Folder 4, Lutherans, 1981-1983.

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

MAY 05 1981

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

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JERUSALEM
P. O. B. 4293
4, ROTENBERG STREET
TELEPH. 635546-635544

Geneva, April 29, 1981

To: Members of IJCIC

From: Gerhart M. Riegner

Rè: Consultation with Lutheran World Federation

1. Most of you will remember that we discussed at our recent London meeting, amongst other things, arrangements for the consultation with the Lutheran World Federation, scheduled to take place in Copenhagen from July 6-8, 1981.

The meetings will start on July 6 in the morning and will end on the 8th on lunch time.

We decided then that the two Jewish papers which will be presented at the forthcoming consultation with the Lutherans on "The Concept of Man in Jewish Thought" will be prepared by Rabbi Bernard Mandelbaum and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum. The first paper will deal with the Jewish sources and interpretation, and the other with the consequences on social teaching and action.

2. I have in the meantime been in contact with the secretariat of the Lutheran World Federation, with the Jewish community of Copenhagen, and with Chief Rabbi Melchior of Copenhagen, and I am now able to report on some of the arrangements made since our London meeting.

- a) The Jewish community of Copenhagen has agreed that the consultation take place on the premises of the Jewish community, Ny Kongensgade 6, 1472 Copenhagen K, Telephone: 12 88 68.
- b) Arrangements are also being made for having one joint meal every day at the building of the community, and preparations for kosher luncheons are accordingly being made.
- c) I have invited Chief Rabbi Melchior to participate in the consultation. He was already informed by the Lutheran Bishop that the consultation will take place.
- d) The Jewish community expressed some doubts about the feasibility of an evening reception as most of the local people will be on vacation at the time of the consultation. I have suggested to our Lutheran partners that their local representatives should get in touch with the community people, discuss this matter and take the appropriate decisions.

e) I have reserved a dozen single rooms at the Royal Hotel for the nights of July 5, 6, and 7.

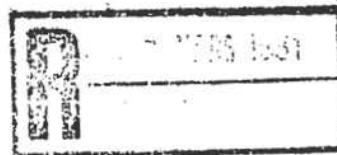
As I do not have the exact list of participants I have booked for the time being only for Prof. Talmon, Rabbi Tanenbaum, Rabbi Mandelbaum, Mr. Shuster, and myself. If any of the above named wish to change the reservation in any way, please let me know as soon as possible.

It is absolutely essential that I have in the near future the names of all other participants and I ask each of the five member organizations of IJCIC to let me have their list of participants not later than May 15. I call your attention to the fact that the consultation is taking place at the height of the summer season and it will be very difficult to get hotel rooms at the last moment.

3. We have also to make up our mind what we should discuss with the Lutherans under the heading "Exchange of topical questions". I would be grateful for suggestions. I am personally of the opinion that we should ask for a discussion on the recent increase of anti-Semitic manifestations in Europe. We may also raise some points concerning the Middle East situation. But I would like to have reactions from all of you to this.

Best regards.





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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

PROGRAMME UNIT ON FAITH AND WITNESS

Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies

Geneva, March 9, 1981.

AB/LM

Dr. G. RIEGNER
World Jewish Congress
P.O. Box 191
1211 Geneva 20.

Dear Gerhart,

My notes from our discussion this morning indicate the following as possible agenda items for the LPC/IJCIC meeting in London, 10.00-17.00, 28th June:

- Reports: 7th Assembly, World Jewish Congress
LPC meeting, December 1980
CCJP meeting, June 1981
WCC Executive Committee meeting, February 1980
Catholic/IJCIC meeting, March/April 1981.
- Discussions: The "New Antisemitism" around the world
The new US Administration and the Religious Communities
Israel Elections.
- Future Plans: Next LPC/IJCIC meeting (place and agenda)
Next joint consultation (1983-84?)
(possibility of a mini-consultation as part of the next
LPC meeting?)

It is certainly good of you to have made arrangements for us to meet on 28 June in the offices of the World Jewish Congress, 11 Hertford Street, London W1.

I shall look forward to learning definitely from you the names of IJCIC members who will be present at the CCJP meeting, London, 22-26 June. Perhaps we should talk again after you have returned from the United States, in order to develop the agenda for the LPC meeting further.

Cordially,

Allan R. Brockway
Christian-Jewish Relations

cc: Rabbi Bernard Mandelbaum
Dr. Krister Stendahl
Dr. Konrad Raiser.

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRÈS JUIF MONDIAL

CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

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Re: Consultation with Lutheran World Federation

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Best regards.



Handwritten signature

Memorandum

AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES
WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL
1, RUE DE VAREMBÉ · CASE POSTALE 191 · 1211 GENEVE 20 (SUISSE)
☎ 34 13 25 · # WORLDGROSS GENEVE · TÉLEX NO 289 876

Geneva, July 21, 1983

To: all members of IJCIC

From: Jean Halpérin

Please find attached a revised version of the "Statement by Lutheran Participants" which is to be substituted for the one included with my memorandum of July 19, 1983. Apparently, the sequence of a few sentences had been blurred inadvertently.

encl.

Statement by Lutheran participants

We Lutherans take our name and much of our understanding of Christianity from Martin Luther. But we cannot accept or condone the violent verbal attacks that the Reformer made against the Jews. Lutherans and Jews interpret the Hebrew Bible differently. But we believe that a christological reading of the Scriptures does not lead to anti-Judaism, let alone anti-Semitism.

We hold that an honest, historical treatment of Luther's attacks on the Jews takes away from modern anti-Semites the assumption that they may legitimately call on the authority of Luther's name to bless their anti-Semitism. We insist that Luther does not support racial anti-Semitism, nationalistic anti-Semitism or political anti-Semitism. Even the deplorable religious anti-Semitism of the 16th century, to which Luther's attacks made important contribution, is a horrible anachronism when translated to the conditions of the modern world. We recognize with deep regret however, that Luther has been used to justify such anti-Semitism in the period of national socialism and that his writings lent themselves to such abuse. Although there remain conflicting assumptions, built into the beliefs of Judaism and Christianity, they need not and should not lead to the animosity and the violence of Luther's treatment of the Jews. Martin Luther opened up our eyes to a deeper understanding of the Old Testament and showed us the depth of our common inheritance and the roots of our faith.

Many of the anti-Jewish utterances of Luther have to be explained in the light of his polemic against what he regarded as misinterpretations of the Scriptures. He attacked these interpretations, since for him everything now depended on a right understanding of the Word of God.

The sins of Luther's anti-Jewish remarks, the violence of his attacks on the Jews, must be acknowledged with deep distress. And all occasions for similar sin in the present or the future must be removed from our churches.

%

A frank examination also forces Lutherans and other Christians to confront the anti-Jewish attitudes of their past and present. Hostility toward the Jews began long before Luther and has been a continuing evil after him. The history of the centuries following the Reformation saw in Europe the gradual acceptance of religious pluralism. The church was not always the first to accept this development; yet there have also been examples of leadership by the church in the movement to accept Jews as full fellow citizens and members of society.

Beginning in the last half of the 19th century anti-Semitism increased in Central Europe and at the same time Jewish people were being integrated in society. This brought to the churches, particularly in Germany, an unwanted challenge. Paradoxically the churches honored the people Israel of the Bible but rejected the descendants of those people, myths were perpetuated about the Jews and deprecatory references appeared in Lutheran liturgical and educational material. Luther's doctrine of the Two Kingdoms was used to justify passivity in the face of totalitarian claims. These and other less theological factors contributed to the failures which have been regretted and repeatedly confessed since 1945.

