



The Story

of the International Council
of Christians and Jews



by William W. Simpson and Ruth Weyl



The ICCJ wishes to thank and commend its Patron, Sir Sigmund Sternberg, for his unwavering support and pioneering work in interfaith dialogue. His efforts have been recognised by the Vatican with the award of a Knighthood of St Gregory the Great which was enhanced with a Star award in 2009 and 18 countries worldwide have also recognised his interfaith achievements.

*Proof reading:
David Gifford
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Photographs: on top – The participants in the International Conference of Christians and Jews at Seelisberg 1947

below – Signatories of the Twelve Points of Berlin

**THE STORY
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL
OF
CHRISTIANS AND JEWS**

**by
WILLIAM W. SIMPSON
and
RUTH WEYL**

IN MEMORY
OF
WILLIAM W. SIMPSON

1907 - 1987

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PART I
(1946 – 1987)

*by Rev William W (Bill) Simpson
and Ruth Weyl*

FOREWORD to Part I and Part II

I regard it as a privilege to be allowed to write a foreword to this book. The day will no doubt come – it is hoped to be sooner rather than later – when a definitive history is written of the remarkable development which has taken place in Christian-Jewish dialogue and relationships during this century. W. W. Simpson, affectionately known to us all as ‘Bill’, had begun work on this, but his death forbade its completion. He did, however, write a Brief History of the ICCJ in 1982. This has now been up-dated by his close friend and colleague, Ruth Weyl, and I wish to express my gratitude to her for the care and skill which she has brought to this task. We are mindful, too, of the enthusiasm and generosity of Sir Sigmund Sternberg whose Papal Knighthood is at once a symbol of the improved relationship which exists between Christians and Jews, and an indication of the respect and affection in which he is held by many throughout the world.

Donald Coggan (23rd December 1909 – 17th May 2000)
(Archbishop of Canterbury and Honorary President of the ICCJ)

INTRODUCTION

At the time of his death, William W. (Bill) Simpson (11. 7. 1907 – 29. 8. 1987), principal founder of the ICCJ, its General Secretary since the original inception and Honorary Life-Vice-President, had been working on an up-dating of the Short History of the ICCJ which he had produced in 1982. Little did I guess when I first joined the newly reconstituted International Council as his part-time assistant in 1974 that our 13 years association would make me a repository of his long experience and many memories which he so generously and instructively shared with me. I respond to the request to undertake the up-dating of this history with a mixture of trepidation and obligation, particularly as Bill had throughout insisted that any up-dating required a measure of back-dating to transmit to a new generation a sense of history as well as an awareness of the insights, the scholarship, the dedication, idealism and practical considerations that eventually brought about the dialogue-organisations and associations of today, and their newly motivated programmes.

The setting up of an International Council of Christians and Jews was first envisaged a little over forty five years ago. The few remaining survivors of those early days are unlikely ever to forget the factors that inspired their vision nor the difficulties that dogged their footsteps on the way to its realisation. It seems to me that the founder generation tried to fulfil the prophecy that ‘your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions’, and that the programme the ICCJ is now involved in completing reflects the other part of this prophecy: ‘that your sons and daughters shall prophesy’.

In setting out what follows it is evident that apart from retaining most of the text of the original Brief History, much of the language I will use in the up-dating is that of WWS, my mentor and tutor who would, I am sure, be happy to know that I now make so many of his thoughts and phrases my own.

Ruth Weyl
Summer 1988

SOME BACKGROUND

The emergence and development of the twentieth century phenomenon of Jewish-Christian cooperation and the dialogue we have been witnessing these last forty years or so have several roots. On the one hand, the horizons of Western Europe were expanding and there was a new questioning of traditional religious teaching. On the other, antisemitism and racism in Eastern and Western Europe were a spur to the emergence of political Zionism.

ENLIGHTENMENT

The French Revolution, the two hundredth anniversary of which the ICCJ will commemorate by holding its 1989 Annual Colloquium in France, ushered in what some termed the 'century of hope' of remarkable progress in the fields of scientific research and discovery, of mechanical invention and, in particular, the speeding up of the industrial revolution with its far-reaching social consequences. In Britain, in particular, it was the expansion of parliamentary democracy and the emergence of new and more liberal political attitudes. There was a general broadening of cultural relationships in Europe as well as imperial and colonial expansion in Africa, India and the Far East while further west the United States of America emerged from their civil war to become the source of strength and inspiration that continue to exercise such a powerful influence on the thinking of our own century.

Of particular significance to Jews and Christians is the fact that all this took place against the background of what was tantamount to a cultural upheaval, in the course of which many turned away from any form of religious faith or observance, while others felt impelled to review and reformulate traditional beliefs and practices in the light of new discoveries about the origins and nature of life on this planet, and about a seemingly ever-expanding universe. Further reasons for reformulating traditional beliefs were the emergence of the socialist and communist movements, the Marxist critique of religion as well as the stirrings of anti-colonialism.

All this had an obvious bearing on concepts of the nature of revelation as well as the reliability of what used to be generally accepted as verbally inspired scriptures which henceforth were to be subjected to the disciplines of literary and historical criticism. While controversy over theoretical issues engaged much of their thinking, there was a large measure of agreement among Christians about two very important areas of practical concern: the first was to remedy the social injustices that had arisen from the industrial revolution, and the second, to strengthen the carrying of 'the Gospel' to all parts of the world.

It was the century that saw the emergence of a number of societies whose primary purpose was the conversion of Jews to Christianity. The spirit of Christian 'triumphalism' which found such widespread enthusiastic support by the end of the century was, however, tempered by the same awareness of the dangers inherent in the divisions within Christianity and the sympathetic study of the scriptures of the religions by some scholarly missionaries as well as the beginnings of the 'scientific' study of religion in some European Continental universities. That awareness was one of the factors which led to the convening in Edinburgh (Scotland) in 1910 of the first World Missionary Conference, though it is not without interest that this first major venture in modern times in 'Christian ecumenism' was anticipated by a wider ecumenical demonstration in the form of a 'World Parliament of Religions' held in 1893 in Chicago (USA) to coincide with the Chicago World Fair.

For Jews, it was very much a century of mingled hopes and fears. In Western Europe it began well, particularly in Germany. This was due largely to the influence of Moses Mendelssohn who, in the latter half of the preceding century, had succeeded by his sheer intellectual brilliance in breaking through many of the barriers that had hitherto separated Jews from their neighbours. During that period of 'Enlightenment' many German Jews abandoned their Jewish identity, culturally by a process of complete assimilation, and religiously by conversion to Christianity. Others chose the way of integration, preferring to regard themselves and to be regarded as Germans of Jewish – preferably even just termed Mosaic – faith, whose practice of Judaism itself was undergoing a process of reformation. This process of 'integration' aimed at the acceptance of Jews on a basis of mutual understanding and goodwill, hopefully with a consequent enrichment of all parties. This was contrary to the concept of 'assimilation' and its effort at total identification with the society, in which it took place and the inherent loss of identity of the minority,

Much the same happened in other Western European countries; in Scandinavia the process of assimilation went further than elsewhere, while in England a Reform Jewish Synagogue was established about the middle of the century, to be followed early in the twentieth century by the emergence of a form of Liberal Judaism.

ANTISEMITISM

The political, religious and social integration of Jews into the life of Western Europe, though by no means complete by the end of the nineteenth century, was in marked contrast to the plight of Eastern European Jewry, where the majority, especially in Poland, lived in the material poverty of the ghetto or the

‘shtetl’ in which, despite all the hardship, the very distinctiveness of their way of life had its spiritual compensations. And it was there that the dream of a new and richer life in a restored ‘Promised Land’ had its roots.

That dream was given new and practical impetus by two very different and unrelated developments during the latter part of the century: The first was the impact of the dreaded pogroms under the Czarist regime which led to the flight of thousands to the West, settling, for the most part, in Germany, the United Kingdom and in particular in the USA where they laid the foundations of today’s dynamic Jewish community. The second of course, was the framing of Albert Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army in 1884 on a charge of treason and the impact of this overt act of antisemitism upon the assimilated Viennese Jewish journalist Theodor Herzl, leading to the publication of the pamphlet ‘Der Judenstaat’ and the birth of political Zionism.

There was one other event which took place in the middle of that century, pregnant with danger for Jews and Christians alike. This was the publication in 1848 of an ‘Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races’ by the French nobleman, the Count de Gobineau, which laid the foundations of what was to become the Nazi racial ideology. Worked over by a number of German writers during the latter part of the century, they were given their fullest expression by a Germanophile Englishman, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, in a two-volume work entitled ‘The Foundations of the 19th Century’, first published in 1899. Chamberlain settled in Bayreuth where he married the daughter of Richard Wagner and later in life became a friend of Adolf Hitler. Central to this teaching was the thesis that those born of ‘Teutonic race and blood’ were the only natural leaders of humanity and as such responsible for everything of value in civilization. Jews, he taught, were ‘a mongrel race whose existence is a crime against humanity’ while King David, the Hebrew prophets and Jesus were to be regarded as of Germanic descent.

RETHINKING MISSIONS

The budding awareness of ecumenism which had found expression in the 1893 Chicago and 1910 Edinburgh gatherings gave way to an even greater awareness of the grave dangers of our unhappy divisions as Christians fought against Christians, Jews against Jews, and members of other faiths against each other in the 1914-1918 World War. The end of the First World War saw the emergence of a new form of ecumenism, this time in the field of international relations. This was the League of Nations which, though ideologically well founded was soon discovered to be without the practical resources to ensure the fulfilment of its purposes.

As for the Churches, while the challenge of 'Edinburgh 1910' remained, the reproach of their peoples' involvement in the war itself gave rise to a great deal of self-examination, not least in respect of attitudes to other faiths. This was shown especially at the 1928 Jerusalem conference of the International Missionary Council and in the American Laymen's Report 'Rethinking Missions' of 1932 which suggested that the missionary should seek to draw out the best in other religions. The aim was a fellowship of faiths rather than conversion to Christianity.

Already by 1924 leading Churchmen in Britain, realising that the Christian 'triumphalism' which had marked the pre-war years had been deeply challenged by the events of the war itself, had held a Conference on 'Economics and Citizenship', evidence of their concern with the moral and ethical responsibilities of Christians in that post-war world. In 1924 a 'Religions of Europe' Conference was also held in London. Moreover, in that same year the Social Service Committee of the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in London, moved by the consideration that, in spite of serious differences of belief, Jews and Christians are at one in their desire to bring nearer the 'Kingdom of God on earth', approached a number of other religious bodies and, in consultation with them, convened a conference on 'Religion as an Educational Force'. As a result, this London Conference of Jews and Christians set up a continuation committee which, in 1928, launched a 'Society of Jews and Christians' to pursue the following aims:

1. To increase religious understanding and to promote good-will and cooperation between Jews and Christians, with mutual respect for differences of faith and practice.
2. To combat religious intolerance.

(When eventually a National Council of Christians and Jews was set up in Britain, the Society added the word 'London' to its title, affiliated to the national body and continued its specific work in the field of interreligious dialogue).

This same year, 1924, was also significant for Christian-Jewish cooperation on the other side of the Atlantic. It was a year of a presidential election in which a candidate of the Democratic Party, Governor Alfred E. (Al) Smith, became the victim of a scurrilous campaign, largely inspired and conducted by the Ku Klux Klan on the grounds that he was a Roman Catholic. When Al Smith again sought nomination in anticipation of the 1928 election, this opposition was again renewed. By this time, however, a number of leading individuals and organisations realised the need to break the power of the Klan. The first steps were taken by the Federal Council of Churches (a Protestant body) and B'nai B'rith (a Jewish organisation) which set up a Committee of Goodwill between

Jews and Christians, soon to be joined by a number of Catholic and other organisations. In 1928, therefore, the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ) was established, becoming a most powerful factor, not only in its own country, but in the building of up of the ICCJ.

The first Executive President of this newly formed body of Christians and Jews was Everett R. Clinchy, a Presbyterian minister. He was a man of wide and imaginative vision coupled with a dynamism that captured the support of many leaders in all sections of the community and secured the financial support needed to 'establish a social order in which the religious ideals of Brotherhood and Justice shall become the standards of human relationships'.

Although we are still far from realising the ideals he propounded in what he termed a 'scientific formula' for improving human relations, it is perhaps of some relevance to the ICCJ's ongoing programme to quote it here:

First, reduce the social distance, the isolation between the various religious and racial groups so that democratic communication may be kept alive. Secondly, discover the economic and sociological forces which make for prejudice and deal with the several factors individually. Hold the guiding star in the sky of men's aspirations, political democracy above totalitarianism; industrial democracy above economic injustice; freedom of the human spirit above tyranny, peace above war, essential justice for all groups above privilege for any one.

Some few years later, in 1937, a Society of Jews and Christians was established in Johannesburg in South Africa under the leadership of an Anglican priest, the Rev. Father C.H.S. Runge. In July 1939, this Society launched a monthly magazine called 'Common Sense'. The life of the South African Society of Jews and Christians, some of whose problems were so vividly portrayed by Alan Paton's first novel 'Cry the Beloved Country' was of relatively short duration. It was eventually slowed down by Government decree.

In the light of developments, negatively in South Africa, but more positively in the history of interfaith dialogue elsewhere, we would perhaps do well to recall here some of the things written by Father Runge in his introductory article in the first issue of 'Common Sense'. Referring to the then current use of the term 'ideology', he commented that 'in the meaning nearest to its current one it appears to owe its origin to Napoleon I, who characterised with contempt all crazy and unpractical thinking as mere ideology'. And he continued:

We should perhaps do well to remember the ancestry of that word when we follow current usage and so describe the com-

peting 'ideologies' of our day ... Let us warn against the danger of being ruled by words, phrases and slogans, and of losing the will and the power to examine dispassionately the views and projects that are advanced on this side and that.

The warning was too late. Within a month the world was at war. Already, however, the Christian theological mood had changed. At the Tambaram meeting of the 1938 International Missionary Council, and in his book, 'The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World', a Dutch missionary theologian, Dr Kraemer, stressed the discontinuity of the Gospel as against other religions. For nearly thirty years, most Christians viewed interfaith dialogue with suspicion. However, with increasing awareness of the horrors of the Holocaust, they began to re-examine traditional attitudes and teaching about Judaism and gradually came to recognise that the origin of antisemitism, as the pioneering Anglican scholar Dr James Parkes was already teaching

unconsciously and unintentionally lay in the interpretation of the Old Testament current in the early Church, and in the picture of the Jews as a rebellious people who had crucified the Messiah and still refused to believe in him, which was constantly repeated from the Christian pulpit.

The process of rethinking age-old concepts began to take place in Protestant circles which found official expression at the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in the summer of 1948. At that time, the official concern of the Protestant Churches about the 'Jewish question' was represented by the International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews, an offshoot of the International Missionary Council, which in 1961 was eventually incorporated into the World Council of Churches (WCC). Under the chairmanship of Dr Conrad Hoffman, a first report was submitted to the 1948 Assembly which soon came to realise the need for a 'more detailed study of the many complex problems which exist in the field of relations between Christians and Jews'.

In the following year, a working party was set up which was asked to prepare the way for a discussion at the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches scheduled for Evanston (USA) in 1954. A number of explosive and decisive issues, created in part by a changed composition of the WCC, led to emotional reactions to a first draft statement and a decision to wait till the Third Assembly to be held at New Delhi in 1961. A plea to denounce antisemitism in all its forms, urging the member Churches to 'do all in their power to resist every form of antisemitism' was taken a stage further at the Fourth Assembly at Uppsala in 1968, clearly demanding the 'examination of

educational and devotional materials with a view to eliminating any misrepresentation of Judaism and the Jewish people'. Eventually, a Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People was incorporated in the WCC unit responsible for Dialogue with People of Other Faiths and Ideologies, including representatives of the Russian Orthodox and other Churches from outside the predominantly Western European and North American orbit. Among the publications issued in 1982 which dealt with all aspects of the Jewish-Christian dialogue was a set of 'Ecumenical Considerations' for member churches.

The developments on the Protestant side were, of course, matched by some concern, particularly after World War II among Catholics as well, a concern which found its full expression in the discussions which resulted in the promulgation by the Second Vatican Council on October 28, 1965 (*Nostra Aetate*). The opening affirmation of this Declaration is: 'In our day, when people are drawing more closely together and the bonds of friendship between different peoples are being strengthened, the church examines more carefully its relations with non-Christian religions. Ever aware of its duty to foster unity and charity among individuals, and even among nations, it reflects at the outset on what people have in common and what tends to bring them together.' While certainly not everything that followed, particularly in the section on Judaism and Jews, commended itself to all Jews, or for that matter to all Christians, it was generally recognised as representing a new approach, providing at the same time a new basis for a Catholic-Jewish dialogue.

A Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews eventually issued 'Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate* in 1974, followed in 1985 by 'Notes on the correct way to present the Jews and Judaism in preaching and catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church'.

THE STORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

The story of the International Council of Christians and Jews tells not merely of the growth of an organisation. It has to do with the persistence of an idea, of a dream, or better still, in the words of a former Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, London, The Very Rev. Dr W.R. Matthews, 'a hope that

the awakened minds in Judaism and Christianity, while holding firm their distinctive beliefs with undiminished firmness, may work together for the establishment of righteousness, without which there can be no peace.

The words are taken from a Foreword by the Dean to the published edition of one of the major documents promulgated by the first-ever International Conference of Christians and Jews, held in Oxford in the summer of 1946. The hope itself lies at the heart of all that has since contributed to the gradual building up of a Council whose membership comprises the officially delegated representatives of organisations in nineteen different countries. It also embraces observers from the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, different organisations involved in dialogue activities, and a number of international Jewish organisations.

BEGINNINGS IN THE 'BLITZ'

For the beginning of the story, however, we must go back a little further than the Oxford Conference, to the Savoy Hotel in London where, one Sunday evening during the Nazi Blitz on the capital, a small party of half a dozen Jews and Christians, British and American, dined together at the invitation of Sir Robert Waley-Cohen, one of the outstanding lay-leaders of the Anglo-Jewish community and Treasurer of the British Council of Christians and Jews. The three American guests were a Catholic priest, Father Edward Cardinal, a Jew, Rabbi Morris Lazaron, and a Protestant, the Executive President of the American National Conference of Christians and Jews, Everett Clinchy. They had come together to study the effect of the bombing on the morale of the British people, but it was not long before conversation turned to the work of their respective organisations.

The British Council of Christians and Jews had been only recently established. It was born of the cooperation between Christians and Jews in caring for those victims of Nazi persecution who had found refuge in Britain. It was fired by a

sense of deep concern at the earliest reports of the Nazi Holocaust, and inspired by the leadership of the Anglican Archbishop, William Temple, Cardinal Hinsley, Archbishop of Westminster, the Rev. Dr James Parkes, the then Chief Rabbi, Dr H.J. Hertz, together with other leading members of the Anglo-Jewish community, including Sir Robert Waley-Cohen himself. Its General Secretary was Rev. W.W. (Bill) Simpson, a Methodist, who since his student days in the mid-twenties had taken an active interest in Jews and Judaism and who since his appointment in 1938 as the Secretary of the Christian Council for Refugees from Nazi Germany, worked in a unique and daily cooperation with the Jewish community.

Surprising as it may seem in retrospect, the aims of the Council were formulated without any specific reference to antisemitism, because, as Archbishop William Temple emphasised at the initial meeting, antisemitism, evil though it manifestly is, is not the ultimate evil. It is rather a symptom of deeper disorders in human society. The Archbishop affirmed that Jews and Christians, by virtue of the ideals and principles they have in common, have a vitally important contribution to make to the exposure and eradication of such disorders. The ultimate aim must be to combat, not only antisemitism, but all forms of racial and religious prejudice. But first, he insisted, there must be mutual understanding and respect between Jews and Christians themselves.

The American visitors, for their part, spoke of how the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ) had been set up in 1928 to protest against the anti-Catholic activities of the Ku Klux Klan in opposing the candidature of the Catholic Al Smith for the Presidency of the United States. They also said that Roger Williams Straus, one of the founders of the Conference had declared:

It is essential to combine a sense of moral indignation with a wise intellectual approach. Moral indignation must be combined with intelligent study of human motives and the creation of educational methods to civilize our intergroup relations.

In pursuit of that study and the creation of such educational methods, the NCCJ, in an ever-expanding programme, had already established centres throughout the United States.

OXFORD 1946

In the course of correspondence which followed the Americans' return home, it was suggested that an International Conference of Christians and Jews should be held as soon as possible after the war. Oxford was chosen as the conference

centre, and it was during the conference that the proposal to set up an International Council of Christians and Jews first emerged. A Continuation Committee was appointed to prepare the way. The conference itself, the first ever of its kind, was one of the great landmarks in the development of the Christian-Jewish dialogue. Its theme, 'Freedom, Justice and Responsibility', was carefully chosen. Its purpose, as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Geoffrey Fisher, wrote in a letter to the Times on June 25, 1946, was:

... to consider the practical part which Christians and Jews can play in educating themselves and their fellow-men for the exercise of responsible citizenship in a society based upon mutual respect, freedom and justice.

All of this, of course, was against the background of the horrors of the Holocaust and of the whole disastrous tragedy of the Second World War. Of that background the participants had been vividly reminded by the speakers at a crowded public meeting in London on the eve of the opening of the conference. These included the Archbishop himself, Professor Reinhold Niebuhr who spoke of 'the potential goodness of individual man, and the potential wickedness of collective man', Lord (RAB)Butler, Lord Reading and Rabbi Dr Leo Baeck, who, still bearing the marks of his sufferings in Theresienstadt, made an appeal for tolerance and understanding which none who heard are ever likely to forget.

The participants, 150 in number, came from Britain and the United States, from Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Palestine (as it then was), South Africa – including Alan Paton who two years later was to publish 'Cry, The Beloved Country' –, Sweden and Switzerland. Among them were two Christian pastors from Germany, Probst Gruber from Berlin and Hermann Maas from Heidelberg. Writing of their presence many years later, one of the Jewish participants described it as 'profoundly impressive – one might almost say traumatic'.

In a remarkable way, the conference anticipated much of what was to come in the following years. First there was the declaration of the 'Fundamental Postulates of Judaism and Christianity in Relation to Social Order', which the Dean of St. Paul referred to as being of

considerable interest for all who are concerned about the future of civilized man.

(See Appendix I)

Secondly, a youth section, by dint of burning a great deal of midnight oil, produced a report on group unity and ways of achieving it, which concluded by

affirming that

group unity is bound up with a spirit of fellowship and a sense of the Brotherhood of Man under God

and that

peace and security will never come to the world until a man, regardless of his creed or colour, can put down his foot anywhere in the world and say 'this is my home'.

Finally, the Steering Committee of the Conference made two very important decisions: first, that 'an emergency conference to deal specifically with the problem of antisemitism in Europe should be convened at the earliest possible moment' and secondly, 'that a Continuation Committee be set up to make plans for the establishment of an International Council of Christians and Jews'.

So the pattern was set for everything that was to follow: the elucidation of the fundamental principles of Judaism and Christianity and their relevance to social order, the translation of those principles into programmes for action, and the development of instruments for implementing these programmes.

SEELISBERG 1947

A year later, still under the joint auspices of the American and British organisations, a second international conference was held, this time in Switzerland. This was at Seelisberg, a village perched on a height overlooking the Rütli, the meadow in which, in 1291, three neighbouring cantons joined together in a 'perpetual federation' and laid the foundations of what was to become the Swiss Confederation.

Described as an 'emergency conference', this second gathering of Christians and Jews turned from the wider ranging discussions of 'Oxford 1946' to the particular problem of antisemitism. It was very much a gathering of experts and included among the participants a Professor of International Law and Economics from the University of Sofia in Bulgaria, who had already produced a draft of legislation for the restoration of Jewish property appropriated by the Nazis; the Head of the Scientific Section of UNESCO; from Warsaw, the President of the League to Combat Racism; the then Chief Rabbi of Rumania (who later became the Chief Rabbi of Geneva); two Professors from the Catholic University of Fribourg in Switzerland, both well versed in the problems of Jewish-Christian relations, one of whom, Msgr Journet, was later to become the first Swiss Cardinal since the XVIth century, and from Berlin, the Director of an

organisation for the relief of non-Jews persecuted on account of their race. There were also observers from the Vatican and the World Council of Churches, which was then in the final stages of formation. Jacques Maritain, unable to be present himself, sent a warmly encouraging message. The organising secretary was Dr Pierre Visseur.

The outstanding personality of the conference, however, was Professor Jules Isaac, whose study of the Christian roots of antisemitism, 'Jésus et Israël' was about to be published. He was later to play an important role, through his meetings with Pope Pius XII and Pope John XXIII, in paving the way for major changes in Catholic teaching and practice concerning Jews.

The conference itself worked, as the Oxford conference had done, through a series of commissions. These dealt with educational opportunities for combating antisemitism through teaching in schools and colleges, with work in the field of civil and social service; relations with governments; and finally with the task of the churches. It was in this last commission that the conference made its most important contribution. In an 'Address to the Churches', it set out what were soon to become widely known as 'The Ten Points of Seelisberg'. These took the form of a series of suggestions for the guidance of preachers and teachers in their presentation of the relations between Judaism and Christianity, and especially of the story of the crucifixion.

The initiative in the preparation of this report was taken by the Christian members of a joint working party. It was they who were responsible for the draft which was eventually considered and adopted by the full membership of the group, of which Jules Isaac was a member. It was then submitted to the conference as a whole and approved for publication.

(For the text of the 'Ten Points' see Appendix II)

Meanwhile, the proposal to set up an International Council received further endorsement in the resolution that:

...in view of the world-wide nature of the task, it is mandatory that the suggestion of the Oxford Conference of August 1946 to establish an International Council of Christians and Jews should be implemented without delay, and that the Continuation Committee then appointed should take energetic action to organise and establish in as many countries as possible Councils of Christians and Jews linked with the International Council.

FRIBOURG 1948

The Continuation Committee took note and did its best. Work on the preparation of a constitution continued. In addition to the British and American, national groups already existed or were in the process of formation in France, Germany and Switzerland, and were, of course, involved in the process of preparation. It was also decided to hold a further international conference in the following year on the theme of Inter-group Education.

Switzerland was again chosen as the host country, and the Catholic University of Fribourg as its centre. The more general character of the theme and the widespread interest then prevalent in almost any kind of international gathering attracted a number of participants who had but little association with the particular field of Jewish-Christian relations. One consequence of this was that some of the discussions tended to reach out beyond what was felt by some to be the proper sphere of Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Apart from its immediate and positive value in providing an opportunity for the discussion of important educational issues in the freedom of an open international exchange, the Fribourg Conference had two important and quite unforeseen consequences. The first came from within the organisation itself. A constitution, the fruit of much discussion particularly between representatives of the American and British Councils, was laid before a meeting of the Continuation Committee, and, after due consideration, formally adopted. At that point, the chairman, Dr Henry Noble MacCracken, President of Vassar College in the State of New York, rose to his feet and said:

Gentlemen, this is an historic moment and I can think of no words more appropriate to the occasion than those put into the mouth of one of his characters in *Little Dorrit* by Charles Dickens: 'God save the foundation.'

He then resumed his seat. Unfortunately, his chair, overwhelmed either by the solemnity of the moment, or more probably, by the weight of its occupant, for Henry Noble MacCracken was a great man in every sense of the word, collapsed beneath him.

So it came about that the first corporate act of the newly constituted Executive Committee of the International Council of Christians and Jews was to help the Chairman to his feet, and solicitous for his well-being, to look for a more substantial seat. But since the qualifications of the members did not include the ability to interpret signs and portents the significance of the incident went unrealised and the first corporate act of the Committee proved unhappily to be its last.

ICCJ OR WORLD BROTHERHOOD?

All that remained to be done to give full effect to the adoption of the Constitution was for the constituent organisations themselves to ratify the agreement reached by their representatives in Fribourg. In the case of the British, the French, the Germans and the Swiss, this presented no problem. By the time he reached home, however, Everett Clinchy, to whose initiative and enthusiasm the whole movement had hitherto owed so much, had been advised by UNESCO and a number of European educators that, partly in view of the political connotation of the word 'Christian' then current in certain countries, a broader platform was needed for the effective combating of antisemitism or any other form of inter-group prejudice. He therefore advised the National Conference of Christians and Jews against ratifying the Fribourg Constitution and, with the encouragement of UNESCO, launched a more broadly based organisation to be known as 'World Brotherhood', and to operate, as its name implied, on a world front.

An invitation to join this new venture was declined by the British, the French and the Swiss organisations of Christians and Jews, not because they were in any way opposed to the ideal of a world-wide brotherhood, but because they believed that the deepening of understanding and cooperation between Christians and Jews was in itself an urgent need as well as an important preliminary to the achievement of the wider objective. For a time, World Brotherhood made considerable progress in a number of countries, but in the end it was hampered by the inadequacy of its resources and after a relatively short but impressive life, quietly disappeared from the international scene.

FEARS OF INDIFFERENTISM

The second and quite unforeseen consequence of the Fribourg Conference came in 1950, when a Vatican directive to the Catholic hierarchy throughout the world warned them against involvement with the International Council of Christians and Jews, accusing it of indifferentism, tending to ignore or minimise differences of religious faith and practice. Since by this time, however, there was no International Council in existence, most of those who received the directive appear simply to have noted its content and to have assumed that it did not apply to them.

There was one exception. One of the Joint Presidents of the British Council of Christians and Jews was Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster. He decided to ask for an official ruling from the Vatican as to whether the directive was to be interpreted as applying to his participation in the British Council of Christians and Jews. Four years later, in November 1954, he was informed that

it did and that he and all other Catholics, lay as well as clerical, must withdraw from the Council.

No satisfactory reason for the withdrawal was forthcoming, in spite of the most strenuous efforts on the part of the Council, and of the former Catholic members, either to obtain an explanation or to find a basis for the renewal of an association which, until that time, had been both happy and fruitful. The contacts and friendships previously forged between W.W. Simpson and the former Catholic members made ongoing private exchanges possible. But it was not, in fact, until ten years later, in November 1964, that Cardinal Griffin's successor in the Archbishopric of Westminster, John C. Heenan, soon to be appointed Cardinal, was able to address the Annual General Meeting of the Council and, as he put it, 'to give some public explanation of what has happened during the last few years'.

He went on to say that 'as far as I know that the cause of the difficulty was partly a misunderstanding of what had been done in the Council'. As to the precise nature of the misunderstanding, the Archbishop was not clear. 'Certain things' -it appeared - 'had been said which were contrary to Catholic principle and the Vatican was dismayed'. But there was no indication then or at any time as to what those things were or by whom they had been said.

I can tell you for certain – Archbishop Heenan continued – what has come within my own experience. While I was still Archbishop in Liverpool I went, accompanied by another Bishop, to the Holy Office to see Cardinal Ottaviani. I pointed out to him that since, alone among Catholics, the Catholics of England and Wales had been required to resign from the Council of Christians and Jews, intelligent people could only assume that we in England had isolated ourselves by our own desire. I said that the result was most unfortunate in every way, and I requested the Cardinal to remove this ukase from the Catholic body in this country. At once the Cardinal agreed that the time had come to remove the ban.

And removed it was, to the great satisfaction of Catholics, Protestants and Jews alike.

In the meantime, the Catholic fear of indifferentism had been clearly demonstrated and carefully noted, not only in England where the work of the Council had continued to develop in spite of the Catholic withdrawal, but in other centres also. Nor should it be forgotten that all this happened before the promulgation of the Vatican Council Declaration 'Nostra Aetate'.

In the absence of an International Council, informal contacts had been maintained in Europe between representatives of the slowly growing number of organisations for Jewish-Christian cooperation. These included: Edmond Fleg, Jacques Nantet and Paul Vanikoff of the French *Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne*, Leopold Goldschmidt of the German Coordinating Council, Kurt Pordes of the Austrian *Aktion gegen den Antisemitismus*, Professors Levasti and Neppi Modona of the *Amicizia Ebraico-Cristiana* in Florence, Rabbi Dr E.L. Ehrlich of the Swiss group, and W.W. Simpson of the British Council of Christians and Jews. A series of private and informal meetings took place, at which, in spite of the Vatican ban on Catholic participation in the activities of the British Council of Christians and Jews, its Secretary was always welcome and continued to act as coordinator. Indeed, it was largely through the good offices of the British Council that the meetings began in the first instance. The only status they achieved was that of an Informal Liaison Committee of Secretaries of Organisations of Christians and Jews.

Apart from the value of shared information and experience, there were two interesting developments. The first was in the mid-fifties when the future of the Saarland was still undecided. The ding-dong struggle between France and Germany within the framework first of the League of Nations and later of the United Nations concerning the right to incorporate this economically important territory within its own frontiers was still unresolved. A plebiscite was pending, and a recently established Association of Christians and Jews in Saarbrücken, the capital city, made a bid to become the host for an International Organisation of Christians and Jews, hopefully suggesting that Saarbrücken might become a kind of second Geneva as a convenient centre for this and other international bodies. It was a short-lived dream. Following upon the referendum in October 1955, an agreement between France and the West German Federal Republic was signed in Luxembourg in 1956 and the Saarland absorbed into the German Federal Republic. The Saarbrücken Council of Christians and Jews in consequence lost its status as a 'national' organisation and was affiliated to the German Coordinating Council (DKR).

Further meetings of the Informal Liaison Committee of Secretaries were held in Paris, in Vienna and in London. By this time news had been received of the setting up of an Israel Committee for Interfaith Understanding, and of organisations of Christians and Jews in Argentina and Uruguay. By December 1960, it was agreed at a meeting in London that the time had come to review the nature and basis not only of the secretariat but of the Liaison Committee as a whole.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Plans were accordingly prepared and a Constitution drawn up for an International Consultative Committee of Organisations working for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, a Committee which was formally established at a meeting in Frankfurt on Main in January 1962. Its principal purpose was to provide for 'consultation between member organisations on matters of common concern in the field of Christian-Jewish relations'. While it could also recommend action either by separate member organisations or by several acting together, it was to have no power of direction over any of its members.

Apart from being accurately descriptive but stylistically cumbersome, this choice of title was largely influenced by the consideration that there had been as yet no intimation of the withdrawal of the directive warning Catholics against cooperation with the International Council of Christians and Jews. It was clearly important, therefore, to avoid giving any occasion for further misunderstanding in Catholic circles.

The founder organisations of this newly established body were the British Council of Christians and Jews, the German Koordinierungsrat, the Swiss Arbeitsgemeinschaft and the Austrian Aktion gegen den Antisemitismus, as well as the Amicizia Ebraico-Cristiana of the city of Florence, represented by the Rev. W.W. Simpson, Mr Leopold Goldschmidt, Dr. E.L. Ehrlich, Mr Kurt Pordes and Prof. A. Levasti respectively.

By 1964 the French organisation had overcome some internal difficulties and was able to join the Committee, to be followed by a Dutch organisation, Het Leerhuis, and other national organisations.

The newly established body continued on its consultative way. The chairmen, elected for a period of two years, were 1962 Leopold Goldschmidt, 1964 and 1966 Kurt Pordes, 1968 Dr Ehrlich, 1970 W.W. Simpson and 1972 Dr A.C. Ramselaar. W.W. (Bill) Simpson, the General Secretary of the British Council of Christians and Jews, continued to act throughout as its 'headquarters' and Secretary, when, to the great delight of all members, Dr David Hyatt who had just been elected President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Conference of Christians and Jews in the United States attended a meeting of the Committee held in Vienna, and 'formally asked that the NCCJ might be enrolled as a member'. This application was immediately, unanimously and cordially approved.

In May 1974, at a meeting of the International Consultative Committee held in Basel, a representative of the National Conference of Christians and Jews of the

United States, speaking on Dr Hyatt's behalf, proposed that its name be changed and that it be henceforth known as the International Council of Christians and Jews.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

This time there was no hesitation, and it is recorded in the minutes of that meeting that the Chairman, Monsignor Dr A.C. Ramselaar (a distinguished Catholic leader whose work for Jewish-Christian understanding in the Netherlands had earned him an international reputation) recalled earlier difficulties which had arisen in Catholic circles over a proposal to set up an International Council. Believing that the considerations which gave rise to those difficulties (and in particular to the fear of religious indifferentism) no longer applied, he supported the proposal. Monsignor Ramselaar's lead was immediately followed by all the members present, including M. Jean-Paul David, representing the French *Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne*. A great protagonist of linguistic independence, M. David proposed that the new title should always appear in French and German as well as in English.

At its following meeting in Cologne in November 1974, it was agreed that W.W. Simpson, who by that time had retired from the general secretaryship of the British Council of Christians and Jews, continue in office on a non-salaried, expenses only basis; that £800 p.a. could be made available to engage the part-time professional services of a secretarial assistant; and that office accommodation at a nominal charge be rented in the head offices of the British CCJ. In the following Ruth Weyl became the General Secretary's assistant, and while finances remained restricted, the growth of the ICCJ very soon demanded her full-time attendance.

At last the 'Oxford 1946' dream of an International Council of Christians and Jews had found its fulfilment in the return of the NCCJ to membership of the international 'family'. If the process of gestation had been long, it had not been unfruitful. The informal backroom meetings of the early days had encouraged full, frank and stimulating exchange of experience and information. They had laid the foundations of the spirit of dedication and friendship which, despite many changes, characterises the work of the ICCJ to this day.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

To celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Oxford 1946 First International Conference a major Conference was mounted in

CAMBRIDGE 1966

This conference produced a number of reports including a critique of the declarations on the relations between the Churches and the Jewish People issued by the World Council of Churches at New Delhi in 1961, and by the Vatican Council in 1965. Both were commended for careful study by all organisations working for Christian-Jewish understanding.

The Conference also produced a definition of the Christian-Jewish 'dialogue' which amid the plethora of such definitions produced in recent years still has much to commend it: The report stated that "The dialogue is essentially a dialogue between persons, an attitude to life and not a mere technique. It is a relationship which has been found in experience to be capable of deepening the spiritual life of all participants alike, for each is given in dialogue full opportunity to express his own position in all freedom. It has proved an enrichment of their faith in God to committed Jews and Christians, and has dispelled many misunderstandings of each about the faith and practice of the other. We believe that it is not only consistent with our several loyalties to Church and Synagogue, but that it also increases interreligious harmony as we face together the problems and needs of our changing world."

This emphasis upon facing together the problems and needs of our changing world is if anything more relevant today than when the report was first drafted. Indeed, the reports of the other commissions which dealt with the challenge of ideological differences with special reference to the resurgence of neo-Nazism, and the educational task in the building up of sound community relations presuppose the existence of just this sort of dialogue.

The list of participants, though only half as long as the Oxford list of 1946, contained the names of many distinguished leaders and scholars in this field, including (though any selection must seem to be invidious) from the United States Father Edward Flannery, Rabbi Samuel Sandmel, Professors Alice and Roy Eckardt and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum; from Germany Dr Gertrud Luckner,

Fr. Dr Willehad Eckert and Rabbi Dr N. Peter Levinson; from the Netherlands Prof Dr Cornelius A. Rijk, and from the United Kingdom Dr James Parkes, the Dean of St. Paul's The Very Rev. Martin Sullivan, the Archdeacon of Oxford The Ven. C. Witton-Davies, Rabbi Dr I. Levy, and the Rt. Hon. Sir Seymour Karminksi who acted as Chairman.

In the course of this Conference the Consultative Committee held an extraordinary meeting to discuss the application for affiliation which had been received from the Israel Interfaith Committee. In view of the importance and value of their contribution, their membership was immediately and unanimously confirmed. Then as now the fact that dialogue in Israel could not be one between Western mainstream Churches and Jews only, but included regular contact with Orthodox Churches, nor could it exclude contact with Muslims has played a decisive role in the outlook and development of the Council.

TORONTO 1968

Two years later, in 1968, a further international gathering was held on Glendon Campus of the University of Toronto at the invitation of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews. Organised by the Rev. Roland de Corneille who had attended the Cambridge Conference two years earlier, this Canadian Conference brought together many of the leaders in the field of Jewish-Christian studies, including Father Gregory Baum of Toronto and Msgr. John Oesterreicher, both of whom had played important roles in preparing the way for the Vatican Council Declaration on the Church and the Jewish People. The occasion also helped pave the way for the eventual accession of the Canadian Council to membership of the ICCJ.

HAMBURG 1975

The next major conference was held in the summer of 1975 to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration and extermination camps. Hamburg was chosen as the meeting place, in part because of its proximity to the site of Bergen Belsen.

In her opening address, the President, Mme Claire Huchet-Bishop who had been a close collaborator of the late Professor Jules Isaac, made the point that the anniversary was not simply to celebrate a victory over barbarism, but that the theme 'The Holocaust and its Lessons for Today' had been chosen to emphasise the growing awareness of the need to be concerned not merely with the paradigm of all violence that had occurred thirty years ago, but with what

needed to be done if similar tragedies were to be avoided in the future. Members were warned against the dangers of further holocausts, directed against other than Jewish victims. It was not enough for Christians to engage in abject protestations of guilt or in expressions of good will. The urgent need was to enlist the expert help of educators, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, political leaders and theologians.

Fortunately, the membership of the Conference itself was built up of just such experts and although the discussions attracted little immediate public attention, recommendations were referred, through the member organisations of the ICCJ, to those most competent to deal with educational matters through the schools and churches in the countries represented.

The Corruption of Conscience was one of the subjects under review. It was movingly put in perspective by the slight figure and quiet voice of Dr Gertrud Luckner, one of a small number of Germans whose fearless help of persecuted Jews led to her own internment in a concentration camp.

Perhaps the most searching and challenging experience of the whole conference was the pilgrimage paid by its participants to two former concentration camp sites, in the course of which under grey skies, a chilly wind and the accompanying sounds of artillery fire from a nearby army base prayers were recited and moving testimonies paid by père Contenson, Pasteur Roland de Pury, Rabbi Pesach Schindler and Rev. W.W. Simpson. The latter recalling the inscription on the entrance to the Yad Vashem Memorial in Jerusalem that 'to forget is to prolong the exile; to remember is the beginning of redemption', reminded the participants of the ongoing obligation to remember and teach so that future generations will be able to live in security and in peace.

JERUSALEM 1976

Hamburg was followed a year later by a conference in Jerusalem to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Oxford Conference of 1946. The theme, remembering that in 1946 the State of Israel had not yet come into being, was "Israel: Significance and Realities". Its purpose was to focus attention upon current problems directly traceable to the emergence of the State of Israel and upon the widespread confusion in the minds of non-Jews principally, but to some extent among Jews also, as to the precise connotation of the term 'Israel'.

Formal lectures and addresses were kept to a minimum by a carefully planned series of working parties and by a programme of visits to people and places of interest, including a four-day visit to the north of the country, arranged by the Israel Interfaith Committee whose secretary, Joseph Emanuel, has proved

himself over the years to be not only a first-class leader in Israel itself, but an invaluable asset to the ICCJ.

Participants from fourteen different countries found themselves welcomed by posters in Hebrew and English widely displayed throughout Jerusalem. At the conclusion of the Council's Annual General Meeting which followed the conference, the members were received in his home by the President of the State. The reports and recommendations of the conference itself provided an excellent outline for member organisations to continue the study for same time to come. They also included a request to the General Secretary W. W. Simpson to prepare a memorandum for submission to Church organisations on the need to resolve the seeming dichotomy between the Jewish interpretation of certain aspects of the Hebrew Bible and their bearing upon the State of Israel and modern political objections to Zionism.

At the business meeting of the International Council yet another Constitution was formally adopted, in which the ICCJ itself was defined as 'a voluntary association of representative organisations established to promote Christian-Jewish cooperation', whose purpose should be

- a) to coordinate efforts of its member organisations in the international and regional fields, and
- b) to undertake joint actions in the sphere of Christian-Jewish understanding, to promote such action, and to seek to remove prejudices and their consequences.

There is much to be said for constitutional comprehensiveness providing that a broad definition of purpose can be translated into detailed objectives. That translation remains the ongoing task of the ICCJ.

At this meeting Rabbi Dr N. Peter Levinson was elected President of the ICCJ, to follow Mme Claire Huchet-Bishop to whose devoted and inspiring leadership the Council had been greatly indebted.

While bound together by a common purpose, it was becoming increasingly evident that the annual meetings did not afford delegates sufficient opportunity to share the emphases and concerns with which they were confronted in their own countries. To facilitate the sharing and exchange of information, the meeting asked the General Secretary who had submitted proposals for a developing programme of the ICCJ, to include in this programme also a study of the political and sociological backgrounds of the member organisations. It was also becoming increasingly evident that without adequate financial and physical facilities the developing programme could only progress very slowly.

SOUTHAMPTON 1977

A third in this new series of international conferences followed in July 1977. It was held in the University of Southampton, now the home of the Parkes Library, a unique collection of books and archives dealing with historical and contemporary relations between Christians and Jews. The Special Collection now also includes material relating to W.W. Simpson and his work in the field.

The conference was again an anniversary occasion, marking the 80th birthday of Dr James Parkes himself and the centenary of the birth of Professor Jules Isaac, both pioneers in the study of and the fight against antisemitism and the furtherance of the Jewish-Christian dialogue. Significantly, the conference was concerned not only with antisemitism, but also with other forms of group prejudice, with their roots, their contemporary manifestations and Judaeo-Christian response. A panel of distinguished lecturers included Professors Irving Greenberg and Roy Eckardt from the United States - who discussed the nature of revelation in relation to the historical process as instanced in contemporary terms by the Holocaust and the emergence of the State of Israel -, Cornelius Rijk from Rome, and Marcel Dubois and Jacob Katz from Jerusalem. Tributes were paid to the work and influence of Jules Isaac and James Parkes who was able to be present at the conference, but who - died in the summer of 1981.

VIENNA 1978

By now the regular pattern of colloquia and annual meetings had been established, and in the early summer of 1978 a colloquium on 'The Rise and Development of neo-Nazism and other Forms of Political Extremism' was held in Vienna. Due to their historical and geographical position and experience, the Austrian Aktion gegen den Antisemitismus in Österreich has throughout made sure that the member organisations remain alert to any latent and at the time of the colloquium once again realistic manifestation of neo-Nazism and other forms of political extremism. A visit to the 'Dokumentationszentrum' in the city served as a sober reminder of the importance of keeping these matters under constant review. And in particular the urgent need for monitoring such activities in various parts of the world with the aid of member organisations.

The colloquium was followed by the annual business meeting of the ICCJ itself. Dr David Hyatt who a few years earlier had brought the NCCJ back into the ICCJ was elected President. Dynamic, far-seeing and friendly he gave a new impetus to the whole enterprise. This meeting also saw the beginning of major changes, particularly in relation to the Secretariat. W.W. Simpson, the General

Secretary, who had throughout served in a voluntary capacity, had earlier intimated his intention to retire at the end of the year. Moreover, since the Council had no permanent headquarters, it was becoming urgently necessary to look for new accommodation.