To their credit it is to be said that there were individuals and groups among Lutherans who in defiance of totalitarian power defended their Jewish neighbors, both in Germany and elsewhere.

Lutherans of today refuse to be bound by all of Luther's utterances on the Jews. We hope we have learned from the tragedies of the recent past. We are responsible for seeing that we do not now nor in the future leave any doubt about our position on racial and religious prejudice and that we afford to all the human dignity, freedom and friendship that are the right of all the Father's children.

Memorandum

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

1, RUE DE VAREMBÉ - CASE POSTALE 191 - 1211 GENÈVE 20 (SUISSE)

☎ 34 13 25 📠 WORLDGRESS GENÈVE 📠 TELEX NO 289 878

Geneva, July 19, 1983

To: all members of IJCIC

From: Jean Halpérin

You will no doubt be interested in the attached statements that have been adopted at the end of the Second Official International Consultation between Jews and Lutherans, held at Stockholm from 11 to 13 July 1983.

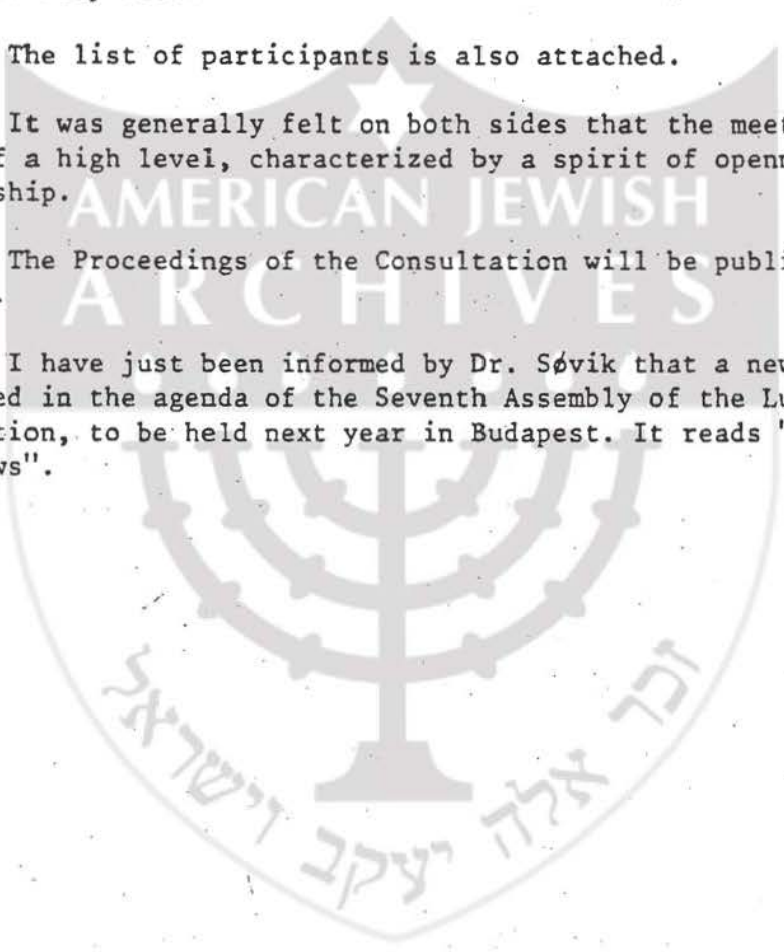
The list of participants is also attached.

It was generally felt on both sides that the meeting has been of a high level, characterized by a spirit of openness and friendship.

The Proceedings of the Consultation will be published in due course.

I have just been informed by Dr. Søvik that a new item has been included in the agenda of the Seventh Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, to be held next year in Budapest. It reads "The Church and the Jews".

encl.



11 - 13 July 1983

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

A more appropriate but more sensitive subject could scarcely have been chosen for the theme of Jewish-Lutheran conversations in 1983, the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformer's birth, than that of "Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews."

When the theme was chosen by the small committee that laid plans for a second international Jewish-Lutheran meeting, it was known that it would be difficult. It was not known, however, that in the many events celebrating Luther's birth, this subject would be one of the major points of interest.

The meeting was convened jointly by the Lutheran World Federation and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, the joint agency of five major Jewish organizations. (The World Jewish Congress, The Synagogue Council of America, The American Jewish Committee, The B'nai B'rith - Anti-Defamation League and The Jewish Council in Israel for Interreligious Consultations). It was the second of what is expected to be a continuing series of occasions for conversations between representatives of the world Jewish community and the association of Lutheran churches. (The first meeting in Copenhagen in 1981 was devoted to Jewish and Christian teachings on the nature of humankind.)

The group of 12 Jewish and 15 Lutheran participants met in Stockholm 11 - 13 July 1983, under the joint chairmanship of Dr Gerhard Riegner, Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress, and Professor Magne Saebø of the Free Faculty of Theology, Oslo.

The aims of the meeting, which was scarcely three days long, could be nothing but simple: to explore the facts and their implications for Jewish-Lutheran relations, and to provide information and encouragement to our constituencies. The program could only be straightforward: two pairs of papers, followed by discussion and the drafting of conclusions. The speakers were: Professor Mark Edwards of Purdue University (USA), Dr E.L. Ehrlich, Riehen, Switzerland, European Director of B'nai B'rith International, Dr Ingun Montgomery of Uppsala and Oslo Universities, and Professor Uriel Tal of Tel Aviv University.

That so complex and existential a topic could be dealt with usefully within so short a time could only happen because there were certain favorable conditions:

many of the participants were specialists in the subject matter and had indeed participated in earlier events this year, and above all there was a commitment under God to search together for a way to a bridging of the historic gulf of injustice and enmity.

The meeting closed with a brief period of silent prayer for peace in the world and particularly for peace in the Middle East.

The statements that follow are submitted to their readers, Jewish and Christian, in the hope and prayer that they may serve the cause of peace, hope and love between these two communities of believers in one God, and among all humankind.



IJCIC/LWF DIALOG
Stockholm, Sweden
11 - 13 July 1983

"Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews"

STATEMENT BY LUTHERAN PARTICIPANTS

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INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

Statement at Meeting With Representatives of the
Lutheran World Federation

Stockholm, July 11 - 13, 1983

STATEMENT BY JEWISH PARTICIPANTS

On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, representatives of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations *) (IJCIC) have met for three days in Stockholm with representatives of the Lutheran World Federation to examine the theme: "Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews".

During this year, members of the world Lutheran family have been reviewing the teachings and actions of Luther and their religious, social and political implications. The teachings of Luther have profoundly affected the course of Jewish history, especially in Europe. We are aware of the exploitation of Luther's anti-Judaism by the Nazis to sanction their genocidal campaign against the Jewish people.

In recent years, Lutheran leaders in Germany, Scandinavia, the US and elsewhere, have made significant efforts to uproot these teachings of contempt which emerged in the writings of Luther in the 16th century. We are heartened by the affirmative direction of the Lutheran-Jewish relationship as manifested in our dialogue in Stockholm.

The Jewish participants welcome the commitment of the Lutheran partners in dialogue to respect the living reality of Judaism from the perspective of Jewish self-understanding and their undertaking that Lutheran writings will never again serve as a source for the teaching of hatred for Judaism and the denigration of the Jewish people. This heralds a new chapter in the relationship between Jews and Lutherans which should find practical expression in teaching, preaching and worship as well as joint activities for social justice, human rights and the cause of peace.

We pledge ourselves to collaborate with our Lutheran colleagues in facing these common challenges. We trust that this year of Martin Luther observances will thus prove a turning point leading to a constructive future between Lutherans and Jews throughout the world.

*) The International Jewish Committee on Interreligious consultation (IJCIC) is composed of the World Jewish Congress, the Synagogue Council of America, the American Jewish Committee, the B'nai B'rith - Anti-Defamation League, and the Jewish Council in Israel for Interreligious Consultations.

LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION - INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS
CONSULTATIONS

JOINT STATEMENT

On the occasion of the 500th anniversary on Luther's birth, representatives of the world Jewish community and world Lutheran community have met in Stockholm July 11-13, 1983, for their second official dialogue.

Meeting in Stockholm, we are mindful of the compassionate response of Scandinavian Christians to the plight of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution forty years ago. This spirit renews our faith in the human capacity to confront evil with courage and determination.

The deliberations on the theme of "Luther, Lutheranism, and the Jews" were informed by an openness of views and a spirit of mutual respect for the integrity and dignity of our faith communities. The discussions revealed a depth of mutual understanding and trust.

1. We affirm the integrity and dignity of our two faith communities and repudiate any organized proselytizing of each other.
2. We pledge to combat all forms of racial and religious prejudice and express our solidarity with all who suffer the denial of full religious freedom.
3. Sharing in the common patrimony of the Prophets of Israel and inspired by their vision, we commit ourselves to strive for a world in which the threat of nuclear warfare will be ended, where poverty and hunger will be eradicated, in which violence and terrorism will be overcome, and a just and lasting peace will be established.

We welcome this historic encounter, which we prayerfully hope will mark a new chapter, with trust replacing suspicion and with reciprocal respect replacing prejudice. To this end, we commit ourselves to periodic consultations and joint activities that will strengthen our common bonds in service to humanity.

DER LUTHERISCHE WELTBUND

THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION - LUTERSKA VÄRLDSFÖRBUNDET - FÉDÉRATION LUTHÉRIENNE MONDIALE

STUDIENABTEILUNG

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Route de Ferney 150
Telephon 989400 Telex 23423 OIK CH
Telegrammadresse LUTHWORLD GENEVA

To Participants in
the Stockholm LJCIC/LWF Meeting

18th July 1983

Dear Friends,

I must apologize to you all because in the haste of our drafting process on Wednesday, I omitted to see that a note appeared in the document stating the limitations in the authority of the LWF delegation. I believe that all participants are aware of the fact that LWF rules provide that official statements of the LWF can only be made by the appropriate elected authorities and not by ad hoc groups convened under its sponsorship. But not all readers of the Stockholm document will know this. I would therefore think it necessary that there be inserted as a footnote to the Introductory Statement the following sentences:

The LWF delegation was authorized to speak to but not in behalf of the LWF and its constituency. The statements below will be submitted to the appropriate authorities of the LWF for their consideration and action.

While the statement of the Jewish partners will not of course be subject to LWF regulations, I believe that our people may want to express their appreciation of that section too of what we have said together, and what I believe to be a notably hopeful meeting of minds.

Thanks to you all for the contribution you made to those three memorable days.

Sincerely,


Arne Sovik

/mm

Jewish Participants

Dr. Ernst L. Ehrlich

European representative of Bnai Brith International
Secretary General, Christian-Jewish Friendship Association, Switzerland
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Second official Jewish/Lutheran Consultation, Stockholm

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Rev. Hans Ucko
Church of Sweden Mission
Box 297
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SWEDEN

LWF/IJCIC
Stockholm
July 12 - 14, 1983

Observers

Dr Walter Keller
Valparaiso University
Valparaiso, IN
USA

Dr Ruth Zander
Bund der Evangelischen Kirchen
in der DDR
Auguststrasse 80
East Berlin

Mrs Joyce M. Berggren, LWF Staff



The Ecumenical Institute for Jewish-Christian Studies is a Catholic - Jewish - Protestant Consortium located in the North Congregational Church of Southfield, Michigan.

PURPOSE:

The purposes of the Ecumenical Institute for Jewish-Christian Studies are to foster greater understanding between Jews and Christians, to combat theological and social anti-Semitism, and to provide opportunities for study and discussion of the issues which have often been sources of tensions and hostilities between Christians and Jews.

As part of the stated purpose of the Institute, the Institute will specifically avoid all missionary and conversionist activities, will deal with the theological dimensions of anti-Semitism in both its historical development and current practice, and will focus its program around such key events as the Holocaust, the founding of the State of Israel and other issues where the failure of Christians and Jews to bridge the gap of misunderstanding has led to distrust and enmity.

PROGRAM:

The purposes of the Institute will be carried out in a wide variety of educational programs that will seek to reach both clergy and laity. These programs will include public lectures, travel-study seminars, theological study groups, publications of educational materials and significant studies, and speakers who will be made available to interested groups.

In addition to the theological and historical studies, the Institute will provide face-to-face discussions around such items of mutual interest as inter-marriage, prejudice free teachings materials for use in religious school programs, the roles of the majority and minority in society, as well as opportunities to know the meanings behind various religious traditions and holidays.

It is the goal of the Institute to create a climate of mutual respect in which areas of concern can be openly and honestly faced and discussed without rancor but with appreciation of both those things which unite us and those where we differ.

James R. Lyons
Director

JOINT STATEMENT

On the occasion of the 500th anniversary on Luther's birth, representatives of the world Jewish community and world Lutheran community have met in Stockholm July 11-13, 1983, for their second official dialogue.

Meeting in Stockholm, we are mindful of the compassionate response of Scandinavian Christians to the plight of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution forty years ago. This spirit renews our faith in the human capacity to confront evil with courage and determination.

The deliberations on the theme of "Luther, Lutheranism, and the Jews" were informed by an openness of views and a spirit of mutual respect for the integrity and dignity of our faith communities. The discussions revealed a depth of mutual understanding and trust.

1. We affirm the integrity and dignity of our two faith communities and repudiate any organized proselytizing of each other.
2. We pledge to combat all forms of racial and religious prejudice and express our solidarity with all who suffer the denial of full religious freedom.
3. Sharing in the common patrimony of the Prophets of Israel and inspired by their vision, we commit ourselves to strive for a world in which the threat of nuclear warfare will be ended, where poverty and hunger will be eradicated, in which violence and terrorism will be overcome, and a just and lasting peace will be established.

We welcome this historic encounter, which we prayerfully hope will mark a new chapter, with trust replacing suspicion and with reciprocal respect replacing prejudice. To this end, we commit ourselves to periodic consultations and joint activities that will strengthen our common bonds in service to humanity.

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH COMMITTEE ON INTERRELIGIOUS CONSULTATIONS

Statement at Meeting With Representatives of the
Lutheran World Federation

Stockholm, July 11 - 13, 1983

On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, representatives of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations *) (IJCIC) have met for three days in Stockholm with representatives of the Lutheran World Federation to examine the theme: "Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews".

During this year, members of the world Lutheran family have been reviewing the teachings and actions of Luther and their religious, social and political implications. The teachings of Luther have profoundly affected the course of Jewish history, especially in Europe. We are aware of the exploitation of Luther's anti-Judaism by the Nazis to sanction their genocidal campaign against the Jewish people.

In recent years, Lutheran leaders in Germany, Scandinavia, the US and elsewhere, have made significant efforts to uproot these teachings of contempt which emerged in the writings of Luther in the 16th century. We are heartened by the affirmative direction of the Lutheran-Jewish relationship as manifested in our dialogue in Stockholm.