The first problem was solved by the appointment as General Secretary of Dr Franz von Hammerstein who had just concluded a term of service as Secretary to the World Council of Churches Committee on the Church and the Jewish People. Though he had also been appointed director of the Evangelische Akademie in Berlin, Dr von Hammerstein undertook to give part of his time to the ICCJ providing that a Deputy Secretary be appointed to work with him. W.W. Simpson assured the members that during the transition period he and his assistant Ruth Weyl would continue to serve until such time when the new headquarters be fully operational.

NEW HEADQUARTERS FOR THE ICCJ

The search for new headquarters happily was resolved by the generosity of the West German Federal authorities and those of the Land Hessen in placing at the Council's disposal the house in which Martin Buber had lived for 22 years



The Martin Buber House in Heppenheim

(from 1916 to 1938) at Heppenheim, half way between Frankfurt a. M. and Heidelberg, in both universities Buber himself had been a teacher. This offer of the civic authorities both at national and local level to provide for the restoration and maintenance of the house was made appropriately in the year which marked the centenary of Martin Buber's birth in 1878. With matching generosity the Protestant Church authorities in the Land Hessen undertook to help with the support of the Secretariat.

In all this Rabbi Dr N. Peter Levinson, Landesrabbiner of Baden and Hamburg and, at the time, President of the ICCJ, played a vitally important role. To his imaginative insight which first conceived the possibility of securing the Martin Buber House as the headquarters of the ICCJ and to his skill as a negotiator with the authorities of the State, both nationally and locally, and also with the ecclesiastical authorities, the International Council has throughout been immensely indebted.

MADRID 1978

Encouraged by these latest developments the ICCJ Executive Committee met in Madrid in December 1978 at the invitation of the Centro de Estudios Judeo-Cristianos whose Director, Father Vincente Serrano, had attended the Jerusalem Conference in 1976. There, at a reception given to members of the ICCJ by the President of the State of Israel, he had spoken of the great interest shown in the work of Christian-Jewish understanding by the recently restored Spanish Royal Family, and particularly by the Queen herself. The new attitude and atmosphere evinced by the existence of the Centro and by the Royal interest in its work was further experienced by the members of the Executive Committee in a reception given in their honour by the Jewish community of Madrid at its new communal centre and in a visit to Toledo, where they were received in audience by the Primate of Spain, Cardinal Archbishop Gonzales, who left no doubt in anyone's mind as to the genuineness of his support for the promotion of Jewish-Christian understanding.

Unfortunately, however, it soon began to be apparent that the teething troubles of the ICCJ were far from being at an end. Already it had become clear that ideally though he appeared to be suited to the requirements of the Council, the ever growing pressure on his responsibilities in Berlin made it increasingly difficult for Dr Franz von Hammerstein to give time to the development of its activities. The situation was not helped by the failure of the Executive Committee to find a suitable deputy to develop the Council's programme under his guidance. And so the team of Bill Simpson and Ruth Weyl carried on with frequent visits to the Martin Buber House.

NEW YORK 1979

When the Council next met, through the generosity of the NCCJ, in New York in the summer of 1979, it was to hold an impressive colloquium on “The Battle for Human Rights in the Aftermath of the Holocaust”, particularly from the point of view of the religious communities.

When it came to the business side of the Council’s affairs, however, the major problem was that of the Secretariat and it was at this point that a possible solution was first envisaged. Present at the colloquium was a Pastor of the Netherlands Reformed Church, Dr Jacobus Schoneveld, who, for the previous twelve years had been working in Jerusalem. There he had played a leading role in the setting up of an Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity which, both in Israel itself and, through its publications, in a much wider field, had come to play an important part in the development of the Jewish-Christian dialogue. The question arose: would he be willing to take over the General Secretaryship of the ICCJ subject to the approval of his Church authorities and the ability of the Council to make suitable arrangements for him and his family. Bill Simpson, Ruth Weyl and Claire Huchet-Bishop went to Jerusalem to find out and to discuss details.

The extension of the invitation and its eventual acceptance were each in its own way acts of faith. The Council, for all its membership of their seventeen national organisations, some of whom were of a very rudimentary character, was still in process of becoming; its programme largely unstructured and its financial situation far from secure. Indeed, there were some among its supporters who were seriously apprehensive about entering into commitments they feared it might not be possible to honour. The vision, determination and courage of its new President, Dr David Hyatt and of Rabbi Dr N. Peter Levinson found an accession of strength and support in the appointment of Sir Sigmund Sternberg, JP, Treasurer of the British CCJ, to the Chairmanship of the Executive Committee. By this time the German Government and Church authorities, now also including the German Conference of Catholic Bishops, satisfied that the Council really meant business, renewed their promises of support, and in the summer of 1980 Dr Schoneveld took up the post of General Secretary. A new chapter in the life of the Council had begun.

SIGTUNA 1980

The newly formed Swedish Council of Christians and Jews (Samarbetsradet för Judar och Kristna) whose Secretary, Pastor Arie Lems had recently joined the Executive Committee of the ICCJ hosted a conference in Sweden in June 1980.

Its theme “Faith after Auschwitz; The Impact of the Holocaust on Faith and Theology in Judaism and Christianity” carried a stage further the Holocaust studies begun at Hamburg in 1975 and continued in New York in 1979.

At the Council’s business meeting following the colloquium, the new General Secretary who was to take up his post two months later indicated his priorities for the ICCJ’s ongoing work, stressing in particular the desirability that the Council find its place in the network of contacts at a global level between the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultation (IJCIC) and the Catholic Church, the World Council of Churches, the so-called confessional families (such as the Lutheran World Federation) and the Orthodox Churches. Referring to the significance for Judaism and Christianity on the upsurge in the renewal of Islam he urged that the Council address itself to a definition of issues which could suitably be taken up within its framework and that of its member organisations.

It was at Sigtuna that Dr Victor Goldbloom representing the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews joined the ICCJ for the first time lending the valuable voice of experience in a multi-racial country to its deliberations.

HEPPENHEIM 1981

There followed a year of quiet ‘digging in’ by the new Secretary and his family, an important aspect of which was the establishment of contact and confidence with the local community in Heppenheim and its neighbourhood. For two years now they had heard about the ICCJ and its new headquarters in the Martin Buber House under renovation which for some had been known as ‘the house where the shutters were never open’. But now, not only the shutters, but the doors were open, and the people of Heppenheim were quickly made aware of the fact that they had in their midst a very much alive secretary of an important international organisation, some 200 representatives and friends of which descended on this attractive little town for a colloquium in the summer of 1981. With “Images of the Other” as its theme, this gathering concentrated its attention on the presentation of Judaism in Christian education, and of Christianity in Jewish education. An outstanding feature of this conference was a series of well-prepared workshops dealing with such issues as the significance of Jewish Law and its educational implications, and particularly the Christian reaction to it; the problems arising from the traditional Christian claim to be the fulfilment of Judaism; the place accorded to Jesus, Paul and Christianity in contemporary Jewish thought, and, inevitably, the presentation of the Holocaust and the State of Israel in current educational methods and materials. The outcome of all these discussions promised to have a very important bearing on the development of the Council’s educational programme under the direction of its

new General Secretary who in 1976 was awarded a doctorate by the University of Leiden in cooperation with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, for a thesis on 'The Teaching of the Bible in Israeli Education, a Study of Approaches to the Hebrew Bible and its Teaching in Israeli Educational Literature'.

Following the meeting in Heppenheim the General Secretary was able to consolidate activities in the Martin Buber House both on a local, national and international level. In this he was greatly helped by dedicated assistants, in particular by his new secretary, Mrs Gerlinde Grundmann. In an effort to coordinate activities with the increasing number of encounters and consultations that were taking place world-wide between major Jewish organisations and all Christian Churches, contacts with these dialogue groups were significantly increased. Mindful also of developments in relation to the Muslim world particularly since President Sadat of Egypt's visit to Jerusalem, and the beginning of the Iranian revolution, the General Secretary also established contact between the ICCJ and the Standing Conference of Jews, Christians and Muslims in Europe (JCM) which meets regularly at Bendorf in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The summer of 1982 also saw the receipt and commendation by the World Council of Churches of the Ecumenical Considerations on Jewish-Christian Dialogue for study and action. These formed the conclusion of a seven years' process of discussion and dialogue in which Dr Schoneveld had been deeply involved, and there was little doubt that the new insights expressed in the document would involve all member organisations in increased educational efforts to help translate them into practice and action.

But the summer of 1982 also saw the beginning of the State of Israel's war in the Lebanon, and the different reactions it evoked among the Jewish and Christian members of the ICCJ and its member organisations. And so, once again as at the time of the 1964 Youth Conference, it seemed providential that the ICCJ happened to have arranged its colloquium in Germany.

BERLIN 1982

In the city which remains a microcosm of world problems. Having as its theme "Meeting Point Berlin – Jews and Christians between the Past and the Future" the colloquium afforded evidence of the broadening horizons against which the programme of the ICCJ was developing. This was highlighted by a visit to East-Berlin the capital the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and a visit to a Muslim community of guest workers in West-Berlin. Participants were received by the then Governing Mayor of Berlin, Dr Richard von Weizsäcker, who in his address took them through the history of the city that had once seen the hope

of enlightenment until it became the centre of Nazi dictatorship, and after its defeat the focal point of a divided world, concluding in a re-interpretation of the command to love one's neighbour by adding , because he is so much different from what you want to be and to fulfil, and because he reaches for different goals'.

Among the participants was the Most Reverend Lord Coggan, former Archbishop of Canterbury, who at the Annual General Meeting that followed the Colloquium agreed to serve as the ICCJ 's Honorary President. Since then, Lord Coggan's position has been anything but merely titular. His experience, counsel and when needed decisive intervention not only at spiritual but equally at practical level have proved invaluable to the development of the ICCJ's thinking and acting.

At the time of the Berlin Conference concern had been expressed that a number of member organisations were finding themselves in a mid-life crisis, following the destruction of European Jewry by the Nazis and the new lease of life and hope for the Jewish people which had been dominant factors in their formation. It soon became evident that the challenge of the Berlin experience injected a renewed awareness that the ICCJ had its own independent and vitally important role to fulfil. The need to service its own member organisations in a variety of ways was becoming more urgent. None of the national organisations which constitute its membership were set up by the ICCJ. All are representative of the spontaneous concern of Christians and Jews (often only a very small minority of both groups) in the countries in which they exist for the betterment not only of Jewish-Christian, but of community relations in the broader sense. There was growing need not only for mutual acceptance, but more particularly for real knowledge and interest in what Christianity and Judaism were about, if the area of mutual and self-understanding was to be widened to include Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations. All this meant that they were increasingly looking to the International Council as a forum in which to discuss their problems and share their achievements, and as a centre to which they can look for information, encouragement and support.

Responding to this need the General Secretary with the help of Ruth Weyl introduced the publication of the magazine 'From the Martin Buber House' intended to furnish member organisations and other interested parties with information from the ICCJ head office.

The war in the Lebanon and the 1983 commemoration of Hitler's rise to power in 1933 in the country in which the ICCJ has its headquarters left their mark upon the work of the ICCJ and its member organisations. There can be no doubt that Jewish-Christian relations underwent some strain at a time when

not a few Christians, plagued by conscious or unconscious guilt feelings, experienced the negative aspects of Israel's involvement in the Lebanon as a form of relief from these feelings. On the other hand the questions posed by a younger generation, as well as their expectations and concepts of Jewish-Christian relations so different from those of the founder generation of most of the ICCJ's member organisations, provided a renewed challenge to the direction of the work. In his third year with the Council the General Secretary was asking what were the common concerns of the day to which Jews and Christians had to respond.

AMERSFOORT 1983

A colloquium in the Netherlands on the theme "The Search for Peace: Our Responsibility as Jews and Christians" attended by 230 participants from 16 countries – among them ten from three Socialist countries – provided an important test of the maturity Jewish-Christian relations had attained. Aware of the explosive nature of the topic the ICCJ had decided that the time had come to discuss this divisive issue in a conciliatory and fraternal way. It was the first time that a young historian and Arabist, self-taught also in English and Hebrew, Dr Stefan Schreiner, from the GDR, attended a colloquium, it also was his first visit to the West. In the years to follow he was to become the ICCJ's leading interpreter of Eastern European attitudes. It also was the first time that Arab participants of the Israel delegation made a significant contribution. The keynote address was delivered by a Dutch professor of peace research, Professor Dr B.V.A. Roeling, followed by two lectures addressing the issue from a Jewish and a Christian point of view, but the greater part of the conference was spent in workshops dealing with different aspects of Biblical Views on Peace, Peace between East and West, North and South and in the Middle East, the Nuclear Threat to Peace, Peace between Humanity and Nature and last not least, Education for Peace.

The essence of the deliberations was perhaps best captured by the Mayor of Amsterdam when, speaking to the participants in the course of a visit to the Portuguese Synagogue of Amsterdam he referred to the rise of fascism and racism against the fourteen per cent of Amsterdam's population that were born outside Europe, and his efforts in dealing with peace and a just society. And he pleaded for the help of Jews and Christians in finding ways to make society feel enriched by the new pluralism.

The answer to that plea lay in what ICCJ President Dr Victor Goldbloom in his closing remark called 'the requirement of trust, restraint and leadership which lay at the heart of peace as they lay at the heart of dialogue'.

Aware that a generation had come of age for whom the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel form part of history, but not of their personal experience, but aware also of the need to keep alive the realisation that birth and growth of dialogue and understanding between Jews and Christians were profoundly influenced by both events, the ICCJ realised that the time had come to devote a colloquium to the future agenda of Christian-Jewish relations. Marked by its own experience and the problems of a technological age in which time and space seemed to undergo new perspectives the generation that would carry the dialogue into the twenty-first century would, like Renaissance man need to define its own synthesis of continuity and challenge.

And so it seemed only natural to respond to the invitation of the Amicizia Ebraico-Cristiana of Florence to hold the 1984 colloquium in their city which had been the cradle of the Renaissance. An old-style hotel in Vallombrosa, set among the gentle Tuscan hills not far from Florence, became the venue of a colloquium on the theme “1984 and Beyond – Purpose and Strategy – in Jewish-Christian Relations”. The meeting was preceded by an event which became another milestone in the history of the ICCJ. As we have seen, founder members of the Council’s predecessor organisation had individually been part to the deliberations leading to the Declaration ‘Nostra Aetate’ as well as the ‘Guidelines’. On 6 July 1984, however, all the members of the ICCJ Executive were received in private audience by His Holiness Pope John Paul II who stressed his

“... close interest in and encouragement of the dialogue agenda to make the great common spiritual patrimony the basis of education and proper teaching of the sad and entangled common history of Jews and Christians – a history which is not always taught and transmitted correctly. And he underlined the fact that there existed once again the danger of an always active and sometimes even resurgent tendency to discriminate between people and human groups, enhancing some and despising others. A tendency which does not hesitate at times to use violent methods. That to single out and denounce such facts and stand together against them was a noble act and proof of our mutual brotherly commitment, that it was necessary to go to the roots of such evil, but that this was not enough if it were not coupled also with a deep change in our hearts.”

The scene for the theme of the colloquium was further set by an important and innovative address given by His Eminence Carlo Cardinal Martini, Archbishop

of Milan, to the participants in the colloquium in the course of which he said that

“When I was a professor of scripture and had occasion to travel frequently through Israel for study and contacts with Jewish scholars, my approach to Jewish-Christian relations was influenced by what I could call the cultural and social aspects of the problem. Now, ...no longer a professor, but a bishop responsible for a Christian community ...I am confronted with this problem in a way at once more simple and naïve. What is at stake here is not simply the more or less lively continuation of a dialogue, but the awareness of Christians of their bond with Abraham’s stock and the consequences of this fact, not only for doctrine, discipline, liturgy and spiritual life of the Church, but also for its mission in the world today”.

To underline these goals, he suggested six stages: Prayer; T’shuvah, a conversion of heart; Faithfulness to the truth; Dialogue, as a lively exchange was essential to the Church; Awareness by both Judaism and the Church that they cannot stop at a dialogue that would exclude other interlocutors; Openness to the fact that Judaism offers many examples of dialogue, not only with Islam, but with other religions, with science and philosophy. The Cardinal concluded by saying that he was sure that if the Christian Church feels called to be a critical conscience, especially in Europe, in tragic events and questions which beset all of us, then it will find the force of the religious and ethical doctrine of Judaism at its side in this mission.

Furthermore, the Brazilian member organisation, Conselho de Fraternidade Cristao-Judaica, had been able to put before the conference the English translation of Guidelines for Roman Catholics for their Relations with the Jews issued by the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops in October 1983. It was the first time in its history that the Church in Brazil addressed itself to religious relations with a group of a different faith. Coming in the wake of previous statements by the Bishops Conference in France and the United States, these recommendations from South America were another step towards the future developments the colloquium was discussing.

The 170 participants considered among other issues the Responses of Judaism and Christianity in the Technologically-motivated and secularised World – the Challenge of Preserving our Ethical and Spiritual Heritages; The Responses to the Quest for New Spirituality: from Fundamentalism to Escapism; The Impact on Religious Thinking and on Human Behaviour; Political Issues in Jewish-Christian Relations; The Dialogue in the Secularised World. Their thinking was

further stimulated by plenary lectures given by Prof. Dr Father Marcel Dubois of Jerusalem, Professor Rabbi Gordon Tucker of New York, Prof. Paul van Buren and Dr David Hartman of Jerusalem.

In the course of the Council's Annual General Meeting which followed the colloquium, the President and the General Secretary were able to report that as the outcome of their visit in January 1984 to Hungary, it was hoped that in response to an invitation by the Hungarian authorities a first ICCJ Consultation in Eastern Europe could be held late in 1984. For the first time in the Council's history two Eastern European delegates were elected to the Executive Committee: the Director of the Rabbinic Seminary in Budapest, the only Rabbinic Seminary in Eastern Europe, Prof. Dr Alexander Scheiber, and Dr Stefan Schreiner. Sadly, Rabbi Scheiber died shortly after his election to the Executive Committee. Scope and challenges of the ICCJ's activities were indeed widening and a moving rendering of Psalm 121 by the Honorary Vice-President, W. W. Simpson, at the end of the conference underlined the sense of interdependence and faith that lay at the heart of its work.

The year following the Vallombrosa conference saw further consolidation of ICCJ involvement, though financial stringencies imposed certain restrictions. Under the inspired leadership of Rabbi Dr N. Peter Levinson an Association of 'Friends and Sponsors of the Martin Buber House' was formed in an effort to create a circle of friends and sponsors, though it was realised that it would take some time until the financial basis of the ICCJ would be sufficiently strengthened to carry out its programme in full.

The General Secretary travelled widely, particularly in the USA and Israel, participating among other events in an USA National Workshop on Christian-Jewish Relations in St. Louis, enabling him to meet an ever widening circle of interested professionals. He also joined another 'first' in the field of Jewish-Christian relations, a seminar on 'Christology' arranged by the Orthodox-Jewish Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. The purpose was to meet the challenge of developing a Christology devoid of anti-Jewish implications, approaching the issue from exegetical, historical and doctrinal aspects. Dr Schoneveld presented a paper on 'The Prologue of the Gospel of John: Logos-Torah; a Hypothesis', thus maintaining the ICCJ's tradition of scholarly leadership.

The Council attained status as a non-governmental organisation with UNESCO. Aware of the importance of maintaining a high local profile, activities ranging from talks, study groups to exhibitions at the Martin Buber House were increased, while at national level the General Secretary continued his active involvement in events all over the Federal Republic of Germany.

Under the guidance of Mrs Ellen Schoneveld, a trained librarian, a library and a documentation centre were established in the Martin Buber House which continues to be widely used, particularly by teachers and research students.

The Executive Committee who had throughout regularly been holding their main annual meeting at the Martin Buber House each spring instituted an annual public lecture in the City of Heppenheim's historic Kurfürstensaal. And it was in this setting that the tenth anniversary of the ICCJ was celebrated a few months prior to the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II. On the occasion of this latter anniversary, which stirred the emotions of many both within the German Federal Republic and outside it, some 250 secondary school children attended a meeting organised by the ICCJ in Heppenheim to witness the recollections of those who had experienced that war, its horrors and its end. It also was the year in which the twentieth anniversary of the death of Martin Buber was commemorated. The President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr Richard von Weizsäcker, who as Mayor Berlin had so movingly addressed the participants of the Berlin Colloquium a few years earlier, paid tribute to Dr Buber's memory and to the work of the ICCJ by participating in a discussion on the theme 'Martin Buber's Legacy for the Renewal of the Relations between Jews and Christians today'. To mark this further milestone in the history not only of the ICCJ, but also of the dialogue between Jews and Germans, the chairman of the ICCJ Executive, Sir Sigmund Sternberg, presented Dr Richard von Weizsäcker with a facsimile edition of the Ashkenazi Haggadah.

DUBLIN 1985

Responding to an invitation by the young Irish Council of Christians and Jews, established only in 1981, the ICCJ held its 1985 colloquium, attended by some 170 participants from East and West (from Costa Rica to Israel), from North and South (from Ghana, the Cape Verde Islands to Sweden) as well as from the German Democratic Republic. In the course of the conference Sir Sigmund Sternberg, Chairman of the Executive, whose generous commitment and dedication to the ICCJ had over the years contributed much to the ICCJ's programme, enabled the establishment of an Annual ICCJ-Sternberg Award in the sum of £2,000 to be given to an individual (or to more than one individual), to an institution or to an organisation, for a sustained intellectual contribution to the furtherance of interreligious understanding, particularly, but not exclusively in the field of Jewish-Christian relations for achievements of international significance which have had impact and influence beyond the borders and the society of the recipient's own country.

(A list of the Award recipients can be found in Appendix XI).

The year 1985 witnessed another development in the Council's work. While the world's attention was focused on the Geneva meeting between the two leaders of the USA and the USSR, a first East-West consultation under the joint sponsorship of the International Council of Christians and Jews and the Inter-church Peace Council in Hungary took place in Budapest in November of that year. Its theme was: Jewish-Christian Dialogue and its Contribution to Peace. The sixty-two participants who came from Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, Great Britain, Hungary, Israel, the Netherlands, Poland, Rumania, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States and Yugoslavia not only brought to the discussion a wide range of experience in interreligious dialogue, but also introduced Marxism and a dialogue with ideologies. In his keynote address, Dr Dick Mulder, president of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands and a leading member of the World Council of Churches stressed that justice must be an essential ingredient of peace, a theme further developed by Rabbi Dr N. Peter Levinson of Germany who illustrated his thesis by reference to traditional Jewish pentateuchal and prophetic sources. Working groups further explored the specific relevance of the theme to Jewish-Christian concern among others with reconciliation between East and West.

Immediately preceding the Budapest meeting the President, Dr Victor Goldbloom, and the General Secretary were able to spend a few days for consultations in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). What until recently had been but hopes for improved understanding between Jews and Christians coming from spheres of very different experiences had become reality.

For the ICCJ it had also become a period of some easing of financial restrictions, as well as increasingly closer contact with different dialogue organisations and other faiths. It was seen not only as a valuable forum for the promotion of wider understanding and cooperation, but there was increasing appreciation of the fact that the ICCJ's independence from more rigidly structured organisations gave it singular opportunities for informal contacts and consultations. A Papal Knighthood bestowed on the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Sir Sigmund Sternberg, was yet another significant example of such recognition.

Political and social developments not only in the Middle East, but in particular on the European scene had for some time past alerted the ICCJ and its member organisations to the need to broaden the spectrum of dialogue. A pointer to such future concern was already contained in the introduction to the report of the Jerusalem 1976 conference when W.W. Simpson observed that

“... most of the issues raised ... are likely to be with us for years, if not decades to come. They are not susceptible of easy

solution, but neither can we afford to neglect them. They are concerned not merely with the contemporary relations between Christians and Jews or even the historic relations between Judaism and Christianity as supplementary and complementary ways of life. They have to do with the deepest problems in the sphere of self-understanding. This is being given another and in our age more immediate relevance in the area of Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations. Hitherto progress in this field has been restricted on account of the political complexities of the Middle East. Those restrictions, however, must not be allowed to blind us to the fact that the Islamic world is becoming increasingly conscious of the needs and opportunities of the present situation.”

While conscious of the fact that its principal task lay in ongoing exploration of its agenda on Jewish-Christian relations, the Council decided to break new ground in introducing the trilateral dialogue between Christians, Jews and Muslims into its colloquium – in Spain.

SALAMANCA 1986

The theme ‘Cultural and Religious Encounter Between Jews, Christians and Muslims – Lessons from the Past’ was an undertaking accompanied by many risks, but at its concluding session the more than 200 participants from 20 different countries agreed that an important new dimension had been added to the work of the ICCJ, and those experienced in Jewish-Christian dialogue discovered that their relationship was experiencing new enriching emphases. It was in all respects a journey into the past of the three monotheistic faiths.

There was an introductory lecture in Madrid on the Spanish Middle Ages when the three religions together attained great cultural and spiritual achievement, via Toledo’s architectural witness to this unique period. Participants came to the Pontifical University of Salamanca to study the *Significance for the Present of Maimonides’s View on the Relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam* and *The Qur’anic Perspective on Judaism and Christianity* as proposed by Professor Hasan Askari, a Muslim scholar from Hyderabad, now working in England. He asked: “How could one equate the transcendental *mysterium tremendum* with the form of one religious belief or practice?” and continued: “For how tragic is it that the God of the heavens and the earth and the God of all being whom we invoke in prayer and hymn is so often systematically reduced to a God of one religion or another.”

The challenge was perhaps most significantly presented by Professor Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, Professor of Islamic Culture at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in discussing 'Some Difficulties in the Way of Dialogue with Islam.' She summed up her address by quoting a passage from Rabbi Heshel: "Both communication and separation are necessary. We must preserve our individuality as well as foster care for one another... Yet ignorance, distrust and disdain often characterise the relations of religions to one another ...Granted that Judaism, Christianity and Islam are committed to contradictory claims, is it possible to carry on controversy without acrimony, criticism without loss of respect, disagreement without disrespect? The problem to be faced is how to combine loyalty to one's own tradition with reverence for different traditions. How is mutual esteem between Christian, Jew and Muslim possible?" And she ended by affirming: "I do not know how, but I believe it is!"

And once again it was a woman, Professor Riffat Hassan, a Muslim scholar from Pakistan teaching at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, USA, who responded, stressing the need "to be very careful about regarding Islam as a monolithic block. There is as much diversity within the Islamic world as there is within the Christian and the Jewish world". She furthermore made the point that: "In each of our traditions there appears to be one point at least which is 'non-negotiable' no matter how open-minded and liberal we are. It is the idea of the Chosen People and the relationship of the People to the Land in the case of Jews, the whole christological question in the case of Christians, and the concept of Revelation in the case of Muslims".

A wide range of workshops and opportunity for shared spiritual considerations left participants with a sharpened awareness of the challenges and possibilities inherent in the ongoing work. The sense of challenge was further enhanced by another, unexpected, development when in the course of the colloquium a number of women took the initiative to urge the Council to include the issue of the Role of Women in Religion and in Religious Communities in its future programme.

Since then, the ICCJ in conjunction with the West German Konrad Adenauer Foundation's International Institute which promotes cooperation between industrial and developing countries, held a Symposium of Christians, Jews and Muslims in the spring of 1988 in Sankt Augustin near Bonn. Forty three participants from such diverse places as Austria, Canada, Egypt, Great Britain, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, the Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Sweden, Switzerland, the USA, the Vatican and the West Bank experienced a sense of belonging to the family of the Children of Abraham, be they Christians, Jews or Muslims.

Within the framework of the overall theme 'Understanding the Other' the symposium in its first part viewed the 'Other's Belief', concentrating on those stereotypes regarding the other's religious conception of God which hindered understanding. In its second part, 'Understanding the Other's Concerns' participants considered the challenges, crises and opportunities confronting the family of today's world.

There was renewed awareness that each had to re-examine sacred texts and question understanding of them, because cooperation in the venture for peace, enlightenment and responsibility depended on the understanding of the richness each brought to this attempt.

Like societies in general in our rapidly developing technological age, the ICCJ was finding itself confronted with the problem of balancing the onrush of challenges produced by emancipation and the opening of all kinds of frontiers, against the need to make haste slowly and to continue fortifying the foundations laid over the past decades. Growth, steady expansion and new outreaches into varying directions demanded reassessment of the ICCJ's structure.

The General Secretary continued to travel widely, and it was becoming evident that effective implementation of the Council's programme required additional financing, and could not remain indefinitely the balancing act that had over the years been performed by the ICCJ's dedicated Honorary Treasurer, Antoon Ruygers of Belgium. As each member organisation was increasing its activity at national level, the need for improved exchange of experiences and concerns was growing, as was the realisation that it was the responsibility of the umbrella body to act both as monitor and nerve centre to enable such exchange. The magazine 'From the Martin Buber House' had over the years supplied member organisations and friends with excellent summaries of the ICCJ's conferences and consultations. What was now needed was a newsletter that could form the basis for a much needed clearing house activity during the periods between annual meetings. It was also felt that the Executive Committee should be able to draw on specialist knowledge from within the member organisations as the need arose, leaving the General Secretary free to coordinate the various aspects of the work, particularly implementation of decisions taken, and secure an appropriate flow of information.

The forty years since the issuing of the Ten Points of Seelisberg in 1947 had indeed not been years of wandering in the desert. To assess what had been achieved since that conference in the aftermath of World War II, it had stated that one of its purposes was to formulate plans for immediate activity through educational, political, religious and social institutions both of a national and international character. It also wished to remove the causes and remedy the

effects of antisemitism and to look ahead, taking into account the widening of dialogue to include Islam and the changing role of women in religion.

FRIBOURG 1987

This colloquium had over 250 participants from 20 countries and considered the theme: 'Overcoming Prejudice - An Educational Challenge Forty Years after Issuing the Ten Points of Seelisberg'.

The venue was the Catholic University of Fribourg. Participating in the debates were laymen as well as educators, theologians, ministers, priests and rabbis, newcomers to the interreligious meetings as well as two people who had already been involved at the time of the Seelisberg Conference and who by their contributions instilled in the participants a sense of also having been there: Chief Rabbi Alexander Safran of Geneva, and William W. (Bill) Simpson who was celebrating his eightieth birthday in Fribourg. The sense of legacy of the ideas and ideals of the founders of the ICCJ was further enhanced by a scholarly and moving presentation of Madame Claire Huchet-Bishop, one of the ICCJ's Past Presidents.

Speakers drew attention to the enormous progress that has been made in forty years. There was vigorous discussion of recent difficulties, such as the establishment of a Carmelite convent at Auschwitz, the beatification of Edith Stein and the Pope's reception of President Kurt Waldheim of Austria. Dr Clemens Thoma of Luzern drew attention to the yet unfinished theological task stressing that Christians still needed to find theological space for Judaism – recognising the Jews are still God's people. This point was echoed by Mrs Judith Banki, a leading educationalist from New York, who on her part warned Jews against thinking that Christianity was at heart anti-Jewish, and of blaming Christians today for the sins of their forefathers. Equally, she added: "The past cannot be forgotten, it has to be faced and overcome. Jews need Christians to work with them, to eradicate the inherited prejudices which still permeate our cultural heritage".

It was recognised that one of the difficulties confronting all involved in dialogue was how to make the progress so far achieved in mutual understanding known to a wider public. This was essential to the task of jointly fighting all forms of prejudice, a point underlined by the presence at the conference of a number of Muslim Arabs from Israel.

The workshops focused on the continuing educational task in educating clergy and rabbis, teachers and parents; the eradication of prejudicial stereotypes

from textbooks and the media, and the need to increase knowledge of ways to overcome the different root causes of prejudice affecting the fabric of all societies. The President, Dr Victor Goldbloom, warned that the mask of humanity was very superficial, as the experience of the Holocaust showed.

An encouraging renewal of their involvement, which had been a feature of the Seelisberg Conference in 1947, was the presence of Jews and Christians from Eastern European countries. For the first time the Hungarian and Polish Catholic Episcopates were represented, as was the Bishops Conference of the German Democratic Republic. The President and the General Secretary had paid a visit to Poland earlier in the year in the course of which emphasis was laid on contacts with the very influential Roman Catholic Church in that country as well as with its very small Jewish community. The ICCJ was beginning to examine the possibility of contributing to the important process of rethinking Catholic-Polish and Jewish relations that had begun in Poland.

With minds freshly attuned to the opening of

DIALOGUE IN THE EASTERN EUROPEAN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

a second such consultation had been arranged to take place in Buckow, German Democratic Republic (GDR), a little town some 60 km east of Berlin, in September 1987, where at the invitation of the Federation of Protestant Churches in the German Democratic Republic sixty-four participants gathered. Among them, despite non-existent diplomatic relations between Israel and the host country, there were twelve delegates from Israel – from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the GDR and an important Polish delegation consisting of four Jews and three Catholics. They met to discuss the theme ‘Precious Legacy – The Contribution of the Jews to the Culture of Central and Eastern Europe in the 19th and 20th Century’, introduced by Professor Robert Wistrich of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Some of the workshops dealt with issues of Jews and National Movements (including Zionism); Jews in the Social/Proletarian Movement; The Image of the Jews in the Eyes of Non-Jews; Russian Religious Philosophy and the Jews; Catholicism and Judaism in Poland; as well as Church and Judaism in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

A most thought-provoking address came from a member of the Jewish community in Warsaw, historian of the natural sciences and mathematics and a member of the Citizens’ committee for the protection of Jewish cemeteries and cultural monuments, Dr Stanislaw Krajewski, who discussed ‘Jewish Identity in a Non-Jewish World’. The talk earned him the commendation of Rabbi Norman Solomon of Birmingham, UK, that he symbolised the beginning of a

new living Judaism in Poland; a Judaism which, whilst drawing on the past, would also be discontinuous with it, as it responded to the very different conditions of contemporary Poland.

The in part emotive subjects under review underlined the importance of coming to terms with the fact that Jews as well as Christians must find a way to testify to their respective suffering without causing offence, a theme that would doubtlessly occupy the dialogue for some time to come.

Visits to Berlin itself included receptions by the East Berlin Jewish Community, and by the Secretary of State for Religious Affairs in the GDR and the first showing of a documentary film based on the producer's personal experience in search of her Jewish past. It witnessed to the fact that it was also part of her past that had been destroyed, a rendering of Yiddish songs by a young German woman from Leipzig.

The *raison d'être* underlying all the ICCJ's work that – as Bill Simpson had written shortly before his death a few weeks earlier – “...we have to address ourselves to issues which have to do with repentance and forgiveness, not in the abstract but in the actual situations in which we find ourselves, to create that real dialogue apart from which there can be no real relationship either between man and man, or man and God ...” had doubtlessly been reaffirmed by the experiences of those days.

Throughout the whole period since 1946 the importance, of YOUTH involvement and EDUCATION have been of uppermost concern to the Council. Yesteryears young have become the teachers of tomorrow's youth; and awareness that attention to education lies at the heart of tomorrow's peace and understanding has grown. It seems justified to lift the relevance of these two concerns and relate their progress within the ICCJ's work separately.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCES

Already under the aegis of the International Consultative Committee a series of international youth conferences had taken place. In the summer of 1960 the then assistant secretary of the British CCJ, Wallace Bell, was invited to participate in a youth conference on Jewish-Christian relations at the Sonnenberg International Centre in the Harz Mountains in Germany. He returned to London with an invitation to the British CCJ to organise a further conference on similar lines at the Sonnenberg Centre. The Council's Executive Committee, however, was divided in its response. While it was generally agreed that every effort should be made to bring together Christian and Jewish youth, the major-

ity of the Jewish members felt that it was still – in 1960! – too soon to encourage Jewish young people from Britain to visit Germany. An alternative proposal that such a conference be held in Belgium or Holland was therefore accepted. When this was reported to the Consultative Committee, together with an offer from the British Council to be responsible for the organisation, there was an immediate and positive response. In September 1962 the first youth conference to be held under international Jewish-Christian auspices took place in Driebergen in Holland. A lingering anxiety as to what might happen when Jewish youth from other European countries were confronted with young Germans was quickly dispelled. After an initial moment of embarrassment the friendliest of relations were quickly established.

The following year a second conference was held in Switzerland. After that it was clear that the next such gathering not only could, but must be held in Germany.

Berlin was chosen as the venue, a choice which could only be described as providential. For all the participants the experience of living for ten days in a city whose ‘middle wall of partition’ vividly symbolised the problems of a divided world proved tremendously stimulating. The challenge was inescapable; not merely by the participants themselves, but in particular by the organisers. Henceforth there must be no ‘ivory tower’ atmosphere about a youth conference. The theme and, as far as possible, the site must be exploited to the full in terms of an experiential confrontation with the problems of an age in which Jews and Christians face the challenge to live responsibly and creatively together.

Subsequent youth conferences were held in Austria (twice), in Germany (a second time), in France (twice), in the United Kingdom (twice) and in Israel. Sites of former concentration camps have been visited, the problems of immigrant workers have been studied together with the social problems of industrial areas. The nature and causes of violence in modern society have been discussed, together with the role of the media both in promoting and curbing it.

There can be little doubt that the very *raison d'être* of youth involvement was reconfirmed by the personal experience of the participants in the August 1974 Youth Conference at Hungerburg, near Innsbruck, the general theme of which had been the position of migrant workers in the first instance in Austria, but also in other European countries. Although some had felt at first sight that this subject had but little bearing on Jewish-Christian relations, the discussions as well as the provision for Shabbat and Sunday services and a Bible study group, had enabled the participants to appreciate how the study of what might at first sight appear to be merely a general social problem, could lead to the considera-

tion of how the fundamental teachings of Christianity and Judaism might be brought to bear on these and related issues.

On the Sunday morning an ecumenical service had taken place in the Church of St. Andrea in Judenstein near Rinn, a church well-known for commemorating an infamous centuries-old legend of the ritual murder by Jews of a boy, Anderl of Rinn. The service was conducted jointly by a Catholic Prior, Prof Dr Zeev Falk of the Hebrew University and Rev. W.W. Simpson. How sadly right the latter had been when he pointed out in his sermon that such myths and legends persist despite new insights and teaching. This was made evident to the young people by the insistence of a number of villagers present at the service that Jews continued to sacrifice Christian children, and by the fury with which some villagers tried to prevent the filming of the event by Austrian Television. (Fortunately, all ritual artefacts reminding worshippers of this legend have since been removed from the church which was closed on the order of Bishop Stecher of Innsbruck, though the legend still continues to persist in the village's secular life).

At the time of the 1974 Youth Conference a Liaison Committee had been set up expressing the hope that further Youth Conferences could be held every other year, aiming in particular at holding such a Conference in Israel, as soon as this would become financially feasible. In 1977 and 1978 meetings took place in the UK and France, but despite stimulating participation by a number of USA field workers and delegates from Israel there was unanimous agreement that new ways must be found to involve the youth group in the activities of the national organisations and assure their future role in the ICCJ.

The Israel Interfaith Committee played a major role in bringing this about by hosting a Youth Conference in Jerusalem in 1980. The theme of the conference was 'The Significance of the State of Israel as a Factor in Jewish-Christian Relations' and once again every effort was made to pose the problem in existential and not merely academic terms. Nor was there any great difficulty in this respect. The participation of two or three Christian Arabs, the planting of a PLO bomb in a petrol station near the Moshav where the conference was being held, and an earlier Israeli raid into Southern Lebanon all gave point to a meeting which, if it produced no answers, at least made the participants acutely aware of the problems from which, for Christians and Jews, there can be no real escape. The conference urged the ICCJ to deal with the role and position of the Arab Christians in Israel and other parts of the Middle East with special reference to Jewish-Christian relations.

One of the tasks undertaken by the new General Secretary, Dr J. Schoneveld from the new headquarters at the Martin Buber House in Heppenheim, was to

prepare in cooperation with the German member organisation a consultation of young Jews and Christians on the challenge of 'Human Responsibility for the Creation'. The upper age limit of participants was raised to 35 years.

It was felt that by inviting the younger generation to deal with these issues, new and contemporary incentives would emerge to help the growing number of member organisations to fulfil their task in a world confronted with ever more complex problems, in the faith and hope that they may bear witness to that which can change the hearts of men.

And so in October 1982 they met on the marsh island of Hallig Hooge, off the North German coast, a tiny film of land precariously won and hardly maintained against the sea. An unresolved creative ambiguity was determined by the double focus of the meeting: participants came with a primary commitment to either the Jewish-Christian dialogue or ecology, each knowing little of the other, which resulted in one of the most fruitful aspects of the meeting. The wide ranging explorations led to the formulation of Ten Ecological Commandments, of which perhaps the ninth, underlining the true meaning of the commandment to hallow the day of rest stands out:

'Set aside time in your weekly day of rest to be with the world rather than to use the world'

An adaptation of Psalm 107 as part of the Sunday sermon by the local pastor emphasised the awareness that for young Jews and Christians who have over the years learned to understand and respect each other, the test of the true meaning of dialogue is the ability to work creatively together in this nuclear, increasingly populated and technological world. Jointly reflecting especially on the creation story of Genesis 1 in the light of their present-day fears and hopes quite evidently also led to a modern interpretation of spears being beaten into pruning hooks to enable each man to sit under his own fig tree undisturbed.

It seemed only natural that developing the theme, the next following Youth Conference in spring 1984, at Unterjoch, Bavaria, addressed itself to different aspects of 'Liberation - Impulses from the Jewish Passover and Christian Easter'. The biblical story of the Exodus from Egypt and Paul's letter to the Romans, Ch.8, dealing with the liberation of God's creation provided the basis for the discussion of contemporary liberation issues ranging from the pressures of the socio-economic situation, the liberation of the foreigner who has become such a common feature in the industrialised countries, to the liberation of women.

Delegates from this conference later in the year participated in the ICCJ Colloquium '1984 and Beyond – Purpose and Strategy in Jewish-Christian Relations'. Their contribution made a significant impact on the member organisations and it was resolved that despite financial stringencies every effort be made to strengthen their active involvement and to groom the leadership that would carry the work into the twenty-first century.

The member organisations were invited to delegate young people with leadership potential to a conference to be held in Jerusalem at the time of Hanukkah and at Christmas time 1986. The Hallig Hooge Conference had for the first time set the pattern to include delegates from Eastern European Socialist countries. Their participation in the Jerusalem Conference, under the theme, 'Identity and Commitment in Interfaith Relations' enriched the colourful programme which dealt with a wide range of religious and political issues against the singular backcloth of prophecy, history, dreams, paradoxes and reality. Following this meeting concrete suggestions for the development of Young Leadership and youth work were submitted to the Executive, among them a recommendation that Young Leadership pre-conferences be held prior to the annual ICCJ colloquia, their theme to be related to that of the colloquium, thus ensuring creative participation and input into the programmes, and furthermore, that responsibility for organising the pre-conferences be left to the group. At the same time the Executive Committee was urged to make also sure that leadership skills be taught and that step-by-step guidance be given to increase youth participation in the various member organisations.

One of the most active members of this dynamic group was Christoph Knoch, a young pastor from Switzerland who made sure that seven months after the Jerusalem Conference and immediately preceding the colloquium celebrating the 40th anniversary of the 1947 Ten Points of Seelisberg, the Young Leadership group met in Berne, not only to strengthen their own programme but with a view to establish themselves as important contributors to the ICCJ's deliberations.

To celebrate their link with the past and the founder generation of the movement, they invited Bill Simpson to share in their end of Shabbat celebration, which coincided with his 80th birthday. Deeply moved by their evident affection he spoke to them of his past involvement with youth work and his confident joy in seeing yet another generation take up the task and carry it forward in their own way, aware of the past and their obligation to the future. He also reminded them that when he and others founded the movement they too were young! It was one of those unforgettable moments that will forever inspire those who shared in it.

The ICCJ Annual General Meeting at Fribourg agreed that henceforth the Young Leadership group form themselves into a sub-committee of the Executive Committee, to be represented at its meetings, and that their pre-conference gatherings with programmes relating to the theme of the annual colloquia become a regular event. There was a contribution of a generation no longer immediately affected by the events of World War II, the Holocaust and its aftermath. This was a generation immediately affected however by the impact of the technological age and its inherent dangers as well as opportunities of increasing relevance to the development of the work of the member organisations, and by implication to that of the ICCJ.

And so in summer of 1988 as the ICCJ turned westwards across the Atlantic to study the issues of pluralism, the Young Leadership group prepared for their own pre-conference, 'Dialogue: Facing the Dignity of the Other – the Risks and Rewards of Pluralism' to enquire into possible risks to traditional identity. Doubtlessly, the presentation of their findings will be as stimulating to the main colloquium as was that of the first Youth group to the participants in the Oxford 1946 Conference.

The meaning of prayer and the issues of joint worship have exercised the minds and hearts of the Youth Group for some time. In their deep commitment to that which binds Jews and Christians they have experimented in moving ways to lead participants of the colloquia into varying forms of joint spiritual considerations. It is thanks to their understanding of the concept of 'mending creation, their religious motivation, openness and increased understanding of each other's religion that for the first time during an ICCJ colloquium at Montreal 1988 Christians will be guests at the Jewish celebration of Sabbath, and Jews guests at the Christian celebration of Sunday.

EDUCATION

Textbook reviews as well as changes in attitudes of teachers, particularly also in the domain of teaching general history and an understanding of post-biblical Judaism had throughout been high on the agenda. In 1962 the Deutsche Koordinierungsrat arranged for international participation in the West German annual Teachers' Conference. In October 1965, a small but important Conference of Educators was held in London, and the International Consultative Committee participated as observer in a conference on European Textbooks in 1971, and a Symposium held in Louvain under the auspices of the Council of Europe in 1987. However, as with the Young Leadership Conferences, a more systematic programme of dealing with specific areas has only been developed since the establishment of the ICCJ in its new headquarters in the Federal Republic of Germany.

At its spring meeting of 1982 the Executive Committee adopted an outline for future action in the field of education. Since all but one of the member organisations operate in cultural settings largely shaped by Christianity with its transmitted prejudices, it was considered appropriate to concentrate first and foremost on the presentation of Judaism in the educational spheres of countries with Christian majorities. At the same time there was awareness of the need to encourage efforts of the Israel Interfaith Association similarly to transmit a fair portrayal of Christianity in Jewish education in Israel, paying special attention to indigenous forms of Christianity observed by its Arab-Christian population. In the spring of 1983 a panel of internationally acclaimed educational experts met for a consultation at the Martin Buber House, which resulted in the issuing of a set of Guidelines on the Portrayal of Jews and Judaism in education and in Teaching Materials. (See Appendix III).

It was recognised that a follow-through of these conclusions depended to a considerable extent on the education of educators at university and training level, and that in particular also their inclusion in theological teaching seminaries was essential. As a result of these findings a further consultation on, "The Place of Jewish History in the Teaching of General History," attended by some 35 outstanding historians and educators was held in May 1985. Prof. Frederick Schweitzer of the History Department at Manhattan College, Bronx, USA, presented a major paper on 'Jewish and General History', followed by a presentation of the question 'Why Teach Jewish History' by Professor Chaim Schatzker of the University of Haifa, who had undertaken special research on the presentation of Jews and Judaism in German history textbooks. Professor Hubert G. Locke of Seattle, USA, examined the question from the point of view of a Black minority in the USA.

Following these consultations, a set of Guidelines for Teachers, Textbook authors, Curricula Planners and Educational Administrators was published towards the end of 1983. The main findings stated that Jewish history must be taught within the framework of world history. To ignore it is to offer an incomplete and defective picture, to minimize and denigrate an important contribution, would reinforce the unjustified impression that Jewish history stopped or ceased to have significance with the crucifixion of Jesus, the Destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, or with the arrival of Christianity.

Aimed at the curricula of ancient, medieval and early modern history, as well as recent history, these Guidelines carefully set out themes, questions, points of specific relevance in these major periods at the same time indicating the distortions, omissions and stereotypes, showing that the historiography of the western world, now predominantly secular, has been deeply influenced by Christian tendencies to ignore the history of the Jewish people... that Jewish history, particularly in the Common Era, has tended to be perceived – and taught, if at all, discontinuously, episodically and simplistically, while Jewish life has obviously been continuous and productive over these 2000 years and more. (See Appendix IV).

The next phase of the ICCJ Educational Project dealt with the Presentation of Christianity in Jewish Teaching.

As the twentieth century drew towards its last decade, the ICCJ saw one of its major contributions to the dynamics of dialogue in providing the tools necessary for the creation of mutual empathy and tolerance in the light of a revised understanding of historical processes.

THE WAY AHEAD

When Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury took the chair at the opening meeting of the 1946 Conference he concluded his address with these words:

“In a difficult world where problems are endless and where many are hard to solve, and some are apparently insoluble without change of heart, we as Christians and Jews bear witness in faith and hope to that which can change the hearts of men: the principles which God has made for men, and apart from which there can be no civilisation.”

In this spirit it seems right to conclude this account of half a century's effort to give practical effect to a dream, by handing the word to the ICCJ's General Secretary, Dr J. Schoneveld, for his

VISION OF THE ICCJ'S FUTURE TASK

Our prospects derive from the singular experience which we in the ICCJ and its constituent members have had that it has proved possible for representatives of two profoundly inimical groups, Judaism and Christianity, to forge a framework within which to meet and examine the hostility that had its origin in the distant past and was increased by the horrific experiences of more recent history, and to move on to a stage where we are able to correct false images and stereotypes of each other and open up new avenues of mutual understanding and cooperation, while maintaining the essential integrity of our respective uniqueness. Learning to understand how the other sees us has obliged each of the dialogue partners to examine our own traditions and histories enabling us to deepen our respective commitment to our own communities, thereby gaining deeper faith and greater fortitude. Each has come to acknowledge that despite and with our differences we have to live in one world, and are dependent upon one another.

We need to do more to convince the doubters in both communities that Jewish-Christian dialogue is neither threat nor danger to the integrity and well-being of our respective communities; that Jews need not be afraid of assimilation as the experience of dialogue has helped to increase their sense of identity rather than diminish it. Christians need not be afraid that critical questions concerning practice and doctrine of historic Christianity will undermine their faith, as the experience of dialogue has helped them to purify their faith commitment and overcome the harmful elements in their tradition.

We need to do more than we were able to hitherto to disseminate the results of our experience to the varying levels of Christian and Jewish communities, partic-

ularly through networks that can influence education, be it in schools, universities or seminaries, teacher training or adult education. The responsibility for this lies in the main with the member organisations. The ICCJ sees its task in stimulating ideas and promoting exchange of experiences among people in different countries. In the process of mutual understanding we have come to appreciate that there is a fundamental asymmetry in the relationship between Christianity and Judaism since Christianity is more dependent upon Judaism for its self-understanding than Judaism upon Christianity. Christianity is confronted with the urgent need to re-think age-old positions held with regard to Jews and Judaism, often expressed in a teaching of contempt, and to abolish its substitution or replacement theology vis-à-vis the Jewish people. Impressive Christian theological thinking to redress such doctrinal position has taken place. In the light of these beginnings Jewish thinkers are challenged to do their part in examining Jewish traditional misrepresentations of Christianity in order to avoid the danger of a 'one-way-traffic' in this process of mutual understanding and discovery of the other. In this context the project concerning the presentation of Christianity in Jewish education is of particular relevance.

As an international body it is our task to help create frameworks for frank and honest meetings of Jews and Christians also in those parts of the world where such framework does not yet, or only insufficiently, exist. Our endeavours in the Socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe mark a significant beginning which needs to be built upon. An urgent task ahead lies in Latin America where a significant number of the world's Jewish population lives. But there lies a task also in those parts of the world, notably in Africa and Asia where only few Jews live but where yet, partly due to the influence of Western theological thought and teaching, massive misrepresentation of Judaism exists in the churches.

While the distinctive experience within the Jewish-Christian encounter is of necessity defined by the particularity of this relationship and its specific agenda, it is also of exemplary and paradigmatic value to other inter-religious and inter-communal relationships. That experience created attitudes which are transferable to such other relationships. The ICCJ should therefore not shun engaging in such other encounters provided both Jews and Christians are included in these further configurations of dialogue.

The trilateral encounter of Christians, Jews and Muslims is an example of how to bring our experience to bear fruit in wider than bilateral frameworks. The significant initial steps taken, also with regard to the encounter with Marxism, need to be developed. Opportunity should also be sought to extend this experience to encounters with Far-Eastern religions. Globally we are faced with common challenges to which our respective religions and traditions must find adequate responses, be they issues of war and peace, the just distribution of the world's

riches, the preservation of natural resources and the many economic, political and social issues that face all of us. As Jews and Christians we have come to trust one another, now we have to find trustworthy answers in our traditional sources and bring the religious and moral values that form their basis to bear upon the wider issues.

The ICCJ's work is grounded in the awareness of the horrific consequences of discrimination and persecution, the violation of human rights and dignity. They surface in many issues such as antisemitism (also in its new guise of anti-Zionism), racist oppression, discrimination against women, notably in our respective religious communities and challenge our response. It is very important that we increase our efforts to communicate our experience to a new generation of Jews, Christians and adherents of other beliefs enabling them to share in our joy of recognising the other in his or her otherness. Our commitment to the development of young leadership in our movement on national as well as international level will ensure the transmission of this precious experience from one generation to the next. The experience of genuine Christian-Jewish dialogue encourages us to believe that a better world is possible, if we learn to relate to those who are different from ourselves in an attitude of openness and deep respect for what they have experienced of eternal truth; if we realise that all human experience, even the most sublime, is finite and conditioned by the particularity of a given situation in time and place. Such particularity is not a shame or a flaw but constitutes the richness and beauty of life. It makes us humble in the face of the immense plurality of God's dealings with humanity and sharpens our awareness of what is genuine and good, and what is shallow and mean in the life of our own community.

PART II
(1988 – 1995)

by Ruth Weyl

The Story Continues

INTRODUCTION

The guidelines on the teaching of Jews and Judaism, issued by the ICCJ in 1985 stressed that history is an amalgam of fact and interpretation. It can only truthfully be mirrored in an historic perspective within the development of general history. This history, since ICCJ General Secretary Dr Jacobus Schoneveld in 1987 concluded Part One of the ICCJ's history with his 'Vision of the ICCJ's Future Task' has taken unexpected dramatic turns.

Asked to up-date the 'History of the ICCJ' since 1987 I find myself in the position of a wanderer looking backward to see how far he has come, only to discover that it is almost impossible to look backward while walking on, without stumbling.

Over these past years we have moved from relief at the fall of the Berlin Wall and its vast hinterland of communist domination; the end of the Cold War to the realisation that intelligent reform requires the often costly responsible coordination of society's communal obligation and individual participation. A task that requires new learning by all partners.

We have been helpless witnesses of war, destruction, genocide and the frightened faces of children in Europe, and in Africa. We are also confronted with a slow bubbling crisis in western democracy yet remain at best on the fringes of preparedness to face these changes. At the same time we realise that the failure of secular ethics opens the way for reactionary and dangerous religious extremism. We have moved from entrenched positions in the Middle East to genuine peace processes, both of which continue to cause pain and courageous acts of faith. And for a brief moment Israel, Jews everywhere, people of all nations, heads of state and religious leaders were united in grief at the murder of Prime Minister Itzhak Rabin.

At the end of 1993 an agreement of mutual recognition with the declared intention of exchanging ambassadors was signed between the Vatican and the State of Israel. This political act of recognition in the wake of the *Declaration Nostra Aetate* and the *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing that Conciliar Declaration* and the *Notes on the Correct Way to present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church* of 1965, 1974 and 1985 respectively will doubtlessly begin to impact on the work of the ICCJ and its by now 26 national member organisations. In the same way the collapse of the Communist totalitarian regimes, the unification of Germany and the first steps towards peace between Israel and the Palestinians have recently affected the work.

The ICCJ's ongoing development must obviously also be seen in relation to a continuing opening up, if not even parallel developments at all religious institutional levels and contacts between Jewish and Christian leadership world-wide. Many individuals involved in the ICCJ also play their part in those wider contacts. It will be the task of future historical research to present the scene in its widest perspective.

All I can do here is to present an account of the ICCJ's major events and development since 1988. It will witness to the continuing double task of firming the ground of past insights and experiences at the same time forging ahead with new understanding of different methods, even a different vocabulary adapted to the requirements of those who for the past half century were deprived of sharing in the progress made. This applied not only for those from the area once called 'behind the iron curtain', but also for those growing up in an age of boundless technology, increased access to people of other faiths and cultures but also increased fear of economic hardships with ensuing dangers of xenophobia, racism and antisemitism.

Old 'certainties' are breaking down for us. A world we had known for nearly half a century – and in the case of Jewish-Christian relations for nearly twenty centuries – is changing, if not disappearing. At the same time the newly acquired freedoms and changes of boundaries and economic structures particularly in Europe have unleashed basic ills that need countering with all the resources acquired by Jews and Christians engaged in dialogue over recent decades.

What fifty, forty even thirty years ago had been a sort of club of scholars, innovative theologians and some people of good will has become a world-wide movement, at times inclined to catapult forward while its component parts still grapple with basic concepts best suited to their condition. We are responsible for encouraging dialogue ideologically and practically. We cannot force it or set its agenda in different regions and countries against the background of different historical and cultural narratives and experiences. It remains the ICCJ's basic mission, vision and bonding to provide a supra-national body with a coordinated platform for world-wide Christian-Jewish dialogue. The ICCJ is at present engaged in a radical examination how we can best continue to express these aims in the years to come.

At the time of writing the ICCJ membership numbers 26 national organisations world-wide. Their strength varies, as does the emphasis of their respective programmes. The ICCJ continues to operate under considerable financial restrictions with a small but dedicated staff at its head office in the Martin Buber House. Although supported and advised by the Board and the Executive, it has

even more than in earlier times fallen to the insight, sensitivity and expertise of ICCJ General Secretary Dr Schoneveld to make sure the ICCJ's programme addresses the national members' specific concerns based on different cultural and historical background yet at the same time coordinates ever widening common concerns.

A generation of young people that eight years ago at the conclusion of its Young People Conference listened wide-eyed to the voice of one of the movement's pioneers has matured into active Young Leadership forging their own paths to assure continuing revalidation of dialogue in present-day terms.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCES AND EDUCATION 1988 – 1995

1988

1988 proved a busy year. Although some attention had been paid since the 1986 Madrid colloquium to add the trilateral dimension of dialogue with Islam to the intrinsically bilateral Jewish-Christian agenda the need was expressed for a specific small scale symposium in which Christians, Jews and Muslims could consider challenges facing all three monotheist religions. In cooperation with the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation who's International Institute promotes cooperation with industrial and developing countries on human rights issues as well as political education programmes, the ICCJ early that summer mounted a symposium 'Understanding the Other – Christians, Jews and Muslims Facing Each Other in Sharing Concern About the Position of the Family in the World of Today'. The venue allowed emphasis on one of Europe's growing problems: the immigrant experience of Jews, Muslims, and Oriental Christians whose families face the transition from a traditional to a modern culture in an alien surrounding, rendered even more vulnerable because of the simultaneous change in the host country's family life poised between a more traditional religious attitude and a purely secular view. Expositions of passages from the Holy Scriptures of all three religions in workshops united participants in experiencing a sense of belonging to the wider family of Abraham's Children.

Urged to make space available for such future encounters, the ICCJ created a special working group composed of Christian, Jewish and Muslim scholars and educators to prepare the next stage.

A few weeks later the ICCJ for the second time found itself on the western shores of the Atlantic ocean, this time in Canada which fifteen years earlier had promulgated a law declaring itself to be a multicultural society. Aware of Canada's dismal attitude to refugees from the Nazis in the late 1930's, critical also of its population's negative reaction to more recent refugee problems, the ICCJ's Canadian hosts, the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, underlined the country's efforts to fight bigotry and seek ways of populating areas where modern technology could overcome the country's harsh climate, making way for future generations to live harmoniously in a truly multicultural society.

The One Way and the Many Ways – Dilemmas of Pluralism was the theme addressed in Montreal, Quebec, a city where every bilingual street sign gave witness to the battle between retaining different cultural identities and sharing

the land. Quebec was rapidly changing. The Catholic Church no longer played the important role which following the 1759 battle of the Plains of Abraham had inextricably linked it to the Province's French language and culture. Quebec's once deeply Catholic society, too, was becoming more secular. It, too, was confronted with the increased attraction of various cults. After more than four decades of dialogue a courageous examination was required whether these phenomena possibly represented also a failure of dialogue. The Loyola Campus of Montreal's Concordia University seemed the right setting for delegates from some twenty countries, inheritors and custodians of the still young tradition of dialogue to tackle some of the issues of pluralism. Regrettably and rather surprisingly, there was low participation of North Americans, nor was there sufficient in-depth contact with the Christian and Jewish communities of Montreal. The European participants were clearly in the majority, among them representatives from the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, and Bishop Henryk Muszynski from Poland.

The self-propelling dynamics of the more recently formalised ICCJ Young Leadership Section resulted in a vibrant contribution of that group to the general topic of the colloquium, as did the ICCJ Women's Section. Both groups held pre-colloquium conferences.

The YLS sought a topic which would relate to the colloquium's main theme: *Dialogue – Facing the Dignity of the Other. The Risks of Pluralism*. A novel aspect of their programme was to capitalise on the opportunity to learn from younger North American professional group facilitators in the field of human relations, and acquire knowledge of some unique methodology and skills that would serve each of the participants in their own countries.

The two-fold aim of the YLS Montreal conference also was to follow the lead of Sweden and the Netherlands and strengthen a programme of Young Leadership Sections within all the ICCJ's national member organisations and in particular to create a permanent structure of a Young Leadership Section within the Constitution of the ICCJ.

Under the title: *The Courage to be Woman - Overcoming the Defective Self-Image of Women in Religious Communities* the Women's Section for the first time held a pre-conference of this kind within the ICCJ. After initial steps taken in 1986 in Salamanca the ICCJ Executive had decided in Fribourg in 1987 to give official recognition to the unique contribution women bring to the interfaith discussions by appointing a Women's sub-committee. The key for the realisation of a vision of women's contribution was found in the ancient myth of Genesis. One of the most puzzling, but at the same time most significant aspects of the story of the Garden of Eden is the fact that there is a dialogue between Eve and the snake, between Adam and God, and Eve and God, but

nowhere is there mention of a dialogue between Adam and Eve. The voice of women could no longer be treated as anonymous, the time was ripe to allow Eve and Adam to proudly respond in unison and equality to build true communities of faith. The time had come to highlight the value of the entire range of woman's wisdom and human experience as inseparable part of the totality of the Council's commitment. Regrettably, no Muslim women participated.

It was a woman also, Dr Pauline Webb, a former Director of the Religious News Service of the BBC World Service and a member of the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches, who in concluding her presentation of a Protestant View of Pluralism in the main colloquium – which she dedicated to the memory of Bill Simpson – left the participants with an indelible challenge to seek and acknowledge the pluralism of our faiths which was like the colours of that rainbow, symbol for all of the most ancient covenant, predating all our separate faiths, the covenant God made with the whole of humanity and with every living thing; that so long as there is faith on the earth it shall not be destroyed.

Father Bernard Dupuy, of the Catholic Bishops Conference in France, suggested that the Creator in accepting the infinite variety of all beings was probably less disturbed by the differences between the religions than many of their respective adherents, provided each group while recognizing the dignity and authenticity of the other, remains faithful to truth entrusted to it. It was, he claimed, in the eye of the other that we must learn to discern the eye of God so that we can speak in unison when confronted with the need to respond to catastrophic events. Underlining the fact that Islam was a newcomer to present-day dialogue, Dr Subhi Abu-Gosh, Director of the Muslim Shari'a Courts in Jerusalem, presented Islam and its relations with Christianity and Judaism in an historic context. His encouraging conclusion drawn from the Qu'ran that it is believed that "what has been sent down to us, and what has been sent down to you; our God and your God is One, and to Him we have surrendered" for the first time in the history of the ICCJ allowed a Muslim to affirm that there was enough common ground between the three monotheist religions to encourage their cooperation, to engage in discussions, to verify and recognise the differences and to respect them.

A most moving and innovative point to future meetings was given by Rabbi Howard Joseph of the Corporation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews in Montreal, who presented a Jewish view of the One Way and the Many Ways. He stressed the need for a theology of humility, which reaches its clearest expression during Moses' second stay on Mt Sinai, as told in Exodus 32-34. In dialogue terms such humility requires the recognition that the finite nature of any human understanding of the divine must lead to the understanding that a faith system true for some, need not also be true for all.

The logistics of holding pre-conferences by the Young Leadership and a Women's group enabled the ICCJ to introduce another first-time event: Spending together the Shabbat and Sunday preceding the main colloquium, traditional as well as progressive Jewish services were held on Shabbat and an ecumenical Christian service on Sunday. The latter was rather overtly tailored to accommodate Jewish sensitivities. The question of sharing in service and prayer had vexed the ICCJ for a long time. It was gratifying therefore that while appreciating the intention that led to a near self-denial on behalf of the Christians, Jewish voices were heard urging that a more genuine format of Christian service be used in future. It was clear to all that at each of these different services participants of the other faiths were welcomed as guests. But a step had at long last been taken in the right direction.

At a time when increased publicity was given to denials of the Holocaust, Prof Dr Martin Stöhr presented a searching analysis of the so-called "Historikerstreit" in Germany, the dispute among German historians concerning the interpretation of the Nazi period.

Forever alert to the need that the ICCJ remains in creative contact with Christian ecumenical bodies, the General Secretary participated, among other events that year, in the European Regional Conferences on Church and Judaism (ERCCJ) in Vienna, themed "The Renewal of Christian Festivals through Reconsideration of Their Jewish Roots" and a wide-ranging consultation of the World Council of Churches Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People (CCJP) in Sigtuna, Sweden.

The need to streamline the Executive Committee by reducing the membership, yet retain the contribution of experienced individuals who could be called upon in relation to specific areas of ICCJ concerns, also led that year to the establishment of an Advisory Panel.

1989

The long-planned topic for that year's colloquium in Lille, France, *Gains and Losses – Religious Consciousness Among Jews and Christians in the Wake of the French Revolution*, devoted to the bicentennial of the French Revolution, was becoming increasingly topical as the peaceful revolution swept through Central and Eastern Europe bringing with it changed conditions and relationship affecting the entire world. A larger number of participants than ever before, three hundred from some 25 countries, including Bulgaria, Colombia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Kenya, New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland and Uruguay – the ICCJ's most recently admitted member, were hosted by the active local group of the Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France. It was led by

Professors Jean-Marie and Danielle Delmaire in the Catholic University of Lille in the North of France, a region where the name of every village recalled the horrendous slaughter of Europe's youth during the First World War. Prof Pierre Pierrard, President of the Amitié Judéo-Chrétienne de France, scholar of the history of his much loved city of Lille, in his opening address spoke of the ongoing validity of the preamble to the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man: *Le peuple français considère que l'ignorance, l'oubli ou le mépris des droits de l'homme sont les seules causes des malheurs publics et de la corruption des gouvernements* (The French people believe that not knowing, forgetting or scorning the rights of man are the sole responsible causes for public misfortunes and the corruption of governments). As was to be expected of a conference under French auspices, all lectures were of high intellectual standard yet addressed the practical concerns. What had become of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity"? Did the ultimate denial of human and communal rights experienced during our century possibly have its seeds in the French Revolution? As for the concept of "brotherhood" - time was devoted to examine whether attention was paid to "sisterhood"; and did the defence of the "rights of man" include the rights of women?

In a rousing speech Prof Diana Eck, Moderator of the World Council of Churches Working Group on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths, spoke of the revolution of women's participation in the events of our time and in religious life, strongly pleading for a change of language and a new interpretation of concepts.

Lectures and workshops dealt with past and present. Examining "Religion and Secularism", "Religious Search Among the Young", "Religious Extremism", "Common Ethical and Social Challenges to Jews and Christians", "The Individual and the Community in Religious Identity" and the ever-present question "From the French Revolution to the Shoah - is There a Connection?". The French Jewish sociologist Monique Schnapper discussed the challenge of modernity to Jews, while Protestant Professor of Theology Dr Rudolf Boon from Amsterdam, examined the impact of the French Revolution on the Reformed Tradition in Christianity.

Following earlier patterns, the colloquium was preceded by a Women's Seminar "Revolution, Liberty, Equality and Women" addressing questions such as whether women's anger can be seen as a source for revolution or prophetic energy and whether freedom of choice for women was fact or fiction from a Christian and Jewish point of view.

Always a step ahead, the Young Leadership Section pre-colloquium Paris conference *Making this World a Better Place -Tikkun Olam, Kingdom of God -*

Khilafa had also included Muslims among the forty participants from fifteen countries.

That year the growing importance of the Young Leadership Section in the work of the ICCJ and its member organisations found expression also in a Statement of Purpose and Structure, and a decision by the Executive Committee that the YLS chairperson would automatically become a member of the ICCJ Executive Committee. Their then chair person, Rabbi Ehud Bandel of Jerusalem, much involved among other matters in the Israel movement 'Rabbis for Human Rights' today is a much respected ICCJ Vice-President.

Throughout that year the Council's involvement with events and other groups grew, particular in relation to the new developments in Central and Eastern Europe. The controversy around the Carmelite Convent in Auschwitz in many ways cast a shadow on Christian-Jewish relations. Fortunately, Sir Sigmund Sternberg, although not acting in his capacity as Chairman of the ICCJ Executive Committee, through conversations with Cardinal Glemp and visits to the Carmelite nuns helped to diffuse the tension.

Together with efforts undertaken by other members of the ICCJ Executive the Council made clear its interest in a solution that would do justice to the sensitivities and pain felt by both the Jewish communities and the Polish Church and people. Dr Schoneveld visited Cracow and participated in an international symposium *The Theology of Auschwitz* organised by the Catholic Intelligentsia Club, and discussions about concrete steps with regard to the shape of the Centre of Information, Education, Meetings and Prayer in Auschwitz. At the same time he joined with the Polish Episcopal Committee on Dialogue with Judaism in the preparatory committee for a planned seminar on *How do we remember our martyrs*.

Participation in a meeting of representatives of Pax Christi International and the Institute of Social Studies of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union afforded a further chance to get acquainted with the new situation.

Contacts were established in Latin America to strengthen links. In Lille, Father Castano, Director of the Department of Ecumenical Affairs of the Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM) discussed chances for closer contact.

In the educational field, the ICCJ was asked by Rabbi Dr Norman Solomon of the Birmingham (UK) Centre for the Study of Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations to cooperate in a consultation on Tertiary Education in Europe, both East and West.

1990

A year after the 'velvet revolution' in what then still was Czechoslovakia the ICCJ Executive Committee at its March meeting was able to welcome Dr Desider Galsky, the President of the Czechoslovak Jewish Community, an old friend who in the past had a few times taken the personal risk of clandestine brief attendance at ICCJ events. How movingly exhilarating that freedom must have been for him and those who recalled how only a year before he had still been forced to wait on Friday nights outside his historic Prague synagogue for a communist state official to hand him the key that would allow his decimated community restricted use for Shabbat worship.

The time had clearly come to meet with our Czechoslovak friends on their home ground, and to encourage the development of dialogue. There was need also for a more profound acquaintance with the situation and assessment of the possibilities in the region until recently known as the Eastern Bloc, including that of religion among people who for more than forty decades had lived under atheist regimes. A limited number of delegates from the then existing member organisations together – with selected experienced experts and colleagues from the new democracies, notably the GDR, Hungary and Poland, met in the ancient Jewish Town hall in an evidently vibrant Prague in August summer weather to examine *The Changes in Eastern Europe – Challenges and Tasks for the International Council of Christians and Jews*. For the first time a leading personality from the Russian Orthodox Church, Bishop Feofan Galinski, and two Jewish delegates from the Jewish communities organisation 'Vaad' in the Soviet Union, Mr Zinovy Kogan and Dr Viktor Zak, participated in the deliberations.

Dr Galsky presented an overview of centuries of Jewish history in Czechoslovakia. The decimation of that community was sadly brought into sharp focus when the conference was conducted to Terezin (Theresienstadt) by two Czech survivors. And the sense of a new beginning was demonstrated when participants were received by the Mayor of Prague in a splendid town hall room under the gaze of an evidently only very recently repositioned sculpture of the former great Czechoslovak leader, Tomas Mazaryk.

Lectures included a presentation by Prof Szymon Rudnicki, lecturer of modern history at Warsaw University on 'Transformations in Poland and Polish-Jewish Relations in the Last Decade'; 'The State and Prospects of the Catholic-Jewish Dialogue in Poland' by Dr Waldemar Chrostowski, Polish Professor of Old Testament Studies; and by Prof Dr Stefan Schreiner who presented a thought-provoking 'Analysis of the Changes in Central and Eastern Europe with Focus on the German Democratic Republic'. An analysis made all the more difficult

by the complexities of constantly changing developments, a sheer impossibility to foretell the future and equal impossibility to speak with logical detachment of the more recent past. The musician Arpad Fasang, a leading member of the Hungarian Democratic Forum clearly assessed the chances of positive aspects of democratisation in the face of inherent economic difficulties. Prof. Petr Pokomy on behalf of the Ecumenical Council of Czechoslovak Churches drew two conclusions from life over the past forty years: that the existence of God's people is not dependent on a particular political or cultural setting; and that the same structures of solidarity that developed under conditions of pressure and discrimination among Jews as well as among Christians are proof of the interdependence of our respective faiths and mission, and a sign that we are destined to aim at better mutual understanding. It was agreed that primary strategy for the future lay in education at all levels, in revision of curricula and textbooks and in particular in a new understanding of history.

ICCJ's outgoing president, Dr Victor C. Goldbloom, a physician and politician from Quebec, Canada, summed up the extraordinary recent events under the heading 'Dialogue – From Solitude to Communication,' with lines from a poem that had been his watchword in dialogue: "Love consists in this that two solitudes protect and touch and greet each other." It was this need to protect, touch and greet the newly discovered other at practical level which prompted ICCJ Honorary President and former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Donald Coggan to plead for step-by-step joint action, as Jews and Christians and as people from the East and the West.

Once again the consultation had been preceded by a women's seminar with important contributions by Czechoslovak women whose fight for full recognition and possibility to make the specific voice of women heard was hampered by the practical burdens of running homes and bringing up families under pertaining economic difficulties.

That year the Young Leadership Section held its conference in Israel, *Interfaith in the Land of Faiths – The Roots of Love, Power and Justice Within Judaism, Christianity and Islam* in which participants from Czechoslovakia, Poland, the GDR as well as Christian and Muslim Palestinians explored tensions, such as the dangers of comparing historic experiences without sufficient knowledge of their respective backgrounds. Together with members of the Israel Interfaith Association and many of his friends and colleagues they attended the dedication of a forest grove in the Jerusalem mountains dedicated to the late Rev (W .W.) Bill Simpson.

Also that year German Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl visited the ICCJ headquarters in the Martin Buber House on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Martin Buber's death.

Professor Dr Martin Stöhr who for so many years had been actively involved in the Jewish-Christian, German-Jewish and German-Israel dialogue as well as in the affairs of the ICCJ, was elected ICCJ President.

The General Secretary's travels that year included Moscow where at the invitation of the Vice-President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, himself adviser to then President Mikhail Gorbachev, he participated in the 'Global Forum on Environment and Development for Survival,' in the course of which informal soundings on Christian-Jewish (*again decide style and order*) relations in the Soviet Union with representatives of Jewish communities and Christian churches roused interest. The visit also afforded him opportunity to visit the Council for Religious Affairs at the Council of Ministers of the USSR, a meeting which permitted a glimmer of hope that some progress could be made at official level in relation to interreligious matters. It was an exploratory visit with a first chance for a variety of personal contacts. More than that, considering the political realities prevailing throughout the greater part of the century, it seemed miraculous to participate in Moscow in the formulation of statements such as the requirement to find a new and spiritual ethical basis for human activities on earth.

1991

All events in the life of the ICCJ were overshadowed by the build-up to the Gulf War in the second half of 1990 which came into full force in January 1991. Coming as it did in the wake of the euphoria brought about by the end of the Cold War and the continuing liberation of many countries in Central and Eastern Europe, it roused the spectre of a North-South conflict, of open warfare between the interests of the affluent industrial North and the impoverished South, of increased polarisation, extremism and religious fundamentalism.

In his opening address to the ICCJ's annual colloquium held at the University of Southampton, in the gentle climate and setting of South-West England, Prof Martin Stöhr stated that when choosing the topic of the colloquium, *When Religion is Used as Weapon – Use and Misuse of Religion in Defense of National and Fundamental Values* over a year ago, we could hardly have guessed how increasingly relevant the topic would be. Nor could we foresee that as a result of the Gulf war and the inherent danger for Israel, all three faith communities, Jews, Christians and Muslims would be faced with renewed vigorous discussions about religion's factual role how as people believing in dialogue we would be confronted with the daily question whether this would lead to renewed use violence. And why? What for? Who decides? Who views the problem with indifference? And does the role of religion change with empowerment? What political and ideological forces use religion for their purposes. And do the religions enjoy – or even welcome – being used?

Some three-hundred theologians, historians, educators and lay leaders from 25 countries as far afield as Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Egypt, Israel, the Soviet Union, North America, Western, Central and Eastern Europe endeavoured to disentangle what is considered legitimate use of religion, its fundamental values which form its tenets in a particular age or culture, from its apparent misuse. All shared the awareness that religion is a major factor in the divisions and quarrels of mankind, a passion, as Bishop Harries of Britain argued, without which it is nothing or which, as Rabbi David Rosen former Chief Rabbi of Ireland argued, could be justified in Judaism (in which a particular identity is accorded special value) if the conduct emerging from it was guided by a superior religious and moral ethic.

In the Muslim context Prof Mohammed Shaalan of Al-Azhar University, Cairo, spoke of the anger pervading the majority of Muslims which led to their support of the arch-atheist and anti-Muslim Saddam Hussein. Also examined was the need of masses of Muslims in Africa and Asia who, like wider Jewish and Christian populations, were at heart searching for spiritual values, and above all for justice. The border between responsible and irresponsible – or no longer credibly responsible – use of Holy Scriptures was examined, as was the question what in essence are the values that the three religions should defend. And over the buzz of frank conversations at meal times could be heard the clamour for courage, perseverance and the need for genuine follow-up to deepen the awareness of the dangers as well as chances. A personal delegate of UNESCO's Director General, M. Sinaceur, delivered a message indicating also the growing realisation that interfaith dialogue must be integral part of working towards peace and order.

The colloquium was preceded by a women's seminar on *Using Religion – A Women's Perspective*, attended by 36 participants from the three Abrahamic religions. The promoter of a clearly heard women's voice was Mrs Gunnell Borgegård, long-time representative of the Swedish Council, a member of the ICCJ Executive and today one of the ICCJ's Vice-Presidents.

The Young Leadership Section's Conference *Religious Revivalism and Fundamentalism* with a large contingent of delegates from former Eastern Bloc countries had earlier taken place in Birmingham. Their subsequent contribution to the general colloquium once again proved the importance of that group to ICCJ's growth.

Dr Schoneveld's travels during 1991 included participation in a Theological Symposium in Krakow which centred on the Shoah and its implications for Christian and Jewish theological thinking. The initiative for the symposium which started with an examination of "The Nature of the Nazi Regime in the Eyes of its Victims", had come from the Polish Episcopal Commission for Dia-

logue with Judaism, and from the outset showed how different the Polish Christian perception of the Nazi regime had been from the Jewish perception. As Nazism had made Poland the place on which they ultimately carried out their criminal ideology, the dialogue was a mature means of helping to develop new historical and religious awareness.

Together with ICCJ Executive Chairman Sir Sigmund Sternberg he attended the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia on the theme “Come Holy Spirit, Renew Your Creation “ in the course of which they met with Archbishop Kyrill of Smolensk, Head of the Department of External Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and paved the way towards some cooperation.

He also visited Budapest and Vienna for some first-hand impression of the member organisations’ work, and to Prague in support of the newly established Society of Christians and Jews in Czechoslovakia, whose president was Dr Milan Lycka. During the Budapest visit a proposal was launched to engage in an ICCJ project involving the three new member countries, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland who were cooperating in building up new educational and research systems. The aim of the project was to assure that proper place was given in these new structures to the presentation of Judaism and the Jewish People in a variety of disciplines.

1992

A year and a half into the unification of Germany, at a time when euphoria about liberation had given way to a frightening rise in xenophobia, racism and antisemitism, economic disillusionment and ignorance of the true meaning of responsible democracy, the ICCJ felt further challenged by expressions such as ‘restoration of the heritage of a Christian Europe’ or ‘re-evangelising Europe’ which raised doubts whether any lessons had in fact been learnt. Was not the Jewish heritage one of Europe’s suppressed heritages? It was welcome therefore that ICCJ General Secretary Dr Schoneveld was invited to participate in the 10th Assembly of the Conference of European Churches, held late that summer in Prague. The occasion afforded contacts also with representatives of the Middle East Council of Churches which eventually led to some developments in 1993. It also gave him glimpses of the quite palpable tensions between the Czechs and Slovaks which eventually led to the separation of the two states and the establishment of two separate Councils of Christians and Jews in the region.

Dr Schoneveld’s other engagements that year included participation in an advisory body of the WCC, the Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People (CCJP); a visit to France to strengthen the Amitié Judéo Chrétienne’s

work, and participation in the USA National Workshop of Christian Jewish Relations where he lead the workshop on “Restoration of a Christian Europe? – Considerations from the Angle of Christian-Jewish Dialogue.”

Also that year the ICCJ responded to an invitation to attend a Hong Kong conference of Jews and Chinese Christians with participation of Western Christians involved in Christian-Jewish dialogue on *The Wisdom Traditions in the Bible and Chinese Religion*. The ICCJ delegates, New Testament Professor Dr Marinus de Jonge of the University of Leiden, Netherlands and Liberal Rabbi Andrew Goldstein from England explored possibilities of a future Council of Christians and Jews in Hong Kong.

Among changes introduced to do justice also to in-depth exploration of vital issues it had been decided to hold major colloquia and selected participation expert study consultations in alternate years. Women seminars would in future be held in conjunction with colloquia only; the Young Leadership Section would, however, continue to hold topic-related conferences every year.

As a result of the demands on the ICCJ and so many of its member organisations due to political changes and social turmoil, as well as the need to address educational issues at all levels, members of the ICCJ felt urged to address or re-address some theological bases of Jewish Christian cooperation. A Theology Committee composed of Ehud Bandel, Gunnel Borgegard, Peter Levinson, Ansgar Koschel, David Rosen, Coos Schoneveld, Simon Schoon, Martin Stöhr and Bertalan Tamas prepared a draft paper for that year’s Consultation which was held in Eisenach, Thuringia, Germany, the city at the foot of the Wartburg where in 1521 Martin Luther worked on the translation of the New Testament. The theme of the Consultation, prepared by the Theology Committee *Search for a Common Religious Basis – Communication and Cooperation Between Jews and Christians with Particular Reference to the Contemporary European Context* in a sense reverted to the first 1946 International Conference’s declaration “Fundamental Postulates of Judaism and Christianity in Relation to the Human Order”. In those first decades of dialogue coming so soon after the Shoah, it appeared too early to examine that which Judaism and Christianity had in common. Now that a level of understanding and trust had been reached to allow looking beyond the tragic past, the Consultation attempted to do this. Especially in context of the dramatic changes that had taken place in Europe, and which were still quite tangible in the city of Eisenach. The town lies close to Erfurt, once centre of a substantial Jewish community, decimated on Kristallnacht 1938 and shipped to near-by Buchenwald concentration camp.

In addition to plenary lectures on topics “Why is the Search for a Common Religious Basis for Jewish-Christian Communication and Cooperation Ne-

cessary”; “Forward Together”; “Searching Christian Tradition for a Religious Basis for Christian-Jewish Communication and Cooperation”; “Towards a Europe of Compassion”, there was a particularly moving presentation by Netherlands’ Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp, one of the rescued ‘hidden children’; and from Prof Dr Stefan Schreiner, formerly of the GDR on the question “What is the Message We as Jews and Christians Ought to Give Europe Today?” He concluded that the primary task is to participate in the creation of an awareness that affirms cultural, national as well as religious variety within a framework of overall interdependence.

The workshops, charged also with consideration of the Theology Committee’s draft statement *Jews and Christians in Search of a Common Religious Basis for Contributing to a Better World*, specifically addressed elements of common religious basis, such as the idea of covenant, the rejection of idolatry, the ethical teachings of the Torah and of Jesus Christ, the Jewishness of Jesus or the Expectation of the Kingdom of God. Those who fear that theological dialogue might lead to syncretism can be assured that there were no glib resolutions of differences, no easy answers. Covenant, for instance, was judged a dubious common religious basis, because it is central and fundamental to Jewish self-understanding, but does not play the same central role in many Christian churches.

All recommendations, emendations and remarks relating to the draft statement were later that year incorporated in the paper which was then circulated to all ICCJ national member organisations and other parties who on their part submitted it to religious leaders in their countries and which appears as Appendix VI.

The German member organisation’s (the DKR) General Secretary invited a panel of four East German Christians from Erfurt who doggedly had been pursuing Christian-Jewish rapprochement with the area’s lone Jewish leader open to share in the effort. Their language, their coming to terms with new political realities and openness may still have been hesitant, their hearts and minds forged forward in that same pioneering spirit that had prompted the 1946 Postulates.

A few of the younger participants in the Eisenach colloquium later on joined the Young Leadership Conference, which that year exceptionally took place after the colloquium.

This lively group of forty participants from fourteen countries, including Czechoslovakia, Poland, Russia, Uruguay, Israel and the West Bank, met in Schonburg, near Naumburg in former GDR territory, a beautiful valley renowned as the 1561 meeting place of German princes and Protestant leaders endeavouring to secure doctrinal unity. Each of the participants expressed concern about rising levels of xenophobia, racism and antisemitism, proof of

deeply held prejudices against minorities and immigrants they witnessed in varying degrees in their different regions and countries.

Their topic was *How We See Ourselves – How We See Others: Understanding and Dealing with Differences*. Their then chairman, Andrew White, an Anglican priest from London, had just established a special Young Leadership Section within the British CCJ with a programme that increasingly would serve as a model for all ICCJ national member organisations. It was perhaps indicative of the growing importance of that Young Leadership group that the World Council of Churches' newly appointed staff member, Mrs Silke-Petra Bergjan who had previously attended the Eisenach Consultation decided to participate also in the YLS conference.

To date six national CCJs have fully integrated YLS leadership sections, and others cooperate with very active YL groups.

As a reminder that the pioneering founders of the ICCJ in their time were young enthusiasts too, the family and friends of the late W.W. Simpson established an annual Bill Simpson Next Generation lecture. The first such lecturer was Prof. Dr Stefan Schreiner who had first met Bill Simpson when in 1983 the East German authorities for the first time allowed him through the Berlin Wall to participate in an ICCJ conference.

1993

The war in the former Yugoslavia was raging, but the Israel Palestinian peace process, despite obvious difficulties and hurdles was under way. A good time therefore to respond to the invitation of the Israel Interfaith Association to hold that year's colloquium in Israel. 230 participants from 25 countries, including the Lebanon and Morocco that summer met on Mount Carmel, Haifa. The topic was *Sharing the Blessing of Abraham in the Holy Land Today*.

Opening the proceedings ICCJ President Prof. Dr Martin Stöhr recalled that that Sunday's lesson in the Christian churches had been Genesis 12: God's call to Abraham assuring him that henceforth he would not abandon humanity, would not hand over his creation to chaos, egoism or violence. A unique history of shared blessing through Abraham had been set in motion. Now, members of the three faith communities at whose origin stands Abraham had come together to examine that blessing's relevance, actualities, hopes, vision and responsibility.

In his keynote lecture, "Life in the Holy Land, Tension and Reconciliation" Hebrew University professor of history and philosophy of religion, Aviezer

Ravitsky spoke of the demonization of memory, and of holiness which becomes territorial in the desire to prove ownership of the truth.

During the first two days under the overall headings “Sharing – Co-existence within the State of Israel” and “The Holy Land – its Significance in the Abrahamic Religions” and the motto “The Land as Living Text” the workshops were held in visited communities involved in co-existence and places of specific significance for each of the faith groups. During the third day under the overall heading “The Blessing of Abraham -Meaning and Obligation” workshops led by a Christian, a Jewish and a Muslim resource person addressed day to day issues of relations with the other; justice and righteousness, the value and sanctity of human life, the family and the status of women.

Plenary panel discussions were led by religious leaders and educationalists from all faith communities among them Archimandrite Aristarchos of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Dr Mitkal Natour, an authority on Islamic law, Mr Yeheskel Landau of the Open House Peace Centre in Ramle, Dr Ali Hussein Qleibo, Palestinian anthropologist and artist, Rev. Ibrahim Sim'an, Secretary of the Association of Baptist Churches in Israel. A moving experience was a visit to the home of Mr Zaidan Atchi, leader of the Druze community in Israel. The magnificent view over the Galilee served as a thought-provoking reminder of the complexities of love for land, tradition, history and shared longing for peace. As the General Secretary pointed out in his closing words, as individuals we managed to establish that ‘small peace’ without which a wider peace was not possible.

How times had changed! A Polish television team accompanied participants throughout the conference. And for the first time since the dissolution of the once flourishing South African CCJ by that country’s former government, the voice of an active participant, Chief Rabbi Cyril K. Harris from Johannesburg commanded attention when he referred to the Draft Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Religious People drawn up by the religious leaders of his country. It was a religious charter for South Africa’s new Constitution where none of the groups could afford a “wait and see” attitude. Interfaith cooperation in a country of strong religious affiliations was basic to survival.

This approach was shared by people involved in dialogue in Israel where more than probably in most countries, interfaith dialogue was still very much a minority activity, little noticed and in need of constant nourishment. An additional reason to emphasise that ICCJ annual conferences have always had the two-fold purpose of supporting the work in the host country – which in Israel certainly was interfaith rather than just Christian-Jewish – and forwarding the ICCJ’s general programme.

The increasing presence of Islam in all ICCJ member countries had begun to raise again the matter of trilateral dialogue. Yet many voices were still heard maintaining the need to continue concentration on the Christian-Jewish agenda.

It was a view not altogether shared by the ICCJ Young Leadership Section who after a visit to Rome of 40 young activists culminating in an audience with Pope John Paul had held their pre-colloquium conference in Jerusalem "*Religion: A Unifying or a Dividing Force*" attended by 60 participants from 22 countries. The presence of two participants from Zagreb and Belgrade motivated them to contact young people involved in the different religious communities and try to establish a group in Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia.

One of the YLS outstanding successes was the fact that a Council of Christians and Jews has been established in Belarus, a country where no Christian Jewish dialogue had ever existed, by a dynamic young Orthodox Christian, Viktor Kolpashikov, one of the first YLS participants from that region. Already he had embarked on the translation of material otherwise unavailable in his country.

A women's seminar was also held prior to the colloquium: 44 participants from 14 countries met in Eon Kareem, on the outskirts of Jerusalem to *discuss Women and Reconciliation – the Ideal and the Real*. The reality of the situation regrettably resulted in participation of only two Christian and one Muslim Palestinian women. Their admission of the difficulties they faced by the very fact of their participation, their open and moving description of their situation of frustration, the long-term psychological effects of the Intifada and the women's increasing vulnerability certainly underlined "the Real" of the seminar's title.

The women's seminar also addressed the worrying concern with a proposed text for the 1994 Women's World Day of Prayer which they viewed as unacceptable. In an effort to limit damage, they had therefore prepared a letter to the international committee and the national committees of the Women's World Day of Prayer which was endorsed by the annual meeting: "We heard and shared the pain of our Palestinian sisters, and so we sincerely regret that this prayer does not extend compassion or solidarity to all who have suffered in the Middle East conflicts" and "We are particularly troubled that the prayer service applies a biblical text to the crucial conflict in ways we consider inappropriate. It revives a theological tradition that defames and displaces Judaism as a religion and portrays Jews in negative and hostile ways, particularly in the Passion narratives. This tradition has had disastrous consequences for Jews".

The colloquium was attended also by Prof Dr Jed Hate from the Lebanon whom an earlier ICCJ delegation, led by Lord Coggan, to Cyprus in February

that year had met when they participated in a Consultation between Western Christians engaged in Christian-Jewish Dialogue and Middle Eastern Christians.