The Jewish participants welcome the commitment of the Lutheran partners in dialogue to respect the living reality of Judaism from the perspective of Jewish self-understanding and their undertaking that Lutheran writings will never again serve as a source for the teaching of hatred for Judaism and the denigration of the Jewish people. This heralds a new chapter in the relationship between Jews and Lutherans which should find practical expression in teaching, preaching and worship as well as joint activities for social justice, human rights and the cause of peace.

We pledge ourselves to collaborate with our Lutheran colleagues in facing these common challenges. We trust that this year of Martin Luther observances will thus prove a turning point leading to a constructive future between Lutherans and Jews throughout the world.

*) The International Jewish Committee on Interreligious consultation (IJCIC) is composed of the World Jewish Congress, the Synagogue Council of America, the American Jewish Committee, the B'nai B'rith - Anti-Defamation League, and the Jewish Council in Israel for Interreligious Consultations.

IJCIC/LWF DIALOG
Stockholm, Sweden
11 - 13 July 1983

"Luther, Lutheranism and the Jews"

STATEMENT BY LUTHERAN PARTICIPANTS

We Lutherans take our name and much of our understanding of Christianity from Martin Luther. But we cannot accept or condone the violent verbal attacks that the Reformer made against the Jews.

Lutherans and Jews interpret the Hebrew Bible differently. But we believe that a christological reading of the Scriptures does not lead to anti-Judaism, let alone anti-Semitism.

We hold that an honest, historical treatment of Luther's attacks on the Jews takes away from modern anti-Semites the assumption that they may legitimately call on the authority of Luther's name to bless their anti-Semitism. We insist that Luther does not support racial anti-Semitism, nationalistic anti-Semitism and political anti-Semitism. Even the deplorable religious anti-Semitism of the 16th century, to which Luther's attacks made important contribution, is a horrible anachronism when translated to the conditions of the modern world. We recognize with deep regret however, that Luther has been used to justify such anti-Semitism in the period of national socialism and that his writings lent themselves to such abuse. Although there remain conflicting assumptions, built into the beliefs of Judaism and Christianity, they need not, and should not, lead to the animosity and the violence of Luther's treatment of the Jews. Martin Luther opened up our eyes to a deeper understanding of the Old Testament and showed us the depth of our common inheritance and the roots of our faith.

Yet a frank examination also forces Lutherans and other Christians to confront the anti-Jewish attitudes of their past and present. Many of the anti-Jewish utterances of Luther have to be explained in the light of his polemic against what he regarded as misinterpretations of the Scriptures. He attacked these interpretations, since for him everything now depended on a right understanding of the Word of God.

The sins of Luther's anti-Jewish remarks, the violence of his attacks on the Jews, must be acknowledged with deep distress. And all occasions for similar sin in the present or the future must be removed from our churches

Hostility toward the Jews began long before Luther and has been a continuing evil after him: The history of the centuries following the Reformation saw in Europe the gradual acceptance of religious pluralism. The church was not always the first to accept this development; yet there have also been examples of leadership by the church in the movement to accept Jews as full fellow citizens and members of society.

Beginning in the last half of the 19th century anti-Semitism increased in Central Europe and at the same time Jewish people were being integrated in society. This brought to the churches, particularly in Germany, an unwanted challenge. Paradoxically the churches honored the people Israel of the Bible but rejected the descendants of those people, myths were perpetuated about the Jews and deprecatory references appeared in Lutheran liturgical and educational material. Luther's doctrine of the Two Kingdoms was used to justify passivity in the face of totalitarian claims. These and other less theological factors contributed to the failures which have been regretted and repeatedly confessed since 1945.

To their credit it is to be said that there were individuals and groups among Lutherans who in defiance of totalitarian power defended their Jewish neighbors, both in Germany and elsewhere.

Lutherans of today refuse to be bound by all of Luther's utterances on the Jews. We hope we have learned from the tragedies of the recent past. We are responsible for seeing that we do not now nor in the future leave any doubt about our position on racial and religious prejudice and that we afford to all the human dignity, freedom and friendship that are the right of all the Father's children.

NEWS BUREAU 82-46
Lutheran Council in the USA
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DANIEL CATTAU

November 24, 1982

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HISTORIAN: LUTHER CONSISTENT 82-46
IN HIS ANTI-JEWISH VIEWS 11/24/82

Garrison, N.Y. --(LC)-- Martin Luther's anti-Semitic or anti-Jewish writings in the early 1540s were consistent with the views he held throughout his life and were not "aberrations" or the "simple products of senility, depression or ill health," according to an historian from Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.

The harsh polemics of Luther, who died in 1546, "were not a new element in his work or thought. His polemics were angry and abusive from the beginning," said Dr. Mark U. Edwards, who has a doctorate from Stanford University.

"By his own admission, he was an angry man," Edwards told more than 30 theologians, clergy and laypeople at the third Lutheran-Jewish-Roman Catholic colloquium at Graymoor Ecumenical Institute here Nov. 17-18.

Edwards said anger was Luther's "special sin" but also it was useful in Luther's writings, prayers and sermons. "Anger refreshes all my blood,

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sharpens my mind, and drives away temptations," Edwards quoted Luther in one of his writings.

The subject of Luther's anti-Jewish writings seems to be increasingly under examination, especially with many international conferences and symposia planned next year to mark the 500th anniversary of the reformer's birth in 1483.

For instance, a letter to the editor in the Nov. 19 New York Times took issue with the U.S. Postal Service's issuing of a commemorative stamp next year honoring Luther "for his views on the freedom of religion," among other things.

William W. Brickman, a retired professor at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, wrote: "Luther's views on the freedom of religion were expressed in various writings, including 'Of the Jews and Their Lies' (1543) in which his 'sincere advice' was 'to set fire to their synagogues or schools.' "

Luther also wrote that the Jews' synagogues and homes should be razed and their prayer books and Talmudic writings be taken from them. Those virulent passages were used by Nazi propagandists during the 1930s and World War II to justify the persecution of the Jews and the subsequent Holocaust in which an estimated 6 million Jews were killed.

While not excusing Luther from being responsible for his writings, Edwards did put Luther's views in the context of 16th-century politics and theological thought.

"Luther indulged in even greater violence and abusiveness in attacking Catholics," said Edwards. Typical of these treatises was "Against the Papacy at Rome, Founded by the Devil" (1545) in which Luther frequently

(more)

"bestialized" his opponents, "likening them to pigs or asses....They were all minions of the devil," said Edwards.

"And in the woodcuts by Lucas Cranach, commissioned by Luther near the end of his life, he had the papal church depicted as being from the anus of an enormous she-devil, had peasants shown defecating on the papal crown, and suggested once in a picture that the pope, cardinals and bishops should be hung from the gallows with their tongues nailed alongside," said Edwards.

Luther's attacks on other Protestants and the Turks were slightly more restrained than his attacks against the Catholics, "but no less severe than his attacks on the Jews," said Edwards.

A major part of Luther's thinking was shaped by his "apocalyptic vision" of his contemporary world and, near his death, Luther firmly believed he was living on the eve of the Last Judgment, said Edwards. Luther viewed his battle as between God and Satan, with the papacy firmly established as the anti-Christ.

And, in terms of his anti-Jewish writings, Luther's major target was the rabbinic understanding of Hebrew Scripture, which challenged his interpretation that all promises by God referred to Christ and the Trinity.

Both Luther's apocalyptic view of the world and his Christological interpretation of Hebrew Scripture generally have given way today to more tolerant views of theological opponents and to the use of historical criticism of biblical texts, said Edwards.

But Edwards said the "root cause" of Luther's anti-Jewish views "lies in Christianity itself." Luther makes much of the distinction between law and gospel or between those who are "slaves to sin" and those who are "set free by grace." That distinction originally was not made by Luther, but rather by St. Paul, said Edwards.