From the outset Dr Schoneveld had been sensitive to the added complexity inherent in the specific position and predicament of Arab Christians who culturally belonged to the Arab world where the language was the holy language of Islam, yet who as Christians shared elements of their religious roots with Judaism. Careful consideration needed therefore be given to a certain reluctance on the part of Middle Eastern Christians to enter into the type of dialogue customary between Jews and non-Middle Eastern Christians. It was understandable therefore that following Dr Schoneveld's contacts in the autumn of 1992 when he raised the question of encouraging Middle Eastern Christians to participate in the Israel colloquium, the then General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) felt that an intermediate step was required to deal with traditional misunderstandings and lack of trust between Western Christians engaged in the Jewish-Christian dialogue and Middle Eastern Christians. Ecumenical partnership between those groups needed to be strengthened in the first instance. In that semi-official setting a variety of issues were discussed in Cyprus. There was agreement to continue the dialogue between the MECC and the ICCJ; to continue dialogue where possible between the respective communities carefully taking into account where they stood with regard to Christian-Jewish relations; to seek cooperation and common action where possible.

A working paper outlining the points of convergence and divergence between the participants in this first consultation was envisaged. A valuable first step had been taken. To continue along the path would require patience and in particular the creation of genuine personal trust.

Side by side with these outreaches to people and faith communities that had hitherto not been involved in dialogue the ICCJ continued to pursue the aspects of the portrayal of Jews and Judaism in education and teaching materials, and on the place of Jewish within the context of general history which had led to consultations in 1983 and 1985. Clearly, the challenge had become even more urgent with the educational developments in the former communist countries. In the light of centuries of suppression of Jewish religion and culture by the majority religion and culture in Europe steps were urgently required to redress attitudes and teaching. A special Consultation was therefore mounted in Mauloff/Weilrod, Germany where educational experts from the ICCJ member countries of Central Europe: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic met with their counterparts from Western Europe, North America and Israel to develop strategies for the correct and adequate presenta-

tion of Jewish religion, culture and history in the educational systems under review in the new democracies. This ICCJ initiative was financially made possible by generous grants from German sources, the UNESCO Commission of Hungary and a number of USA foundations.

A number of recommendations emerged from that strategy meeting which are printed as Appendix V.

Prof Dr Géza Komoroczy, Director of the Centre of Jewish Studies at Eötvös University of Budapest, Hungary, was asked to prepare an outline of a master textbook which could later on be adequately adapted by authors of textbooks in different European countries. An editorial committee was formed and a first detailed project outline was presented two years later.

Also that year in addition to visits paid to member organisations in Belgium and Slovakia, the General Secretary and Rabbi Ehud Bandel went to Barcelona to attend a seminar devoted to the contribution religions could make to a 'culture of peace' arranged by the UNESCO Division for Human Rights and Peace. Religions were being challenged to undergo thorough transformation for the incoming millennium. The challenges to a wider sharing with others of insights of five decades of Jewish-Christian dialogue were mounting, as were the opportunities for contacts with educational, scientific and cultural bodies in different parts of the world. Although the ICCJ had over several years maintained a formal relationship with UNESCO as a 'non-governmental organisation,' it was the first time that it was able to make an intensive and constructive contribution.

1994

Propelled into the need to take a hard look at ICCJ's structure and emphasis, the Council in 1993 had asked its then treasurer, the late Laurence Goodwin, a partner of the auditors Price Waterhouse, to present some restructuring recommendations relating to the organisation and internal administration of the ICCJ, setting priorities and analyzing the Council's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Furthermore, the Executive meeting early in 1994 engaged in some serious brainstorming, re-assessing ICCJ's priorities and future programming. Discussion groups, dealing respectively with "The task of the ICCJ in relation to global concerns"; "The task of the ICCJ in Central and Eastern Europe"; "The task of the ICCJ in Israel and the Middle East" and "The task of the ICCJ Theology Committee" were asked to divide their recommendations into:

- (a) proposals for the task of the ICCJ in relation to the respective areas of concern, and

- (b) the structural and financial consequences flowing from the respective proposals.

The groups also had before them a summary of replies received to an earlier questionnaire circulated among the member organisations. Obviously, it would take some time until further conclusions could be drawn and acted upon.

In July that year the ICCJ responded to an invitation by the growing, but obviously also still struggling Polish CCJ, the Polska Rada Chrzescijan i Zydow, to hold its Consultation on Jewish and Christian Traditions and the Quest for the Ideal Society in Warsaw. The demise of Communism and disenchantment with all kinds of utopias had left a void and lack of direction. Questions about the inner quality of human life, the building of a just and compassionate society and the contribution Judaism and Christianity can make to such society present profound challenges. The dream of the ideal society, as participants in that consultation discovered, is as old as mankind itself.

Equally old are two ways of dealing with this dream: force, which is one way of killing this dream.

Another way of destroying that dream is to turn it into short-term apparent fulfilment. Both types of despoiling the dream frequently go together: a passive near indifferent acceptance of force on the one hand, selfish individual pursuit of seeming fulfilment on the other. Despite these, asked ICCJ President Martin Stöhr, do we have to give up the search for the ideal society?

Many, as Judith Banki from the USA said, had ambivalent feelings about coming to that particular area, to be housed in the peaceful surroundings of a priests seminary – wondering what these young men are actually being taught about the Jewish people – to make a pilgrimage to Treblinka and stand before masses of black stone seemingly still crying out, to join in the Kaddish and the Lord's Prayer offered in unison in a dozen or 80 different tongues.

Lectures varied from voices of doom to a positive, albeit hard to achieve, outlook for realising a just and compassionate society. Workshops studied different issues such as the Laws of Kings based on Deuteronomy 17, the late nineteenth century voices of Vladimir Solovyev and Nicolai Berdyayev, Jewish involvement in revolutionary movements, liberation theology in the Third World and Polish Messianism. As Rabbi Julian Jacobs of London so movingly concluded after the visit to Treblinka: "We were all deeply traumatized, we felt more vulnerable than we felt as children, it was from the presence of Polish and other Christian friends that we drew strength and support. And while the thoughts of no two people were exactly alike in a place where the sheer normal-

ity of nature seemed both an affront and an expression of hope, it was a binding experience that put new flesh on our discussions”.

Present also in Warsaw were representatives of our Latin American member organisations: Dr Carlos Barbouth, president of the Conselho de Fraternidade Cristao-Judaica of Brazil; Mr Mateo Godfrei, a young representative of the Confraternidad Judeo-Cristiano de Uruguay as well as Sister Marta Bauchwitz who in close cooperation with Rabbi Angel Kreiman-Brill was involved in efforts to establish a Fraternidad in Argentina. Due to the great geographical distance contact with the countries of Latin America had always been difficult. This time the representatives felt the time had come for a visit by Dr Schoneveld to the region to learn of and help promote the work. Once again the realities of our age hit the headlines a few days after the consultation: the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in London, and of the Jewish Community Centre in Buenos Aires, one of its victims the wife of Rabbi Angel Kreiman-Brill.

Later in the year Dr Schoneveld spent a fortnight in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Venezuela, meeting also those active in Chile, a country with a long tradition of dialogue. The visit did more than allow insights, it gave opportunity for personal exchanges which consequently led to more active cooperation and the establishment of an Argentine Council of Christians and Jews. These outreaches also enhance the Spanish speaking element in the ICCJ's composition.

Also that autumn, a long planned exploratory visit by a small ICCJ delegation to Minsk, St Petersburg and Moscow finally took place. From the outset it was clear that the purpose of this visit could and should not be the attempt to establish 'branches' of the ICCJ in the former Soviet Union, but in the wake of the immense changes to learn about the present situation concerning Christian-Jewish and wider interreligious relations. Also, to explore ways in which the ICCJ could assist in their development. The former Soviet Union was and continues to be exposed to far too many attempts, especially from the West, to exploit the newly won freedom and the fluid cultural, spiritual, social and political circumstances to import a variety of movements, sects and organisations with scant respect for local situations, prevailing sensitivities and existent traditions.

In Minsk a variety of meetings were arranged at the Belarus State Pedagogical University, the delegates were welcome at the House of Parliament and met with many religious leaders such as the Exarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Filaret, scientists, educators and Jewish community activists.

In St Petersburg the programme was organised by Dr Natalia Pecherskaya, director of the St Petersburg School of Religion and Philosophy with whom a lively correspondence had developed over the preceding two years. An inspector of the St Petersburg Spiritual Academy seeking to develop a new social doctrine which no longer confines the Church to the narrow area of liturgy, for instance, expressed interest in the Jewish-Christian dialogue, while a member of the editorial board of an antifascist periodical decried the lack of a Russian theology after Auschwitz and the paucity of available literature on Jews and Judaism, to name but two aspects. A pessimistic outlook on the future of St Petersburg's Jewish community was expressed by some Jewish discussion partners.

The schedule was equally crowded in Moscow. It was prepared by Dr Rafail Fainberg, the director of a newly created association for spiritual-cultural dialogue with particular emphasis on the Jewish-Orthodox Christian encounter "Facing Each Other", already seeking partnership with similar bodies outside Russia. There were meetings also with the head of department in the Institute of Oriental Studies, a Muslim from Tadshikistan, Chief Rabbi Shayevich as well as Zinovy Kogan, the president of the Progressive Jewish congregation Hineini, who are also members of the Consultative Coordinating Council of Religious Organisations in Moscow, together with representatives of the Islamic and Buddhist Centres, and all the different churches.

There were many outstanding individuals, there was much expertise, much enthusiasm and motivation, yet lack of financial support to do even such basic things as translate material so readily available in the West with its long tradition of dialogue. Again, the ICCJ was looking to its Young Leadership Section whose members increasingly forge friendships and cooperation across what only a few years ago seemed impregnable borders.

Other visits that year included Luxembourg, Northern Ireland and Eire, Israel and the United States. Also, as a member of the World Council of Churches Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People (CCJP) the General Secretary as well as the President and both Vice-Presidents attended a meeting in Budapest on the theme "The People of God and the Churches' Self-Understanding". Despite a number of Church declarations characterising the Jewish-Christian dialogue as essential for the Church's self-understanding it was realised that the Jewish-Christian dialogue continues to play only a marginal role in the theological reflections of many church bodies. A sort of listening process was essential to assure that the concerns of the churches become known to the CCJP, and vice versa. The growing number of national Councils of Christians and Jews and their impact upon all levels of church adherents is bound to contribute to that listening process.

1995

One of the March 1994 recommendations relating to the task of the ICCJ had been that the 1995 conference as well as the 1996 consultation be part of a theological process. The particular freedom of the ICCJ, a body who throughout has been free from Christian or Jewish institutional influence, allowed free flowing examination of the theological priorities between Jews and Christians that need attention. A useful exercise, not least in the light of the benefit a number of member organisations already had derived from the 1993 Theology Committee Statement in discussion with church and other bodies.

And so it came about that the 1995 Colloquium, hosted by the Hungarian Council in Budapest addressed the burning issue of *Speaking of God Today* with two sub-themes: *What shall we Say to our Children?* and *Speaking of God in the Face of Ethical Problems of our Time*.

The venue itself was a reminder of the real challenge confronting not only the 200 conference participants, including representatives of the Russian and Greek Orthodox Churches, from countries as far apart as Australia and Argentina, Canada, the USA, Israel, Cyprus, Russia and Belarus, Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Spain, Great Britain, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and the Slovak Republic and of course the host country, Hungary. Below the conference centre the Danube wound its way south-east-wards towards the former Yugoslavia where nation continued to fight nation. In the hill side atop the city a roll call of different religions, nations and cultures, yet all engaged in the continuous search for answers to new realities.

The keynote addresses delivered by two women, Progressive Rabbi Elizabeth Sarah from London and Dr Natalia Pecherskaya from St. Petersburg, carried the conference theme forward well beyond the perceptions established over the preceding five decades.

Major lectures relating to new approaches in education and understanding of tradition and history, moral issues in global economics, and in particular a presentation by Lord Jakobovits, former Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, of recent Jewish views and moral issues in bio-ethics touched raw nerves also of deep internal divisions within Judaism as well as Christianity. Workshops examined questions such as what to say to the many children who are ignorant of the Bible, its stories. Imagery and Symbolism; how does one convey biblical images and symbols to people living in a modern, mainly secular world; how to speak of God in prayer and liturgy; how or whether to speak of God in school when teaching secular subjects; how to speak of God in the face of powerful

influences of mass media; when asking: what shall we say to our children, do we have the honesty to ask what God's decrees, laws and rules mean to ourselves; the sects and new religious movements speaking of God and their influence on the young; the beginning of life and the end - a humane dying; the dialogue between the generations; minorities and refugees in our midst; the distribution of wealth. There was much common cause, much listening to those with different cultural and historic experiences, but there was also at times an acknowledgment that there were theological aspects that divided those from different faith traditions. It is proof indeed of the measure of our progress and mutual trust facilitated also by the congenial atmosphere prevailing at meal times and between sessions that we no longer shy away from touching on these differences. A time will surely come when we shall confront them in depth as integral part of our obligation to serve this world.

The women's seminar which preceded the colloquium, had twenty-eight participants and concentrated on "Contemporary Ethical and Spiritual Dilemmas ". New ways of reading the Bible were studied as were new forms of children's religious education and revival of the ancient art of story-telling without handing over altogether to the evidently captivating electronic media.

As customary, the colloquium was preceded by a Young Leadership conference "Religious Action in a Pluralistic World ". Forty-five participants from thirteen countries met with leading Hungarian rabbis, clergy and academics to address contemporary problems from family and media to the understanding of good and evil and the problems of dialogue in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. They resolved to find ways to press for the release of Israeli prisoners believed to be still captive in or near Lebanon and to examine how YLS groups might raise awareness of the plight of captives of all creeds anywhere. And once again their contribution to the general colloquium left no doubt that the ICCJ was indeed grooming a compassionate, alert and professional future leadership.

PART III
(1995 – 2009)

by Ruth Weyl

INTRODUCTION

by Fr Prof John Pawlikowski, OSM, former ICCJ President

The International Council of Christians and Jews has been in the forefront of Christian-Jewish dialogue since its inception out of the ashes of the Holocaust. It launched the first concrete efforts to respond to the challenge posed by the Nazi destruction of the Jewish People for which traditional views of Jews and Judaism in Christianity provided an indispensable seedbed. Over the years ICCJ has worked on two basic fronts: challenging antisemitism whenever and wherever it again raises its ugly head and building a new, constructive understanding of the Jewish-Christian relationship grounded in an appreciation of how deeply rooted Jesus and the early church were in the traditions and communal life of first century Judaism.

In recent years ICCJ has expanded its work while continuing the basic twofold orientation that has guided it from its inception. The organization has reached out to Eastern and Central Europe, even prior to the demise of Communism, to assist emerging Christian-Jewish organizations in that region. It has also assisted in the development of the dialogue in several Latin American countries, including holding an annual conference in Uruguay. In July 2007 ICCJ held its first annual conference in the Pacific region, meeting in Sydney under the sponsorship of the member organizations of ICCJ in Australia and New Zealand. This effort represented what the ICCJ leadership hopes will be an expansion into the wider Pacific region along with an equally hoped for extension of its activities to Africa. ICCJ has also encouraged a Young Leadership Group and was especially pleased that a trilateral young people's group emerged out of the Sydney conference. Finally, ICCJ has pursued a trilateral Jewish-Christian-Muslim exchange without minimizing its central focus on Christian-Jewish relations.

Ruth Weyl, the author of this chronicle of ICCJ's more recent activities, has played an invaluable role over many years in assisting in the coordination of ICCJ's many programs. She is truly the "institutional memory" of the ICCJ organization. The ICCJ leadership is indebted to her for compiling this important record of our international work for the deepening of human understanding. We are also grateful to our long-time Patron Sir Sigmund Sternberg of London for his underwriting of this new history and for his continued support in so many ways for many years.

Rev. John T. Pawlikowski, OSM, Ph.D
(President of the International Council of Christians and Jews 2001 – 2008)

INTRODUCTION

by Sir Sigmund Sternberg, ICCJ Patron

In the introduction to the first edition of the history of the ICCJ, the late Lord Coggan paid warm tribute to the work done by Ruth Weyl in researching and preparing the material.

We are no less grateful to Ruth for the update presented here which reflects her ongoing devotion to and long time work for the ICCJ. We are blessed in that we continue to benefit from her skills and commitment to promoting the message of dialogue.

Her testimony bears witness to the growing outreach of the ICCJ which not only serves its members in 32 countries worldwide, but also offers a platform for debate and encounter between people of various talents and the widest age range.

This includes an audience concerned about dialogue not only at the academic or purely theological level, but in relation to the socio-political changes of our time which affect every one of us. Even as means of communication extend ever wider, there are people who need assurance of security within their own personal and cultural borders.

Our programmes, nationally and internationally, illustrate our endeavour to respond to this need. But we cannot continue this important and urgent work without adequate support.

Grateful as we are for the assistance provided by the German authorities, we desperately need financial support from individuals and governments. Without this help we will have a major problem carrying out projects at present in the pipeline, particularly those relating to the development of a young leadership and our work in the countries of the former Soviet Union.

This would be a tragic outcome to the devoted work of so many men and women of good will around the world for six decades since the end of the Second World War.

Sir Sigmund Sternberg
Patron
International Council of Christians and Jews

PROLOGUE

It was an honour to be invited to set down a record of the ICCJ's activities since 1995. When responding positively to that request it struck me that half way through this twelve year period we experienced the shock of nine-eleven which evidently also affected dialogue. Not that we needed to re-start from "Ground Zero", but the political events of those past twelve years have also made an impact on our work.

Fourteen years on despite nine-eleven Camp David, the Second Intifada, suicide bombers and the 2005 Israel Hezbollah war not to mention the war in Iraq we have continued our outreach in the firm belief that the interreligious dialogue beyond even the occasional contentious encounter, but remains a witness of people of faith working together in a rapidly developing technological world of mass migrations, economic stress and ecological threats. Increasingly, people of diverse faiths and cultures and diverse histories are coming together in the realisation that this global society requires cooperation and living together in respect of our differences.

While maintaining a steadfast progress in exploring Jewish-Christian relations from various angles, and increasingly including Muslims in our deliberations, fundamentalism as a way of escapism into what seemed a simpler and therefore with hindsight to some a more secure world, challenges the ICCJ to deal with problems before they blow into our face. Aware that many of our members concentrate on the issues most relevant to their countries, which in particular in the former Soviet Union satellites involve a wider and deeper re-examination of their history and new developments, it remains the task of the ICCJ to use our long-standing experience and joint antennae to prevent rather than try to cure problems after they arise. Based on that expertise the ICCJ is uniquely qualified to offer a platform for personal encounter, discussion, questions and at times dispute of people who otherwise would not have the opportunity to meet or to exchange experiences with renowned scholars, theologians and educators.

This update of the ICCJ history is intended to recall in broad outlines the progress, outreach and impact of the ICCJ's activity. The history of a movement like ours is not necessarily marked by world shattering events. But it is the story of Jews and Christians with some clear indications that despite a painful history it is possible to meet on equal terms and to contribute to solving the perplexities of our age. It is a slow but steadily forward moving process of often small mosaic stones that hopefully one day will grow into a complete picture.

The activities of the past thirteen years bear witness to a determined progress in balancing the specific needs of each of our world-wide members

with a programme that recognises universal challenges in a rapidly changing world.

In addition to the record of those fourteen years, a special section will show how throughout the period under review the ICCJ Young Leadership created their own forward looking programmes, often bringing their voice to bear upon the main deliberations.

As I am looking back on more than three decades of work in various capacities in the ICCJ as well as participation in other international or specifically local conferences I can say without sounding sentimental that there is something unique in ICCJ gatherings. Its hallmark is an open platform to share not only academic, religious, historical or otherwise sensitive or difficult subjects, but a place for reunion of genuine friendships grown from past encounters as well as a warm-hearted, open minded and easy forum to create new bonds between the expert leadership and committed educators and community lay leaders across cultures and countries, even across languages. And this legacy inherited from those who got together after the horrors of the Second World War in a then barely formed organisational structure has been kept alive and remains one of the hallmarks of the ICCJ. I hope that in the following pages I can without going into all the details convey a sense of this continuity and renewal. We may have been through periods of severe financial constraints that have made it difficult to carry out our projects, but the participants invariably left with a renewed sense of encouragement and ongoing exchanges of experiences and concerns. We owe much of this shared trust to the three presidents that have led the ICCJ during the past years: Prof Dr Martin Stöhr, Rabbi David Rosen and Fr Prof John Pawlikowski. A trust we now also share with our new president, Dr Deborah (Debbie) Weissman.

Special gratitude is due also to our patron, Sir Sigmund Sternberg whose vision paired with a strong sense of reality and world-wide contacts continue to support and promote the ICCJ.

We owe thanks to our past treasurers, Clive Marks and Edwin Green from England, and to our present treasurer Dr Abi Pitum from Germany. Their dedication to the aims of the ICCJ and their skill in balancing the meagre resources of the ICCJ have been invaluable in ensuring the ICCJ's response to the increasing challenges we faced over these past years.

And we acknowledge with grateful appreciation the understanding of the immense task the ICCJ has set itself and therefore the continuing financial support of both the Land Hesse and the German Federal Government as well as of a number Protestant and Catholic Churches in Germany of our head office in the Martin Buber House and our ongoing activities.

If I mention only a few names at points where reference to the one or other individual seems useful I apologise to the many friends and colleagues whose invaluable personal contributions are not specifically mentioned.

Details of all events mentioned, reproductions of plenary addresses and workshops with names can be requested from ICCJ Head Office at the Martin Buber House.

Ruth Weyl

ICCJ'S ACTIVITIES AND CONFERENCES 1995 – 1999

1995

Though the 1995 account was concluded in the early days of the year 1996 there were further developments that year that reached into 1996:

It had become evident that there was another matter the ICCJ had to attend to: Since it had first been seriously discussed in 1993 in Haifa, it became apparent that the ICCJ while retaining its original structure and without losing its intrinsic Jewish-Christian agenda needed to address relations with Islam. Despite resistance by some members, demographic and political realities everywhere prompted the ICCJ to examine again an earlier proposal by Dr Schoneveld to develop a vehicle that aimed at facilitating contacts, dialogue and cooperation on equal terms between Christians, Jews and Muslims who in the terms of their respective scriptures and traditions all trace the origin of their faiths to Abraham, and are committed to developing attitudes of mutual respect and acceptance of one another in acknowledgment of their religious and other differences.

In its 1995 session the Executive had decided to recommend to the annual general meeting the establishment of an Abrahamic Forum as an appropriate way of dealing with the need for trilateral encounter and dialogue between Christians, Jews and Muslims. It was agreed to develop the earlier Working Group of Trilateral Dialogue between Jews, Christians and Muslims and change its name to Abrahamic Forum making sure that its membership will represent a fair balance of Jews, Christians and Muslims, and among the Christian a fair balance between Christians living in predominantly Muslim societies and other Christians. Though still in its initial stages, there can be little doubt that this Abrahamic Forum will have an important role to play in the development of ICCJ member organisations in parts of Eastern Europe or in South Africa and other regions.

Also, after some initial contacts, the ICCJ had been asked to help coordinate a project to bring together members of the Strasbourg Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in an interfaith group composed of members of the three Abrahamic faiths in order to impress upon the Parliamentary Assembly the growing role religion plays even in Europe in situations of political conflict and tensions.

Other calls on the expertise offered by the ICCJ included a request by the World Council of Churches Office on Interreligious Relations to contribute to the preparations for the 1998 WCC Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe, on the

theme “Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope,” which will reflect several elements of the biblical motif of “jubilee”. The ICCJ assured inclusion of careful common reflection, mutual challenge and understanding also of Jewish spiritual, moral, ethical and social tradition in relation to this visionary concept.

Hosted also by the World Council of Churches Office of Interreligious Relations representatives of the ICCJ met in Geneva with a small group led by the new General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches to explore ways of following up the contacts first taken in Cyprus in 1993. It felt that at a time of increased awareness of the dangers of religious extremism and generally the crucial role religion can play for better or worse, the ICCJ lent itself as a catalyst to improve relations between Jews and Middle Eastern Christians.

Based on well-known passages in Genesis 1, 2, 3 and 4 we interpreted aspects and responsibilities resulting from an understanding of the particular nature of the divine image of the human being in relation to present-day implications and future joint action. The agenda seemed well set for the ICCJ’s next stage.

At the end of the year Dr Coos Schoneveld retired from the Council’s General Secretaryship. He had never ceased to remind us that basically we have come together as Jews and Christians with a deep faith commitment and that our responsibility in the first instance remained rooted in our shared scriptural patrimony out of which common beliefs and values emerge. Reminded of thoughts expressed half a century earlier by Dietrich Bonhoeffer in a letter from prison: *We are moving towards a totally irreligious age. The way people have become they simply can no longer be religious. Even those who sincerely describe themselves as being ‘religious’ do not practise religion; the term probably means something quite different for them... How do we speak of God without religions.*

1996

It was this aspect of part three of our 1993 Theology Committee Statement which the 1996 Consultation decided to explore under the overall title

Created in God’s Image – The Imperative for Moral Action

After 1995 had found us in Budapest exploring *Speaking of God Today* our general secretary, Rev Dr Coos Schoneveld referred to the ICCJ’s 1993 Theology Statement *Jews and Christians in Search of a Common Religious Basis*. He pointed out the importance of theological and philosophical issues for Christians and Jews as they emanate from the essential conviction of each, but also raised the fundamental question whether we can recognize the theological legitimacy of the other religion. Can we accept a relativity theory in theology

just as Einstein developed it for the natural sciences? He also raised the role of religion in political issues and the sensitive and then still tentative steps towards trilateral in-depth encounter with the third of the Abrahamic faiths – Islam.

For the time being however it was decided to set in motion a first attempt at developing and concretising the Statement's list of shared beliefs and values and to hold this year's conference under the leadership of the Theology Committee. The expert participants included ICCJ President Prof. Dr Martin Stöhr, Prof. Hans Küng, Rabbi Bent Melchior from Denmark and leading personalities from Britain, the USA, Latin America as well as from Russia, Poland and the Czech Republic. Among the plenary speakers former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Donald Coggan and Rabbi Albert Friedlander reflected on Genesis 3:9 "Where art thou?" Edna Brocke and Prof Dr Ekkehard Stegemann on Genesis 4:1-16 "Am I my brother's keeper?" For the workshops it was decided to concentrate on joint exploration of the first three chapters of Genesis. Five verses from these chapters were chosen (Genesis 1:26; 2:1-3; 2:15; 2:18; 3:22). In a first round these verses were studied and interpreted from Jewish and Christian points of view, and in a second round their significance and implication for today were explored.

Originally scheduled to be held in Winterthur, Switzerland the venue had to be shifted at very short notice. Given the conference topic and the age-old relationship between Mainz and the Jewish community documented at least since the tenth century it seemed fortuitous to be offered the superb conference centre of the Erbacher Hof in Mainz, the adult education centre of the then Bishop of Mainz, now Cardinal Prof Dr Karl Lehman. We visited the Marc Chagall windows in St Stephen's Church, the Jewish cemetery and other historic places.

The conference was an important milestone in the ICCJ's re-evaluation of its task in relation to global ethics and in particular the need to include in dialogue areas in which our traditions or mentalities differ; rather than to accept common denominators to entrust the Theology Committee to seek a more demanding ethic acceptable to all three monotheist religions and to focus on practical methods for application. An appeal to the wider ICCJ membership included...

1996 also proved to be a year of expansion. Following a visit by Coos Schonveld in 1994 the Chile Confraternidad Judeo-Cristiana, actually the longest established dialogue group in Latin America, was received as a full ICCJ member. Despite some hesitation still expressed in particular by Argentina, Germany and Italy, it was agreed to receive as full member also Lizom k Litzu –

(Facing Each Other) from Moscow. Because of the different activities in some countries' cities, notably in Russia, the Executive Board in March 1996 had ruled that "it is the expectation of the ICCJ Board and Executive that coordination and cooperation will be sought with any group from other cities who may at any future date seek official status within the ICCJ".

Consideration was also given to the inescapable fact that increased dialogue activity in a number of countries, often with varying emphases or composition required admission of multiple memberships from countries seeking this format. Suitable checks and safeguards avoiding clashes or tension between such multiple organisations were mooted and eventually agreed upon by the General Meeting.

In line with the ICCJ constitution that to ensure the ICCJ as an international body does not operate in isolation, "the Executive may invite representatives of international organisations to participate regularly as observers in meetings of the Executive Board and the General Meeting", the American Jewish Committee (AJC), The Commonwealth Jewish Council and the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ) joined long-time observers World Council of Churches (WCC), the Vatican and SIDIC.

1997

The Other as Mystery and Challenge – The Significance of the Jewish People for the Christian Church and of the Christian Church for the Jewish People

At a 1994 Bible study consultation the question "Am I my brother's keeper" considered to be the quintessence of the views and values in the Hebrew bible as common basis of Judaism and Christianity, was answered with a resounding "yes". However, the time had surely come to look a little more closely at who this brother or sister really is. This was important because the ICCJ no longer remained composed only of people from the western world, or for that matter from the Northern hemisphere. Active participation in dialogue and encounter from Australia, New Zealand, Latin America, from the former Soviet Union and its satellites as well as from the Middle East had brought new dimensions, different historical and cultural perceptions and with it new challenges.

In early September at the invitation of our Italian member the Federazione della Amicizie Ebraico-Cristiane in Italia, in a sprawling retreat building in the mountains of Rocca di Papa above that other eternal city, Rome, some 270 participants – clergy, rabbis, educators, journalists, computer scientists, engineers as well as experts in advertising and filming from Australia, Austria,

Argentina, from Belarus, Belgium and Brazil, from Canada, Chile and the Czech Republic, from Egypt, India, Italy and Jordan, from France, Georgia, Great Britain, Germany and Hungary, from Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland and Russia, from Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden from Trinidad, the Ukraine, the USA and Uruguay - came together to discover the mystery at the heart of our respective faiths and the challenge of the other fully aware that probably at best we can perceive it only “through an opaque glass”, yet not totally obscured by a wall. As the then ICCJ treasurer Joseph Wasserman said in his report to the annual general meeting, as the world grew smaller so the task facing the ICCJ grew larger.

The conference was of significant importance to the Jewish-Christian dialogue which over the past 50 years had come a long way. A dialogue that has matured from the slavery of the mind to a freedom of spirit few could have hoped for a generation before. It had also served all of us in deepening our relationship to our respective sources and traditions.

Once again, workshops were central to the conference. To cut through some of the mystery at least, participants examined a variety of inescapable contemporary challenges, each introduced by a Christian and a Jew; some by a Christian, a Jew and a Muslim coming from different countries and continents. Bible studies concentrated on Deuteronomy 22:6-7, 23:19-20 and Matthew 6:25-34.

There were two emotional highlights:

The entire conference had an audience with Pope John Paul II in St Peter's Square. Under a blazing sun we spent a few hours, first as observers of the grand theatrical occasion with the Pope arriving in his “Pope Mobile” moving among the thousands straining to touch his hands or feel his personal blessing. Yet, when this frail old man eventually approached a selected group of ICCJ representatives speaking to each of them, we felt proud and strangely moved. The Pope then proceeded to walk along the enclosure especially reserved for the rest of us, speaking to each of us in our own language and holding our hands we felt witnesses of an extraordinary experience. Somehow the mystery of the other and our individual different identities had come together in an unforgettable moment in the life of the ICCJ. Addressing the vast audience in different languages he made special mention of the ICCJ, calling in a special blessing on Jews, Christians and Muslims to go beyond the path of mutual understanding and respect.

Throughout the colloquium there was much awareness that we were in Italy, the country of Primo Levi (?), whose *'Shema'* addressing the mystery of memory throughout the conference was never far from our minds:

You who live secure
In your warm houses
Who return at evening to find
Hot food and friendly faces:

Consider whether this is a man,
Who labours in the mud
Who knows no peace
Who fights for a crust of bread
Who dies at a yes or a no,
Consider whether this is a woman
Without hair or name
With no more strength to remember
Eyes empty and womb cold
As a frog in winter

Consider that this has been:
I command these words to you.
Engrave them on your hearts
When you are in your house, when you walk on your way
When you go to bed, when you rise.

Repeat them to your children.
Or may your house crumble
Disease renders you powerless,
Your offspring avert their faces from you

To celebrate the memory of those who perished and give honour to the large numbers of righteous Italian gentiles who had helped Jews survive we invited Rabbi Albert Friedlander and Lisa Palmieri-Billig to present a moving and unforgettable mixture of readings and personal reminiscences. To these were added the personal recollections of Dr Ezra Ben Gershon and of one of Italy's outstanding Jewish survivors, Lea di Nola. Nothing could better have rounded off that conference than a presentation by Prof Martin Stöhr and Rabbi Andrew Goldstein of the 19th Psalm, encouraging us to go forth from that conference full of energy, enthusiasm and inspiration hoping that this conference allowed us to see God's will through the eyes and the minds of the other – man or woman, Jews or Christian or Muslim.

1998

Unity without Uniformity – the Challenge of Pluralism

It was chilly, there were dark skies and endless rain as we gathered in Erlbach, a small place in the former East Germany just across the Czech border. That

made it more accessible for participants from Central and Eastern Europe. It marked a physically and visibly further step in the ICCJ's endeavour to strengthen dialogue initiatives in the region and offered an intimacy of debate and cohesion hitherto not commonly experienced in that part of Europe. The subject was chosen in light of the increasingly visible differences between those long engaged in dialogue and the newcomers from a world that for half a century had been under totalitarian regimes. There were also a few Muslims present.

The keynote address *Politics and Pluralism - Myths and Reality or the Otherness as Stigma* was presented by Dr Fédor Gâl from Prague with particular reference to the increasingly grave situation of the Roma people, thereby highlighting the so far neglected responsibility of Christians and Jews towards the issue of minorities confronting democratic societies. Blu Greenberg, USA, spoke of *Religious Feminists Within and Beyond Community*.

In a region only recently emerged from decades of official atheism, the opening evening included *Reflections on Genesis* by Rabbi David Rosen; *Reflections on John 21 and 22* by Prof Martin Stöhr, and *Reflections on Psalm 96*: Jewish by Rabbi Alexandra Wright, London – Christian by Rev Friedhelm Pieper.

Workshop topics included: *Different models of state and religion*; Empowerment and Powerlessness – *Minorities and majorities in a pluralist society*; *The ordination of women – a challenge to unity*.

Able moderated by Prof Dr Stefan Schreiner, (formerly East Germany) Professor of Judaistics at the Eberhard-Karls-University Tübingen, a fascinating plenary panel discussion, by individuals who had been involved in revolutionary protest and reform movements often at considerable personal risks gave participants some insight into the experience of reversal and renewal in Eastern Europe, and the battle to secure lasting self-determination and pluralism that can withstand future attempted encroachment on civil liberties.

Other highlights of the conference were the presence of His Eminence Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, who helped participants to gain a better understanding of the 1998 Vatican paper on the Holocaust, "We remember" a document which caused controversial discussion amongst Christians and Jews alike. (See Appendix VII-II) and of Prof Dr Konrad Raiser, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) who with reference to the forthcoming 8th WCC Assembly in Harare, presented recent as well as envisioned future developments in the world wide network of Protestant and Orthodox Churches and analysed the

situation and encounters in a secular world and the challenges to perceived truth claims in post modernity.

In one of those moments in the life of the ICCJ where friendship, affection and honesty need to find public expression the *ICCJ Annual International Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award* was presented with much gratitude for all he stood for to His Eminence Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy.

The conference programme included a visit to the Czech town Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) where in the assembly hall of the Evangelical church of the Czech Brethren Pastor Josef Keir and a death camp survivor presented the history and present situation of Jews in the Czech Republic.

Upon retirement of Martin Stöhr as ICCJ President, the Annual General Meeting elected Rabbi David Rosen as his successor. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that this appointment of one of Jewry's most erudite and open-minded personalities would bring new emphases and outreach to the ICCJ's debates and activities.

Earlier in the year the ICCJ appointed a new general secretary, Rev. Friedhelm Pieper, formerly youth pastor in Kiel, Germany with experience in inter-religious encounter who had spent some time in the USA. In view of his increasing interest in Jewish-Christian relations he also spent time in Israel under the "Study in Israel" programme initiated by Martin Stöhr.

Also on the occasion of the ICCJ's Executive Board main annual spring meeting, German Federal President Prof Dr Roman Herzog visited the Martin Buber House. The visit greatly helped to promote awareness of the support given by the City of Heppenheim and to strengthen relations with the local population through a growing programme of high quality lecture series.

Some relief regarding the continuing precarious financial situation was found. A generous legacy plus a donation of a personal German Leo Baeck prize awarded to German Chancellor Kohl, who earlier had visited the Martin Buber House, enabled the creation of the International Martin Buber Foundation generously supported by the Land Hesse.

In 1948 the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches had been attended by the ICCJ's first general secretary, Rev William W Simpson. Now, 50 years on, as the WCC General Assembly marked its 50th anniversary in Harare, Zimbabwe, the ICCJ, represented by Friedhelm Pieper and rabbis Ehud Bandel and Andrew Goldstein, participated as official Observer with access to the Plenary Meetings and as host for a session on Christian-Jewish relations. The laws of

the Sabbatical year and Jubilee of Exodus 23.10-12 and Leviticus 30 formed a theme running through the programme. It was foreseen that this ICCJ participation would lead to further meetings between the ICCJ and the WCC to search for ways in which the two bodies could best aim at deepening Christian theological understanding of the importance of the Jewish Christian dialogue for the Churches, also in regions where despite non-existing Jewish-Christian encounter anti-Judaism persisted.

1998 was also the year when for the first time a new member organisation dealing exclusively in trilateral context of the three Abrahamic Faiths, the UK Three Faiths Forum, co-founded in 1997 by Sheikh Zaki Badawi, Rev Marcus Braybrooke and Sir Sigmund Sternberg was admitted as full member of the ICCJ.

1999

Destruction and Renewal – The Role of Religion in Changing Society

At the invitation of the recently formed Ukrainian Interfaith Association ‘Steps to Unity’ the ICCJ grasped this first opportunity to facilitate encounter between representatives of its members from the West and the East by focusing on the way in which religion could play a constructive and reconstructive moral role in societies ravaged by decades of totalitarian communism. There was also need to help respond to the continuing collapse of ethical values in a society now facing rampant consumerism. Beyond that we also needed to understand the relationship between the different approaches and influences on new developments and the long history of religion in the Ukraine.

We met in Kiev, capital of a country that only nine years before had declared its independence after seventy years of Soviet dominance. The city is only some 50 km from Chernobyl, some of whose child victims had been visited a couple of years before by our Young Leadership. It is close to Babi Yar whose grim history of Jewish persecution immortalised in the poem by Yevgeny Yevtushenko. It was displayed throughout the conference venue - its concluding words haunting reminders of the task ahead

There is no Jewish blood that's blood of mine
But, hated with a passion that's corrosive
Am I by antisemites like a Jew,
And that is why I call myself a Russian

It became clear that for visitors and hosts alike the main thrust of the conference topic lay in “Destruction and Renewal”. We were challenged to renew our

understanding of a world that for so long had existed under official atheism, of a country that had also experienced Nazi occupation and the destruction of a once flourishing and creative Jewish community. A country where open encounter was still viewed with reticence if not downright suspicion. Once the cradle of Eastern European Orthodox Christianity, Ukrainian society was also facing numerous conflicts in relation to a renewal of the role of its different Churches. The opening event was attended by leaders and representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kiev Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the Kievan Pentecostal Church, the Lubavitch rabbi of the Central Synagogue, the All Ukrainian Jewish Congress.

Hovering over our deliberations was the Serb refusal to end the fighting in Kosovo, the NATO decision to bombard Serbia. The shadow of that war, the senseless cruelty of yet another ethnic killing brought home the awareness how fragile true peace even in Europe still was.

In addition to the main lectures and in particular the workshop topics which at first glance may have sounded familiar: *Religion and Conflict Resolution; Defining Jewish-Christian Values for a Just Society; Ethical Economic Perspectives; Particularity and Social Cohesion; Healing Wounds and Chernobyl 13 Years on – Religion, Ethics and Technology.*

In particular those of us from the West would not easily forget the fervour of the worshippers at the church in the Caves Monastery or the horror of the ravine at Babi Yar, nor in the heart of Kiev the fabulous St Sophia Cathedral and at the opposite end of the vast Sofyiska Ploshcha the rebuilt ancient 12th century monastery complex of St Mykhayl. Between the two was the statue of Bogdan Khmelnytski whose Cossacks in 1668 brought the worst devastation in the history of European Jewry before the Shoah. That conference in a city which also boasts some of the most beautiful and amazing architecture had a unique impact upon the ICCJ's further work of extending the boundaries and breaking down barriers.

Outstanding was a panel discussion, once again moderated by Stefan Schreiner involving the Egyptian Sheikh Zaki Badawi, Lucia Faltin from Slovakia, Rabbi Dr Norman Solomon from Britain, Dr Vera Volgemute from Latvia and Dr Viktor Yelensky from the Ukraine. It was evident that religion had not yet found its place in those new societies that were still strangled by identity crises brought about by the political changes. The ICCJ Theology Committee was challenged to work on a "Vision of the Just Society Based on Jewish and Christian Values".

The conference had been preceded by a **Women's seminar: *An Exchange of Current Reality in Today's Ukraine.*** Central to the discussions was the un-

expectedly open exploration of *How did you manage to keep your faith tradition alive 'before and after' Gorbachev? What is the daily reality if women in society and your faith community today? What can you tell us from the West about the religious history of Christians and Jews in the Ukraine in the 20th century.* As one of the participants, a professor of history pointed out the visitors from the West ought to bear in mind that:

- the Catholics in Ukraine had missed out Vatican II
- the Orthodox Christians had missed out the renewal in the West
- the Protestants had missed out Bonhoeffer, Tillich and Moltmann
- the Jews had missed out the creation of the State of Israel
- the Russians of the Ukraine had missed out the 20th century

There was little doubt that transmitting the insights gained by that unique bonding of women from across the countries played a vital part in workshops and other discussions held during the main conference.

The annual general meeting following the conference agreed admission to membership of the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI) upon proof of cooperation between it and the long-standing Israeli member, the Israel Interfaith Association (IAA). The ICCI's component of varying interfaith groups in Israel was bound to open also new avenues of encounter to others outside Israel eager to become contributors to the growing international awareness that – in the words of Hans Küng – peace among nations cannot be achieved without peace among religions.

LATIN AMERICA

One of the new general secretary's first tasks was to try and firm contacts with some of the Latin American countries including Argentina, Chile, Peru and Uruguay. He had occasion to visit Mexico and contact leading historians at two universities and Rabbi Rittner of the Mexican Jewish community. The small dialogue group hoped to set up a constitution for a *Confraternidad Judeo Cristiana de Mexico*. There was little doubt in the ICCJ Executive that to enable genuine cooperation with Latin American countries every effort needed to be made to strengthen regional cohesion and to communicate in Spanish as well as provide Spanish translation in our conferences.

THE ABRAHAMIC FORUM

Aware that the three Abrahamic faiths communities in their diversity have an important contribution to make to contemporary society ICCJ in 1995 decided

to broaden its activities through the creation of an Abrahamic Forum as one of its component councils to create a more effective basis for the trilateral encounter without losing its primary objective as the only International Christian-Jewish dialogue organisation. Over the years ICCJ conferences had been attended by individual Muslims from different countries, but scant attention had specifically been given to theological concerns among the three faiths. Centred in the Martin Buber House in Heppenheim, Germany, it was also felt that the ICCJ's international experience could bring some influence to bear on the challenges arising from the country's increasingly pluralistic and multi-religious society.

It came about that Berlin – more specifically the former East Berlin with its growing Turkish population – was chosen as the venue of a small cross age-group consultation of forty Jews, Christians and Muslims from Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Indonesia, Israel, Poland and the Ukraine who met to explore *the Concept of monotheism in the three traditions*. The topic had originally been chosen by an active trilateral section of the ICCJ's Young Leadership Council created in 1996.

Opening the consultation Friedhelm Pieper reminded participants that it was the concept of monotheism that basically brings our three faiths into a unique relationship fully aware however that our approaches to monotheism are different. The programme had been designed to better understand the other's concept and to explore ways how best to deal with the resulting tensions.

Dr James Aitken (then chair of the Young Leadership Council), Sheikh Zaki Badawi, and Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh introduced the consultation mainly in the context of growing globalisation yet stressing the need to gain understanding of what was appropriate and most important to talk about in dialogue with only two or with all three partners and appreciate that each brings a different agenda to this new venture. And this not least in light of a universally growing fundamentalism blinding the eye to needs, rights and aspirations of the other.

Open panel exchanges and discussion groups followed the main introductions. Although English and German translations were provided exchanges particularly at meal times in Arabic or Hebrew enhanced the exchange of more personal views. One of the most challenging conclusions came from a discussion group led by Rev. Dick Pruiksma: "The three religions should stop using history for their own ideological aims".

A first more formal step in extending the outreach of the ICCJ had been made.

INTO THE 21ST CENTURY – ICCJ'S ACTIVITIES AND CONFERENCES 2000 – 2009

2000

Like most people, we in the ICCJ, welcomed the new millennium with hopeful expectation that much that we had carefully planted in particular during the last part of the past century would come to fruition. In particular in relation to the growing need for a more open dialogue including Islam. An enquiry among the ICCJ membership showed that the majority would still expect the ICCJ to be an organisation exclusively or mainly engaged in the Jewish-Christian dialogue and its obviously unfinished agenda and take on the trilateral task first and foremost through its Abrahamic Forum. A more positive approach presented itself when it was decided to hold that year's conference in Seville, held in conjunction with the Spanish Centro de Estudios Judeo-Cristianos hosted by the Seville centred Fundacion de las Tres Culturas del Mediterráneo entitled

Convivencia – Enhancing Identity through Encounter between Jews, Christians and Muslims

The traditional meaning of “convivencia”

In Jewish tradition (Seder Elijahu Rabba Ch.9)

*I call heaven and earth to witness whether a person be Gentile or Jew,
Man or woman, male or female servant, solely according to their
Conduct does the Holy Spirit rest upon them*

In Christian tradition (Acts,10:34)

*I truly understand that God shows no particularity. But in every nation
anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him*

In Muslim tradition (Qur'an, Sura 49:13)

*O mankind Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you
Nations and tribes that ye may now one another: Lo! The noblest of you
In the sight of God is the best in conduct*

was displayed throughout the amazingly beautiful conference centre put at our disposal by the conference co-sponsors was the magnificent Moroccan 1992 Expo pavilion. The splendour of the opening event and its meal served to the 180 participants on the roof with the unique Sevillean reflection of the dusky sky promised conference days of enlightened discourse. The setting also

provided indication of the ICCJ's future outreach as just below the hotel flowed the river Guadalquivir down which Columbus sailed towards the "new world" in the fateful year 1492 when a history of "the Golden Age" of convivencia finally came to a brutal end. Passing Amerigo Vespucci Avenue as we drove daily from the hotel to the pavilion we were reminded of the beginning of a colonial era with its own ambiguities, including hope and refuge from persecution.

The keynote address was given by André Azoulay from Israel, Counsellor also to the King of Morocco. The king who also proclaims himself as leader and commander of all Christians, Jews and Muslims in his country, even though nowadays there were only a few Jewish communities in the country whose ancestors had already settled there some 2000 years ago. Stereotyping was one of the greatest dangers Mr Azoulay believed, whether among the faith communities, or among Northern and Southern Europeans.

There were only two other plenary lectures; the conference centred around 8 workshops covering the following topics:

The theology of Trilateral Dialogue;
Religious values for an increasingly secular society;
Liturgy and language in the modern world;
Religious nationalism and identity
Confronting conquest and persecution;
Human rights and religious values;
The family of Abraham facing the challenges of science and ecology;
Pride and prejudice – personal aspects of encounter and reconciliation

The Government of Andalucía as well as the authorities of Sevilla and Cordoba laid on a tour of Seville and visit to the Reales Alcázar and a trip to Cordoba where our joint histories of Convivencia, persecution and yet survival caught up with us. The visit included the ruins of the Medina Azahara, witness to a once powerful centre of commerce and culture, to the beautiful Mosque, the Mezquita transformed into a Christian cathedral and to the Jewish quarter. We stood by the statue of Maimonides and that of the great Muslim Ibn Rushd, known to the Western world as Averros, like Maimonides a philosopher and healer. Both victims of religious intolerance. It was fitting indeed that reflecting on so much history as well as our conference aim that when we visited the beautiful ancient synagogue, today serving only the gazes of tourists, we came together in singing the old affirmation composed from two Psalms :*"Ashrei Yashvei Beitekha"* – "Happy are those who dwell in Your house, who are ever singing Your praise, happy the people on whom such blessing falls, happy the people whose God is the Eternal One".

Though certainly not yet formally as an organisation, there was little doubt that on returning to their homes and countries the Seville participants would give more thought and leadership to making space for the growing relevance of cooperation and dialogue among the three Abrahamic faith communities.

2001

Hitherto the ICCJ's general background and activities had mainly been in the Northern Hemisphere. However, closer contact with Latin American members had more recently been forged and the members in that vast region had agreed that the Confraternidad Judeo-Cristiana del Uruguay, effectively the pioneer on that continent since 1958 would host the year's ICCJ conference in Montevideo. We owe much gratitude to Bishop Luis de Castillo, Pastor Armin Ihle, Mrs Sonia Kirchheimer and Rabbi Daniel Kripper for their enthusiastic and imaginative help in creating the programme and theme of the conference:

Spirituality and Ethical Commitment

Basic to the ICCJ's aim of bringing what is best in our respective traditions into the context of contemporary concerns was of specific relevance in a region that over past decades had been faced with considerable political and social change. Proof that we had struck the right chord was not only the large number of Latin Americans among the 200 participants from our world-wide membership but the fact that the conference was officially accorded the governmental designation "interes nacional". For the first time in the ICCJ's history the opening took place in a parliament building, the impressively neo-classical Palacio Legislativo attended by some 400 people including religious leaders, dignitaries from other Latin American countries, ambassadors of other ICCJ member countries.

There were three keynote addresses:

- Cardinal Walter Kasper. upon the retirement of Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy, the recently appointed president of the Commission Promoting Christian Unity and as such also president of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, was critical of the 2000 document "*Dominus Jesus*" by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, assured the conference of the Vatican's ongoing commitment to reconciliation and understanding between Catholics and Jews and the fight against all forms of antisemitism.

- Grand Rabbin Sirat of France expressed his profound belief in the ethical basis of the Prophets' visions that will inspire the irreversible process of Christian-Jewish dialogue, cooperation and renewal.

– Rev Dr Hans Ucko of the World Council of Churches offered the challenge to Jews and Christians alike to responsibly explore the cultural differences of the region paired with a different understanding of its history and human rights issues.

The wide arch of plenary as well as workshop topics dealing with the Christian Family and their values, Culture and peace of interreligious dialogue; the Afro-Umbadista religions and their form of cult worship; Afro-American cults and the biblical religions; The vicariate of solidarity – ecumenical and interreligious testimony, poverty and the marginalized drew us beyond the usual topics addressed in the Northern Hemisphere.

For the first time in the ICCJ's history there was a general open workshop specifically addressing *burning religious issues of the moment*. Led by Rabbi David Rosen, Father Prof John T Pawlikowski and Dr Emilio Castro the free-wheeling discussion included the history of monotheism; the widespread phenomenon of marriage between adherents of different religions; and one of the stumbling blocks when trying to transmit dialogue issues to church or synagogue communities – namely the fact that documents from Church sources are not widely known at grass-root level. While Christians are insufficiently informed about the history of both Judaism and Christianity and the relations between the two religions, Jews, often also insufficiently informed about the past also tend to be insufficiently informed about the present and about the realities of progress in Jewish-Christian relations. Special attention was devoted to

– the 2000 Vatican statement *Dominus Jesus*

and to

– *Dabru Emet*, (Appendix VIII) the first Jewish response since *Nostra Aetate*. To a brief presentation of its general impact on Jewish society Tikva Krymer-Kensky, one of its authors spoke in particular of the 'One God – One Book' provision, concluding that the reaction showed a need for better Jewish education of Jews about Judaism so they would feel less threatened by aspects of the interfaith dialogue.

Dr Emilio Castro speaking from the experience of the Southern Hemisphere urged that attention must also be given by those practised in the dialogue of the Northern Hemisphere to the missionary identity of religions and that the fearful word 'conversion' must be looked upon with honesty and humility, not least in context of South America's tragic history of conquest, colonisation. The people of the Southern Hemisphere were not part of Western Europe and do

not feel in the same degree the burden of the Shoah on their conscience. The impact of such diverse cultural and historical experiences must responsibly be taken on board by the ICCJ as an international umbrella so that in the words of *Dabru Emet* “separately and together we must work to bring justice and peace to our world”.

The topics covered by the conference indeed provided the right setting for the ICCJ Theology Committee to present its paper *A Jewish and Christian Understanding of a Just Society* (Appendix IX).

Two outstanding workshops were led by the ICCJ's Young Leadership Council (YLC):

South America – the promised land? Freedom of religions, religious views on land reform and ownership and a practical one and welcome chance for encounter with local young people consisting of a four hour visit to a shanty town in Montevideo, the Barrio Borro. The route took them through areas of high unemployment and lack of sanitation. Yet a major feature of the Barrio group is their expertise as drummers, competing in Uruguayan national drum contests. The visitors were invited to try their skills and new form of dialogue was being born.

As so often in ICCJ conferences it was the women's group who brought to the fore the pain, bewilderment as well as the challenges to traditional family structures created by modernity. The Uruguayan Confraternidad had made considerable efforts to motivate local and from just across the border Argentinean women to participate.

Two superbly led workshops discussed *Gender perspectives in the Jewish-Christian dialogue and women in Latin America* and *Religion and spirituality in their daily lives*.

Conference participants also agreed a statement about the situation in the Middle East condemning the practice of provocative rhetoric, vengeance and violence against all human beings and holy sites of all religious groups.

In the words of the Uruguayan poet Ruben Kanalenstein:

Peace will not be an agreement
But the harmonious memory of the presence, the prophets...
For this is what we look for: the beginning,
The reason of the beginning and the beginning of reason,
The inauguration of hope

As we bade each other goodbye in that Southern Hemisphere mid-winter, little did we know that a few months later, on 11th of September a heinous man-made catastrophe and manifestation of evil intent would change our lives forever and worse: that ‘the other’ in common perception would become ‘the enemy’ and ‘a terrorist’. There was talk of “ground zero”. But whatever was destroyed that day of human life or property, it only increased our determination that what was begun in the wake of the 20th century atrocities would continue. Possibly with shifted emphases and new awareness, but there was no ‘ground zero’ for dialogue and certainly not in the new Europe.

2002

Therefore the ICCJ responded with alacrity to the invitation of its most recent new member, the Latvian Kristiesu un Ebreju Padome to hold that year’s annual meeting and conference in Riga. The world was indeed opening up and there was another break-through into a country that was different from other satellites of the former Soviet Union. Our host country had not been perceived as a political entity until the middle of the 19th century, its borders having only been fixed since World War I and it had then only been governed as an independent state until German occupation in 1940, and then again since 1991. So we met in a country still deeply engrossed in re-defining its identity, where the different Christian Churches for decades under atheist totalitarian rule had tried to maintain a vestige of their traditions and suddenly found themselves confronted with modernity, and in particular whose small surviving Jewish population was slowly re-emerging from untold suffering during the Shoah and under Soviet rule. Under this new Latvian national self-awareness the Jews had the additional problem of needing to be fluent in Latvian instead of Russian if they wanted to acquire Latvian nationality status. Programme preparation was possible only under the expert guidance of Stefan Schreiner and Archbishop Elmars Rozitis and his wife Vera. The conference title chosen was

Faithful to One’s Tradition in the Presence of the Other

In his opening words ICCJ President Rabbi David Rosen spoke of the truly historic fact that we could meet in this most beautiful city of a country that phoenix-like risen and even had experienced a restored Jewish presence. The opening event was attended by religious and political dignitaries to confirm what Prof Ruvin Ferber, Jewish co-president of the new organisation quoted from the Hassidic tradition “that it is senseless to fight the darkness without lighting a candle, albeit still a flickering one.” The keynote address was given by the country’s president Dr Vaira Vike-Freiberga. In presenting the annual ICCJ Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award to the young representative of the Jubilee Movement International for Economic and Social Justice as well as to Dr Klaus

Schwab, founder of the World Economic Forum which also has a religious advisory component, she underlined the need to transmit the interfaith dialogue also to the social and economic concerns that were so important to creating and maintaining peace in the community.

Plenary lectures dealt with The Jewish experience in the Baltic countries; Christian Diversity and its Impact on Interreligious Dialogue; Re-thinking the Covenant – new Christian and Jewish approaches; Rebellious reading of Covenant texts and images; interreligious relations in the wake of September 11.

Workshops addressed Religious renaissance in the Baltic countries after the era of atheism; Religion and identity in the diaspora; Challenges of globalisation for religion and society; A religious response to refugees and repatriates; the quest for a just society.

While seemingly pre-occupied with the present most beautiful of cities: Latvia too is one of those countries where in the words of Job we found engraved on a stone *O earth, do not cover my blood, let my outcry find a resting place* we did as usual revisit a painful past. And so we visited Riga's former Jewish quarter, the small ghetto created in 1941 to hold 30,000 Jews most of whom were murdered in the streets of Riga and the surrounding forest. The ghetto that later served as a stop for the fiendishly efficient movement of Jews from all over Europe towards systematic extermination. We continued to the Bikierneki Memorial on the outskirts of Riga set in a beautiful woodland area, the heart-breaking memorial of hundreds of small rocks straining upwards recording the places that once were called home. We were led in an unforgettable *Yizkor*, a brief memorial service sharing Proverbs and Psalms ending with the 121st Psalm – each with our own thoughts, memories and our determination to carry on at all levels of dialogue and encounter.

At the invitation of the small but vibrant Jewish community the concluding session took place in their proudly restored multi-purpose community centre re-uniting them with their past and their present aspirations, treating us to a delightful display of dancing by their youngest members and a memorable buffet. We had forged new friendships and gained new insights into our connection with and obligation to a hitherto unexplored part of Europe.

The conference marked the conclusion of David Rosen's two years presidency. He had inspired and led the ICCJ through four years of massive political and social changes due also in no small part to the confidence and respect for his wide knowledge and open minded attitude granted to him by all partners. In the course of the annual general meeting Father Prof John T Pawlikowski was unanimously elected as President. In light of the ICCJ's growing membership

and John Pawlikowski's intention to visit numerous countries to strengthen members' activities, it was resolved that the President's term of office – and by implication that the other officers and Executive Board members – be extended to a three year period.

The annual general meeting also confirmed admission of a second Canadian member Christian-Jewish Relations in Canada, and due to the re-orientation of the USA NCCJ as indicated by its change of name from National Conference of Christians and Jews to National Conference for Community and Justice and the formation by a growing number of centres and institutions with a religious emphasis, The USA Council of Centres on Jewish-Christian Relations (CCJR). Though CCJR's membership was centred in different locations in the USA, it operated at the Centre for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College under the leadership of Dr Phil Cunningham.

2003

Serious concerns were raised throughout the year as the ICCJ membership worldwide was confronted with renewed ugly spectres of racism, xenophobia and in particular antisemitism in the guise of anti-Zionism. A foremost task for the ICCJ and its members has been condemnation of labelling the Jewish community in all its multi-faceted diversity from Israel to the Diaspora, as “the Jews” regardless of their views or political opinions. It is a dangerous and virulent error that fore-closes on dialogue and because of its blinkered view, makes conflict inevitable. As for Israel, what was at stake was the maintenance of Jewish values including the vision of the kind of state its founders had aimed to have. A Jewish state that is particularistically Jewish but at the same time universally significant.

And so the year's conference theme was chosen to make space for an in-depth look at the way we view each other:

Imagining the Other – Jews, Christians and Muslims in Modernity between self-determination and the imagined other

Twenty years after the last ICCJ conference held in the Netherlands the ICCJ gladly accepted the invitation of the *Overlegorgaan van Joden en Christenen in Nederland* (OJEC) to host the 2003 conference. Thanks to the initiative of Pastor Dick Pruiksma, a member also of the ICCJ Executive Board, and the academic leadership of Rector Prof Herwi Rikhof of the Catholic University of Utrecht and its Dean and Chair for Rabbinic Culture Prof Judith Frishman, the ICCJ for the first time was presented with a conference framework, prepared in close cooperation with two long-established centres of learning, and the Protestant Faculty of Theology at the University of Utrecht.

Over the past years it had become increasingly evident that as Jews and Christians had moved from the past into the present working together to provide a common vision for the future, the growing influx of Muslims into Europe meant that every opportunity must be sought to include them in our deliberations. What better setting than the historic city of Utrecht in Holland, the country which throughout history has been a special meeting place between peoples and cultures. The congenial Woudschoten conference facilities set in beautiful woodland half an hour away from Utrecht and the long daylight hours gave time also to personal exchanges of experience in so many different parts of the world and to compare different approaches including learning about the unique Dutch experience of *pillarisation*, the long practised deliberate separation according to religious background, social and educational level which however no longer served the needs and realities of an increasingly multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society including 80000 Muslims mainly from Asia and North Africa.

Another first: The keynote address *Ideals of universal humanity – the gap between the ideal and reality* was presented by the member of the Netherlands State Council and former Minister of Justice, Prof Dr Ernst Hirsch-Ballin in the impressive historic setting of Utrecht University's Academie Gebouw, the very hall where in 1579 the Unie van Utrecht was signed leading to the Netherlands constitution generally seen as the first recognition of freedom of religion. He drew comparison with the 2003 European Convention draft treaty entitled 'United in its Diversity.'

The mixture of increasing academic outreach in the Jewish-Christian dialogue covered by plenary lectures such as "*The grammars of identity; the us and them; the grammars of orientalism or reverse mirror imaging*"; *The tragedy of orientalism and the emergence of occidental discourse among Muslims treating Jews, Jewish nationalism and Judaism as inalterably anti-Islamic and anti-Oriental, Jewish identity between acculturation and self-determination – dilemmas of a minority*; and most impressively Prof Riffat Hassan from Pakistan on *Islam beyond the orientalist images* and the workshops dealing with pressing contemporary issues worked well.

The well led workshops included: *Limits of tolerance and thought – hiding identity; Women in conflict – women extremists; Art and reconciliation; On Levinas – the stranger in modern philosophy – peacemaker or intruder?; Did the West and the East learn anything from each other?; The contemporary revival of mission – a danger for dialogue; Assimilation and self-determination; Confronting extremism and extremists within the communities*. Of special interest was a workshop dealing with *Dabru Emet* in conjunction with the remarkable 2002 document *A Sacred Obligation – Rethinking Christian Faith in Relation to Juda-*

ism and the Jewish People (Appendix X) signed by twenty-two leading Catholic and Protestant theologians and scholars. There was no doubt that both papers generated the awareness for the need also within the Jewish community about its own perspectives of a theological exploration of Christianity.

The concluding session was addressed by Cardinal William Keeler of Baltimore who referred to those two papers in a general overview of the more recent history of the Vatican and the Jewish People. Aware that the question of renewed stronger Christian missionary activity evoked bitter memories and reaction among Jews he spoke of the need for Jews together with their Christian dialogue partners to deal with the concept of mission central to the understanding of the New Testament in the spirit of honesty and open mindedness that has been reached over so many years of encounter. How fitting it therefore was that as a highlight of that concluding session veterans and newcomers alike witnessed one of those inspiring moments in ICCJ conferences when Sir Sigmund Sternberg presented his friend, the frail nonagenarian Cardinal Willebrands to whom the Jewish-Christian dialogue owed so much, with the Annual ICCJ International Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award.

The three intellectually and emotionally challenged days were rounded off with a joint service in Dominie Dick Pruiksmas's beautiful Laurens Church with its 18th century Bätz organ, with a choral presentation and a delicious meal laid on by his congregation. The walls of the church resounded with the babble of languages, much friendship and laughter, but also much talk of how best to employ the work of past decades in the service of an increasingly complex but also impatient world driven by global quick communication that so obviously also needed time to rebuild and reflect on new relationships.

The conference had been preceded by a **Women's conference: Human Rights, Women and Religions – Current Perspectives**. Chaired by Gunnel Borgegård main issues addressed centred on the question whether personal life actually also has to do with human rights, and if so – how to create a human rights culture; the reality and the hope of raising children today in a world of much fear. Issues courageously explored in lectures by Mary Boys, New York and Eva Maria Lassen, historian from Copenhagen.

At the annual general meeting, the new President, John Pawlikowski confirmed the need not just to imagine the other, but to get to know the situation in our member countries and beyond through personal contact and visits. His first year as President had seen numerous visits: to the CCJ in London, to New Zealand, Austria, Canada, Chile and Peru. Further visits in the coming months were programmed for Australia and Ireland. Changes were afoot once again because due to policy changes in Friedhelm Pieper's church, the Northelbian

Lutheran church, which would have significantly impacted on its continuation as ICCJ General Secretary, he decided to resign from the ICCJ and resume activity in his church. The time had also come in light of world-wide changes, political as well as financial for the Executive Board to re-define and prioritise the objectives of the ICCJ as well as its structure, before engaging a new general secretary. That process was bound to take a little time. Meanwhile there was physical renewal as the Martin Buber House, our headquarters since moving it from England was due for an external as well as internal facelift. Most of the renovation costs to be borne by the landlords, the regional authorities who also put intermediate alternative office accommodation at our disposal. In addition John Pawlikowski was glad to confirm that following an invitation by the Episcopal Academy of the Aachen Diocese the next conference would be held there in

2004

on the theme *Changing Borders*.

The border town of Aachen which in the perception of European history has stood for the idea of a Western i.e. Christian Europe based on the demarcation between Occidental, i.e. Latin Christianity and the Orient i.e. Islam with Jews at times acting as the link between them, had throughout history also witnessed the first attempts at establishing cross-cultural contacts and inter-religious Christian-Jewish-Muslim encounters in Europe. As it was the city that witnessed the crowning of Charlemagne at a time when one single currency was common throughout Europe, it served as an excellent setting for three days of exploration of a number of major concerns of our age when traditional boundaries affecting the political, socio-economic and cultural conditions particularly in Central and Eastern Europe no longer separate but interlock. Yet these boundaries and certainly not divergent historical memories have not vanished but rather gained in profile and have created new seemingly unbreakable walls. Barely ten years after Samuel Huntington's publication of the *Clash of Civilization*, a thesis dismissed by many, reality seemed to prove him right. Special thanks for invaluable guidance and the preparation of the programme were due to Dr Hans Hermann Henrix, Director of the Episcopal Academy of the Diocese of Aachen, who hosted us graciously, and to Prof Dr Stefan Schreiner.

Different from previous conference programmes at Aachen the emphasis was on intense participant's interaction. For the first time in the history of the ICCJ the annual Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award for sustained intellectual contribution to the furtherance of interreligious understanding that had impact beyond the borders of the recipient's country was awarded to a Muslim, His Eminence Dr Mustafa Cerić, Grand Mufti of Bosnia-Herzegovina, who also presented the only conference lecture at the opening event in the famous Aachen Town Hall's

historic coronation hall. He raised the question: *What is our time? Is it a time of conflict or of dialogue; a time of intolerance or of tolerance; a time of violence or non-violence; a time of fear or of hope; a time of mistrust or of trust; and above all a time of historical myths of the argument of historical responsibility and of strong political and moral commitment.* He urged that a common road from cosmogony to eschatology of Judaism, Christianity and Islam could lead to a middle path of the ethics of sharing.

Responses to this challenging opening were given by Rabbi David Rosen and Dr Josef Homeyer, Bishop of Hildesheim. Both touched upon the violence inherent in religion and the fact that since nine-eleven, religion seems to have no language and no image. Trying to tease out the way religion is wrapped up with the very question of human identity he argued that religion seeks to give meaning and understanding to who we are as individuals, as part of families, communities, peoples, nations and beyond. It was indeed a time when of incredible capacity for evil but also a time when as children of Abraham we have to try and give reality to the injunction to be a blessing for humanity. But before achieving this we must first of all try and be a blessing to one another. Food for thought and discussion in the workshops and panels dealt with:

- *The world seen from the centre of Europe – or the Jewish, Christian and Muslim foundations of western civilization;*
- *Existing borders – Are there current limits of dialogue? – Testing and recognizing borders*
- *Trespassing borders and beyond borders – Presentation and misrepresentation of The Other in press and media – The diplomacy of dialogue*
- *Israel and Palestine – Searching for borders while dreaming of their absence (one of the most moving panel presentations from an Israeli, a Palestinian and a Mennonite openly addressing the dreams and reality)*
- *Creating new borders and moving boundaries – The descent into new ghettos through Introversion – Imposing one’s concept on the Other.*

By way of light but insightful relief yet so relevant to our contemporary search for mutual understanding, in commemoration of the 800th anniversary of the death of Maimonides, there was also a scholarly discussion between Stefan Schreiner and Andrew Goldstein chaired by Sheikh Abduljalil Sajid on *Jews, Christians and Muslims in the perspective of Maimonides.*

Immediately preceding the Aachen conference John Pawlikowski, David Rosen, Gunnel Borgegård and Rev Marcus Braybrooke had led a well attended ICCJ

workshop at the World Parliament of Religions conference in Barcelona, giving the ICCJ's Christian-Jewish dialogue higher visibility. This had become particularly important as Judaism and the Jewish-Christian dialogue had surfaced in a new way giving a new understanding of the global face of Judaism.

Also in the course of the year John Pawlikowski had visited Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, France and Sweden.

An exploration of Christian self-understanding as a result of the Jewish-Christian encounter.

The Jewish-Christian dialogue, which in many ways contributed to redressing the relationship between Jews and Christians, is a phenomenon of the 20th century. Christians were alerted to the living reality of Judaism and realised that the anti-Jewish teaching, anti-Judaism, which had been part of Christian tradition, needed to be properly and forcefully addressed. Many churches involved themselves in profound study of Judaism and listened to the self-understanding of Jews. Documents were passed and recommended to Christians for study and action. The Roman-Catholic Church with its more centralised teaching authority pioneered in many ways in this recasting of the Christian tradition in relation to Jews and Judaism. Many encyclicals and other Papal and Episcopal documents have become known beyond their Roman-Catholic constituency.

However, the Protestant churches cannot be subsumed under one teaching authority. The World Council of Churches is not an equivalent to the Vatican and its centralised authority. Member churches such as Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox churches have each their own teaching authority. No matter how many declarations are passed by the WCC; their only authority is in relation to how much churches will and can embrace each pronouncement. Individual member churches of the WCC have also studied living Judaism and have had Jewish scholars enabling the churches to rethink anti-Jewish traditions. But this does not mean that what can be embraced in one church is necessarily embraced by the other.

There are some foundational documents and statements, around which the WCC can rally an overwhelming support, such as the denouncements of antisemitism or the Ecumenical Considerations on Jewish-Christian Dialogue. The diversity in the Protestant world and between Orthodox and Protestant Christians make it difficult to find agreement on theological matters. The member churches in unison have therefore found it more important to address political issues, where the absence of peace and justice are absent. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is in a case in point, where WCC member churches have

united in protest against a protracted occupation and an end to violence in all forms. The Jewish partners in the dialogue perceived some of these statements as one-sided and unfair and have to some extent weakened the relationship between Jewish organisations and the WCC.

The time had come for the ICCJ to discuss these matters in depth. Therefore at the suggestion of Rev Dr Hans Ucko of the WCC a small consultation between the WCC and the ICCJ attended by leading Christian theologians took place in London at the end of the year co-sponsored also by the Cardinal Bernardin Centre at Catholic Theological Union, Chicago and the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations, Cambridge.

The aim of this meeting and the ongoing process was to explore, if and how the **findings of Jewish-Christian dialogue relate to Christian self-understanding**. The Faith and Order Commission within the WCC would need a summary on four decades of Christian-Jewish studies: In particular also how well have the discussions, dialogue and research really entered the mainstream of Christian consciousness. Has it changed its self-understanding and consciousness? Is there still a supersessionist self-understanding of the church? It was agreed in the first place to set up working teams on various themes and to discuss the outcome at a second meeting of this group in order to move the essence of Christian-Jewish dialogue into mainstream Christianity. The year of the 40th anniversary of Nostra Aetate appeared a good link and starting point for our endeavour. Though fundamentally a Christian discussion that there cannot be any reflection about Jewish revelation without thinking of the Jewish people today, it obviously also impacts on the Jewish community. It was therefore important that the ICCJ was represented also by Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, Dr Edward Kessler and Ruth Weyl.

Summing up the two days of intense discussion (details and papers available from the Martin Buber House) and trying to clarify a way ahead, bearing in mind also the fact that the dialogue agenda with different Churches would be on different levels, for instance with the Russian Orthodox, a primary question would also be: “who are we addressing”?

A first agenda for further discussion between the ICCJ and the WCC was proposed.

- Bible (including hermeneutics)
- God
- People of God (position of 3rd world peoples; the difference in a more practical approach to the Bible in Africa etc) are we the people of God or is the term reserved for Israel?

- Land (Land and ethnicity)
- Dialogues (particularity of Jewish/Christian dialogue, but also Jewish/Christian/Muslim)
- Liturgy and worship
- Creation, redemption, healing of the world
- Christian faith in a pluralistic society
- Imago Dei – Anthropology – Theology
- Soteriology and Christology

Utmost honesty in the ongoing deliberations was essential, including the question of supersessionism.

Hans Ucko was to take it back to the Faith and Order Commission in preparation of a further joint meeting relating to its proposed statement on the Nature and Mission of the Church.

2005

Twenty Five years after the last ICCJ's conference in the USA when the topic dealt with the battle for human rights after the Shoah, the ICCJ gratefully responded to an invitation by the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) and the Council of Centres for Jewish Christian Relations (CCJR), co-hosted by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) and the Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Center at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago to move once again across the Atlantic for a conference this time in Chicago, addressing

Healing the World – Working Together – Religion in Global Society

Aware that in addition to the old wounds of prejudice, historical separation and racial discord there was need to confront the new wounds caused by mass migrations, as well as changing the boundaries as well as attitudes, of mindless violence in a world searching for values. It was indeed a logical topic following the issues explored at the Aachen conference.

Among the 220 participants mainly from ICCJ member countries, there were also people from Tunisia and Turkey.

The opening keynote address was presented by Rev Dr Samuel Kobia, General Secretary of the WCC who touched upon tensions in relation to the situation in Israel including a call for divestment from companies that profit from the Israel Palestinian conflict. A call he described as being in context of working for reconciliation. To this Rabbi David Rosen gave a spirited response stating that the divestment call far from furthering reconciliation only increased the climate of

delegitimation of Israel. He dismissed the argument that it was right to use economic leverage in the pursuit of peace and justice. The conflict he said was territorial, each party seeing itself as having just claims. Placing exclusive blame on one side while ignoring assault and violence against it was bound to compound the conflict. He also referred to the resurgence of related antisemitism in Europe. Fifty years on since the 1948 First Assembly in the wake of the Shoah which recognised the State of Israel, he would have wished to hear in Chicago a condemnation of those who were continuing the propagation of anti-Semitic myths in the shape of an anti-Israel stance. However he hoped that the very fact that Dr Kobia's presence set a sign of a new spirit of engagement and consultation with the Jewish Community.

It was the first time in the history of ICCJ conferences that an address of such political nature introducing the work of the days ahead caused such a painful storm. The conference authorised the ICCJ to issue and widely circulate the following statement:

Investment in Israel/Palestine Peace

These are very difficult and sensitive times for Israelis and Palestinians, both of whom need support from the international community to try to ensure peace and justice for all may prevail.

Whenever possible, there should be international investment in projects which alleviate suffering, lower tension and promote economic cooperation.

Israel is currently preparing for disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. It is of singular importance for Israel to feel that it has the understanding of the wider world and in particular from religious institutions, whose resolution of violent conflicts, as it prepares for withdrawal. It is also important for Palestinians to feel that they have a viable economic future in the area.

Negative or hostile gesture can confirm extremists, on all sides, in their intransigence and make it more difficult for people to play an effective role in mediation.

A greater international understanding needs to be built concerning the complex political, theological, social and cultural elements of the Israeli/Palestinian situation.

The International Council of Christians and Jews calls for support for all those working for peace in Israel/Palestine and encourages those endeavouring to make a positive difference on the ground.

As a vast area of mutual concerns was covered, below just a few topics that would continue to engage the ICCJ in the years to come:

One of the workshops *Reconciliation Efforts in Israel/Palestine* led by two of Israel's most experienced leaders in the field of these efforts in Israel and

Palestine, Rabbi Dr Ron Kronish and Ambassador Shmuel Hadas gave proof of the ICCJ's and its memberships' continuing commitment to contribute without bias to a solution in a region that has outreaches far beyond the Middle East.

Despite so many still prevailing shortcomings in our dialogue, we have come a long way since our New York conference 25 years ago.

The good, the bad and the ugly was the topic of Attorney Azam Nizamuddin's presentation in the conference's in-depths analysis of *The role of religion in the three monotheistic faith communities in American society*. He shared the presentation with Dr David Elcott, New York and Tom Roberts of Kansas City, Missouri. The resulting thought-provoking discussion from the floor was followed by an equally frank analysis of *the Role of religion in European society* by Clifford Longley, England and Rev Katja Kriener, Germany.

Comparative workshops on the *Role of religion in the public life of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South America* were proof of the diversity of inter-relationships, including antisemitism and racism in light of the respective geographical, cultural but not least also historical experiences. There was unanimity that all the same, a stage has been reached as a movement under the umbrella of the ICCJ to go beyond and address contemporary issues of a more political nature such as the war in Iraq, the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, scientific developments, poverty and new 'ethnic cleansing'. A global society approach was delivered by Nashville's Prof Amy Jill Levine's lecture entitled *Liberation theology and multiculturalism, the globalisation of antisemitism*. In this context responses to new emerging issues were explored by Dr Georgette Bennett of the Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum Center in New York on how to deal with *Religion in the workplace*, and by Dr Tom Naim and Rabbi Byron Sherwin in relation to *Biomedical issues*.

In that 40th anniversary of the Vatican Declaration *Nostra Aetate* in which so many founder members of the ICCJ had at the time been involved John Pawlikowski and Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg looked towards its future not least in light of the growing complexity due to newly emergent conservative trends in the Catholic church. Related workshop topics such as *Theology of the Land in Judaism*, eloquently presented by Dr Edward Kessler, England and Rabbi Eugene Korn, New York, as well as *Theological issues in Jewish-Christian relations* by Dr Phillip Cunningham, Boston, Dr Martin Forward, Aurora University USA, and Dr Edward Kessler; and *Tensions in Jewish-Christian relations* by Dr David Elcott, Dr Eugene Fisher, Washington and Rev Dr Hans Ucko of the WCC, Geneva which included concern with WCC sponsorship of literature in Africa which stressed the anti-Jewish passages in the New Testament. All these made for lively and at times controversial discussions at the tables during

mealtimes. There was also the encouraging presentation a *new Union of Reform Judaism programme on interreligious relations* by Dr Judith Hertz, New York and Rabbi David Sandmel, Chicago.

One of the urgent issues *Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations from historical attitudes to present-day realities* discussed by Dr John Borelli, Washington, Rev Malcolm Weisman, England and Prof M'hammed Fantar, Tunisia came up with seven guideline points for the trilateral dialogue still in its infancy:

- *There shall be no proselytism*
- *There shall be no anathema*
- *No one shall claim that one religion is better than another*
- *Everyone shall have the right to worship their own god*
- *No one can have access to absolute truth*
- *The profane cannot contain the sacred*
- *Everyone can choose their own way of approaching, recognizing or invoking the sacred*

Dr Mazher Ahmed of the Chicago Batavia Islamic Centre, Dr Mary Boys a leading US theologian and Dr Judith Narrowe, professor of anthropology at Dalarna University, Sweden led a very well attended Women's Council workshop chaired by ICCJ Vice-President Gunnel Borgegård *Embracing the whole – two biblical women's testimonies: Hannah's Song and Mary's Magnificat*.

How refreshing it was to round off the discussions with a plenary exploration of the *Future of Jewish-Christian relations* and in particular the question of *Dialogue where next?* Posed by the ICCJ Young Leadership whose chair, Debbie Young pointed at the importance of drawing younger people into the existing framework of dialogue because of their new approach and non self-restricting outreach to a generation that is not marked by the earlier history of the 20th century but confronted with new manifestations of similar evils want to be part of the wider dialogue and asking for recognition of their ability to teach children and teens to learn that being different can be a good thing.

At the concluding luncheon Francis Cardinal George, Archbishop of Chicago urged that as believers and representatives of our faith communities we remain visible in the face of growing secularism, ensuring that religion will not simply be privatised. Also to affirm the multi-religious society as the framework of freedom rather than the growing perception of the freedom of desire, an aspect of consumerism.

In November, the ICCJ Abrahamic Forum held a consultation – co-sponsored by the Federal German Ministry of Interior and the Konrad Adenauer Founda-

tion and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe - at the Sarajevo Art Gallery (Umjetnica galerija). Expertly organised by Prof Stefan Schreiner it was entitled

Visions of a Just Society: Fears, hopes and chances for living together in a globalized world from Jewish, Christian and Muslim perspectives.

Aware that historically as well as from a contemporary point of view the emphases and needs of the trilateral encounter varied even within Europe from region to region, the focus of the consultation was on South-Eastern Europe. Participants including representatives from Bosnia, Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Egypt, Hungary, Iran, Poland and Sidney Shipton from the ICCJ's UK member the Three Faiths Forum.

Main themes addressed were: *The Image of Man in the three traditions; the respective concepts of Individual and Community; Common ethical values and moral obligations derived from their 'Divine Commandments'; Human rights – pertaining to individuals and/or the community; The impact of religious traditions on national and international politics for good or evil; Separation of church and state – the meaning of religion in secular societies; the Islamic state as an alternative to Western democracy; Legal implications for and everyday experiences of Muslims in the Western diaspora; Legal implications for and everyday experiences of non-Muslims in Islamic societies.*

The fact that greetings were delivered in person by HE Vinko Cardinal Puljic (Roman Catholic), Episcop Dr Maksum Vasiljevic (Orthodox) and the Chairman of the Jewish Community, Jacob Finci followed by a lecture given by Dr Mustapha Ceric, Grand Mufti of the Muslim Community bodes well for all who live, work and pray in Sarajevo. An excursion to the Franciscan Monastery of Fojnica, high in the hills above Sarajevo also provided opportunity for a more private exchange of experiences, concerns and hope between the participants.

This concentration on a region with its specific history provided a unique opportunity to centre attention on the carefully chosen topics which would in follow-up conferences be creatively examined also on other geographical and political backgrounds. It was agreed that follow-up conferences should concentrate in the first place on:

- *non-Muslims in Islamic societies: theory and practice of dhimma in its modern interpretation;*
- *Muslims in the Western Diaspora – legal status and everyday experiences;*
- *Exploring meaning and role of religion in modern societies;*

- *Ideas and concepts of an Islamic state as alternative to Western democracies;*
- *Religion and politics – the impact of religious traditions on national and international politics*
- *Repentance, forgiveness and peace as a religious and political concept.*

(The full proceedings of that consultation are published under ISBN-13:978-3-00-19283-8 and ISBN-10: 3-00-019283-2)

As John Pawlikowski pointed out: It was also the year when the ICCJ celebrated 25 years since its head office was moved from England to Heppenheim and commemorated the 40th anniversary of Martin Buber's death. The mounting challenges facing the ICCJ required stronger financial support, particularly as general economic conditions have reduced traditional streams of support and though financial support by the City of Heppenheim, the Hesse as well as the Federal Government, the time had come for an aggressive response to the situation possibly including some restructuring of priorities.

2006

Encounter with History – Learning for the Future – Dealing with Memory

Austria officially was still declaring itself as the first victim of Nazi occupation when in support of their dialogue activities in 1978 we held a conference in Vienna entitled *The Rise and Development of Neo-Nazism and Other Forms of Political Extremism* and also discussed the move of our head office from England.

Considering that an Austrian representative was among the first who six decades ago participated in creating what eventually became the ICCJ, and also that the Austrian organisation celebrated this year its 50th anniversary and following changes in Austria's official stance, we were delighted to accept their invitation to hold the 2006 conference and annual general meeting in Vienna.

We owe much gratitude and appreciation in particular to the organisation's president Prof Helmut Nausner and its general secretary Dr Markus Himmelbauer for helping with the structure of a conference that uniquely centred on many visits replacing the usual series of theme related workshops.

An outstanding experience was a session in the Austrian Parliament's Palais Epstein nowadays the venue of international events. The impressive building situated among the House of Parliament, the Opera and other buildings was the creation of the 19th century Jewish industrialist and banker Knight Gustav

von Epstein. Referring to the conference theme a message from Dr Andreas Kohl the Parliament's president clearly referring to his country's more recent history urged a moral attitude to history particularly as today's liberal and democratic societies seem to have no coherent view of the past. In evoking questions of history and memory the accusation is raised that it may be a disguised form of religion as truly words like memory, forgiving the healing power of knowing the truth, catharsis etc. belong to the vocabulary of religions. How relevant and important therefore was the fact that the year's annual International Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award was presented on the occasion to Prof Dr Kurt Schubert, who had specially come for the occasion from his hospital bed, in recognition of this courageous scholar's lifelong engagement as a believing Catholic in the Christian-Jewish dialogue and for having been instrumental in ensuring that the concepts of Nostra Aetate are applied throughout the Austrian Catholic Church. The laudation by Stefan Schreiner covering Prof Schubert's sixty years search for the causes of antisemitism and theological answers included his words *Between my Christianity and Judaism there exists a somehow metaphysical connection. Jews are part of us, we are of the one and same Covenant entered with God.*

We experienced history in the making when in the same building we were received by Dr Hannah Lessing, director of the Austrian National Fund established in 1995 as a long overdue gesture of reparation and reconciliation and admission that Austria could no longer evade admission of its cooperation with Nazi Germany. Hanna Lessing's tales of sensitive and compassionate contact with thousands of individuals all over the world to facilitate financial compensation showed an impressive human face of dealing with memory and difficult historical bridge building.

The keynote address was given by Dr Jiri Grusa, Director of Austria's Diplomatic Academy, former Czech ambassador to Germany and Austria, and author drawing on experiences and observations from a Central European point of view. That Central Europe which he had once called the continent's Bermuda triangle because so much havoc had emanated from Vienna, Munich and Prague where modern nationalism, a sort of secularised religion had found its roots.

Other plenary lectures covered:

- *The history of the Christian-Jewish relationship in Austria from the 1848 revolution to the rise of national socialism* by Prof Schubert but due to his illness presented by one of his students;
- *The conference theme in its local context* by Prof Helmut Nausner who recalled the late Kurt Porges and Sr Hedwig Wahle nds, the spiritual force

among the originally named Aktion gegen den Antisemitismus in Österreich;

- *The impact of the State of Israel on today's Jewish-Christian dialogue* by Rev Prof Simon Schoon of the Theological University Kampen and pastor of the Reformed Church in Gouda, Netherlands who pointed out the generation gap in different Christian reactions towards the State of Israel. With little or no knowledge of the Shoah they were much more interested in the role of religion in society, with Islam being the hot issue, particularly in the aftermath of nine-eleven;
- *The people of Israel in the State of Israel – Encountering the State of Israel today in the Christian-Jewish dialogue* presented by Dr Racelle Weiman, an Israeli of US origin who vividly described that unique nation-state called Israel where some six million individuals gathered from all the ends of the world, all defining themselves as members of the Jewish People are not primarily concerned about sacred space or about fulfilling anyone's messianic wishes, but with finding themselves at home. Therefore Jews, and certainly those living in the State of Israel will only make comfortable room for the Christian-Jewish dialogue when they are not treated as theological objects or God's mystery or needed as Christian vessels for repentance or guilt. Whatever memory may mean: Nearly sixty years of statehood and six million Jews as *Am Israel b'Israel (the People of Israel in the State of Israel)* are a reality providing (in the words of David Hartman) not only a haven against antisemitism but a new way in which the other, the different one, might enter into our consciousness as the dignified other, be it a Christian or a Muslim. Brave words that will hopefully form part of new approaches to our dialogue.
- *Austrian Lutheranism and Christian-Jewish relations – the Lutheran Church in Austria 1938–2005* by Prof Michael Bünker of the Evangelische Kirche in Austria presented a vivid description of conversion within one leading family from antisemitism to Christian-Jewish relations culminating in active involvement since 2000 in the annual 17th of January 'Day of Judaism' – mainly still a day of and for Christians for learning about the Jewish root of their faith.
- *The history of Islam in the region – Myths and Monuments – the Turkish siege of Vienna and its contribution to present-day Austrian identity* – were colourfully described by Dr Susanne Heine of the Department of Practical Theology and Psychology of Religion at the Protestant Theological Faculty at Vienna University describing the centuries old dispute between the former Habsburg and Ottoman empires, the situation unique in Europe that legal recognition was accorded to Islam in 1912 and reconfirmed in 1979 acknowledging Islam as an accepted religion within the Austrian Republic. Yet attitudes towards Turks and Turkish nationalism differed from

those towards Muslim immigrants from former European colonies. Despite 400 years of Muslim influence and existence in the region, including Hungary and Bosnia with at times high level theological exchanges with Christianity, she was much concerned with school text books which still mirrored and even reinforced problematic public self-understanding as a foremost Roman Catholic country. For the conference participants from other countries mainly experienced in Jewish-Christian dialogue this lecture proved the continuing difficulty, despite all contemporary efforts at changing attitudes, of dealing with memory and history particularly at grass-root level. As one participant remarked: the time had come to re-visit the ICCJ's 1985 *Guidelines on the Teaching of History*.

There was only one workshop *Christian, Muslim and Jewish Women in the New Europe – a new faith?* Discussing the meaning of 'New Europe' and 'New Faith?' the question was posed about 'the difference between faith and religion, and in particular in the Austrian and German context the admission of Turkey into the New Europe and what about the fear of Muslim influence?

Our hosts had asked *Do monuments preserve memory?* And in the spirit of that question we were treated to visits of relevant places, churches as well as Jewish communities where each group held bible study sessions. Here only a couple of examples of visual impacts on memory:

We visited the Jewish cemetery and stood at numerous Christian graves of people baptised, or of Jewish origin, or not professing Judaism – they and their children victims of Nazi race laws. How right it was for Ehud Bandel to offer a Psalm of consolation. We were taken by Markus Himmelbauer through the streets of the city where he pointed out many sites relating to Jewish history, we were welcomed on the Judenplatz at the memorial by British artist Rachel Whitehead commemorating 65,000 murdered Jews by Dr Ariel Muzicant, president of the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde in Vienna, opposite the statue of Lessing the author of Nathan the Wise. A visit to St Stephen's Cathedral allowed another glimpse of the still prevailing mixture of myths and monuments among them the portal of the west entrance depicting animals and other creatures that would desecrate the cathedral, including a Jew, and there were other examples in the relic chamber. Descending into the catacombs we visited the grave of Cardinal König where Rabbi Ehud Bandel and Fr Norbert Hofmann offered short prayers while our backs were turned to the grave of Cardinal Theodor Innitzer who had set his 'Heil Hitler' signature to the 1938 plebiscite in favour of the 'Anschluss'. Yet on one of the cathedral's outside walls there was a medieval fresco depicting Jesus with a Jew's hat.

Thanks to the initiative taken by Hans Ucko and the financial contribution of the WCC, a continuation of the ICCJ-WCC theological exploration took place in

December of that year in Boldern, Switzerland on the shores of Lake Zürich where for several days of intense discussion under the chairmanship of Dr Peter Pettit of Allentown, USA, thirteen Christian theologians including representatives of the WCC's unit for Faith & Order, and four Jewish scholars perused the theological document entitled "the Nature and Mission of the Church" which deals with the ecclesiology and identity of the Church.

As already outlined at the 2004 meeting the process of integrating insights and reflections from the Jewish-Christian dialogue into the mainstream of Christian as well as Jewish theology remains central to the task of the ICCJ. The aim of the consultation was to explore whether there would be possibilities to make the document interact with considerations pertinent to decades of Jewish-Christian dialogue. The draft document seeking to promote Christian unity contained phrases and concepts problematic to Jews and Muslims, as well as to some Eastern faiths. The document still contained the old supersessionist view that Christianity replaced Judaism's role of God's Chosen People. The word 'Mission' dreaded by Jews was another word repeatedly used in the document raising the question whether trying to convince others of one's firm belief was really an integral part of faith. It was noted with surprise that there were no references to the Shoah, and only scant reference to Judaism and the Jewish roots of Christianity.

The frankness of the discussions also allowed for Jewish considerations about the need to re-assess attitudes to Christianity and re-examine passages in Torah that refer to Jewish relations with other people and nations. There was a need to make more space for *Dabru Emet*, a Jewish attempt at theological reflections on the Christian faith. Moving in particular was the testimony of Professor John Mbiti, a black minister from Kenya who spoke of Africans' affinity with the biblical story of Israel, of slavery, of wandering in the desert and other trials. He pointed at Western Christianity's emphasis on the significance of the passion and crucifixion of Jesus, whereas Africans rather will emphasise the living Jesus, the gentle man of peace and healing.