The law-gospel distinction, throughout the history of Jewish-Christian relations, effectively consigns Judaism to the status of a "has been" from the Christian viewpoint, said Edwards.

"Judaism is seen as a religion of law that has now been superseded by a religion of grace revealed through Christ," said Edwards.

And this issue is still the major problem in Jewish-Christian relations today, said Edwards. "We may overcome the prejudices and hatreds of the 16th century, but we still must resolve, or at least learn peacefully and tolerantly within this division," said Edwards.

Other papers were presented by Dr. Joseph Leahy, Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., on the Spanish Inquisition of the late 15th century and by Rabbi Robert M. Seltzer of Hunter College in New York City on Jewish perspectives on Luther and the Spanish Inquisition.

The colloquium was co-sponsored by the Lutheran Council in the USA's Division of Theological Studies, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and the Graymoor Ecumenical Institute (Atonement Friars).

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CORRECTION: In the Nov. 17 news release on page 5, line 8, the correct quote from the Rev. Dr. Carl H. Mau, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, should read: "the territory of the so-called 'second world'".

CLARIFICATION: In the Nov. 12 news release in the story "North Dakota Voters Keep Gambling Law" (page 10), the quotes attributed to Bishop Roy Gilbertson of the American Lutheran Church's Western District may not have made it clear that he was an early and strong opponent of the law that brought blackjack and lottery-type gambling into the state. A referendum to overturn the gambling was defeated by North Dakota voters in the Nov. 2 election. Gilbertson supported the referendum to limit legalized gambling.

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A team of scientists from the Weizmann Institute of Science in Redovoth have been studying the scrolls for years and have recently developed conclusive evidence that the destruction was caused by water vapor, which altered the collagen in the scrolls' fibers. The water vapor was almost certainly penetrating the scrolls before they were packed away into sealed jars about 2,000 years ago. Among the scrolls is the oldest known manuscript of the Book of Isaiah. Also important among these writings is the Manual of Discipline which opened speculation among scholars concerned with possible relations between the Jewish sect of Essenes and early Christians.

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HISTORIAN SAYS, LUTHER WAS CONSISTENT IN HIS ANTI-JEWISH VIEWS

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GARRISON, New York, Dec. 9 (lc)--Martin Luther's anti-Semitic or anti-Jewish writings in the early 1540s were consistent with the views he held throughout his life and were not "aberrations" or the "simple products of senility, depression or ill health," said an historian from Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana. The harsh polemics of Luther, who died in 1546, "were not a new element in his work or thought. His polemics were angry and abusive from the beginning," said Dr. Mark U. Edwards, who has a doctorate from Stanford University.

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BRAZILIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IS ESTABLISHED

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PORTO ALEGRE, Brazil, Dec. 9 (lwi)--For the first time in Brazil a new ecumenical body called the National Council of Christian Churches in Brazil (CONIC) has been founded that includes both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. CONIC's member churches include the Roman Catholic Church, the Christian Reformed Church of Brazil, the Episcopal Church of Brazil, the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil and the Methodist Church.

Roman Catholic Bishop Ivo Lorscheider, head of the Brazilian Bishops' Conference, was elected as chairman of CONIC for a four-year term during its first constituted assembly held Nov. 17-18. Vice chairman is Augusto Kunert, president of the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil. The delegates issued a statement in which they emphasized Christian community through common testimony of the gospel and service to mankind.

The top priority of the newly formed ecumenical body is to strengthen the relations with the churches that do not belong to CONIC. The body is also concerned with pastoral care activities in areas of common interest--country and family politics--in which the church is already cooperating with each other, exchanging information and questions and reflecting over the current situation in Brazil to bring about a deepened cooperation. The founding of CONIC coincided with Brazil's general elections--the first time in 20 years that the Brazilian people were able to elect their own representatives. CONIC said in a statement, "As Christians, we have been called to help the people to organize themselves more strongly." CONIC's central office will be located in the capital city Brasilia.

* * *

A R C H I V E S

FINNISH CLERGY ARE FRUSTRATED AT BEING 'MASTERS OF CEREMONIES'

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by Jaakko Jaatinen

(The following is an adaptation of Jaatinen's report to the Research Institute of the Lutheran Church in Finland as printed in the World Council of Churches' monthly "One World," no. 81 November issue.)

The figures don't look too bad: some 90 percent of Finland's population of 4.7 million belong to the Lutheran church and, according to the surveys, about half of them believe in the Christian God. The secular trend is more obvious in the pews of the parish churches on Sundays. Only three percent of the total membership bothers to attend worship. Two-thirds of the members aren't likely to be seen at church functions more than once a year.

But Lutheranism in Finland is a folk (state) religion, so the ministers come into contact with just about all the church's members at some stage during their lives, through the performance of the Christian rituals adopted by society. Baptism, marriage and burial are rites that not even the most secularized have repudiated. On the other hand, taking part in them is largely a response to social pressure, and these rites of transition give most people little spiritual perception of life.

They also tend to make the clergy into masters of ceremonies, which produces a certain frustration. This has led to an identity quest which, for better or worse, has not been much of a problem for Finnish clergy before now. Clerical roles have changed in the past, of course--from the medieval inheritance of something close to the witch's task of performing magic rituals, through the Reformation insistence on the ministry of word and sacrament, to the social status gained by clergy when they had secular power to enforce church discipline.

In this century, a major factor in shaping the role of the clergy was the profound schism and spiritual trauma born of the civil war that followed Finland's independence in 1917-18. It fell to the clergy to try and alleviate this trauma. Adopting the idea of the folk church, they sought to minister to all, regardless of religious or political convictions. This understanding was reinforced during World War II, when clergy were again in direct contact with the whole range of society in special need. Ever since the Middle Ages, the core of the ministry has been the performance of divine service and the sacraments, with additional roles as witch doctor, orthodox instructor, gentleman and official. The profession has had a clear profile. Today that role may be seen to be disintegrating. In order to keep pace with those around them, the clergy have been obliged to acquire many skills and perform many tasks so differentiated and specific that their identity is in danger.

(M O R E)

THE HOLOCAUST AND THE CORRUPTION OF SCIENCE*

Almost immediately after the collapse of the Third Reich, educational leaders in Germany and several countries that had been incorporated into Hitler's European empire began to hold conferences of members of demoralized vocations and professions. Today there are over sixty adult education centers in seventeen countries where regular programs in vocational and professional ethics are carried on. Since the churches in Germany emerged with the best supply of surviving resisters and relatively unshattered structures of any social institutions, and with excellent international relations which were immediately resumed, these adult education centers were closely connected with the churches and in some cases led by survivors of the Christian resistance. They were able to move into the field as rapidly as they did not only because of a general dearth of trained personnel with a relatively intact economic base but also because of the general public respect enjoyed by the churchmen after the collapse of the Nazi empire.

There was another general factor operating in their favor: the German universities have never, even during the short-lived reform mentality after World War II, accepted a responsibility for "adult education."

*An address by Prof. Franklin H. Littell of Temple University, on 18 November 1977 at the Third Philadelphia Conference on Teaching the Holocaust.

If anything the "higher learning" has retreated fairly rapidly into restoration-oriented attitudes and programs, yielding/under duress in recent years to the mechanistically-minded politicizing of some of the universities. But SPD Proporz and related ventures have been a poor alternative to a genuinely creative and imaginative re-ordering of university priorities in study and common purpose. The latter initiatives have seldom developed, only those who can accept the paper money of political homilectics for real bullion can be satisfied with the "reform" in the post-war German universities.