At the concluding session a long list of recommendations and need for further topics of exploration was drawn up before the paper will be finalized in 2011, many of which will surely also occupy the ICCJ Theology Committee as we boldly move forward into exploring future religious emphases basic to the Christian-Jewish and in a parallel effort a trilateral dialogue including Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Also that year through the good offices of Hans Ucko John Pawlikowski was invited as an official observer at the 9th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Porto Alegre, Brazil. A workshop had also been arranged and

chaired by Hans Ucko on Christian-Jewish relations which had an overflow attendance. The workshop panel included Bishop Luis del Castillo of Uruguay, Pastor Armin Ihle of Montevideo, John Pawlikowski and Rabbi Henry Sobel of Sao Paulo.

2006 had indeed been a busy and to some extent difficult year and in light of the situation facing the ICCJ since the end of 2005 it had been decided to charge a specially appointed Restructuring Committee composed of Gunnel Borgegård, Andrew Goldstein, Dick Pruiksma and ICCJ's long-time structure advisor Rev Dr Elliott Wright, New York, to undertake a careful and critical review of the ICCJ's structure as well as financial situation.

For personal reasons the Treasurer Edwin Green resigned from the position. He had served the ICCJ well over the past difficult years. At his recommendation the Executive Board proposed and the 2006 annual general meeting confirmed the appointment as Treasurer of Dr Abi Pitum, Munich, a long-time member of the ICCJ Finance Committee.

The Executive Board was grateful when Dick Pruiksma pastor of the Netherlands Protestant Church in Weesp and a member of the ICCJ Executive Board declared his readiness, upon consultation with his church, to step in as interim part-time General Secretary.

2007

We started the year in a spirit of some optimism as after some administrative and personnel changes at head office, the new treasurer was able to put the international network on a firmer financial basis. Dick Pruiksma developed a framework of new initiatives that would in due course involve the membership more deeply in the work emanating from head office.

Change was in the air indeed as for the first time in its history the ICCJ, at the invitation of its members, the Australian and the New Zealand Councils of Christians and Jews, moved its annual conference and general meeting to Sydney so efficiently and effectively prepared under the leadership of Mr Henry Mendelson and Sr Mary Dacy. The overall conference theme, proposed by our hosts was

Healing a Broken Earth – the Faiths Working Together

The new buzz word “Civilisations matter” developed over past months would best describe the central thread that run from the impressive opening event at the University Law School theatre starting with an Aboriginal smoking ceremony and healing dance followed by an address of Prof Marie Bashir, Governor

of New South Wales through most of the plenary as well as the workshop presentations: the Australian expression of respect for the Aborigines as the first inhabitants of the land and public repentance for past treatment, as well as the country's multi-cultural and multi-religious programme "Living in Harmony".

In his keynote address *The healing of rifts between religions in a multicultural society* Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple set the theme arguing that as it is in the nature of religions to claim they have the truth, the rifts will remain. Which he described as a fact, possibly even an inevitable scandal. As religious influence is on the decline those involved in dialogue must find a new way of applied pragmatism divided into: personal, collaborative, academic, theological and attitudinal. He proposed a five-point ethics of difference: identity, honesty, study, courtesy and credibility.

Plenary panels mainly led by a Christian, a Jew and a Muslim dealt with *Tolerance and pluralism – the way ahead; Three faiths dialogue: A fractured earth – the impact on globalisation and ecology; What can religion contribute to healing in the Middle East context; Theological presuppositions and their impact on Jewish-Christian relations; The quest for spirituality in a secular world; The Interfaith voice of women; Tolerance and pluralism; The Australian story – early settlement, the white Australia policy, post-war immigration.*

Most impressive were the freedom and honesty evidenced by the Muslim speakers, outstanding among them Rehanna Ali from New Zealand who tried to explain Muslim reactions to Israel in terms of the *Umma*, the global Muslim body where if one part is ill a fever is created throughout the body.

Equally impressive and encouraging was the presence of a large group of young people from the host countries who then and there formed a trilateral organisation to follow up impulses received from the conference.

There can be little doubt that much of ICCJ's new thinking and programming will have gained from the spirit of the conference. To name but a few:

Five basic points towards *Contribution of religion to healing in the Middle East* were analysed by Dr Debbie Weissman of Jerusalem who concluded that there was need to strive to emphasise within each of our cultures those elements which promote a more open and compassionate attitude to other human beings, aware that when people feel their identity is under attack they respond violently. Our goal therefore must be empowerment through ensuring the safety and security of different groups, rather than the eradication of group identities.

Regarding *Theological presuppositions and their impact on Jewish-Christian relations* Dr Phil Cunningham interpreting the topic as “thinking outside the box” and understanding “presuppositions” to mean pre-existing theological ideas that Christians and Jews, consciously or unconsciously bring with them into their encounter highlighted five major points the impact having been:

- Avoidance of the irreducible theological issues that divide us. Exploration how much of each tradition is boundary marking. Reification of present (and received) attitudes, judgments about the other.
- A tendency to push relations with the Jewish or Christian communities to the periphery of the faith community’s life.
- An inhibition on hearing the other on the other’s own terms and within their frames of reference.
- Impediment to mutual enrichment and the limitation of understanding and partnership.

There were 16 workshops on related subjects including: Dialogue and the next generation; *Repentance and reconciliation*; *Dialogue between religion and science*; *The ongoing problem of antisemitism*; *Can one teach the New Testament without being anti-Semitic*; *Too much lip service – how to make interfaith relations meaningful*; *Minority/majority relations – how does mainstream religion talk to others*; *Women – the catalysts to dialogue – the daughters of Hagar and Sarah*; *Youth and religious studies*.

Of particular interest for the ongoing work of the ICCJ was a workshop addressing the need to *review or renew in 21st century terms the 1947 Appeal to the Churches, commonly known as the Ten Points of Seelisberg*, the product of an “Emergency Conference on Antisemitism,” held in Switzerland starting on July 30, 1947. The statement in many ways marks the beginning of the sustained Christian-Jewish dialogue that has subsequently unfolded. The 1947 Seelisberg conference was also instrumental in establishing the ICCJ.

Six decades later is a most appropriate time to review what has been achieved, to define what still has to be done, and to chart the direction of the dialogue in the future.

The ICCJ’s annual international Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award was presented to Sr Dr Mary Dacy.

Guest speaker at the concluding dinner was Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy who reflected on the path so far of a journey of encounter and mutual recognition.

Closing the conference ICCJ President Prof John T Pawlikowski stressed that the conference had brought to the fore the fact that religion now must prove itself as having value for society which will also involve religion engaging in a thorough self-critique about itself as an instrument of violence and human abuse past and present. Nor can dialogue remain North American and Europe centred, the conference discussions have shown that globalisation also means a shift towards Asia and Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

The main conference was preceded by a **Women's conference** entitled ***Women's Role in Healing a Fractured Earth*** attended by twenty-two women who were immediately thrown into an understanding of one of Australia's most pressing issues when an Aboriginal participant led the group in looking at their own stories through the elements of Earth, Water and Fire in a traditional women's healing ceremony using these pure elements. Anthropologist Judith Narrowe from Sweden concluded that at this time in our history we are both fragmented and global human beings who need to find out whether we have actually reached the stage of being comfortable with working together without anger. An outing to see a most moving film *Romulos My Father* about one of Australia's prominent authors deeply moving personal story of abject poverty of immigrants seeking a new and better life in the bleakness of the country's vast countryside, of the imbalance between received religious morality of love and violence. On the following day Debbie Weissman from Jerusalem offered a study of the *Book of Ruth*, a presentation dedicated to the memory of Tikva Frymer Kensky on whose book *Reading the Women of the Bible* her study was partly based, followed by an innovative Christian study by Sr Mary Raeburn nds. The insights gained made invaluable contribution to the main conference programme, confirming the insistence of the Women's group to ensure in future that general theme related Women's conferences be held prior to every annual conference.

The annual general meeting agreed that the Sydney conference marked indeed a watershed in the ICCJ's renewal of its task facing the challenges of the 21st century as set out in its newly adopted agenda set out by Dick Pruiksma for the period 2007 – 2009:

- The re-assessment of the Jewish-Christian dialogue
- The impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on Jewish-Christian relations
- Christian-Jewish relations and third world theology
- The development in Central and Eastern European countries
- The trilateral dialogue.

Three of these programmes saw a beginning towards the end of the year 2007:

– Programme outlines for the ICCJ's June 2008 Jerusalem conference *The Contribution of Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogue to Peace-Building in the Middle East* include the impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on Jewish-Christian relations.

– A consultation took place in November at the Evangelische Akademie Arnoldshain in Germany. *Under the overall heading of The Re-assessment of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue* following the recommendations of the Sydney workshop about the Ten Points of Seelisberg as a first step in this re-assessment 29 scholars and theologians from ICCJ member countries prepared an outline of a Ten Point statement which unlike the original 1947 one would address both Christians and Jews, aimed at religious leaders and educated congregants stressing the importance of increasing community and individual commitment to Christian-Jewish dialogue. Rather than having a "bullet points" format, the new statement should contain a longer narrative that surveys Christian-Jewish relations past present and future, stressing the importance of pursuing the emerging positive new relationship.

Major headings in all likelihood to include:

- theologies of God;
- whether there is any hope for religion;
- the predominantly hostile relations between Christianity and Judaism for over a millennium to early 20th century new beginnings;
- the Shoah;
- transition from the original Ten Points of Seelisberg to today's issues such as the State of Israel and other religions;
- the changing global face of Christianity
- six decades of growth: development in scholarship, such as biblical studies;
- recognition of atrocity as a new form of industrial genocide;
- a world of instant communications, including hate sites in a shrinking world of mass migrations and resulting encounter with different religious populations;
- the rise of anti-religious secularity;
- various responses to these and other contemporary changes;
- benefits as well as impediments of the interreligious dialogue.

It intended to present a first draft pointing also at the tasks, obligations, and wider outreach of the ICCJ to the ICCJ 2009 conference due to be held in Germany.

A further deep concern for the ICCJ was the proposed re-institution of the Tridentine Mass and other worrying developments in the Vatican. The ICCJ's concerns continue to be addressed by our past and present presidents Rabbi David Rosen and Prof. John Pawlikowski.

A first brainstorming meeting under the leadership of Lucia Faltin of the Cambridge Woolf Institute and Centre for the Study of Christian Jewish Relations, Dr Markus Himmelbauer, Austria, both expertly experienced in all aspects, social, political and religious of the region, and Dick Pruiksma took place in Eisenstadt, Austria to explore basic requirements and emphases to further and strengthen Christian-Jewish Dialogue in Central and Eastern Europe. Participants came from Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. There was need to develop creative activity beyond the good work done since many of the countries emerged from totalitarian rule.

It was agreed to start an educational project in Central and Eastern Europe with the initial aim

- to identify how best to reach the centres of the most relevant institutions
- to teach teachers in schools and religious institutions
- concentrating on history, religion, culture and citizenship in relation to human rights, democracy, combating antisemitism and the presence of Islam in Europe
- using textbooks as well as internet access

It is a task that requires in-depth attention by the ICCJ and major financial resources and application will therefore be made to the European Union for funding.

Plans were laid for an exploratory meeting early in 2008 regarding the Revival of the ICCJ Abrahamic Forum. It is intended to hold a small consultation in London with experienced Christian, Jewish and Muslim people in the field.

Furthermore, the ICCJ Executive decided to change the ICCJ constitution and structure of the organisation making it more inclusive of relations with other international bodies active in the field.

2008

Dick Pruiksma's continuing enthusiasm and strong sense of matching programmes with prevailing realities as well as his ability to identify and encourage suitable individuals to assume leadership and responsibility to carry through these programmes infused the ICCJ with new life.

Imperceptibly, but surely the dialogue partnership founded 70 years ago has also changed from in the first place Christian awareness that attitudes to Jews and Judaism required fundamental change, to Jewish awareness that maturity in dealing with the memory of the past required active Jewish participation at equal level with the ever growing task of *Tikkun Olam*, the *Mending of the World*, even a degree of change in self-identification. The election of Dr Deborah (Debbie) Weissman as the ICCJ's new President for the next three year term therefore came at an appropriate time. Following the superb leadership of her predecessor Fr Prof Dr John T Pawlikowski, now the ICCJ-Immediate-Past-President, a new leading Jewish voice is bound to help move the ICCJ to face the ever growing challenges of a world trying to cope with rapidly growing technology yet still lacking fulfilment of those human rights declared 60 years ago that *all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood*:

There also was a ray of light regarding the financial situation. Following representations submitted by the treasurer Abi Pitum and despite some evident clouds on the economic front there was an assurance by the BMI, the German Ministry of Interior, that subsidies for the current year would be maintained possibly even slightly increased. Funding of special projects would continue to be favourably considered.

Such projects doubtlessly would include the proposed educational programme for Central and Eastern European countries which had been discussed late in 2007 at Eisenstadt. Furthermore, expansion at a more effective level with partners from the former Soviet Union and the Baltics was under review. To define the best way ahead a meeting took place earlier in the year at the Cambridge Centre for the Study Jewish-Christian Relations, just celebrating its 10th anniversary. It was decided that the most promising structure would be to divide the project into two stages: A period of research under the expert guidance of Dr James Aitken of the Centre in relation to culture, history and civil citizenship followed by a one year course combining tuition and electronic distance learning. A two-pronged project which could possibly also command financial support from the Brussels based Jean Monet Fund of the European Union. Increasingly the ICCJ's outreach was likely to go beyond the religious dialogue, responding also to the wider socio-political needs of European development. A stumbling block remained the difficult contacts with the Orthodox Churches, due to some extent to their own slow emergence from the effects of so many decades under totalitarian rule. The entire project was also furthered with the help of Dr Markus Himmelbauer of the Austrian Coordinating Council for Jewish-Christian Cooperation. Vienna had moved into the centre of tensions within the Christian-Jewish dialogue with the publication in the London Catholic

weekly The Tablet by Archbishop Cardinal Christoph Schönborn propagating the christening of Jews as an aim of the Christian witness. In light of the furor this created, Markus Himmelbauer sought to extend our outreach forging for instance first contacts with Croatia. At meetings with representatives of the Churches and the Jewish Community in Zagreb, contemporary issues of Jewish-Christian cooperation were explored and the programme of the ICCJ was introduced. As a result, a Central European conference in May 2009 was planned to take place in Arad, Romania to be followed by a Bible week in Köszeg-Güns, Hungary, attended by participants from Austria, Hungary and Slovakia as a bridging exercise between the religions and nations.

To explore further the re-creation of an ICCJ Abrahamic Forum Dick Pruiksmā invited a leading Christian, Jewish and Muslim to meet with him and Ruth Weyl in London at the head office of the Three Faiths Forum. Dick Pruiksmā introduced the discussion by posing the questions:

- If we use the expression ‘trilateral dialogue’, what kind of dialogue are we talking about?
- What can be the contribution of the Jewish-Christian dialogue to Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogue?
- Combining the former two questions, what could or should be the programme of a revived ICCJ trilateral group?

Rabbi Prof Jonathan Magonet presented the issue from a Jewish perspective. His main points were that on the one hand there is dialogue that is ultimately intended to serve a particular purpose, i.e. religious, or ‘political’ with a small “p” addressing social issues in areas of tension existing at the level of Jewish-Christian and Muslim communities interacting at local level. There is also with a capital “P” addressing national and international political concerns such as the Israel-Palestine conflict. On the other hand there was dialogue for its own sake without any short- or long-term goals beyond the actual relationships that are being established and deepened over a time. A dialogue where the relationship moves from curiosity to friendship to loyalty impacting on the spiritual as well as material level of the participants. But that sort of dialogue is sensitive and does not lend itself to larger public activities. It may create tangible changes in the short term yet hopefully with a long-term effect on mutual trust and respect.

One of the problems the ICCJ seemed to be facing within its diverse membership, remained that those already involved with trilateral work realising the positive aspects of Islam so rarely reported in the media, may find that a constant rehash of negative aspects and stereotypes – such as negative statements about Judaism in the Qur’an, Dhimmi status, terrorism, anti-Israel and

antisemitic publications – make genuine building of a relationship with Muslims most difficult. In his view, it appeared difficult to break out of a Jewish attitude of a situation of self-fulfilling hypothesis about Islam. There was need to re-educate Jewish communities. Analogous to decades of Christians involved in the ICCJ and its components to defend Jews, it would be part of the ICCJ's task to encourage Jews as well as Christians to familiarise themselves with actual Muslim voices, they can understand and identify with and counter anti-Muslim attitudes wherever possible. There probably was need for a Jewish 'Dabru Emet' aimed at the Muslim world.

Dr Martin Forward invited to present the issue from a Christian perspective stressed that the Jewish-Christian dialogue over the past six decades had developed teeth, allowing Jews and Christians to come to know each other, work with each other and disagree with each other, all in the awareness that things needed to be done to effect change in attitudes. Despite the occasional setbacks and tensions in that relationship it was now natural and right that the next step forward should be to engage Muslims in a wider dialogue of Abrahamic faiths. From a Christian viewpoint much work has been done in recent years to come to terms with and attempt to change a history that has marginalised, demonised, destroyed or turned a blind eye at the destruction of Jews, by contemporary interfaith groups – not least in Israel – such as the WCC, at educational level in Egypt, India, Pakistan and elsewhere. Yet much more was needed to be done to revisit history in relation to Muslims. He welcomed the possibility of a visible coming together of Jews, Christians and Muslims under the aegis of the ICCJ, mainly also because outsiders could see positive things being done in place of the highlighting and frequent distortion of negative things.

Even though theology was a Christian obsession, all religious people have beliefs. A trilateral dialogue between Jews, Christians and Muslims would inevitably involve Muslims in examining their beliefs as critically as Christians had to do. As an example he cited supersessionism, a basic issue addressed by Christians and Jews. Muslims also have their version of supersessionism which can be used to demonstrate the finality of Islam and the partial, interim or even passé status of Judaism and Christianity. But Islamic concepts of prophethood and of 'people of the book' could be a potentially positive way of countering this conviction.

An ICCJ Abrahamic Forum should be a place where all can be held to account, but also affirmed and respected where friendships can be developed that create trust and the space to tackle the most difficult questions. And not only the things that are difficult, but also the things we have in common. Our interpretations of the latter are often very different, such as the importance of Abraham from Jewish, Christian and Muslim perspectives.

In the same way in which despite the compromised history between Christians and Jews a willingness was developed to work together to mend the world, an assessment of history also in relation to Islam must aim to allow the Abrahamic faiths to flourish in the 21st century in a trilateral dialogue free from feelings of guilt and victimhood, though it needs to deal with them under a safe umbrella. Good relationships cannot have lasting foundations unless they are built upon adult issues like justice, equality and responsibility.

Dr Amineh Hoti and Sheikh Mumisa from Cambridge were invited to present the issues from a Muslim perspective. They added that when Muslims living in predominantly non-Muslim countries had started taking part in interfaith work and inter-religious dialogue some decades ago, their fellow Muslims living in Muslim and Islamic countries were initially very suspicious and critical of what interfaith and inter-religious dialogue was about. They thought that what was being proposed by their fellow Muslims living in non-Muslim countries was what they (the opponents of interfaith) later referred to as “wahdat al-adyan” (meaning “The unification of religions”).

When it became clear what interfaith and interreligious dialogue entails, some Muslims in Islamic countries were supportive of those in non-Muslim countries involved in the project. In some cases those Muslim organisations involved in interfaith work received material support from those who initially were opposed to it. Muslims involved in dialogue frequently feel that their Christian and Jewish counterparts have often excluded them from the discussions on the interpretation of problematic texts which has been taking place between Jews and Christians. It was their belief, however, that Muslims are intellectually mature and ready to benefit from and contribute to the discussion and debate. If no serious consideration is given to the need to involve Muslims in the discussions with Jews and Christians on how to deal with the texts in our contemporary societies, interfaith and interreligious work will not be as effective for Muslims as it has been for the Jewish and Christian communities involved. The experience gained by the ICCJ over the years would be of tremendous benefit to the Muslims if they are truly involved.

The general conclusion of that meeting was that the answer lies in a long-haul activity and commitment to make such encounter comfortable and ‘conventional’ that it is seen as part of civil society. And there was need to promote willingness to move beyond shared generalities to more difficult theological, cultural, social and political issues on which we differ. More and more opportunities ought to be offered for meeting, sharing even creating alliances. Such opportunities may vary from occasional bilateral to trilateral events; The ICCJ should take a year to decide on its strategy at three levels: practical, academic and integration into the general programme of the ICCJ.

A major ICCJ trilateral conference, perhaps in 2010 should cover these items encouraging participants to continue the trilateral dialogue by providing suitable tools.

THE ICCJ 2008 JERUSALEM CONFERENCE

Almost a precursor for dealing in depth with the project the **impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on Jewish-Christian relations** the 2008 conference proved a superb introduction to making known to so many with scant knowledge of what really goes on to bridge the divides and join forces in Israel to bring about the longed-for peace.

Some 170 participants, including representatives of the Vatican and the World Council of Churches, joined in an exploration of **'The Contribution of Jewish-Christian-Muslim Dialogue to Peace Building in the Middle East'** at a conference centre on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Half of the participants were locals.

From the opening to the concluding event and throughout the many plenary and workshop sessions the thread of two underlying issues ran through our deliberations:

- The fact that while religions alone cannot bring about a solution, failure to engage the religions in the political debate is bound to prolong the conflict. The search included a serious analysis of the question whether our respective religious heritages can provide us with a way to go towards a solution.
- The need to comprehend each other's narratives of exile; whether the ancient, ongoing and profound Jewish link between a people and its homeland, spiritual centre and land of destiny, or the Palestinian one of 'nakba' (Nakba means "Catastrophe" in Arabic. It refers to the situation in 1948 when more than 700,000 Palestinians fled or were forced into exile by Israeli troops). There was unanimous understanding of the firm conviction that our Christian partners, not only in Israel but world-wide have a role to play in terms of mutual recognition of the narratives.

Guided by the unique experience of our conference hosts, the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI), the programme, starting with an insightful opening presentation by Rabbi David Rosen, a former ICCJ president and director of interreligious affairs of the American Jewish Committee, H.B. Michel Sabbah, Emeritus Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and Qadi Muhammad Zibdi, Qadi of Jerusalem, included visits to institutes engaged in religious based reconciliation work in Israel among them

- the Jerusalem International YMCA,
- the Swedish Theological Institute
- and the Old City Ecce Homo Convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Sion.

The latter included a moving and inspiring visit with one of the City's oldest peace pioneers, Sheikh Bukhara whose family had come to Jerusalem in the 16th century.

An innovation were workshop outings enabling participants to face the realities of prevailing sensitivities as well as peace and reconciliation work in the country hardly anything of which is ever reported in the international press and media. The outings enabled participants to listen to the voices not only from different narratives, but from collaborators in the exchange of experiences, voices of children and students as well as the voices of long-standing inhabitants of Jerusalem. To name but a few:

- a visit to the Armenian Quarters allowing for understanding of the unique character and dynamics of Jerusalem as a meeting place between East and West;
- a comprehensive tour of Jewish and Muslim neighbourhoods living within the experiences of security, justice and hope;
- to Wadi Ara, in the Triangle. meeting with parents and children of Yad Be-Yad, schools in joint Israeli and Arab education, and with teachers and students of Al-Quasemi College, the first institution of higher learning located in an Arab town in Israel to grant an academic degree;
- a visit to Bethlehem and Etzion Bloc; listening to different voices from the Abrahamic traditions, and the Centre for Conflict Resolution.

Workshops included

- A Christian view of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict – as a challenge and an opportunity for Jewish-Christian dialogue;
- The Arab Christians as a double minority and potential bridge between the Palestinian
- Muslim minorities; and the Israeli majority;
- Humanistic Lessons from the Holocaust as a departure point for Jewish-Arab dialogue;
- Teaching an introduction to Judaism in the Palestinian context;
- Teaching Islam to Jews, and Judaism to Muslims;

- How the media cover the religious dimension of the conflict;
- Education for co-existence and reconciliation via film (often with a humorous and self-critical presentation)

The conference concluded at the beautiful Jerusalem Biblical Zoo with Jewish, Christian and Muslim text studies relating to animals, followed by a guided tour, visible evidence that this peaceful zoo is one of the country's centres where Jews, Christians, Muslims, Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians of all shades and convictions join in enjoyment of God's creation and bring their families and children.

In the zoo amphitheatre under a huge tree where hundreds of birds chirped and chanted in the sinking sun we listened to a summing up by outgoing ICCJ president Fr Prof Dr John T Pawlikowski and by the new president Dr Debbie Weissman. Tired from the long day's visits and studies but elated, we were then treated to a wonderful meal in the cooling Jerusalem evening breeze. It gave a deep sense of reality to the song *Y'reushalayim Shel Zahav – Jerusalem of Gold* – and its lines

*as trees of stone slumber so the city that dwells alone,
whose heart is a wall, is held captive by its dreams*

A follow-up seminar in Israel was planned for the spring of 2009.

The conference had been preceded by a well attended **Women's Conference** on *the contribution of women to the peace process*.

That conference workshops programme included follow-up topics such as:

- I am a Christian Palestinian and a Woman grappling with multiple identities in the Holy Land;
- Feminism: Women and Jewish-Christian Relations.

The other central project of the ICCJ remained

THE FUTURE OF THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

Seventy years after the Appeal to the Churches encompassed in the *Ten Points of Seelisberg*, formulated under the shocking impact of World War II and the holocaust the time had come to produce an effective new set of theses responding to the needs of the 21st century. This time the appeal would be issued in three parts:

- to the Christian Churches,
- to the Jewish Communities and
- to the Joint Task of Jews and Christians.

Following the 2007 consultation at Arnoldshain, a first draft had been prepared by a group of experts under the guidance of Dr Phil Cunningham, USA. To discuss this draft, to strengthen the document due to be finally published at the ICCJ 2009 Berlin conference, a consultative group of 30 experts met in Fribourg, Switzerland, hosted and joined by fifteen members of the Theological Faculty of Fribourg University where the first international conference of Christians and Jews had convened in 1948. There was a further visual reminder of the complex 20th century history: Next to the staircase ascending to the beautiful main Senate hall we saw a plaque commemorating the fact that Chaim Weizmann, the first President of the State of Israel, had obtained his chemistry doctorate at Fribourg University in 1899.

Participants were welcomed by Prof. Guido Vergauwen, Rector of Fribourg University and by Prof. Martin Klockener, Dean of the University's Theological Faculty, who referred to the fact that in addition to the 1948 conference the ICCJ had been hosted by the University at its 1987 conference to explore *Overcoming Prejudice – an Educational Challenge Forty Years after Issuing the Ten Points of Seelisberg*. Then, memorably, Judith Banki – a member also of the present group of experts – warned Jews against thinking that Christianity was irretrievably anti-Jewish and of blaming Christians today for the sins of their forefather. While the past cannot be forgotten, it has to be faced and overcome. Jews need Christians to work together to eradicate the inherited prejudices which still permeate our cultural heritage.

Preceding particularly assigned workshops three challenging plenary lectures were presented whose emphases will help the drafting committee in formulating the new theses guiding dialogue in the years to come.

Bishop Richard J Sklba, chairman of the USA Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs reflected on the new document building on the hope of John Paul II that the tragedy suffered by the Jewish People in the 20th century can lead to a new relationship between Jews and Christians. He drew parallels between the first century and the present day to find understanding of the kinds of dialogue that are needed between the two faith communities. He stressed the underlying principles of differentiation without exclusion in interreligious dialogue, of interreligious dialogue that carries moral obligation and accepting our “unknowing” state in interreligious dialogue. He saw the cultivation of “memory within the minds and hearts of Christians assisted by their Jewish brothers and sisters” as a primary issue. He

further addressed the diverse notions of “memory”. There was urgent need to address three issues affecting dialogue today: to develop a culture and skill for remembering within the next generations; a continual and mutual sharpening of those skills as well as confidence to set out in new directions embracing other faith communities.

Responding, Debbie Weissman stressed two major points: In the second and third centuries some Church Fathers in the Land of Israel conducted fruitful dialogues with the Rabbis. Similarly, in medieval France. So there was a tradition of dialogue. While memory is of prime importance, we should not get stuck in our memories. We also have to know when to forget or at least heal our memories so we can move on.

Based on the Beatles’ song – *the road is not only long and winding but full of bumps* – Debbie Weissman and Marc Saperstein entitled their lectures *Bumps, Forks and Detours on the Road to God’s Kingdom*.

Dr Deborah Weissman, ICCJ president argued that long-standing patterns of thought, feeling and behaviour cannot be changed that quickly, because even the choicest vine needs seasonal pruning to ensure more fruitful growth. The challenge of pluralism is one of the major issues facing the world – the other two are environment and socio-economic justice. Can there be plural truths? She asked. Referring to the Jewish philosopher and mystic Rabbi Hakohen Kook’s statement that real peace to the world can come only the through the multiplicity of peace, when all sides and opinions come to light and have proven to each having their own place, she argued that there were limits to pluralism and what we need in society is not the replication of uniformity, but the organisation of diversity. As for the argument that the perception of “ultimate truth” leaves no room for other faiths and their truths. She felt this to be an overly glib and superficial presentation of the nature of religious reality. She quoted from a Midrash that relates that when God created Adam, the angel of truth argued against this, saying that human life would be full of lies. God responded by throwing truth to the ground. That metaphor was extended by some commentators who suggested that on earth truth has been shattered into millions of fragments, so that different people possess pieces of the truth. The Jewish tradition of Oral Torah based on endless discussion compelling the participants to look at the objects of enquiry from diverse possible perspectives can be important in a certain way as it helps to create a culture of discourse and debate with room for alternate truths.

Rabbi Dr Marc Saperstein, principal of Leo Baeck College, London, presented a somewhat unorthodox view, neither as a theologian nor a professional in the field of dialogue, but rather as an academic historian. His outlook was not on

the more obvious issues, but on the principles of dialogue that though accepted by everyone in theory, were often inadequately respected in practice. He warned to be careful with our use of metaphors such as “marching into the future,” Misguided perception, as truly we need to be walking backwards into the future – aware of the path that brought us to where we are at present. Our best guidance coming from our vision and memory of the past and the problems we encountered where we have been. Wise words for the editors of the ICCJ’s new theses!

Another common metaphor in use in Jewish-Christian dialogue is “the parting of the ways”. This implies a picture of people walking on a path together when at a fork they then split up. But are the two paths leading eventually to the same destination, or is one path – that taken by the Jewish people – meandering around in loops and circles, never arriving at the destination of the alternative. He suggested an alternative metaphor: no sudden rupture, many without a clearly demarked identity of one religion or the other, only gradual differentiation. Although a signatory to the *Dabru Emet* statement, he did not concur with the assertion that “without the long history of Christian anti-Judaism and Christian violence against Jews, Nazi ideology could not have taken hold nor could it have been carried out.” Historical record and subsequent examples of genocide – such as in Cambodia – suggest to him the more pessimistic conclusion that an authoritarian government can demonise a minority group with lethal results in a frightening short period of time without centuries-long tradition of negative attitudes.

Another issue he addressed was that there should be no preconditions or ultimatums imposed upon the partners in dialogue. He concluded by urging that we stop judging post-modern doctrines and behaviours by the standards of contemporary multi-culturalism, pluralism and political correctness; but rather recognise that both our traditions – as well as the Islamic tradition – multivalent, containing material that can be used to justify a narrow-minded prejudiced view of the other, the outsider, as well as the basis for toleration, understanding and mutual respect. Let us cease bearing false witness against our neighbours, or the ancestors of our neighbours. He concluded that the ICCJ has shown that it can continue to strengthen an alliance based on knowledge and respect, an alliance that will bring us beyond the bumps, forks and detours as we continue our difficult backward walk into the future.

All this formed the basis of the 2009 Berlin conference. Preparatory to that event, which was also an occasion to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the DKR, Gunnel Borgegård, John Pawlikowski, Abi Pitum, Dick Pruiksma on behalf of the ICCJ, Rabbi Henry Brandt and Dr Eva Schulz-Jander on behalf of the DKR were hosted by German Federal President Prof Horst Köhler. Surely an indica-

tion of the importance Germany attaches to interfaith dialogue at international level as represented by the ICCJ.

Concentrating in addition to the day to day work at the Martin Buber House on all these developments evidently meant that there was more to do than the original part-time employment of Dick Pruiksmas could cover. Therefore, in agreement with his Church in Holland his presence in the Martin Buber House, albeit still part-time was extended.

In addition, he had begun regular visits to member countries such as Switzerland and the USA to encourage personal contact and more intimate insight into the different needs of the ICCJ's wide membership.

2009

This particular year can in the ICCJ's history best be described as Coming of Age into a New Age.

It was a year in which some of the most influential post second world war philosophers, educators and scholars, strong supporters of the interfaith dialogue passed away, including Professor Ralph Dahrendorf, the German-British thinker, politician and educator, three outstanding Jewish scholars and friends: Rabbi Michael Signer; Dr. Franklin Littell; Rabbi Leon Klenicki as well as Fr. Donald Clifford, S.J., the founder of the Center at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, now directed by one of the ICCJ's vice-presidents, Phil Cunningham.

Throughout the year, the new president Debbie Weissman already made considerable impact on the development of the ICCJ. Under her leadership the ICCJ shows signs of becoming more pro-active. Rather than wait for established national dialogue organisations to apply for membership, the aim now was to seek out, motivate and help create new members in countries where dialogue and encounter were either not known or in their infancy.

For the first time the main annual Executive Board meeting was not held in Heppenheim, but to emphasize the importance of the 2008 annual conference, in Jerusalem at the Swedish Theological Institute. The house called Beit Tavor owned by the Church of Sweden since 1967. Built by the German archaeologist and architect Conrad Schick in 1882 the building contains unique features particular to Conrad Schick's special interests with traditional 19th century Jerusalem style.

Welcoming the Board members in her home city, Debbie Weissman thanked everybody present for their support during the past first months of her presidency.

Her overview of her activities included two statements sent to the member organisations dealing with the war in Gaza and a letter to the Pope concerning the lifting of the 1988 excommunications of four bishops, one publicly denying that six million Jews were slaughtered in the Nazi Holocaust, and denying the use of gas chambers.

She proposed a novel way of giving further depth to annual conference themes. Not to lose the impact of the 2008 Jerusalem conference, as part also of the ICCJ project on how the interreligious dialogue is affected by the Middle East conflict, she had prepared challenging plans for a small November seminar entitled, 'From two narratives to a culture of peace' to gain personal experience of the complexity of the situation in Israel and the Palestinian Authority, to meet the people of the region, gain experience of living with Arab families in Abu Gosh and Jewish families in Jerusalem and to meet with the peace makers. It was hoped that despite the difficult international economic situation there would be the required minimum of 15 participants to realise this important seminar.

Ably supported by the ICCJ's new secretary Barbara Fruth, Dick Pruiksmas still only part-time General Secretary successfully concentrated his attention on two areas:

Central and Eastern Europe – resulting in a first ever ICCJ conference in Rumania (Romania) at the end of May in Arad, organised by Mr Ionel Schlesinger, president of the city's Jewish community. An opening session at the Arad Town Hall was evidence of the importance the local people attached to that gathering of representatives from Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, -Slovakia and Poland, scholars from Arad universities, politicians and numerous Christian denominations, most important among the latter the Orthodox Bishop of Arad. All were greeted by the Orthodox Patriarch of Romania. It is hoped to form a first initiative group that may become the core of a future Romanian ICCJ member.

Seeking Development of the trilateral dialogue through a 2010 conference in Istanbul to be held jointly with the Turkish Konrad Adenauer Foundation branch who has good relations with the Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs in Ankara. The welcome cooperation of the Jewish community was assured. Contacts were established with the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew as well as with the Armenian Patriarch. To reinforce these contacts, Dick Pruiksmas travelled to Turkey under a personal visits programme set up by the Adenauer Foundation.

A further project under the auspices of Debbie Weissman was the creation of a multi-lingual educational website. To that end permission was sought from the

German Ministry of Interior to secure the services of Dr Steve Copeland, an experienced Israeli educator.

Main concentration was on preparing in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation the 5-8 July annual Conference in Berlin. It was this conference that would lead into the above mentioned educational website.

Central to the Berlin Conference was the launch of the ICCJ's new document

**'A Time for Recommitment –
Building the New Relationship between Jews and Christians'**

updating and reviving the 1947 *Ten Points of Seelisberg* in a new call for both Jewish and Christian communities around the world to commemorate the anniversary of the Seelisberg gathering, which was also the genesis of the ICCJ, in light of the advances in interreligious dialogue since that groundbreaking 1947 document. The new 12-point document highlights the fact that through a serious commitment to dialogue, self-critical examination of our texts and traditions, and joint study and action for justice, we not only better understand each other, but accept each other in the fullness of our differences and affirm our common humanity as well as our joint responsibility in relation to other faith communities in the interest of inter-group peace and the avoidance of inter-religious conflicts.

The full document is integral part of this updated history as Appendix XI. Member organisations and affiliated bodies were urged to ensure the success of the Berlin Document by widest promulgation, to make use of the materials not only in their local CCJ activities, but also in their own Jewish or Christian religious and educational frameworks.

A further important central point of the Berlin conference was the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the German Deutscher Koordinierungsrat für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit (DKR).

The choice of the city had been deliberate: while Berlin had been the place where the atrocities of the Nazi regime had their origin, the ICCJ intended to draw international attention to the fact that Germany has assumed responsibility for its past in that politically today's Germany has become a genuine friend and supporter of the interreligious dialogue, of the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

On each of the three days plenary lectures addressed a particular aspect in relation to the 12 Theses. The conference programme was structured to contain expertly led groups of workshops on those aspects:

Theological topics deriving from the Twelve Points of Berlin:

- Paulus and Judaism
- 21 century forms of supersessionism
- The mutual influence of Jewish and Christian liturgy
- The impact of the Israeli Palestinian conflict on Christian-Jewish dialogue
- The Papacy of Benedict XVI
- From Asymmetry to complementarity
- What is the Christian mission to the Jews after the Shoah?

Today's issues in Jewish Christian dialogue:

- Christian-Jewish dialogue in France
- A report on the "Christ and the Jewish People" consultation
- How Jews and Christians pray about the other
- Perceiving and Conceiving the "other" through texts
- Jewish-Christian dialogue – yesterday and today
- Jewish communities in Germany today
- Similarities and differences after the Shoah: second and third generation

The non-theological topics arising from the new Twelve Points of Berlin:

- Women's issues in interfaith dialogue
- The current economic crisis and interfaith dialogue
Interfaith text study
- Good cases in Jewish-Christian dialogue: a visit to a special Jewish-Turkish cultural and living project settlement in Berlin-Wedding
- Intergenerational process in interreligious dialogue
- A Young Leadership led Chavruta on the Twelve Points of Berlin

Speakers at the festive opening were Federal German Minister of Interior, Dr Wolfgang Schäuble, ICCJ president Dr Deborah Weissman, Rabbi Dr Henry Brandt – Jewish co-president of the DKR, Bishop Dr Wolfgang Huber – chairman of the Council of Protestant Churches in Berlin, and ICCJ vice-president Dr Philip Cunningham, Philadelphia as well as Prof Dr Beate Neuss, vice-chair of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Berlin.

A unique signing ceremony of the new ICCJ document by 22 international ICCJ members was the inspiration of Debbie Weissman. Three musicians introduced each national representative with humorous music specific to their country. Symbolic for what the ICCJ stands for: solemn commitment with a human touch.

The first two conference days started with joint meditation – once Jewish once Christian. The third day started with an introduction into the history and an overview of the Berlin Holocaust Memorial to be visited that afternoon.

Day one started with a lecture by Bishop Dr Heinrich Mussinghoff, Aachen, about the urgency to develop theologies about Judaism that emphasise the diverse integrity of Judaism and of Christianity. He analysed the tasks and the challenges, the theological requirements, and pointed at some practical and ethical ways. It was only recently that re-thinking had reached the wider Catholic community. He clearly denied any form of mission to the Jews and concluded with joint commitment of Jews and Christians to a more just society.

The Jewish response was given by Dr Edward Kessler, Cambridge. In honour of the venue he began his talk in German stressing that there existed more Christian texts about Judaism than the other way round.

He asked whether Jews have developed sufficient confidence in the dialogue partner to start working on theologies of the Jewish-Christian dialogue and Jewish theologies about Christianity that allow both faiths to co-exist without the need for compatibility or aiming at naïve agreement. Having outlined various issues he concluded with the belief that those outlines could enable Jews to create the theological space for Christians not only to possess their own special relationship with God but to see their reflection in a Jewish mirror, also serving Christian respect for their elder siblings.

The second day started with a key note address by Prof Ruth Langer, Boston, *Re-examining Jewish texts and liturgy in the light of Jewish Christian dialogue...* She led the participants through various modes of theological textual memory, showing also changes that had been made over the centuries. The question was how to construct much loved liturgy for a new time, and in particular how to grapple with Jewish texts that appear xenophobic. She proposed ways of how best to renovate the framework of the old rather than construct anew from scratch.

Light relief and the chance to renew friendships, make new friends and share more personal thoughts and experiences were provided by a sun-drenched boat trip along the River Spree past old and post-war re-built buildings and monuments, as well as strikingly modern facades and architecture.

We all dressed up for the celebration of the DKR's 60th anniversary in the impressively beautiful Berlin Französischer Dom, built in the early 18th century by the Huguenot community, continuing symbol of social change and re-settlement. Fanfares under the organ greeted our arrival and that of numerous German political, religious and social leaders as well foreign dignitaries. Impressive, moving and unforgettable was the address by Federal German Chancellor Angela Merkel. She referred to Pastor Martin Niemöller's words upon his return from concentration camp "How can we hear the word of Grace, if we can not see our guilt?"

These are words that have guided her and the country's religious and political leadership these past decades, the aims and meaning, also its unification. Germany had every reason to be grateful for the confidence placed by the USA, the European peoples and global society in its ability to become a democratic society and honest partner in world affairs. Slowly but surely the Jewish-Christian dialogue at all levels has become indelible part of the country's social fabric.

The third day started with a panel discussion by Christian Meisner, Berlin; Rabaya Müller, Cologne and Rabbi Debbie Young, London, leading into workshops exploring political topics and the common commitment for justice in the global society.

At the festive closing dinner Minister of State Herman Gröhe spoke of the fact that the Berlin Theses recognising what has been achieved over the past decades giving new guidance, though he for one would not be able to foretell the future of the Jewish-Christian dialogue. Yet he expected it to remain a basis from which controversial issues and problems could be discussed objectively. Interfaith dialogue remains a delicate subject. He saw need to accept that there were limits to dialogue. In the end, questions of the interlocutor's religion remain open. Because only through faith itself does the whole dimension open up. No one outside Judaism, no one outside Christianity and no one outside Islam can entirely understand it. He considered it symbolic and was grateful that the new document bears the name of the city from which persecution and murder of the Jews had been organised by the Nazi regime. He was convinced that the country has changed. But that it has not and will not forget as past and present attitudes to history also determine our future.

Inviting the participants to raise their glasses he proposed a toast to the discussions of the past few days, to past achievements and the future.

For the first time in many years under the expert housekeeping supervision and wider contacts of the treasurer, Dr Abi Pitum, the ICCJ's financial situation appeared less precarious.

Andrea Thiemann, who for past years had skilfully and expertly created local outreach and interest, left in order to qualify as a pastor, her replacement, Marion Körner, has created new local programmes with an emphasis on the influence of music, art and literature on encounter with The Other.

As the ICCJ enters the end of the new century's first decade it becomes evident that while much has been achieved – much still remains to be done. To that end each member of the Executive Board has taken on specific responsibility for one of the major programmes that would be given reality in the coming years.

Seminar Israel November 2009

An important aspect of one of those programmes was the need to ensure more in-depth follow-up of issues addressed by the annual conferences. The first such follow up of the 2008 Israel conference was a Seminar entitled

From Two Narrative to Building a Culture of Peace

From 3 – 11 November, ten participants from Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland and the USA, three Jews, seven Christians, aged between 33 and 85, under the inspired leadership of Debbie Weissman, joined in meeting with individuals and institutions, Arab and Jewish Israeli as well as Christian to listen to diverse voices, witnesses of diverse experiences and perceptions basic to the conflict in that small and beautiful country.

Meeting at the offices of the Interfaith Coordinating Council in Israel (ICCI) its executive director, Rabbi Dr Ron Kronish presented an excellent introduction to inter-religious and inter-cultural encounters in Israel. Dubi Barak, a Jerusalem based educator presented an educator's perspective of the two narratives.

Two main guides accompanied the group. At first, Ophir Yarden, and then Jared Goldfarb. Both theologians and historians who uniquely conveyed their superb knowledge, insight and stories without bias. When re-visiting Jerusalem towards the end of the seminar, the group benefited from the long experience of the Christian scholar, Dr Henry Carse who up and down the paths of the Old City, led us through "Jerusalem: The Sacred Labyrinth".

Within hours of setting out our small group jelled to share laughter and experiences. The driver of our little bus, Ahmed, who spoke perfect Hebrew, joined in our discussions, always plying us with the best local coffee.

The superbly structured programme presented the participants with well balanced, honest, often painful narratives. To give a brief overview:

Starting in Jerusalem within the walls of the Old City at a spot where – above the Western Wall – the view of Temple Mount, the Dome of the Rock and El

Aqsa immediately focused attention on the seminar theme.

We stayed with Arab hosts in Abu Gosh near Jerusalem, warmly welcomed by the town's director of the Abu-Gosh Local Council Education Department, Issa J. Abu-Gosh, where over leisurely tea and the most wonderful breakfasts we held lively discussions and learned of the experiences of Arab Israelis.

We spent four nights with Christians in their Kibbutz Nes Ammim in the north only a few miles away from the Lebanese border. From there we visited various sites including Bar'Am, today a National Park, where only the remnants of an ancient synagogue and a beautiful Mennonite church give witness of what once was a thriving Arab Christian agricultural village, Bir'im. Its former inhabitants live a few kilometres away, their former land now occupied by Jewish settlements. The villagers still hope to return to rebuild their former homes. One of the former residents, Ibrahim Issa, still has the keys to the house he was born in.

In the Bet Hatefutzot, the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv Debbie Weissman concentrated on family histories from well adjusted lives to persecution and the Shoah.

Most impressive were visits to bi-educational centres:

- Kibbutz Lochamei HaGetaot (the Ghetto Fighters), its Centre for Humanistic Education on "Israeli Arabs and the Holocaust" where we met with two Arab graduates, one Muslim, one Christian, one of whom remarked that the holocaust is not only about the Jews – it has to do with facing history and ourselves;
- Neveh Shalom where we assembled in their spiritual centre hearing how they deal with national holidays such as Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers. The emphasis always is to remember other victims of war and violence;
- a Yad-be'Yad (hand-in-hand) school located in an Arab village, its two headmistresses, one Jewish one Arab, where Jewish and Arab children share lessons in both Hebrew and Arabic;
- delightful mixed children's circus with young acrobats cheerfully conversing in a mixture of the two languages, depending on their trust in those kids supporting them.