The most important and positive educational initiatives occurred elsewhere, especially in the adult education centers sponsored by the churches. The first of the Evangelische Akademien was founded at Bad Boll, east of Stuttgart, in October of 1945. Very early the institute developed a line of approach to rehabilitating and reorganizing social structures which has been widely followed in centers around the world. The style of the meetings was dialogical, to break old habits of uncritical obedience. For two crucial decades, the context of many conferences--finally numbering in the hundreds--was vocational/professional and ethical. So far, although the style of work has been adopted in Asia and Africa in several dozen adult education centers founded since the war,

in America there has been little echo. Under the sponsorship of the Lutheran Church in America, Dr. Harold C. Letts for several years held seminars of doctors, lawyers, business leaders, etc. in religion and professional values. Rev. Hendrik Koning has developed a similar program among engineers. But by and large the approach which has meant so much in social reconstruction in postwar Europe has had few echoes in America. Perhaps, with the self-examination which is beginning in the post-Vietnam and post-Watergate era in America, the time is now right for us to move forward in a rediscovery and restatement of professional and vocational standards. Laity unformed go bad.

The great advantage which persons of sensitive conscience enjoyed in post-war Germany was that everyone, regardless of his previous history, knew that something basic had gone wrong. The readiness for self-examination and self-criticism was well nigh universal. Building on this psychological mood, and with the re-integration of professional and vocational communities a practical imperative if a modern, industrialized, specialized society were to be rebuilt, the Evangelical Academies began their great work. Parallel to the fundamental reexamination pressed by theologians as a result of the Holocaust and the Church Struggle, the ablest educators struggled with the acute credibility crisis

in higher education. After all, the Third Reich was a vicious engine of control and destruction built by men who had been trained in what had been for a century the best university system in the world. Item: Himmler was proud of the fact that so many of the higher officers in his Death's Head troops were Ph.D.s. How could it happen that the typical product of that great university system should be not a man of wisdom and religious commitment but a technically competent barbarian?

In East Germany, under communist control, the response to that question has been the establishment and enforcement of a new "state church." The men and women of commitment are to be Marxists, and all of the repressive measures of an earlier Christendom at its most monolithic and coercive nadir have been rejuvenated to construct the establishment of an Ersatzreligion. In West Germany, where the Bundesrepublik has sought to preserve the conditions for a free competition of ideas and movements, the universities have split wide open. Some have attempted to restore the grandeur of the 19th century university, with its intensive specializations and structured class patterns. Many so-called "progressive" forces, chiefly Marxist, have attempted to solve the crisis by mechanical innovations to provide co-determination for students and TAs with

the professors. Since Germany was cut off from the international intellectual currents during the period 1936-45, when most of the free world fought through the challenges of Marxist dialectics, "united front" politics and the sectarian fratricide of Stalinists, Trotskyites, Lovestonites, etc., the "progressive" innovations in some German universities remind one of nothing so much as the replay of a forty year old black and white movie--not very good then, and today a tragedy.

The educational initiative came, to repeat, in adult education centers separate from the universities. They flourished in part because the German universities, in contrast to the American, have never developed extension and adult education programs. They also flourished because their founders and leaders drew upon the resources of das andere Deutschland, the civilized and cultured Germany the Nazis had tried to bury permanently, to develop a new articulation of Beruf (calling) and Amt (office duty) in restoring and re-integrating the professions and vocations essential to the highly sophisticated specializations of a modern industrialized society.

The problems confronting them were enormous. Max Weinrich, who reviewed the contributions of debased professions to the Nazi machine--doctors, lawyers,

school teachers, engineers, chemists, theologians and clergymen, policemen, civil servants, soldiers and military officers, industrialists, bankers, book publishers, radio announcers, advertising, farmers, journalists (all were complicit!)--concluded that "two groups deserve the place of honor among those who made their scholarship subservient to Nazi ends: the physical anthropologists and biologists, and the jurists."¹ Werner Richter, a great educator who returned

¹ Weinrich, Max, Hitler's Professors (New York: YIVO, 1946), p. 17.

to help rebuild a democratic West Germany after the war, wrote of the predicament of the elementary school teachers before and during the Third Reich.

"Their training was regulated by the authorities on the assumption that a too well-educated elementary school teacher would no longer be willing to carry out his unostentatious duty in remote villages.Consequently, the elementary-school teacher was to be discouraged from seeking a really fruitful academic preparation; hence his training had to be different from the rest of the teaching profession.... The misfortune of German officialdom has always been the influence of the noncommissioned officer--the man who stood just high enough to exercise a limited command but was in turn dependent upon a host of high-ups whose rank he could never hope to achieve. He was foreordained to remain subservient, yet with something of a task of the sweetness of ruling and commanding. He knew too much

simply to vegetate, and not enough to come to terms with his lot.... Little wonder that the elementary-school teachers aspired to political power. If the ministers of education had formerly belonged to the ruling classes and had been trained in administration and law, the cry now went up for the specialist who was also a politician.... Large sections of the population preferred the elementary-school teacher as the administrator of culture. In many German states these teachers now became ministers of instruction, and it is highly significant that they took an active part in the revolution of 1933."²

² Richter, Werner, Re-Educating Germany (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1945) pp. 23-24.

Raul Hilberg's classic, the first massive study in English of The Destruction of the European Jews (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), is at one level simply the record of how lawyers and jurists--although temporarily impeded from time to time by traditional values and precedents--always managed as technical experts to find the necessary way to commit enormous crimes "legally."

To the extent that the Nazi totalitarian ideology and system were successful, every association or grouping between the individual and the state was either merged or blended (gleichgeschaltet) into the governmental machine.

Most of them surrendered their liberty and integrity with enthusiasm. The work of the Evangelical Academies was to pull together the fragments of shattered and demoralized professions and vocations, teach the importance of dialogue and pluralism in independent centers of initiative, restore morals and give new directions of stewardship and service. To do this they had to deal realistically with a complex network of communities which provide the fabric of modern society.

In primitive society, community was consanguineous. Regardless of geography, or even separation into distant encampments, persons related on the basis of blood connection. With the emergence of settled villages and an agricultural economy, community emerged as a geographic reality. Since through centuries such villages and finally cities were usually garrisoned fortresses as well, interdependence and familiarity with one's neighbors became essential. The idea of "neighborhood" emerged. With the rise of modern industrialized society and the nation-state, a new kind of community emerged: a community based upon social function and role. The rise of the multinationals, paralleled by the international connections of mathematicians and bankers and theologians and oil-drillers, simply documents the fact that social and economic roles now create

networks of communities--agglomerates with special vernaculars and sometimes uniforms, economic and social identities, the enhancement of group-feeling (Wirgefuehl) -- which have now exploded beyond the former controls of nation-states. In the United Nations we see how important ideological/religious blocs have become, and how little old-fashioned national patriotism on the one hand--or concern for the ordinary human person on the other--now mean.

Bluntly put, a doctor in Los Angeles has more in common with a surgeon in Syracuse than he has with the history teacher who lives next door--and he knows it. Moreover, if you are familiar at all with the public and political activities of the American Medical Association, you know that he acts it out. The bankers know the bankers, the wheat farmers know the wheat farmers, even the spies know the spies--and the public at large, in a sophisticated, specialized society can only hope and pray that the water quality testers and enforcers, let alone those stewards of public order, the police, exercise their role with integrity. If they degenerate to mere predatory, self-seeking groups, with no commitment except to technical competence and group interest, the common weal will suffer and eventually collapse.

This is in fact what happened in the Third Reich. The NSDAP adventure

not just government by criminals: it was enabled and carried out by professional and vocational groups that had betrayed their callings and debased their stewardships of responsibility and power. The adult education centers in post-war Germany, especially the Evangelische Akademien, set out to restore the morale and integrity of now demoralized as well as debased communities. Brought together in conferences and continuing re-established professional and vocational associations, they asked themselves two fundamental questions:

1. Where did we go wrong?
2. What is our present responsibility to help make a restored liberty and self-government work?

Consider the self-questioning which inexorably followed. The school teachers, stewards of the transmission of culture to the next generation, had instead turned out class after class of young janizeries—Hitlerjugend, Bund deutscher Mädel zealots. The clergy, proclaimers of the coming kingdom of justice and mercy and peace, had blessed the Führer and Nazi revolution and adjusted their messages to serve an atavistic pan-Aryan Volksgemeinschaft. Businessmen and industrialists had used raw materials and other supplies pillaged from occupied countries all over Hitler's European empire, and many of the latter had used thousands of slave-laborers. The lawyers, whether attorneys or government officers or jurists, had to face the truth that many of us remember uttered in

"Judgment at Nurnberg": Where did the jurist go wrong? He went wrong the first time he condemned a man he knew to be innocent.

Much has been made of "the German miracle," the economic recovery accomplished by Ludwig Erhard (and 14½ million refugees from the eastern territories). At least equally impressive has been the regeneration of the professions and the vocational associations. Although superlatives should certainly be avoided, and we must always be aware of the still painful problem of youth alienation which has turned some of the postwar generation to terrorism, we are safe in saying that the police of Stuttgart are as dependable stewards as the police of Philadelphia, that the businessmen of Düsseldorf are as ethical as those of our city, and that the clergy are making at least as worthy an effort as ours to emphasize the Christian commitment to ultimates--distinct from transitory tribal or national interests.

The study of the Holocaust is in one sense a pathological undertaking. Just as medical schools have divisions of Pathology, better to understand health by studying diseased or defunct bodies, so we have urged the study of the Holocaust and related traumas and aberrations. The better we understand societies in which things so bad, the better we shall be able to get at

working definitions of "health." If we study how professions and vocational groups become corrupted and debased, inevitably an exercise which seems morbid, we may rejoice when the ideas grow legs and begin to walk us along the path of redemption.

Although our workshops should not detour from their useful agenda, we should not forget that back of our practical concerns tower two of the greatest credibility questions of recent centuries:

1. the credibility question mark over Christendom;
2. the credibility question mark over the modern university.

William Irwin Thompson, who left university teaching in 1973 to found the Lindisfarne Association, has argued that "we must go back to a Taoist model of the role of wisdom, not expertise, in culture," and that "we should trust no policy decisions which emanate from persons who do not yet have this habit."³

³Thompson, William Irwin, "Notes on an Emerging Planet," ch. 17 in Katz, Michael/Marsh, William P./Thompson, Gail Gordon, eds., Earth's Answer (New York: Lindisfarne Bks/Harper & Row, 1977), p. 151.

This may be one way of putting it, but I cannot but wonder what the scholars and theologians, and other scientists and technicians, have done to Judaism and Christianity that a thinker in the West must turn to Taoism to learn that truth. This comment is not entered in hostility to Taoism, nor in hostility to the Amish Mennonites--who have preserved the same truth in their own way, but in sorrow that a society supposedly impregnated by Biblical perspectives should have mirrored our religious heritage in such broken and distorted fashion as to

render it incredible.

It is the present incredibility of Christendom and its basic structures-- the law, higher education (including both seminary and university), the corporation, the common school, government, health care--that are spotlighted by the Holocaust. The facts compel us to admit, unless we silence our consciences, that the murder of six million Jews in the heart of Christendom calls into question the very symbols which Western civilization has held most dear. I believe that the experiences of the victims, and also of the survivors, may be bracketed out of this immediate set of reflections. But today, as the numbness passes and we spectators have to deal with the first nauseating waves of painful self-examination, we perceive that the Holocaust questions our highest achievements--our best and brightest idols, and that using Hitler and his little gang of reprobates as scapegoats will not wash.

It is we, in sum, who are put to the question. And we draw on the resources of high religion and the tradition of the great university not only to work through again the fundamental questions of values and integrity and morale in our professions and vocations, but aware that at the same time we are assaying what we have learned in religion and in the university.

The key question is whether we have motivation, moral earnestness. Have we, in post-Vietnam and post-Watergate America, the psychic and spiritual energy to get at what has happened to our journalism, teaching, engineering, preaching, advertising, selling, trading, lawing and adjudicating?



Additional writings by the author

"The New Style of Corporate Life," ch. 5 in The Church and the Body Politic (New York: Seabury Press, 1969)

"Democratic Discipline and Professional Responsibility," a chapter in Fletcher, C. Scott, ed., Education: The Challenge Ahead (New York: American Foundation for Continuing Education, 1962), pp. 122-34.

"Reflections on the Project and its Product," in Hall, Cameron P., ed., On-the-Job Ethics (New York: Seabury Press, 1964), pp. 134-47.

"A New Pattern of Community," in Robertson, D. B., ed., Voluntary Associations (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), pp. 261-74.

"Sectarian Protestantism and the Pursuit of Wisdom: Must Technological Objectives Prevail?" ch. 3 in Erickson, Donald, ed., Public Controls for Non-public Schools (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 61-82.

"Ethics After Auschwitz," XVIII Worldview (1975) 9:22-26.

CONSULTATION URGES CHRISTIANS TO PURGE HATRED OF JEWS

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by Roger Kahle

GENEVA, Sept. 8 (lwi)--"We Christians today must purge ourselves of any hatred of the Jews and any sort of teaching of contempt for Judaism." This was one of a number of recommendations and comments coming out of the fourth Lutheran World Federation (LWF) consultation on the church and the Jewish people. "In seeking to achieve these goals we need to take into account that anti-Judaism and anti-semitism did not penetrate all parts of Christianity in the same way and to the same extent. These evils have been much more prevalent in the West than elsewhere," the statement continued.

The consultation (Aug. 22-28) said, "Lutherans have a special problem: Next year we will celebrate Martin Luther's 500th birthday. In his later years he made certain vitriolic statements about the Jews that Lutheran churches today universally reject. We regret the way in which what Luther wrote has been used to further anti-semitism. This matter will be the subject of considerable attention during the coming year."

There were 42 participants in the consultation, entitled "The significance of Judaism for the life and mission of the church." Included in the meeting at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey near here were persons from 17 countries, with ~~four~~ Jewish consultants and a consultant from the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity. Previous Lutheran consultations prepared by the LWF department of studies in the series were held in Denmark (1964), Federal Republic of Germany (1973) and Norway (1975). Dr. Arne Søvik, who heads the federation's church and the Jewish people desk, prepared the consultation.

The consultation concluded, "Only with the eradication of the teaching of contempt and hatred from our faith can we hope to bear witness to the good news of God's love." And it noted that faith is vitalized "as we rediscover how Jewish the Bible is and how Jesus and his disciples were Jews."

Among themes suggested for such discussions in the future are: the Christian understanding of the validity of the Old Covenant and the implications of such understanding for the theology of mission; the question of mission/dialogue; the Torah and its relation to the New Testament; what Christians and Jews can do together in service to the world; the meaning of the Messiah for Jews and Christians, and the meaning of "Dikaosune" (justice or righteousness) for Christians and Jews.