During the last days we stayed with Jewish families in Jerusalem, learning also of their fears and hopes.

From the beautiful grandeur of Jerusalem to the vineyards and hills of the Galilee we encountered past and present history and religious traditions at every step.

What to the Palestinians is “Nakba” – the catastrophe – and to Jews the longed-for creation of the State of Israel is evidently deeply ingrained in the personal histories of the individuals who related their pain and experiences, as well as, yes! hope for a future of peaceful co-existence without ‘competition’ of victimisation in the land dear to all.

Thankfully, it was not all about memorials, about thought provoking meetings with educators and scholars or painful stories; or about holocaust education for Muslim or Christian Arab students; or tales of former Arab villages no longer accessible to their former inhabitants. We visited a vineyard with generous tasting and learning about the different types of wine. As the Imam in Akko despite earlier arrangements was not there, we spent some leisure time in the Bazaar and sat in a restaurant watching the sun set over the sea. We celebrated Shabbat in Nes Ammim, studying chapters 18 and 22 of Genesis.

On the penultimate evening in Jerusalem the group commemorated Kristallnacht in Debbie’s beautiful synagogue Kehillat Yedidya, where we were joined by a study group from the Swedish Institute led by our January Executive Board meeting host.

At the Pontifical Biblical Institute we met with Father David Neuhaus on what Christians carefully listening to both sides, in an age of Christian-Jewish dialogue, need to do with the different narratives, aiming at a future stage of writing a new, a joint narrative.

On the last morning we visited the beautiful offices in East Jerusalem the organisation “Search for Common Ground”, headed in Israel by Sharon Rosen and her Arab colleague Suheir Rasul and learned of their step by step programme to achieve a conflict transformation, valuing diversity to find solutions aiming for both sides to become partners in humanity.

The question for us remained: Will it ever be possible to find a compromise between a narrative of a biblical promise of a land and a narrative of lost land once ploughed by fathers and grandfathers?

Maybe the answer will lie in some success attained by Search for Common Ground.

As Debbie Weissman reflected in summing up the 9-day experience: What in the long run will be required is in the words of the 34th Psalm we found written up in Hebrew and Arabic on the wall at the Yad-be’Yad School:

*Who is he man who is eager for life
Who desires years of good fortune?*

*Guard your tongue from evil
Your lips from deceitful speech
Shun evil and do good
Seek amity and pursue it*

A strong community sense including a commitment to listen with respect and to face tough questions with respect in light of the complexity of the issues and aiming at constructive critique.

THE ICCJ YOUNG LEADERSHIP – YLC – ACTIVITIES AND CONFERENCES 1996 – 2009

As already reported in the earlier parts of ICCJ's history, since 1960 there had always been regeneration through a dynamic group of 19 – 35 years old who, recalling that the founder of the organisation way back in the aftermath of World War II and the Shoah tended to be a step ahead in outreach of the various ICCJ national member organisations. The emphasis in the group's name on the word "Leadership" was advisedly chosen. Not that every member of the YL would necessarily become a leader in their own country's organisation, but there can be little doubt that they brought idealism as well as expertise to dialogue and encounter also in their diverse professional fields.

Among outstanding examples of that contribution we name here but a few:

Dr James (Jim) Aitken, specialist in classics, particular ancient Greek and Hebrew is Academic Director at the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations. He researches and teaches at CJCR and at the University of Cambridge.

Rabbi Ehud Bandel a leading personality in Masorti Judaism and a vice-president of the ICCJ.

Lucia Faltin, Director of International Programmes at the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations. Her main area of interest in which she widely publishes is civic diplomacy, the role of religion in public life and European integration.

Canon Andrew White, who has devoted recent years to act as international peacekeeper and reconciler at times on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury in some of the most serious trouble spots in the Middle East, known nowadays as "The Vicar of Bagdad."

Mostly concurrent with the ICCJ's annual conferences the Young Leadership Council has held its own main annual gathering on topics of contemporary relevance. Whenever feasible they joined the main conference making superb contribution to the themes under review. Their independence has allowed them to invite participants way beyond the usual ICCJ membership constellation. The new language, the experiences and even yearnings for living in harmony of a new generation are indeed invaluable contribution to the ICCJ's new agenda.

The following is a brief overview of the YLC's activities and impact:

1996

The group concentrated on motivating and strengthening interested parties in Brazil, the Czech Republic, at the University of Riga in Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and the Ukraine. They also established a YL Middle East division with its own Abrahamic Forum resulting in the invitation of one of the first Internet groups, MSA, to write about the ICCJ's and in particular the younger people's concerns, including the part religion plays in getting people across so many divides to join in open discussion. Participants among that year's YL conference included delegates from Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian autonomous areas and Israel. The conference theme was *Young People in Dialogue Across Borders, Religion and Conflicts – how can we sing a song in a strange land – or do we speak?* Well, they shared songs about Jerusalem. Guitars had become part of the unity that marked such gatherings. But they did not shrink from at times controversial debate about the divide not only between East and West but increasingly about the South and the North.

Representatives of the YLC also accompanied Prof Martin Stöhr to present toys and bicycles to a children's rehabilitation home in Minsk.

1997

Forty delegates from 21 countries, including for the first time delegates from Brazil, Slovakia and Spain significantly met in Rome bear the Catacombs to discuss *Back to the Catacombs? – Religious Freedom in a Secular World*, central to their deliberations among others were aspects of religious freedom in Egypt, religion in South America and the position of Arab Israelis.

1998

Early in the year the YL chair, Lucia Faltin, accompanied the then President of Slovakia (and Honorary President of the Slovak CCJ) on his farewell visit to the USA. It was an opportunity for Lucia for an informal meeting with a number of young people from the Open Society Foundation, hopefully a step towards reviving USA younger people's cooperation with the ICCJ YLC bearing in mind also that a number of dialogue activists from Russia and Belarus had moved to the USA. Later that year she also attended a Reconciliation Institute Basic Seminar in California organised by the European Reconciliation Fellowship, this was followed by an international reconciliation seminar in East Slovakia. The seminar brought together young people from the region in Kosice who benefited in particular from a number of reconciliation techniques.

Immediately prior to the main ICCJ Erlbach conference they held a meeting nearby addressing, in the main, issues of structure as well as a viable form of

trilateral work considering the diverse attitudes towards an increasing Muslim population and ways of reconciling historical experiences and memories with contemporary challenges.

1999

The YLC held a conference in Bratislava entitled *Agony and Ecstasy: Emotions in Religion*.

At that conference Rev Dick Pruiksma presented the annual YLC Bill Simpson “Next Generation Lecture.” He spoke of *Spirituality and Interfaith Encounter*, the dynamic process emanating from the unmediated experience of oneness. This responded already to some extent to the YLC’s search for a new agenda with heightened theological content. Later that year following the proposed changes in emphasis, a YLC Young Theologians Forum met at the Martin Buber House to explore basic emphases for the coming century mainly in relation to the inescapable requirement of facing historical and ideological changes, evaluating the reasons and sources for dialogue. Based on their commitment ‘responsibility’ they gave serious consideration to the place of liturgy and traditional topics in light of contemporary needs.

2000

You’ve Got Mail – Revelation in the Post-Modern World was the YLC’s topic chosen for a conference in Madrid. It focused on concepts of revelation in the present day and the importance of the revealed source in its traditional form, its use by modern movements and the effects of globalisation on fixed forms of revelation as well as modern perceptions of revelation such as human rights ethics and the internet revolution. Prior to the conference there had already been a pre-conference e-mail group enabling on-line discussion in which 20 countries participated. The “Annual Bill Simpson Next Generation Lecture” was given by Rev Gary S Leonard, South Africa. He suggested that if there is to be a continued and conscious move for contextually committed and inter-religious social action in South Africa, then dialogue and engagement with historical-critical, sociological and Marxist theory are inevitable in allowing true understanding and analysis of Black African Experience. In contrast to usual discussions on the history and importance of sources, there were a number of workshops on mysticism and mystical revelation, including also Sufism, Hassidism and Hassidic masters. It was also decided that in future the YLC would also formally have representatives of all three Abrahamic religions.

2001

At the ICCJ’s main conference in Montevideo two major workshops were given over to the YLC. They addressed the heart of the issues at the centre of our

forward looking young participants, including the year's only Muslim conference participant.

South America – The Promised Land? Freedom or Religion, Religious Views on Land Reform and Ownership and If I am only for myself – What am I?

Two major topics – genuine encounter in lieu of written papers were the order of the day. It was impressive and promising for ongoing contact between the 'veterans' from the Northern Hemisphere and their highly motivated Latin American counterparts.

The first session dealt with the historic twin issues of Colonisation and Christianisation which had led to the destruction of different native faiths and created the contemporary search for answers about the ownership of land and liberation theology. The second workshop consisted of a four hour visit to the Barrio Borro – a shantytown in Montevideo where the group learned how this Borro youth place is being run for children after school.

2002

The YLC branched out into a different country: They went to Vilnius in Lithuania to explore the topic ***Ready for Dialogue? – Learning from the past to create the future.*** "The Annual Bill Simpson Next Generation Lecture" was given by one of the YLC's most enthusiastic and committed members, Mohamed Mosaad from Egypt. There were only fifteen participants. The main emphasis of the conference however was on social action projects and sharing of experience in interfaith leadership. Despite the fact that on the face of it they were in a beautiful city with people on the whole being welcoming, the experience on closer acquaintance and in sharing experiences with their hosts to discover how difficult life still was and the insufficiency of social and health care, made them realise that the crass reality and the sheer facts of life did not altogether make encounter with the other a priority; something that rather encouraged the YLC's determination to find new ways of making dialogue work in diverse settings.

2003

Haven was the deliberately chosen title for the YL conference in Amsterdam immediately preceding the main ICCJ conference in The Netherlands, a centuries old haven for the persecuted and the dispossessed. The central theme was how religion and state interact and how this affected the engagement in the participants' respective religious and national life. Amsterdam obviously was an attractive and popular venue, but from among 60 international applicants

responding to internet publicity only 32 were selected to ensure that whoever they were and wherever they came from an exercise in shedding their traditional labels and to encounter each other as individuals involved in a faith and a nation, yet engaging with those aspects of their identities in different ways. And there were real moments of discovery such as: an Egyptian Muslim for the first time meeting Jews; a German Palestinian rights campaigner for the first time meeting Israelis.

The Annual Bill Simpson Next Generation Lecture was given by John Pawlikowski on *Ecology and Globalisation* a topic that struck a chord with the group who were already planning the next conference

2004

Bonn, Germany entitled ***Globalisation***. The forty participants had been selected for their current involvement in interfaith dialogue and their potential to continue taking it forward in their home countries. Plenary as well as workshop topics considered various aspects of globalisation and its effects on lives religiously, nationally and individually. There were the usual academic lectures, tours and sharing in each other's worship as well as text studies, but most of the work focused on small group encounters teaching new skills and inspiring renewed motivation to continue the work in their own countries. There were two major encounters with local communities: attending Friday prayers at the University and church on Sunday morning. In particular for the Bonn Islamic Society it was their first exposure to formal dialogue, rather than struggling to establish their own identity in a German university. The Christian community was most welcoming and fascinated to meet Jews and Muslims to whom they would normally have almost no exposure at all; an astonishing experience in a country that has a long established Jewish-Christian organisation and growing dialogue also with Muslims.

2005

Holding an YL conference in the USA at the time of the main Chicago conference had proved too expensive. Instead their conference entitled ***Confronting Prejudice*** mainly organised under the guidance of YL chair Lena Ohlsson was held in Sweden. In Stockholm the city with the most complex geographical layout in Europe with bridges and waterfronts spread over a dozen islands. It seemed in every respect a wonderful backdrop for thirty-eight participants from Egypt, Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Jordan, Northern Ireland and Spain to confront with candour and honesty, and the Middle Eastern participants also with commendable courage and soul-searching their dreams of lack of prejudice, as well as the realities often buried deep below their professed idealism. Workshops and seminars included an in-depth seminar *Making sense of*

stereotypes led by Judith Narrowe an anthropologist and also wife of Sweden's Chief Rabbi. The local Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities were involved in the entire project, including a session led by One Voice, a joint Israeli-Palestinian organisation determined to prove that they had partners for peace even on 'the other side.' Though there was of course no escaping the hot issue of the Middle East conflict always in the background. As one participant stated: we can discuss religion with each other, but not politics. It was due to the skill of the by now fairly experienced YL leadership that despite some at times harsh debate the balance was maintained and the confronting of prejudice deeply and beneficially explored. Given the ICCJ's strained financial situation the main conference sponsors were *Euromed*, an EU programme sponsoring youth contacts between Europe and the Mediterranean region who afterwards wrote to the organisers "The quality has deeply impressed us, the financial report was exemplary and it seems to us that you have accomplished a very good youth exchange indeed".

2006

The YL gathered in August for its conference – to some extent in the shadow of the Second Lebanese war between Hezbollah and Israel – in Heidelberg at the Ecumenical Institute in the old city below the old castle. The subject was ***Identities in a Changing World*** and an unprecedented number of countries was represented. Jewish, Muslim and Christian participants came from all over Europe and the Middle East, including for the first time delegates from Saudi Arabia and Iran. The group almost mirrored the main players in today's political world. Each day started with text study in groups based on texts connected to identities of different kinds, not only such as gender and age, but also intra-religious traditions. The composition of the groups was deliberately designed to be as diversified as possible. Much of the entire enterprise including outings and visits was due to attention to detail provided in particular by the experienced YL committee member, Daniel Geese, a student of theology at Heidelberg University.

2007

At the end of August the YL met in the small village Yardley Hastings outside Northampton, England, the country with its long-standing tradition of dialogue and encounter across national origin, cultures and religions. The theme was, "To Share the World – Religious Diversity and Respect." For 6 packed days some thirty young people from thirteen counties, once again mainly from Europe and the Middle East started the day with text study centred on different topics such as prayer and revelation. Important part of the conference was sharing each other's holy days, attending Muslim Friday prayers, celebrating Shabbat and going to church together on the Sunday. One room at the confer-

ence centre was dedicated to prayers. Muslim participants gathered there five times a day for prayers, and there was Christian prayer every evening. There was diversity within the different religions, such as one of the Egyptian participants giving glimpses of the richness of the Coptic tradition when he led the evening prayer. The group also learnt to deal with tensions which naturally arise when people of such diverse background meet. Cooking together, using different seasoning was another lesson in cooperation and communication.

2008

The year's conference entitled Religions and Peace-Building regrettably could not be held in Israel and therefore make a lively contribution to the main conference deliberations as numerous participants would be unable to secure Israeli visas or even receive permission from their own countries to come to Israel. Instead, it took place in July in the pleasant surroundings of the Cypriot village of Kritou Terra. During the gathering delegates from Egypt, Germany, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Scotland, Sweden, the UK and the USA, and reflected on the role of religions in peace building through a variety of different activities. Participants were selected to represent as far as possible and in equal balance of Jews, Christians and Muslims. This year, as last, the lack of response from the CCJ national organisations remained a matter for concern and has made the task of finding suitable delegates considerably more difficult. Also, funding once again proved a problem. One of the most memorable aspects of this year's conference was the incorporation of activities based on the 'Theatre of the Oppressed' technique developed by the Brazilian thinker Augusto Boal, a tool which was both fun and profound in the insights it opened up in the group. The guest speaker was an expert in using 'Theatre of the Oppressed' as a tool for reconciliation in the North of Ireland. Key to the YLC gathering was the daily practice of *Chevruta* in they which we took a Jewish, Christian and Islamic text based around the central theme to reflect on these in small groups. As usual, they also celebrated Shabbat together, attending the Mosque as a group, and celebrating an ecumenical Christian Agape service.

At a time when in place of the traditional handing on between the ageing and the younger generation there nowadays is evident overlapping, the YLC are also looking into the immanent issue of intergenerational relations in interfaith dialogue. A sort of looking back in order to look forward pivotal to ensuring long term flourishing of the ICCJ.

2009

At the start of the year there was a sense of despondency due to uncertainty surrounding funding not least due to the rejection of the YLC's application for a

Berlin conference to the European Union. In the end additional funds were provided by the ICCJ, Sir Sigmund Sternberg and the Association Friends and Sponsors of the Martin Buber House – an association created to enable individuals to participate in the wider work of the ICCJ, nowadays mainly the all important Young Leadership.

The list of participants in the Berlin YLC conference entitled *Interfaith Dialogue – hopes and challenges – a vision for the future* was diminishing in geographical scope as full funding for the many interested from all over the world could not be guaranteed and also because exit restrictions were applied by some countries as well entry visa restrictions by the German government. However, undeterred they pressed on and though a few participants only trickled in on various days, it proved an amazingly fruitful conference. The YLC led two interesting and successful workshops at the main ICCJ conference. This gave both sides a unique chance to connect and discover that the generation gap had not so much to do with commitment or basic approach, but mainly with the new skills and experiences of a younger generation actively engaged in the ecological issues of our time and also being more attuned to react to electronic information in a constantly changing world.

There was a rich diversity of participants:

Five Muslims: one from the UK, one from Sweden, two from Iran, and one from Saudi Arabia.

Five Jewish participants: one from Berlin (and Israel), one from the UK, and three from Israel.

Six Christians: two from Ireland, two from the United States and two from Germany.

Within these three faith systems there were diverse traditions, highly engaging for their daily chevruta engagement with texts from each tradition.

Visits to the synagogue, mosque and church presented opportunities from each tradition to ask questions of actual communities and to contextualize the individual faiths of each of the other participants. Throughout the participants emphasized that they represented themselves only – not their entirely faith traditions.

The conference strongly benefited from the full participation over the conference days of ICCJ president Debbie Weissman, a renowned educator.

In addition Barbara Fruth, secretary at the Martin Buber House, led a fascinating exercise in identity, tradition and self-definition and open discussion about difficulties encountered thereby.

Ruth Weyl, ICCJ consultant, who has served the ICCJ in various guises over the past 35 years was invited to tell how she foresaw the future of dialogue. It was a sort of looking backwards at a childhood in Berlin under the Nazis in order to look forward. A genuine intergenerational exercise.

The AGM and new elections brought to the fore some concern regarding the balance of faith traditions as only one Jewish participant agreed to stand. She was unanimously elected because of her experience in the work of the UK Three Faiths Forum her skills, leadership qualities, and wealth of support.

It is intended to create a working group that would significantly bolster the balance of Judaism's influence in the board. There are candidates from the United States, Europe, and Israel that are under consideration.

Members of the new Board (2009 – 2010) are:

Katie Sturm (Chair) USA /Ireland – Christian
Daniel Geese (Co/Vice Chair) Germany – Christian
Debbie Danon UK – Jewish
Wafieq Al-Sughver Saudi Arabia – Muslim
Alicia Gauch USA/Ireland – Christian
Sayyid Wahid Sweden/Iran – Muslim
Garry Holmes, Ireland – Christian
Jason Mcann, Ireland – Christian
Fatemeh Shameli, Iran – Muslim
Rebecca Brückner, Germany – Christian

As Debbie is of Turkish-Jewish origin her help in setting up the 2010 YLC conference in Turkey was greatly appreciated.

Cooperation with the main ICCJ body has now definitely been strengthened for the benefit of all.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

FUNDAMENTAL POSTULATES OF CHRISTIANITY AND JUDAISM IN RELATION TO HUMAN ORDER

FINDINGS OF COMMISSION No.2 OF THE INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS, OXFORD, 1946

As Christians and Jews, while recognizing the important religious differences between us, we affirm on the basis of divine revelation that the dignity, rights and duties of man derive from his creation by God and his relation to God.

We acknowledge God as the Creator and Lord of the universe, and as the Father of all human beings: we see in their relation to God the bond which unites them, even amid division and conflict, and in Him the authority to which all are subject. Moreover, we find the basic motive for ethical conduct in man's response to God as he makes Himself known in His wisdom and goodness.

By the will of God in creation man is both an individual and a member of society, so that both individuals and communities owe obedience to His rule. Moreover, there is true community only where there is full personal life, and vice versa.

Therefore:

We acknowledge the authority of the moral principles which are implicit in the nature of man in virtue of his relation to God and of his qualities as a rational, moral and social being. From these it follows that it is the duty of men to respect in others the right to:

1. LIFE – Since each human being is the child of God and has special value in His sight as an individual, his life must be respected and preserved. At the same time, he must similarly respect the life of his fellow-man and is under obligation to promote his good.
2. LIBERTY – The responsibility which falls upon man as a child and servant of God involves the necessity for freedom. He must therefore, be given opportunity for the free exercise of the spiritual and moral powers entrusted to him. Life in organised society makes demands and entails restrictions upon the individual, but the fundamental principles of liberty alike for the individual and communities may never be sacrificed.
3. PERSONAL DIGNITY – Each individual possesses worth as a person and must treat others as such, while other persons and the community must accord similar treatment to him. This principle involves recognition of his

status as a member of society with a contribution to make to the whole, and is opposed to discrimination on grounds of colour, race or creed.

We repudiate both the individualism which would make a man a law unto himself and the totalitarianism which would subordinate and sacrifice all other values to race, nation, state, class or party. Against the first, we claim that only as a man accepts himself from God and all his life as under God can he truly live. Against the second we affirm that all human institutions stand under God's rule and judgment and that none may usurp the loyalty which is due to Him alone.

Rights are exercised and duties discharged in a world which includes things as well as persons. Here we would maintain the following principles:

1. Things must be subordinated to persons, and property rights should always be secondary to consideration of human welfare and social justice.
2. Nature is to be respected and not merely exploited. It is a revelation of God and a sphere of His purpose: man may not squander its bounty and must show due regard for its beauty.

The right attitude of a community to its members, of persons to persons, and of persons to things, cannot be fully achieved without the recognition, alike by the individual and by the community, of God and of the relation of man and nature to Him.

Corporate recognition of God will include, in addition to the moral obligations of society, all that comes within the compass of worship.

Divided as we are in the forms of public worship, we are united in affirming the value of it and the need to participate in it if a right human order is to be achieved. Religious communities have therefore the right to exist and also the right to their own freedom of activity. Without the recognition of this right the political community is impoverished.

The moral law which is rooted in God and implanted in man's nature is binding, not only upon individuals, but also upon society in all its groupings.

1. Within the state there should be respect for the family, freedom for a rich and varied group-life; above the state is the will of God as manifest in the universal moral law.
2. Society is preeminently the sphere of justice, by which the relationships between individuals are so ordered that each may perform his duties and be assured of his rights. This can be achieved only under some form of government which recognizes the social, political and religious rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups.

3. Society is equally under an obligation to use all its resources for the welfare of all its members. That implies education, adequate provision against want, opportunity of service and conditions which will enable every individual to be at home in the community and every community to be at home in the larger human society.

Man's recognition of himself and of his neighbour as children of God should issue in a charity, and righteousness which, while but imperfectly embodied in the forms and laws of organised society, work constantly to transform them into an ever more adequate expression. We therefore, Christians and Jews alike, call upon all who share the religious convictions and the ethical standards here set out to cooperate for the realisation of this ideal.

APPENDIX II

AN ADDRESS TO THE CHURCHES SEELISBERG, 1947

We have recently witnessed an outburst of antisemitism which has led to the persecution and extermination of millions of Jews. In spite of the catastrophe which has overtaken both the persecuted and the persecutors, and which has revealed the extent of the Jewish problem in all its alarming gravity and urgency, antisemitism has lost none of its force, but threatens to extend to other regions, to poison the minds of Christians and to involve humanity more and more in a grave guilt with disastrous consequences.

The Christian Churches have indeed always affirmed the un-Christian character of antisemitism, as of all forms of racial hatred, but this has not sufficed to prevent the manifestation among Christians, in various forms, of an indiscriminating racial hatred of the Jews as a people.

This would have been impossible if all Christians had been true to the teaching of Jesus Christ of the mercy of God and love of one's neighbour. But this faithfulness should also involve clear sighted willingness to avoid any presentation and conception of the Christian message which would support antisemitism under whatever form. We must recognise, unfortunately, that this vigilant willingness has often been lacking.

We therefore address ourselves to the Churches to draw their attention to this alarming situation. We have the firm hope that they will be concerned to show their members how to prevent any animosity towards the Jews which might arise from false, inadequate or mistaken presentations or conceptions of the teaching and preaching of the Christian doctrine, and how on the other hand to promote brotherly love towards the sorely-tried people of the old covenant.

Nothing would seem more calculated to contribute to this happy result than the following

TEN POINTS

1. Remember that One God speaks to us all through the Old and the New Testaments.
2. Remember that Jesus was born of a Jewish mother of the seed of David and the people of Israel, and that His everlasting love and forgiveness embraces His own people and the whole world.

3. Remember that the first disciples, the apostles and the first martyrs were Jews.
4. Remember that the fundamental commandment of Christianity, to love God and one's neighbour, proclaimed already in the Old Testament and confirmed by Jesus, is binding upon both Christians and Jews in all human relationships, without any exception.
5. Avoid distorting or misrepresenting biblical or post-biblical Judaism with the object of extolling Christianity.
6. Avoid using the word Jews in the exclusive sense of the enemies of Jesus, and the words 'the enemies of Jesus' to designate the whole Jewish people.
7. Avoid presenting the Passion in such a way as to bring the odium of the killing of Jesus upon all Jews or upon Jews alone. It was only a section of the Jews in Jerusalem who demanded the death of Jesus, and the Christian message has always been that it was the sins of mankind which were exemplified by those Jews and the sins in which all men share that brought Christ to the Cross.
8. Avoid referring to the scriptural curses, or the cry of a raging mob: 'His blood be upon us and our children', without remembering that this cry should not count against the infinitely more weighty words of our Lord: 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do'.
9. Avoid promoting the superstitious notion that the Jewish people are reprobate, accursed, reserved for a destiny of suffering.
10. Avoid speaking of the Jews as if the first members of the Church had not been Jews.

APPENDIX III

ICCJ GUIDELINES ON THE PORTRAYAL OF JEWS AND JUDAISM IN EDUCATION AND IN TEACHING MATERIALS

The following guidelines, developed at a consultation held by the International Council of Christians and Jews at the Martin Buber House, Heppenheim, Federal Republic of Germany, April 7–10, 1983, will be submitted for adoption at the Annual Meeting of the ICCJ at Amersfoort, The Netherlands, on August 25/26, 1983.

They are intended for the guidance of authors and publishers, and also of teachers and education administrators, as well as government authorities responsible for education. They apply to all levels: primary, secondary, postsecondary and university, both general and specifically theological.

TEXTBOOKS IN GENERAL

Introduction:

Much work has been done in this field, particularly in the last 30 years; indeed, a major purpose of the 1983 ICCJ Consultation was to take stock of it and move forward from it.

It is axiomatic that textbooks, in order to be educationally acceptable, must take into account the latest and best research and scholarship.

They must encourage an attitude of respect for all people.

They must recognize and understand the special historical and theological relationship between Jews and Christians. This relationship must be acknowledged, and further explored, in teaching materials and in teaching methods and approaches.

Historical Considerations:

A sense of history must be achieved in the light of present reality. It develops slowly throughout childhood and adolescence; hopefully, it evolves continually in adult life; but particularly in formative years, it requires specific, positive educational help.

The learning of history must lead to the acquisition of fundamental values, not the least of which is the direction it offers for the future.

The three dimensions of past, present and future come together in the celebration by Jews and Christians of their respective festivals, in ways maintained throughout the centuries and still carried on today.

Throughout European history, Jews have been present (with some gaps of expulsion) in every country. Their contribution to that history has been considerable, but it has been significantly neglected. Their experience has in many respects been radically different from that of Christians, and it deserves to be brought back into historical view: the confinement in ghettos, the selective persecution, the restriction of economic, educational and social opportunities, the so-called “final solution”, the impact of the creation of the state of Israel.

Recent scholarship, Christian even more than Jewish, has focussed on the life of Christ and on the early years of the Christian era. It has brought out major misrepresentations and inaccuracies with respect to Jews and Judaism, and having so long been accepted as truth, pervade textbooks and teachings. This work underlines the need for the review and revision of teaching materials, the writing of new texts, and the re-thinking of education approaches.

Theological Considerations

Theology always strives towards greater understanding. Christian and Jewish theologians today are developing a fuller reciprocal comprehension of the relationships between their respective traditions. The complexity of Biblical texts, and of the teachings which have derived from them, should not be underestimated. Oversimplification may lead not only to inaccuracy but also to misrepresentation. All teaching of children, however, involves some form of simplification of subject matter: the omission of material and of concepts for which the child is not yet intellectually or psychologically ready. In educational terms, simplification posits a thorough grasp of the matter to be simplified, and this imposes a special responsibility on the teacher.

Christian scriptures can be fully understood only through accurate knowledge of the life and thought of the Jewish world which was contemporary with what they relate and of the surrounding Graeco-Roman world as well. Jesus, his family and his apostles were Jews. Their lives and practices were typical of the Jewish world of that time. This fact is essential to the understanding of their story.

The teachings of Jesus and the development of early Christian thinking as recorded in Christian scriptures, can be better understood if illuminated by accurate

te knowledge of coeval Jewish values and ethics set down in later times, in the Midrashim, the Mishna and the Talmud. These texts are difficult and their approach requires the careful application of appropriate historic-critical methods.

In the time of Jesus, reference to the Bible was only to what Christians call the “Old Testament” (preferably, “Hebrew scriptures”). It is important to recognize that this Book is still for Jews a coherent and complete text, the source of a living tradition. It has a living and independent validity as a record and source of Jewish tradition and teaching. Its integrity must be respected and consideration of it must not be limited to its significance in Christian teaching.

Jewish life and practice in the time of Jesus, and still more so Jewish life and practice today, cannot be circumscribed by reference to the bible. Throughout the intervening centuries, and continuing in the present time, Judaism has produced a vast and still growing literature which provides theological insights of indispensable value.

Christianity also has been developing throughout the ages. As in the case of Judaism, this development has led to diversity. There is much parallelism in the evolution of both, underlining the origins they have in common and the shared ideals and hopes to which both aspire.

Conclusion

It is the aim of these guidelines to foster the production and use of texts which dispel the inaccuracies and misconceptions which have been the seeds of prejudice and persecution. It is their further objective to encourage continuing scholarship, research and dialogue.

TEACHING OF HISTORY

In this field as in every other, attitudes are formed by exposure to teaching approaches and materials, and of course to people.

Criteria for the analysis of the portrayal of Jews and Judaism in textbooks for religious instruction and catechesis have been developed in different countries. With regard to the teaching of history such criteria already exist at least in one country (West Germany): Chaim Schatzker, *Die Juden in den deutschen Geschichtsbüchern* (“Jews in German History Books”), 1981.

On the basis of Schatzker’s school-textbook analysis, the ICCJ and/or the Deutscher Koordinierungsrat der Gesellschaften für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit should submit to German governmental authorities, as well as to school-

textbook publishing houses, to authors, to historians and to suitable journals, proposals for the revision of history textbooks. Similar presentations should be made to appropriate authorities in other countries.

As basic principle should be established: that nothing should be presented in isolation from the comprehensive historical context of Judaism of Jewish life or of Jewish-Christian relations.

Jews in Antiquity

The specificity of Jewish life and faith, including Jews' perceptions of themselves, require careful analysis. Jews must not be disparaged on the grounds of stereotypical portrayals of their relationships to the newly-developing Christianity, in the stereotypical images that the Pharisees manifested mortal enmity towards Jesus, that the Jewish people were responsible for Jesus' death, that only Christianity offered a God of Love in contrast to the Hebrew God of law, that Christianity had displaced Judaism, that only Christianity had a universalist orientation. On the contrary, the emergence of the Christian faith community must be shown to have occurred within the framework of Judaism (viz.: the Jewishness of Jesus and his disciples, the rapid spread of Christianity across Diaspora Judaism, etc). The divergence of early Christianity from Judaism must be presented in the full detail of their historical relationships in those early days of the Christian era.

The destruction of the Temple in the year 70 of the Christian era, and of Jerusalem in the year 135, must not be interpreted as denoting the end of Judaism and of the Jewish people. The religious and cultural reconstruction of Judaism by Pharisaic-rabbinic initiatives, enabling the Jewish people to preserve their identity and vitality in a life lived increasingly in the diaspora, requires an attention hitherto not accorded to.

Jews in Mediaeval Times

The persecution of Jews was often justified on the basis that they were usurers; but it must be recognized that most other occupations were closed to them, and indeed that other people – Lombards, Fuggers, et al. – were also engaged in money-lending but did not generally receive the same opprobrium.

The history of mediaeval Jews must not be limited to stories of martyrdom. Due attention must be paid to the economic, social and spiritual contributions of Jews to the life of the world, contributions of which the Christian peoples of the West were significant beneficiaries: in philosophy, astronomy, medicine, trade, linguistics, theology, etc.

Judaism in Recent Centuries

The evolution of Judaism and of Jewish life in recent centuries cannot be adequately understood without a comprehensive historic consideration of many elements, of which the following seem especially significant:

- The attitudes towards Jews manifested by Martin Luther and the Reformation;
- The Enlightenment, together with the presupposition and the reality of emancipation;
- Jewish assimilation, and its relation to the racist antisemitism of the 19th century and to the eventual birth of the Zionist movement;
- The contributions of Jews to the cultural, economic and social life of each country;
- The persecution and extermination of Jews under the Nazi regime, as the culmination of a two-thousand year-old anti-Jewish tradition;
- The state of Israel, in the light of history and of present-day problems. and its impact on the Jewish people and on the world.

Judaism, the Jewish people and Jewish intellectual activity did not vanish with the arrival of Jesus, remain in ghostly limbo for 1900 years and reappear in the twentieth century. Their continuity needs to be restored to the historical record. It is worth noting that history books have often, perhaps unconsciously, uncritically assimilated theological or religious judgments.

The objective transmission of historical information and analysis is an exacting responsibility for teachers of history. This is even more true where Jewish history is concerned, and the human dimension deserves special attention.

Conclusion

Existing history textbooks require careful and objective re-evaluation. It is true that formal history lessons are not the only factors which influence attitudes; but young people especially must be helped, at the very least in this formal way, to recognize and understand the historical roots of prejudice and be motivated towards respect and friendship for all.

The ICCJ should create an appropriate committee for the pursuit of the work begun at the 1983 Consultation including the application of these considerations to the various social sciences.

SEMINARY EDUCATION

Specific courses in Judaism and in Jewish history are important indeed essential, in seminary curricula; but consideration of Christian-Jewish relationships at the theological level also involves central elements of the core courses of those curricula, especially scripture, systematics (dogmatics), liturgy, church history and ethics.

General Recommendations

Christian seminary students and faculty members as well, should be exposed to the active teaching presence of Jewish scholars, especially but not exclusively in the areas of scriptural study and church history. The engagement of one or more full-time Jewish faculty members would be ideal; at the very least, Jewish lecturers should be brought in to deal with pertinent topics.

Qualified Christian theological students should be encouraged (and supported) towards further education at Jewish institutions of higher learning, in rabbinic and other Jewish studies.

Chairs of Jewish Studies should be established at Christian and non-denominational universities.

Attention should be given to continuing education programs, to the use of the media (e.g. religious publications), and to the development of appropriate curriculum materials for “world religions” courses.

Hebrew Scriptures (“Old Testament”)

The Hebrew Bible must be understood in its own right as the word of God. A historic-critical methodology, proceeding objectively, will provide the initial approach to understanding the text as it was written in its own time.

Christian theological students should be aware of, and able to use, Jewish sources of biblical interpretation, both classical (rabbinic, mediaeval) and contemporary.

Based on this foundation, the implications and consequences of such approaches need to be raised within the context of systematic theology.

One cannot be satisfied with any methodology of “old Testament Theology” which would organize biblical thought solely around theological categories derived from Christian doctrine.

Christian theological students must be able to read and study the Hebrew scriptures in Hebrew. No translation, or study based on a translation, is really adequate today.

Specifically Christian Scriptures (“New Testament“)

Students must develop the skills necessary to read the texts, normally and fully, in a critical way, always aware of their historical development.

Students must develop the ability to understand the Christian scriptures within the richly complex and evolving setting of Second Temple Judaism, with its wide spectrum of attitudes from the apocalyptic to the Pharisaic/rabbinic. Contemporary Jewish literature also has a wealth of pertinence.

The “Jewishness of Jesus” is important not only in terms of Jesus’ heritage and life as a Jew but also for the proper placement of Jesus’ teaching within the framework of the Jewish thought of that time.

Teaching must be founded on the latest and best of modern scholarship, both Christian and Jewish; the latter is less well known to most Christians.

Difficulties exist regarding “problematic” (i.e. “anti-Jewish”) texts, both hermeneutically and as regards homiletics. They must be honestly faced. The polemical expressions contained in these texts must not, however, be conceded as valid for authentic Christian reflection on Jews and Judaism today.

Scriptures need to be viewed as historically conditioned. Elements which are of relatively later origin and which may possibly be considered not to be “authentic logia” of Jesus, may thus be judged to have been valid in the context in which they were set down (a complex question in itself) but not binding upon Christians today as a properly Christian approach to the Jewish people.

Passages in Christian scriptures must be related to the context of the whole text, and to the underlying spirit of love and truth of the gospel message.

Church History

The parallelism, and frequent intersection, of Church history and Jewish history deserve special study; this will provide enriched illumination of key issues and events. Jewish chronicles and other primary sources should be read together with Christian accounts of major phenomena (the Crusades, the Inquisition, etc.). Such “bifocal” views are of exceptional value in understanding history.

Church history tends to be primarily that of the conclusions of theological debates and controversies, and tends to stress that which is deemed positive in the tradition of each denomination. Yet without the “dark underside” of the tradition, even those positive elements may not be properly understood. Thus, to comprehend the teachings of the Fathers, it is vital to deal also, and in depth with the ‘Adversos Judaeos’ tradition which played such a central (if negative) role in the development of Patristic theology. It can be instructive to juxtapose such elements against the “purer” formulations of creedal development.

Likewise of great significance for the understanding of Patristic and mediaeval thought are parallel developments in rabbinic and in Jewish scholastic philosophy and biblical reflection. In the “Golden Age” (from a Jewish perspective) of Spain, for example, at the turning point of the first millennium there took place, especially in Toldedo, a brilliant period of exchange among Muslim, Jewish and Christian thinkers. Such exchanges had a profound impact on the development, first of scholastic, then of Renaissance and ultimately even of Reformation thinking in European Christendom. It is indeed impossible adequately to relate these seminal developments in Western tradition from the viewpoint of Western Christian thinkers alone. One thinks not only of Raymond Lull (13th century Barcelona) but also of Jewish textual criticism and of the influence, by way of translations by Jewish scholars, of Arabic philosophy upon the West. In an age of internationalization” such as our own, such precious moments of interreligious and intercultural meeting deserve a priority of place in the telling of the Christian “stay” through the ages. Further, to understand 20th century Jewish movements, one needs to know their origins in the 18th century ‘haskalah” (Jewish Enlightenment Movement). Of significant concern is the lessening of general interest in Church history within theological training.

Liturgy (“Practical Theology”)

Scholarly studies in the Jewish roots of Christian liturgy, especially the sacraments but also ecclesial and communal structures, are of central importance and need to be furthered.

It is essential to explain the meaning of the use of terms such as “the Jews” in the lectionary. This is especially important in the teaching of homiletics.

Christian theological students should be introduced to Jewish liturgy, and given opportunities for participation in synagogue and Jewish home services.

The relationship between Jewish law and canon law, and the principle of ‘halacha’ as a life and ritual orientation are a relatively new field of studies. For sacramentology and the theology of Marriage, this has special significance.

Systematics

The promise fulfilment concept to describe the nature of the relationship between the Jewish people and the Church, and the problem of the covenants, are matters of current study which may lead to reinterpretation. Such studies deserve intensive support, and require the cooperation of biblicists and systematians.

The central problem is to state the significance of the Christ event in such a way as to allow “theological space” for Judaism, i.e. to develop an adequate locus theologicus’ regarding Judaism and the relationship within God’s plan between the Church and the Jewish people. This is an undeveloped theological mystery (properly so-called) that lies at the heart of the very identity of the church.

The implications of the acknowledgement that the ‘Jewish covenant has not been revoked’ by God remain also to be developed, and stand as a challenge to the central categories of traditional Christian doctrinal affirmation. Here too, biblicists and systematians need to work together.

A very complex and challenging set of questions lies in the area of ‘mission and dialogue’. This also needs to be considered from the ecclesiological point of view.

With respect to ‘eschatology’ insights of the “already/not yet” tension of Christian theology must be taken into account. Christians and Jews each in their own tradition, await the “perfect fulfilment” of the Messianic promises in the final coming of the Kingdom (‘malchuth’) at the end of time.

Recent official Church documents, such as the 1982 “Ecumenical Considerations on Jewish-Christian Dialogue” of the World Council of Churches and the 1975 “Vatican Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate* (No. 4)”, raise profound questions which require in-depth study in systematics (dogma, doctrine) courses in graduate theology schools.

Reclaiming a proper accent on the absolute supremacy of ‘the Father’ (1 Cor. 15:28) in prayer and spiritual formation can be helpful in avoiding misunderstanding. The Roman liturgy, save for the prayer for peace is mainly addressed to the Father. Unity in witnessing to the very same, One God, the God of Israel, is an emphasis vital to proper dialogue (cf. Acts 22:14).

The uniqueness of the relationship between the Church and the Jewish people, especially as related to Christian unity but also to dialogue with Islam, deser-

ves fuller attention. Jewish-Christian-Muslim “trialogues” exist today in only a few places, but this three-way dialogue deserves increased academic attention.

The changing evaluations of the Hebrew Scriptures need to be systematically considered. It is essential to the integrity of the Christian faith that the two “Testaments” be deemed of equal value as the Word of God.

Continuing Problems

Current manifestations of antisemitism form a distinct pastoral problem with which students will be faced in their ministries.

There are theological, ethical and sociological questions involved in honestly confronting the Holocaust within Christian educational settings.

Conclusion

In each country, and indeed in each community, people of good will must seek unending opportunities for dialogue and understanding, and exert influence towards improvement of the society in which they live.

APPENDIX IV

GUIDELINES ON THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

AND PARTICULARLY ON THE PLACE OF JEWISH HISTORY IN THE TEACHING OF GENERAL HISTORY

PRESENTED BY

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

INTRODUCTION

This document is a publication of the International Council of Christians and Jews. It derives from a consultation of 30 scholars and specialists held in May of 1985, who, however, are not directly its authors; it is an edited extract drawn from a summary of three days' discussions.

It is intended for the guidance and stimulation of teachers and of educational authorities. It is not a manual, but rather a reflection on tendencies in the teaching and writing of a particular component of world history, that of Judaism and of the Jewish people.

Jewish history must be taught within the framework of world history on the grounds of accuracy and completeness, authenticity and objectivity. To ignore it is to offer an incomplete and defective picture. To ignore it is to minimize and denigrate an important contribution. To ignore it is to reinforce the unjustified impression that Jewish history stops or ceases to have significance with the crucifixion of Jesus, or with the Destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., or with the arrival of Christianity.

The teaching of history is the search for understanding. Its foundation must be the search for truth.

The document is divided, as was the Consultation itself, into three areas: Ancient History, Medieval and Early Modern History, and Recent History (i.e. the history of approximately the last two hundred years).

Each area is divided into two sections, the first setting out themes which should be developed, questions which should be addressed and points which should be emphasized, and the second identifying prevalent distortions, omissions and stereotypical presentations. Guidelines derived from these analyses form the conclusion.

Although some of the observations and recommendations contained herein may have wider application with respect to the teaching of history in general, the primary focus of consideration is the special situation of Jewish history within general history and the special challenge of teaching it accurately and objectively.

ANCIENT HISTORY

THEMES, QUESTIONS, POINTS

MONOTHEISM The impact of monotheistic Judaism upon the non-monotheistic world, e.g. upon Greek and Roman polytheism and upon Persian, Egyptian and Babylonian religions, etc.

The special attraction offered by monotheism, and by Judaism specifically, and the attraction which Judaism continued to exert notwithstanding the subsequent impact of Christianity.

The Biblical concept of the unity of humankind, and of beginnings of the notions of the equal worth of each human being.

The intolerance of Jewish (and subsequent Christian) monotheism for other beliefs, and often vice versa.

ETHICS The special ethical challenges of monotheism, of the Hebrew prophets and of later Judaism.

LAW The contribution of Judaism to the development of law.

The comparison of Mosaic law with the Hammurabic Code, with Greek law, with Roman law, etc.

The coexistence of different legal systems within a shared environment, e.g. within the Roman Empire.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICE Numbers of adherents (Judaism probably constituted the largest religious minority within the Roman Empire in the year 100 C.E., e.g.)

The varying degrees of respect in which Jews and Judaism were held within the Greek and Roman world, e.g. by the

various Roman Emperors, and at different levels of Greek and Roman society.

The Jews' sense of peoplehood, and their commitment to the Holy Land.

The wholeness, integrity and continuity – right through to the present day – of Jewish religious life and observances, of the Hebrew calendar, of Jewish ethical principles, etc.

SOCIETY

The situations of Jews in ancient societies, and their inter-relations with other minority groups.

The political, military, economic and cultural roles of Jews in ancient societies, and the comparison of those roles with those of other minority groups.

The trans-boundary functions of Jews in commerce, culture, information and religion, etc.

The Jewish experience of accommodation, of self-preservation and of exile.

LITERATURE

The comparative interpretation of ancient myths (Tiamat, Creation, Eden, the Flood, etc.).

Studies in comparative literature (e.g. Biblical and Homeric stories, etc.).

The contributions of Jews to the world literature of the period (Philo, Josephus. et al).

JUDAISM & CHRISTIANITY

The life of Jesus, his family and his followers in the context of the Judaism of the 1st century C.E.

The evolution of Christianity in the context of the pluralistic Judaism (Essenes, Pharisees, Sadducees. Zealots, etc.) of the 1st century; the subsequent crystallisation of two pathways: Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity.

The mission of Paul, and of others, to the Gentiles, as fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham to be father of many nations.

The geographic and cultural paths of early Christianity as it spread outside the Holy Land; the relationship of early Christianity to Diaspora Judaism; the dependence of early Christian communities on Diaspora Judaism for structures, liturgy, ritual, ethics, Biblical interpretation, art, literature and music, etc.