For the first time the consultation included a significant number of participants from Africa and Asia. It noted that though anti-semitism has not played as big a role in Africa and Asia as in the West, Christians there still "need to warn their fellow citizens and church members against the use of religious and political ideologies to justify hatred or acts of oppression and persecution toward any religion or people today." And the consultation said that getting back to Christianity's Jewish roots can be helpful to non-Western churches as "the starting point of the process of contextualization."

The consultation urged LWF member churches "to make a fair and correct presentation of Judaism in all their teaching and preaching." It said, "The Old Testament is indispensable for a full understanding of the significance of the person and ministry of Jesus and for explicating the life of the community of faith."

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Ruth Zerner
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

18 May 1983
(212) 960-8289

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum,

Here is the essay I mentioned to you tonight, along with some New York Rainbow group fliers of the last year. Larry Frizzell of Seton Hall University (now on leave in Jerusalem) is the Catholic "founding father."

Thanks for your powerful presentation on "Luther and the Jews" tonight. Your comment midway in the paper -- that Luther's "torrential outpouring of hatred" seems to be "worse than that of any predecessor" and one that "no one has matched to this day" -- stunned me into rethinking Luther's pivotal position in the history of Christian anti-Judaism. Obviously the overwhelming power of his language was his strength as well as his tragic weakness.

A Lutheran all of my life, I have always sensed that the Biblical emphasis in my upbringing (in the oldest Lutheran Church in America - St. Matthew in upper Manhattan) made the personalities and tales of the Hebrew scriptures "my history," and brought me closer to my Jewish neighbors. In fact, there are many "Judaizing motifs" (as you put it) in my own New York-Lutheran past. For me Jewish-Christian relations have not been "a mystery to adore", as Gritsch put it. My Jewish friends are just that -- friends, not mysteries. Their lives and faith have influenced me, as I have undoubtedly also touched them.

You may be interested to know that on April 10, 1983 (Yom Ha Shoah Day) my Lehman colleague and friend, Livia Bitton-Jackson (Auschwitz survivor and author of Elli: Coming of Age in the Holocaust) spoke to the members of my Lutheran congregation at the end of a service in which ^{we} especially remembered the Holocaust. She commented on her concentration camp experiences and the meaning of her orthodox Jewish faith during the Holocaust; she was 13 years old when she was deported to Auschwitz. It was an unforgettable event at the oldest Lutheran congregation in America.

All good wishes for your very important ministry.

Cordially,



Ruth Zerner

P.S. In a commentary on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's fictional writings in prison, I developed a concept of "unconscious Judaism" (on p. 155 of Fiction from Prison by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Fortress, 1981). It's my idea (not Bonhoeffer's), but I evolved it from his phrase "unconscious Christianity." I'm expanding the idea in my book on Bonhoeffer. I think there were definitely "judaizing" features in his thought and in the family life in the Bonhoeffer home. I'm trying to finish the book during the coming year. Will let you know when it's out.

AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS



STEPHEN WISE CONGRESS HOUSE • 15 EAST 84TH STREET • NEW YORK, N. Y. 10028 • (212) 879-4500

February 1, 1982

Dear Friend:

You are cordially invited to attend the founding meeting of the New York Rainbow Group which will take place on:

Sunday, March 7, 1982 at the
American Jewish Congress
15 East 84th Street (between Fifth & Madison
New York, N.Y. 10028 Avenues)
at 4:00 P.M.

A paper on "The Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles Pursued by Jewish Christians in the First Century" will be given by Prof. J. Louis Martyn, Edward Robinson Professor of Biblical Theology at Union Theological Seminary, New York, N.Y. and author of History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel (Harper and Row, 1968) and The Gospel of John in Christian History, Essays for Interpreters (Paulist Press, 1979.) The paper and discussion will end at 6:00 P.M. and will be followed by a sandwich supper.

The Jerusalem Rainbow Group has been a significant forum for Jewish-Christian scholarly exchange for some years. A number of us in the New York area have long felt the need for a New York counterpart of the Jerusalem Rainbow Group. We envisage a group whose focus will be scholarly, while maintaining an interest in current developments in Jewish-Christian relations. The American Jewish Congress has agreed to support this project and it is for this reason that we are now able to proceed.

We envisage two meetings per semester. Our second meeting of the Spring 1982 semester will take place on:

Sunday, May 16, 1982 at 4:00 P.M.

Please reserve this date.

Please return the enclosed post-card to indicate your response.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Frizzell

Lawrence Frizzell
Department of Judaeo-Christian Studies
Seton Hall University

Michael Wyschogrod

Michael Wyschogrod
Department of Philosophy
Baruch College, CUNY

Ruth Zerner
Ruth Zerner
Department of History
Lehman College, CUNY

Enc.

NEW YORK RAINBOW GROUP

NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE:

SUNDAY, MAY 16, 1982

PLACE:

American Jewish Congress
15 East 84th Street
(between Fifth & Madison Avenues)
New York, N.Y. 10028

TIME:

4:00 P.M.

TOPIC & SPEAKERS:

The Rhineland Synod Statement on
Jewish-Christian Relations:
Background and Controversy.

Professors Ruth Zerner and
Michael Wyschogrod

EXPLANATION:

In 1980, the Synod of the Rhineland Church in Germany adopted a statement on Jewish-Christian relations which some have described as the most advanced to date. It generated considerable discussion, including a critical statement adopted by the Theological Faculty at Bonn. The speakers will discuss the history of the Rhineland statement and the issues in the controversy.

NEWS

FROM THE

COMMITTEE

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THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE Institute of Human Relations, 165 E. 56 St., New York, N.Y. 10022, (212) 751-4000

The American Jewish Committee, founded in 1906, is the pioneer human-relations agency in the United States. It protects the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advances the cause of improved human relations for all people.

MORTON YARMON, Director of Public Relations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK, July 17...In a broadcast prepared for radio station WINS from Stockholm, Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee, hailed the Lutheran World Federation's declaration repudiating "the sins of Luther's anti-Jewish remarks...and his violent verbal attacks against the Jews" as "one of the most significant achievements of the year-long observance of Martin Luther's 500th birthday."

Rabbi Tanenbaum also commended the world Lutheran leaders for their "pledge that Lutheran writings will never again serve in their churches as a source for the teaching of hatred for Judaism and the denigration of the Jewish people."

The historic declarations were adopted during the just-concluded international conference held in Stockholm on "Martin Luther, the Jews, and anti-Semitism." The three-day meeting, co-sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), was the first international meeting of Lutherans and Jews held during Luther's anniversary year.

Rabbi Tanenbaum, who represented AJC at the conference, reported in the WINS broadcast that the joint communique issued in Stockholm by the Lutheran and Jewish spokesmen "also declared the far-reaching agreement that 'we affirm the integrity and dignity of our two faith communities and repudiate any organized proselytizing of each other.' "

The Stockholm statement, continued Rabbi Tanenbaum, acknowledged "with deep regret that Luther had been used to justify anti-Semitism and the Nazi period" and that "his writings lent themselves to such abuse." The joint

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communiqué also stated, said Rabbi Tanenbaum, that "we are mindful of the compassionate response of Scandinavian Christians to the plight of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution."

The Lutheran and Jewish leaders, concluded Rabbi Tanenbaum, "quite rightly characterized their meeting of minds as 'a new chapter in the relationship between Jews and Lutherans, which should find practical expression in teaching, preaching, and worship as well as in joint activities for social justice, human rights and the cause of peace.' "

Founded in 1906, the American Jewish Committee is this country's pioneer human relations organization. It combats bigotry, protects the civil and religious rights of Jews at home and abroad, and seeks improved human relations for all people everywhere.

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