The continuing participation of Christians, well into succeeding centuries, in the synagogue as well as in the church.

The reasons for the non-acceptance of Christianity by the majority of Jews: differing concepts of monotheism and of the Messiah, divergent practices, etc.

The continuing rivalry between Judaism and Christianity, therefore emphasizing differences rather than similarities, and their concurrent creativity for many centuries: theological and political aspects, art and literature (e.g. rabbinic and patristic writings).

Geopolitical factors determining historical developments (e.g. the struggle between the Roman and the Parthian Empire as a factor in the decision of Constantine the Great to adopt Christianity).

DISTORTIONS, OMISSIONS, STEREOTYPES

Judaism is often portrayed as having disappeared, stagnated or become fossilized when Christianity arose, rather than as a living, continuing religion of vitality and human significance, guiding the lives of large numbers of people up to and including the present day. Rather than coexisting in parallel and even in organic relationship with each other, the church is portrayed as replacing the synagogue, and Christians as replacing Jews as people of God.

Judaism is often portrayed as monolithic, legalistic and inflexible, and even as hypocritical and lifeless. ("Law" is a mistranslation and misinterpretation of "Torah").

The image of God in the Tanach (Hebrew Scriptures) is often presented as judgmental and vindictive, without love or mercy, in contrast to a gentler Christian image.

The Tanach cannot be interpreted so as to portray the virtuous Hebrews as pre-figured Christians, heirs to God's promises and messianic hopes, etc., while the portion of the wicked Jew is God's wrath, punishment, exile, etc.

The Gospels are often interpreted as if containing a single, negative attitude towards Jews and Judaism. They are often presented or perceived as diaries or documentaries, rather than as accounts written in the last third of the 1st century C.E., years after the events with which they deal. Conflicts between Jesus and Jewish groups, such as the Pharisees, depicted in the Gospels often reflect conflicts between Christian and Jewish communities at the end of the 1st century C.E.

Even today, Jews are often held to be collectively responsible for the death of Jesus, notwithstanding extensive scholarship and ecclesiastical pronouncements which have demonstrated that the decision and the form of execution were Roman, and that many Jews were sympathetic towards Jesus and grief-stricken at his death.

In many writings, Jesus, his family and his followers are not recognizably Jewish: their faithful and pious observance of the religion into which they were born is ignored or even denied.

The presentation of Jewish history in the Holy Land as having ceased after 70 C.E. or after Bar Kochba gives the false impression that Jewish settlement thenceforth ceased to exist. In fact, the Roman ban was enforced only in the area surrounding Jerusalem, and Jews continued to live in Galilee and elsewhere. Later, in Muslim times, Jews came back to Jerusalem.

There is a tendency to project back into antiquity certain later, medieval forms of anti-Jewish feeling. Such anti-Judaism as existed in the ancient world was not related to the social or economic roles of Jews; general xenophobia was a commonplace phenomenon.

A general consequence of these distortions and omissions is that stereotypes, and indeed polemics, have arisen out of uncritical and inaccurate historiography. As a result, a thread of anti-Judaism has run throughout Christian history.

MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN HISTORY

THEMES. QUESTIONS. POINTS

VARIETY OF EXPERIENCE

Jewish life covered a broad spectrum of experience, from cultural productivity, economic prosperity, political responsibility and social involvement to persecution, impoverishment, exile and massacre.

CULTURE & SCHOLARSHIP

There was a high level of general culture and literacy among Jews who were pioneers in many fields of human endeavour.

The study of religious texts was widespread among Jews, with abundant resulting commentary, in contrast to the pre-Reformation Christian tradition which limited such study and commentary primarily to the clergy and the religious orders. Rabbinic literature flourished, under the leadership of such scholars as Rashi, et al.

Jewish scholars played an important role in the transmission to Western Europe of a vast corpus of classical, philosophical and scientific (including medical) knowledge, e.g. Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Moses Maimonides, Baruch Spinoza, et al, as well as in translating many of the great Muslim works and making them available in Europe.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Jews played a wide variety of economic roles in many countries; the value to the state of their literacy was considerable.

The involvement of Jews in importation and exportation was facilitated and made natural by the existence of a network of Jewish communities, particularly throughout the Mediterranean basin and in the Middle East.

In addition to their better-known urban activities, Jews were considerably involved in agriculture and in crafts, e.g. in Spain, in Russia and in Poland.

The managerial skills of Jews were much in demand in many countries; Jews played a financial role in the development of medieval Europe.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Jewish communities were significantly integrated into many societies. There was, however, a swinging pendulum between welcome and expulsion, freedom and restriction, equality and discrimination.

The religious life of Jewish communities was a binding and sustaining force, and a lifeline of continuity.

Education was a dominant preoccupation in Jewish communities, and a concomitant lifeline of continuity.

Jewish communities had significant structures of internal self-government and of social welfare; care for the ill and the poor was a well-developed tradition.

JUDAISM & CHRISTIANITY

Anti-Jewish attitudes were inherent in certain ecclesiastical doctrines. There were anti-Jewish manifestations, and indeed massacres, during the Crusades, and harassments and pogroms in other countries. In some places Jews were held responsible for the Black Death and subjected to persecutions and even forced migrations. As the Reformation progressed, Martin Luther became more and more virulently anti-Jewish. Throughout the era ghettoization became a widespread phenomenon.

There were, however, contrasting positive situations in the cultural, economic, professional and social life of various countries. Pro-Jewish positions were taken by a number of papal decrees and by church councils. Calvinism and Puritanism contain strains favourable to Jews and Judaism. Some civil authorities accorded Jews favourable treatment because of their contributions to society.

JUDAISM & ISLAM

Jews and Muslims, as well as Christians, coexisted peacefully in various countries. The relationships of Sephardic Jews to their surrounding societies were not necessarily the same as those of Ashkenazic Jews.

Some Jewish scholars and leaders were significantly influential on the Muslim communities to which they related, and indeed on Christian communities as well; Moses Maimonides is the outstanding example.

DISTORTIONS, OMISSIONS, STEREOTYPES

There is a tendency to ignore Jewish intellectual and spiritual contributions – philosophical, medical and scientific, literary – to western European life.

There is a tendency to portray Jews as having been tolerated at best, rejected and persecuted at worst, whereas various political rulers vied in encouraging their immigration and their involvement in society.

There is a tendency to portray Jews uni-dimensionally, particularly as money-lenders, whereas in favourable socio-economic circumstances they were involved in agriculture, exportation and importation, management, literature, medicine, science, etc. There is a related tendency to caricature Jews as Shylocks, whereas their financial role was often constructive and indeed vital to economic development; others (Fuggers, Medicis, et al.) have not been so negatively regarded.

There is a tendency to explain Jewish success in business and finance as stemming from Judaism's supposed worldliness, materialism and rationalism, rather than as an expression of their dispersion extending from Christian Europe to the Muslim Levant and beyond, their education and their exclusion from other sources of livelihood, etc. The assertion that Jews were prominent or dominant in the slave trade, then or later, is a myth.

There is a tendency to portray Jews as illiterate and narrow, ghettoized and isolated, whereas literacy and study were widespread, rabbinic literature flowered, and wherever possible relationships were sustained with other Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora and in the Holy Land.

There is an impression that Judaism was systematically rejected by the church, whereas the Codex Theodosianus, for example, acknowledged Judaism as the only non-Christian religion to be permitted within Christendom, albeit at an inferior level.

There is an impression that Jews were systematically and uniformly persecuted, hated and rejected by the Christians and Muslims with whom they came in contact; whereas in various areas Jews and Christians or Jews and Muslims lived together for centuries in mutual harmony and productive interaction.

RECENT HISTORY

THEMES, QUESTIONS, POINTS

MODERNISATION & SECULARISM The Jewish world of the last 200 years has undergone profound changes, as has the larger world around it. Jewish communities were not necessarily static, isolated, inward-looking and religiously conservative; many were significant participants, often pioneers, in the intellectual and social transformations of their era, particularly in the world of ideas.

There was great diversity of Jewish expression, with a spectrum ranging from traditional piety and observance to relaxation and even abandonment of religious practice and commitment; this must be analyzed in comparison with tendencies in other religions.

The social and economic evolution of living, functioning Jewish communities was significant. Sometimes it was conditioned and constrained by discrimination, harassment, hostility and persecution; but in many times and places it flourished with considerable vitality and variety.

EMANCIPATION & ASSIMILATION The French Revolution and the Napoleonic legislation which followed it constituted a watershed from which Jewish emancipation began to flow. Jewish life and Jewish participation in the larger society, evolved (to different degrees) in various European countries. Emancipatory phenomena also touched other minority groups.

The tolerance which was launched by the emancipatory enactments tended, however, to have an inherent expectation: that Jews would abandon their specific Jewish social and religious identity and merge into the larger society. Some did some did partially, and some did not.

SOCIALISM & RADICALISM Some Jews were politically radical, and there was a considerable Jewish socialist movement. Many Jews, however, were in the centre or on the right of the political spectrum. The plurality of Jewish political life related to the political plurality of the larger society.

DEMOGRAPHICS & ADAPTATION During the two centuries preceding the Holocaust, there had been a substantial population increase among eastern European Jews; there had also been a considerable migration of Jews in Europe from East to West.

In most countries Jews, tending to adapt quickly, became widely dispersed within the social and occupational structures of the larger society.

MODERN ANTISEMITISM The force and persistence of modern antisemitism are undeniable, but the degree has varied. Antisemitism has been significant in some places and times, yet not in others.

There are evident links between modern antagonism towards Jews and the centuries-old tradition of Jew-hatred in Christian thought. There are, however, important distinctions to be made between Christian anti-Judaism and the racial antisemitism which became significant in many countries towards the end of the 19th century.

Antisemitism has been found all across the political spectrum, and has not been particular to the right or to the left.

THE HOLOCAUST The Holocaust is an incontrovertible fact of history.

Jews were not passive under the sentence of annihilation for there were many ghetto and concentration camp revolts, partisan actions and other forms of resistance. Jews were victimized simply because they were Jews. Millions of other people were also casualties, but with very few exceptions such as the Gypsies they were not massacred because of their religious and/or ethnic identity.

Nazi ideology set as its objective the eradication of an entire people. There were in Germany pre-existing anti-Jewish attitudes, with a definite moral and ideological basis in Christian anti-Judaism. When the Holocaust began, there was widespread indifference to the fate of the Jews, and widespread complicity in, or acceptance of, anti-Jewish policies and actions.

The Holocaust was not exclusively a German phenomenon; in most of Nazi-dominated Europe, there were collabo-

rators willing to assist in, and even to initiate, anti-Jewish persecution.

Throughout Europe and throughout the world, there were bystanders whose passivity and inaction contributed to the magnitude of the human tragedy.

There were, however many “righteous Gentiles” who assisted Jews during this period often at the risk of their own lives. There were also leaders of the churches in various countries who rigorously campaigned on behalf of Jewish refugees and protested against the mass murders of the Holocaust. Horror at these atrocities was a significant factor in stimulating resistance against Nazism.

JEWISH NATIONALISM

The Jewish nationalism which emerged in the late 19th century, finding major (but not exclusive) expression in the Zionist movement, must be placed in the context of other currents of nationalism in this period of history.

The Zionist movement in its early manifestations had a secular and a revolutionary character; subsequently, more traditional elements of Jewish expression came to play a significant part in it, as the movement spread within the Jewish community.

Adverse economic and social conditions in much of Europe were important contributing factors to the emergence of the Zionist movement.

Zionism is an example of modern nationalism and embodies the idea of national self-determination, but equally important are its religious contents as an expression of the Biblical link between land and people, and of the centuries of messianic hope and expectation.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL

The history of the State of Israel must be treated with the same objectivity and fairness as that of any other state.

The Middle-East conflict must be analyzed with balance and comprehensiveness, and in a full regional context; its global implications must also be taken into appropriate account.

Israeli society itself must be portrayed with appropriate consideration of its achievements: the revival of the Hebrew language, the integration of waves of immigration, the co-existence of Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews, the progress of interreligious relations, the partial internal coexistence of Jews and Arabs, the socio-economic and technical achievements, the cultural and scientific productivity.

THE DIASPORA The continuing role of the Diaspora must be recognized and given appropriate attention. The study of the history of local Jewish communities deserves particular consideration.

DISTORTIONS, OMISSIONS, STEREOTYPES

The portrayal of Jews as passive victims of history, rather than as actors in their own right.

The portrayal of Jews as static, inward-looking, religiously reactionary groups, confined to ghettos and to shtetls.

The portrayal of Jewish expression as morbid, narrow and uniform, rather than as diverse, imaginative and full of vitality, with a special sense of humour.

The simplification of the phenomenon of assimilation which followed emancipation, or of the religious and socio-cultural commitment which resisted it.

The stereotyping of Jews as radicals, subversive of the societies in which they lived.

The inaccurate demographic statistics which misrepresent the numbers and influence of Jews in various countries (e.g. pre-1933 Germany).

The simplification of the complex problem of antisemitism; the failure to assess objectively its roots in Christian thought, interpretation and doctrine, and its other sources; the failure to recognize its variation over the centuries and over the face of the world.

The denial of the Holocaust.

The inadequate assessment of the contribution of German and non-German collaborators, and of passive bystanders in Germany and in other countries, to the sweep and magnitude of the Holocaust.

The inadequate analysis of Jewish nationalism in its historico-social context.

The simplification of the Middle-East situation; the selective attribution of blame.

The failure to acknowledge the reality and legitimacy of the State of Israel; the failure to recognize its technical, social, scientific and cultural achievements, and its internal vitality and democracy.

CONCLUSIONS AND GUIDELINES

History is an amalgam of fact and interpretation, as the portrait of a person is both a likeness and an artist's perception.

History is an interdisciplinary undertaking, involving notably the social sciences and the humanities.

Historical research and teaching are complementary.

The achievement of constructive present-day relations, and of effective dialogue, requires on both sides a thorough knowledge and understanding of the past.

The historiography of the western world, now predominantly liberal and secular, has been deeply influenced by Christian tendencies to ignore the history of the Jewish people. Jewish history thus constitutes a significant gap in knowledge and teaching, and suffers distortion, simplification and stereotyping.

Jewish history, particularly in the Common Era, has tended to be perceived – and taught, if at all – discontinuously, episodically and simplistically. Yet Jewish life has obviously been continuous and productive over these 2.000 years and more.

Students must therefore be taught the history of their country, the history of their religion and the history of the world, in such a way as to ensure their understanding of the integrity and continuity of Jewish religious and secular existence before and after the emergence of Christianity.

Jewish history must therefore be rightfully perceived as one of the major and continuing factors which have shaped the history and civilization of the world, no less than such forces as Hellenism, Roman law, the Magna Charta, the rise of Islam, the Reformation and the Industrial Revolution.

The diversity of Jewish history, and of Jewish contributions to cultural and economic life, to scientific knowledge and to social progress, should receive no less attention than the persecutions, hardships, displacements and constraints which affected Jews and their communities in various times and places.

Out of a knowledge and an understanding of both Jewish and Christian history should come a comprehension of Christian anti-Judaism and of Jewish dissent from the Christian world view. There should also come a recognition of the periods of Jewish-Christian coexistence.

Since understanding and mutual respect between people of different religious commitments are the natural fruits of education and of dialogue, the teaching of history in terms of reciprocally recognizable portraits is fundamental to the future of the world.

Historical objectivity requires that we seek together to identify significant distortions, omissions and stereotypings; to a void and eliminate significant fallacies and pitfalls; and to implement necessary corrections in our books, our curriculum content and our attitudes.

APPENDIX V

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF JEWISH RELIGION, CULTURE AND HISTORY IN THE NEW EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS IN CENTRAL EUROPE

A Information Processing

- to help create and sustain a network of people engaged in Christian-Jewish relations with a view to strengthening their motivation and promoting continuity .This will also require regular meetings and exchange at regional level;
- to render information, such as naming suitable lecturers etc. to those in Central Europe who seek to organize Christian-Jewish encounters and seminars;
- to help print and disseminate bibliographies on Jewish religion, culture and history and on Jewish-Christian relations in various languages;
- to establish in the Martin Buber House, Heppenheim, a user-friendly databank and information centre on teaching materials on Jewish religion, culture, history and Christian-Jewish relations for research and general information accessible through best available communication equipment.

B Academic Initiatives

- to encourage institutions engaged in the study of Judaism and/or Christian-Jewish relations to grant scholarships to graduate students from Central Europe;
- to identify (e.g. through the help of the ICCJ sub-committee for Support of Central European Libraries) universities and other institutions that are ready to establish in Central Europe libraries in the field of study of Judaism and Christian-Jewish relations and to find financial support for such libraries, e.g. under the terms of the "Tempus" Programme of the European Community;
- to request and encourage UNESCO to promote the creation of chairs of the study of Christian-Jewish Relations at European universities with a view to

establishing Christian-Jewish Relations as an academic discipline in its own right. Special attention ought to be focussed on the role of Jewish culture/history in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. This would come within the framework of UNESCO's interest in strengthening international understanding while paying special attention to regional individuality and to religious and ethnic groups as factors in the shaping of historical/ideological consciousness;

- to request UNESCO to help establish a centre of Jewish studies in Prague in cooperation with the Department of Religious Studies of Charles University, the Czech Society of Christians and Jews and the Christian Academy.

C Teaching Materials and Training

- to translate the 1985 "Guidelines on the Teaching of History" into Central and Eastern European languages, enlisting the support of the respective national UNESCO Committees, Ministries of Education, churches and Jewish communities in adapting these Guidelines to local requirements;
- to foster the development of creative and inexpensive materials of adult teaching outside school, and help secure financing of the translation and printing of important books from other countries;
- to ask churches and agencies for Christian education to help finance a research project on the analysis of textbooks for Christian religious education and make sure that the results be made available to all catechists and teachers of religion;
- to ask ministries of education and agencies for history teaching in various countries to help finance research projects on the analysis of history textbooks regarding the inclusion of contents of Jewish history in so far as they constitute parts of their national history and of general history, and to make sure that the results be made available to authors of history textbooks and to institutions of teacher training;
- to request the help of the European Community (e.g. through its "Tempus" programme) to support the writing of a European textbook on Jewish history as well as other disciplines relating to the reclamation of the Jewish heritage for Europe, on which authors and publishers of textbooks and other teaching materials in the fields of general history, literature, art, social sciences etc., can draw to include elements of Jewish religion, culture and history in their publications and products. At the same time the ICCJ

is asked to support a draw to include elements of Jewish religion, culture and history in their publications and products. At the same time the ICCJ is asked to support a consultation of experts from Central and Eastern Europe as well as other countries, including Israel and the USA, to impact on this important proposal;

- to ask appropriate agencies in Western Europe, North America and Israel to prepare, adapt and translate audio-visual material on Jewish religion, culture and history as well as on antisemitism for use in various languages in particular by way of interaction videos. Creative and sensitive screening of material dealing with antisemitism is required particular with regard to negative stereotyping of non-Jews, since this could strengthen antisemitic sentiments rather than contribute to a correct understanding of antisemitism;
- to ask the International Centre for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization in Jerusalem to offer further professional training in Jewish history and culture to teachers of history, art, literature and social sciences;
- to take advantage of the generous offer of the George Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Braunschweig, Germany, to host conferences of experts concerned and from its experience to assist authors of textbooks and institutions for teacher training in dealing with the question, which contents of Jewish history, religion and culture should in the various countries be included in the textbooks and the teaching practice, and how to do this;
- to ask the Department for Diaspora Education of the Jewish Agency to make available in different languages model lessons with related material on topics of Jewish religion, culture and history for perusal in the teaching of history, religion, literature, art and social sciences;

D Experiential Education

- to promote study tours and seminars in Israel and in large Jewish communities in the Diaspora for (future) teachers and priests from the various countries with a view to acquainting them with vibrant and creative forms of contemporary Jewish life;
- to explore suitable ways with the appropriate Israeli agencies how best to emphasize the affective and interpersonal component of education by assuring that Israeli youth visiting Poland e.g. as part of the “March of

the Living” be enabled to experience living encounters with young non-Jewish Polish students and scholars interested in dialogue. The new Centre for Study and Meeting in Oświęcim should be encouraged to host such encounters;

- to ask competent organizations to offer courses to young people in experiential learning about living in multi-religious and multi-cultural societies:

E Heritage Conservation

- to ask the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, the Council of American Jewish Museums and similar bodies to participate in the identification of materials and artefacts previously belonging to Jewish communities, in order to enhance Christian and Jewish educational processes;
- to ask the ICCJ and its member organizations in the countries concerned to take care of Jewish heritage such as synagogues and cemeteries. This could also be done in conjunction with projects of experiential education under D. bringing young people in contact with the Jewish past and present.

APPENDIX VI

JEWES AND CHRISTIANS IN SEARCH OF A COMMON RELIGIOUS BASIS FOR CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD

Introduction

The following document has been produced by the Theology Committee of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ). It contains both separate Jewish perspectives and Christian perspectives concerning mutual communication and cooperation as well as a joint view of a common religious basis for Jews and Christians to work together for a better world.

This committee was established to assist those who work in the framework of ICCJ and its affiliated organisations furthering Jewish-Christian dialogue and cooperation to reflect on basic principles that underlie our engagement in this work.

These considerations are not “the” official theological, philosophical nor ideological underpinnings of the ICCJ and its member organisations, but are an invitation to consider what our work is all about. They have no authority other than their intrinsic worth.

An earlier draft of these considerations was submitted to representatives of the ICCJ member organisations who participated in a theological consultation organized by the ICCJ in Eisenach, on the territory of the former German Democratic Republic from 12–15 July 1992, and had been changed in the light of discussions at that consultation. The member organisations were subsequently invited to offer their comments. Many of them responded directly to our invitation or requested theological experts in their country to examine our considerations. In preparing the final text of this statement we carefully weighed the responses we had received. But what does “final” mean in this context? Obviously, the discussion about the issues examined will continue. We only hope that our statement may be helpful to all who are engaged in our work and may inspire them to persevere with even greater strength and courage in their efforts. We would welcome further suggestions and comments, as we go on with our work as Theology Committee of the ICCJ.

A Traumatic Past

In our time, Christians and Jews are increasingly involved in a process of encounter, dialogue and cooperation. They come to it from different experiences

and perspectives. This process intensified and accelerated in the wake of the Shoah, the almost entire destruction of European Jewry.

Christians have begun to realize that the Shoah which took place in a culture deeply influenced by Christianity, was not an accident of history but, to a large extent, rose out of and was fostered by age-old anti-Jewish perceptions and attitudes. For the sake of its moral and religious integrity and out of responsibility for the Jews and the world at large, Christianity has to be purged of these. In fact, Christians have become aware that Christianity alienated from its Jewish roots, is deprived of a fundamental dimension of its identity. Convinced that it is not possible for Christians to embark on a process of reappraisal and reconstruction without gaining deeper understanding of Jewish religion, culture and history, they have sought encounter and dialogue with Jews.

Jews have entered this process with the realisation that such encounter and dialogue can help counteract prejudice, discrimination and persecution, as well as with the desire to respond positively to efforts made by those Christians who sought to create a climate of mutual respect and co-operation.

Because the relationship between Jews and Christians has been burdened by tragic conflict, trauma and guilt, there are Jews and Christians who are unable or unwilling to enter into any real dialogue. Nevertheless a considerable number of both Christians and Jews have persisted and reached a level of understanding and trust that has enabled them to address and, to some extent, redress past distortions and look beyond the past in order to exercise a joint responsibility for the world of today and tomorrow.

Towards a Better World

Jewish-Christian dialogue may have a number of objectives but its ultimate aim is to contribute towards a better world - a world in which the will of God is done; a world of justice and peace. We in the ICCJ are profoundly aware that Europe, where so much friction and tragedy has marked the relations between Jews and Christians, serves as a warning example. We believe that, as Jews and Christians, we together have a contribution to make to the new Europe which is faced with the challenge of rebuilding its moral and spiritual structure in a situation of disorientation brought about by the breakdown of communist systems and by the acute crisis of values in the West. Recent manifestations of intolerance, xenophobia, extreme nationalism and antisemitism in Europe and elsewhere have reminded us how fragile civilisation is even today.

We are also disquieted by those who seek to counter such negative tendencies by calling for a restoration of a "Christian Europe". In response to the latter we

must emphasize that European culture cannot and should not be reduced to its Christian component. Many other factors, among them Jewish religion and culture, have played a major role in the development of European civilization, a fact that must not be denied.

This document was first presented at our consultation in 1992, five hundred years after the expulsion of the Jews and Muslims from Spain and the beginning of the “Christianisation” of Latin America which included the oppression of indigenous peoples.

Acknowledgement of this past abuse of religion must also serve as a warning example. Responsibility for the building of a better world devolves upon all. It may be accomplished only through discussion at all levels. Moreover it must be pursued without threat either to the traditions or to the systems of beliefs and values of those who participate. Yet all are called to search their own traditions in order to give adequate responses to the challenging problems of the modern world, while at the same time recognizing and respecting insights which come from other faith traditions and value systems.

Within this multifaceted and multilateral conversation there is room and need for a variety of bilateral dialogues. One of them is the Christian-Jewish dialogue. For many centuries this had hardly been possible but now, looking beyond past tragic divisions, Christians and Jews – each from their particular perspectives – may find the bases in their own traditions for engaging in religious communication and cooperation. In so doing they also acknowledge a common religious foundation from which they may make a joint religious contribution to the wide-ranging discussion among all who seek for values by which Europe and the world as a whole may be guided and directed.

It has to be noted that in the relationship between Judaism and Christianity there is an obvious asymmetry, which of course does not imply inequality. This finds expression in the differing perspectives from which Jews and Christians consider communication and co-operation with each other. Whereas Christianity recognizes that its roots are primarily within Judaism, there is obviously no such relationship on the part of Judaism to Christianity. While recognizing this fact we affirm a common agenda taking into account the needs of each one.

Jewish Religious Perspectives Concerning Communication and Cooperation with Christians

Attitudes in Judaism towards Non-Jews and Christians

1. According to God's covenant concluded with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and ratified at Sinai, Israel is called to sanctify God's name in the whole world by testifying to the Divine Presence through its very existence as a particular people and by serving as a light to the nations. The Jewish people is called to be a blessing for all peoples with the goal that all men and women will live in accordance with the Divine Will, not by converting to Judaism, but within the context of their particular historical and cultural identity .
2. All humankind is encompassed in God's covenant with Noah and commanded to live according to seven commandments which are seen to be the quintessence of universal morality: the prohibitions of murder, idolatry, theft, incest, blasphemy, cruelty to animals, and the injunction to establish courts of justice. Those who live according to this covenant are called "the righteous from among the nations who have a portion in the World to Come".
3. Rabbinical attitudes to Christianity have varied considerably, from a perception of it as idolatrous or at least as "flawed monotheism", to a view of it as a means to help humanity to come closer to universal redemption (Maimonides); to seeing Christians as "people bound by the ways of religion " (Rabbi Menahem Ha-Meiri) and as those who believe in the Creation and the Exodus and in the main principles of religion whose whole intent is to serve the Maker of Heaven and Earth" (Rabbi Moshe Rivkes/the Be'er Ha-Golah).

There is in this latter understanding of Christianity, the implicit acknowledgement of a special relationship between it and Judaism. This is expressed not only in terms of a religio-ethical partnership, but is also based on the common religious patrimony of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Bases for Jews to enter into relationship with Christians:

1. the need to take a *common stand* against ignorance, prejudice, bigotry and their violent manifestations on the basis of the affirmation – shared with Christians and other people of faith – of the Divine Presence in our world;
2. the existence of a *common agenda* indicated by those tenets and values (e.g. the belief in God as Creator , the commitment to the Noachide com-

mandments, the Ten Commandments, as well as the expectation of God's role over the whole earth) which Jews and Christians hold in common due to their shared biblical and historical roots;

3. the sanctification of God's name in cooperation with all people who live in accordance with God's ways; and the possibility of *partnership* with Christians in *sanctifying God's Name* before society at large.
4. the opportunity to *know and love God* more deeply by seeking God in every place, especially where the knowledge of God is experienced in the lives and spirituality of people of other faiths. In religious encounters with the righteous from among the nations, Jews are exposed to other perspectives of the Omnipresent that are not encapsulated totally in one Tradition; thus they gain a deeper experience of the Divine.

Christian Religious Perspectives Concerning Communication and Cooperation with Jews

Overcoming obstacles stemming from shared roots

Since Christianity is rooted in Judaism, many of the images, symbols, ideas and much of the vocabulary of both religions are derived from a common source. Paradoxically this common religious basis is in fact the greatest stumbling block for communication and cooperation since Christianity, in so far as it has adopted a supersessionist attitude towards Judaism, has seen itself as the sole and true heir and exponent of this religious basis, regarding the Jewish interpretation of it as antiquated, misguided and characterized by obstinate rejection of the truth. It is that which Christianity has in common with Judaism that has traditionally militated against respecting the Jewish interpretation of those common roots. *Major theological obstacles* for acknowledging a common religious basis for communication and cooperation with Jews are the following:

1. the teaching that the Torah has been replaced by Jesus Christ as God's ultimate revelation;
2. the proclamation of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah promised to Israel;
3. the denigration of the national character of God's Covenant with Israel by considering the latter replaced by a divine covenant with all who "are in Christ";
4. the rejection of the Land promised to Israel as a meaningful theological category for the Jewish people.

Current Christian theological thinking that seeks to deal with these obstacles clarifies that:

1. The Torah, as the expression of the covenant of Sinai, remains valid for Jews as a gift to them that was never revoked. (Romans 9:4; 11:29). Nor has the Torah been abolished for Christians, but remains part of God's revelation, albeit with a new interpretation through the person of Christ. (Matthew 5:17, John 10:35). The two main commandments Jesus described as the greatest (Mark, 12:28–31) are commandments of the Torah (Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18), and the Ten Commandments given to the people of Israel at Sinai (Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 6) are central to Christian ethics.
2. One of the main aspects of the promise of Messiah to Israel includes – also in the New Testament – the deliverance of Israel from foreign oppression. Such deliverance, however, did not take place through Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, designating him as the “Messiah promised to Israel” would not be an adequate description of his person. In the course of Christian tradition, the Church has enriched the name “Christ” (derived from the Greek rendering of “Messiah”) which the early Christian community had given to its Lord, Jesus of Nazareth, with many associations and attributes to describe the fullness of his being.

These express mysteries of the Christian faith (such as contained in the concepts of the Incarnation and the Trinity) which do not find adequate expression in the word “Messiah”. Accordingly, Christians should be circumspect in their use of this term as it is not an appropriate one to describe the person of Jesus Christ, although it does strongly point to the Jewish roots of Christianity.

3. God's covenant with Israel as a people has not been abrogated with the coming of Christ. The Church as the body of Christ is not the successor or heir of God's covenant with Israel, but is a new way for men and women to enter into communion with the God of Israel alongside the people of Israel. Accordingly proselytization of Jews, often referred to as missionary activity among Jews, is theologically untenable. The coming of Christ did not change the Torah's purpose of giving shape to the life of Israel as a particular people with a particular vocation.
4. There is an intrinsic relationship between the Jewish People and the Land of Israel, which is linked to God's covenant with them, a reality which is often not well understood by Christians. They should strive to understand this link as well as the strong attachment of the great majority of Jews to the Land of Israel and therefore to the State of Israel.

It is not incumbent upon Christians to observe the whole way of life of the Torah because the Christian church is distinct from the Jewish people. What they can and should do as disciples of Jesus Christ who was faithful to the Torah – the expression of God’s will – and added to its interpretation, is to derive inspiration from its values and paradigms shaping the many different elements of their national, social, economic, cultural and political life in the light of Torah.

For example, a nation or an oppressed group may see its own liberation struggle in the light of the Exodus of Israel. Also one may take the biblical commandments to Israel about the use of its Land (e.g. injunctions about the sabbatical year which claim the ultimate divine ownership of land, the release of slaves and the cancellation of debts) as paradigms for one’s own attitude towards land and people. Or one may use the commandments concerning the rights and dignity of non-Jews who live among the people of Israel, as orientation for the way foreigners are to be treated in one’s own society. But in doing so one must be aware that such application of biblical commandments can only be made in a paradigmatic or analogous sense, without exhausting, changing or superseding their original meaning and context as commandments given to the people of Israel.

The Common Religious Basis of Judaism and Christianity

Based upon shared scriptural patrimony out of which common beliefs and values emerge, Jews and Christians share

a particular view of humanity, the world and God, including:

- the belief that the world is the creation of the One God;
- the belief that God is beyond any being, power or idea in the world (to consider any of these as absolute is idolatry);
- the recognition that the world is given into the care and stewardship of humanity which is called to serve and protect it in accordance with God’s purpose and to act in partnership with God;
- the recognition that each human being is created in the image of God and is therefore infinitely precious to God;
- the recognition that human beings are responsible for each other;
- the recognition of God’s sovereignty in mercy and justice over humanity and the world;

- the recognition of God as present in history and in the lives of men and women;
- the hope for the establishment of God's Kingdom of justice, peace and love on earth.

a particular ethos or set of values, deriving from this view of God, the world and humanity, including:

- protection and preservation of God's creation, everything in its kind, in responsible stewardship;
- the affirmation of the sanctity of human life;
- the protection of the dignity of each human being irrespective of origin, race, gender, characteristics or abilities;
- the protection of the family;
- the pursuit of justice for all, especially for the weak and vulnerable;
- the pursuit of mutual solidarity and peace in relations between people: in family, in society, in the nation and among the nations;
- rejection of slavery, oppression and authoritarianism;
- striving for humility as the right balance between pride and subservience.

a rich literature – the Hebrew Scriptures – comprising narratives, poetry, hymns, prophetic literature, wisdom teaching and historiography, which reflect the understanding of God, humanity and the world as well as the ethos and values set out above. These have great spiritual, moral, social and cultural significance for the present.

Of particular importance is the message contained in the Sabbath which teaches that human life should alternate between the holy and the profane; between activity and passivity; between dominance and dependence; between creativity and being creature amongst other creatures. Christianity has applied some elements of the Sabbath to its celebration of the Sunday, but the full implications of this aspect of Torah teaching for human life in society and for the relation between humanity and the non-human world are seldom realized.

Limits of Pluralism

Because the expression of the human encounter with the Divine is limited by its very nature, there is always need for reflection and scrutiny, for purification and renewal. In short, there is need for theological humility of which religious self-criticism is an essential part.

It is inappropriate and offensive for outsiders to a particular religious community to pass judgment on what is true religion within it and what is false. Outsiders to the religious symbolic language by which a community expresses its encounter with the Divine do not have adequate access to the inner sanctuaries of that religion. The right of self-definition rests within that community's own membership.

Notwithstanding, we contend that the limits of pluralism for Christians and Jews have been reached when:

1. the consequences of beliefs threaten the well-being of human beings and their societies;
2. beliefs bring about injustice, oppression, persecution or murder;
3. beliefs do not respect the dignity and integrity of each human being created in the image of God;
4. beliefs do not respect the dignity and integrity of Creation.

In contributing to the building of a better world, Jews and Christians together should draw the practical consequences from those teachings of the Torah which are their common basis. They ought at the same time to be open to the insights and experiences which other religious traditions and communities have to offer out of their account with the Divine.

Jews and Christians and Pluralism

From their common basis, Jews and Christians make their contribution to the discussion on the future moral and spiritual shape of our world. Essential in this context is theological humility.

Members of each religious community should concede that God may have other ways to relate to human persons and communities, than those in which God has been revealed to their own community .They should be aware that

there are valid expressions of the encounter with the Divine other than their own. When encounter with the Divine takes place in another religious community, there too, men and women tread on holy ground.

Martin Buber House,
Heppenheim, Germany, 1 March 1993

APPENDIX VII

WE REMEMBER: A REFLECTION ON THE SHOAH (COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS, Vatican City, March 16, 1998)

I. The Tragedy of the Shoah and the Duty of Remembrance

The twentieth century is fast coming to a close and a new Millennium of the Christian era is about to dawn. The 2000th anniversary of the Birth of Jesus Christ calls all Christians, and indeed invites all men and women, to seek to discern in the passage of history the signs of divine Providence at work, as well as the ways in which the image of the Creator in man has been offended and disfigured.

This reflection concerns one of the main areas in which Catholics can seriously take to heart the summons which Pope John Paul II has addressed to them in his Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*: „It is appropriate that, as the Second Millennium of Christianity draws to a close, the Church should become more fully conscious of the sinfulness of her children, recalling all those times in history when they departed from the spirit of Christ and his Gospel and, instead of offering to the world the witness of a life inspired by the values of faith, indulged in ways of thinking and acting which were truly forms of counter-witness and scandal“.

This century has witnessed an unspeakable tragedy, which can never be forgotten: the attempt by the Nazi regime to exterminate the Jewish people, with the consequent killing of millions of Jews. Women and men, old and young, children and infants, for the sole reason of their Jewish origin, were persecuted and deported. Some were killed immediately, while others were degraded, ill-treated, tortured and utterly robbed of their human dignity, and then murdered. Very few of those who entered the Camps survived, and those who did remained scarred for life. This was the Shoah. It is a major fact of the history of this century, a fact which still concerns us today.

Before this horrible genocide, which the leaders of nations and Jewish communities themselves found hard to believe at the very moment when it was mercilessly being put into effect, no one can remain indifferent, least of all the Church, by reason of her very close bonds of spiritual kinship with the Jewish people and her remembrance of the injustices of the past. The Church's relationship to the Jewish people is unlike the one she shares with any other religions. However, it is not only a question of recalling the past. The common future of Jews

and Christians demands that we remember, for „there is no future without memory“. History itself is *memoria futuri*.

In addressing this reflection to our brothers and sisters of the Catholic Church throughout the world, we ask all Christians to join us in meditating on the catastrophe which befell the Jewish people, and on the moral imperative to ensure that never again will selfishness and hatred grow to the point of sowing such suffering and death. Most especially, we ask our Jewish friends, „whose terrible fate has become a symbol of the aberrations of which man is capable when he turns against God“, to hear us with open hearts.

II. What We Must Remember

While bearing their unique witness to the Holy One of Israel and to the Torah, the Jewish people have suffered much at different times and in many places. But the Shoah was certainly the worst suffering of all. The inhumanity with which the Jews were persecuted and massacred during this century is beyond the capacity of words to convey. All this was done to them for the sole reason that they were Jews.

The very magnitude of the crime raises many questions. Historians, sociologists, political philosophers, psychologists and theologians are all trying to learn more about the reality of the Shoah and its causes. Much scholarly study still remains to be done. But such an event cannot be fully measured by the ordinary criteria of historical research alone. It calls more for a “moral and religious memory” and, particularly among Christians, a very serious reflection on what gave rise to it.

The fact that the Shoah took place in Europe, that is, in countries of longstanding Christian civilization, raises the question of the relation between the Nazi persecution and the attitudes down the centuries of Christians towards Jews.

III. Relations Between Jews and Christians

The history of relations between Jews and Christians is a tormented one. His Holiness Pope John Paul II has recognized this fact in his repeated appeals to Catholics to see where we stand with regard to our relations with the Jewish people. In effect, the balance of these relations over two thousand years has been quite negative.

At the dawn of Christianity, after the crucifixion of Jesus, there arose disputes between the early Church and the Jewish leaders and people who, in their

devotion to the Law, on occasion violently opposed the preachers of the Gospel and the first Christians. In the pagan Roman Empire, Jews were legally protected by the privileges granted by the Emperor and the authorities at first made no distinction between Jewish and Christian communities. Soon however, Christians incurred the persecution of the State. Later, when the Emperors themselves converted to Christianity, they at first continued to guarantee Jewish privileges. But Christian mobs who attacked pagan temples sometimes did the same to synagogues, not without being influenced by certain interpretations of the New Testament regarding the Jewish people as a whole. "In the Christian world – I do not say on the part of the Church as such – erroneous and unjust interpretations of the New Testament regarding the Jewish people and their alleged culpability have circulated for too long, engendering feelings of hostility towards this people". Such interpretations of the New Testament have been totally and definitively rejected by the Second Vatican Council.

Despite the Christian preaching of love for all, even for one's enemies, the prevailing mentality down the centuries penalized minorities and those who were in any way "different".

Sentiments of anti-Judaism in some Christian quarters, and the gap which existed between the Church and the Jewish people, led to a generalized discrimination, which ended at times in expulsions or attempts at forced conversions. In a large part of the "Christian" world, at the end of the 18th century, those who were not Christian did not always enjoy a fully guaranteed juridical status. Despite that fact, Jews throughout Christendom held on to their religious traditions and communal customs. They were therefore looked upon with a certain suspicion and mistrust. In times of crisis such as famine, war, pestilence or social tensions, the Jewish minority was sometimes taken as a scapegoat and became the victim of violence, looting, even massacres.

By the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, Jews generally had achieved an equal standing with other citizens in most States and a certain number of them held influential positions in society. But in that same historical context, notably in the 19th century, a false and exacerbated nationalism took hold. In a climate of eventful social change, Jews were often accused of exercising an influence disproportionate to their numbers. Thus there began to spread in varying degrees throughout most of Europe an anti-Judaism that was essentially more sociological and political than religious.

At the same time, theories began to appear which denied the unity of the human race, affirming an original diversity of races. In the 20th century, National Socialism in Germany used these ideas as a pseudo-scientific basis for a distinction between so called Nordic-Aryan races and supposedly inferior races.

Furthermore, an extremist form of nationalism was heightened in Germany by the defeat of 1918 and the demanding conditions imposed by the victors, with the consequence that many saw in National Socialism a solution to their country's problems and cooperated politically with this movement.

The Church in Germany replied by condemning racism. The condemnation first appeared in the preaching of some of the clergy, in the public teaching of the Catholic Bishops, and in the writings of lay Catholic journalists. Already in February and March 1931, Cardinal Bertram of Breslau, Cardinal Faulhaber and the Bishops of Bavaria, the Bishops of the Province of Cologne and those of the Province of Freiburg published pastoral letters condemning National Socialism, with its idolatry of race and of the State. The well-known Advent sermons of Cardinal Faulhaber in 1933, the very year in which National Socialism came to power, at which not just Catholics but also Protestants and Jews were present, clearly expressed rejection of the Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda. In the wake of the Kristallnacht, Bernard Lichtenberg, Provost of a Berlin Cathedral, offered public prayers for the Jews. He was later to die at Dachau and has been declared Blessed.

Pope Pius XI too condemned Nazi racism in a solemn way in his Encyclical Letter *Mit brennender Sorge*, which was read in German churches on Passion Sunday 1937, a step which resulted in attacks and sanctions against members of the clergy. Addressing a group of Belgian pilgrims on 6 September 1938, Pius XI asserted: „Antisemitism is unacceptable. Spiritually, we are all Semites“. Pius XII, in his very first Encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus*, of 20 October 1939, warned against theories which denied the unity of the human race and against the deification of the State, all of which he saw as leading to a real „hour of darkness“.

IV. Nazi antisemitism and the Shoah

Thus we cannot ignore the difference which exists between antisemitism based on theories contrary to the constant teaching of the Church on the unity of the human race and on the equal dignity of all races and peoples, and the long-standing sentiments of mistrust and hostility that we call anti-Judaism, of which unfortunately, Christians also have been guilty.

The National Socialist ideology went even further, in the sense that it refused to acknowledge any transcendent reality as the source of life and the criterion of moral good. Consequently, a human group, and the State with which it was identified, arrogated to itself an absolute status and determined to remove the very existence of the Jewish people, a people called to witness to the one God

and the Law of the Covenant. At the level of theological reflection we cannot ignore the fact that not a few in the Nazi party not only showed aversion to the idea of divine Providence at work in human affairs, but gave proof of a definite hatred directed at God himself. Logically, such an attitude also led to a rejection of Christianity, and a desire to see the Church destroyed or at least subjected to the interests of the Nazi state.

It was this extreme ideology which became the basis of the measures taken, first to drive the Jews from their homes and then to exterminate them. The Shoah was the work of a thoroughly modern neo-pagan regime. Its antisemitism had its roots outside of Christianity and, in pursuing its aims, it did not hesitate to oppose the Church and persecute her members also.

But it may be asked whether the Nazi persecution of the Jews was not made easier by the anti-Jewish prejudices imbedded in some Christian minds and hearts. Did anti-Jewish sentiment among Christians make them less sensitive, or even indifferent, to the persecution launched against the Jews by National Socialism when it reached power?

Any response to this question must take into account that we are dealing with the history of people's attitudes and ways of thinking, subject to multiple influences. Moreover, many people were altogether unaware of the "final solution" that was being put into effect against a whole people; others were afraid for themselves and those near to them; some took advantage of the situation; and still others were moved by envy. A response would need to be given case by case. To do this, however, it is necessary to know what precisely motivated people in a particular situation.

At first the leaders of the Third Reich sought to expel the Jews. Unfortunately, the governments of some Western countries of Christian tradition, including some in North and South America, were more than hesitant to open their borders to the persecuted Jews. Although they could not foresee how far the Nazi hierarchs would go in their criminal intentions, the leaders of those nations were aware of the hardships and dangers to which Jews living in the territories of the Third Reich were exposed. The closing of borders to Jewish emigration in those circumstances, whether due to any anti-Jewish hostility or suspicion, political cowardice or short-sightedness, or national selfishness, YPE s a heavy burden of conscience on the authorities in question.

In the lands where the Nazis undertook mass deportations, the brutality which surrounded these forced movements of helpless people should have led to suspect the worst. Did Christians give every possible assistance to those being persecuted and in particular to the persecuted Jews?

Many did, but others did not. Those who did help to save Jewish lives as much as was in their power, even to the point of placing their own lives in danger, must not be forgotten. During and after the war, Jewish communities and Jewish leaders expressed their thanks for all that had been done for them, including what Pope Pius XII did personally or through his representatives to save hundreds of thousands of Jewish lives. Many Catholic bishops, priests, religious and laity have been honoured for this reason by the State of Israel.

Nevertheless, As Pope John Paul II has recognized, alongside such courageous men and women, the spiritual resistance and concrete action of other Christians was not that which might have been expected from Christ's followers. We cannot know how many Christians in countries occupied or ruled by the Nazi powers or their allies were horrified at the disappearance of their Jewish neighbours and yet were not strong enough to raise their voices in protest. For Christians, this heavy burden of conscience of their brothers and sisters during the Second World War must be a call to penitence.

We deeply regret the errors and failures of those sons and daughters of the Church. We make our own what is said in the Second Vatican Council's Declaration *Nostra Aetate*, which unequivocally affirms: "The Church ... mindful of her common patrimony with the Jews, and motivated by the Gospel's spiritual love and by no political considerations, deplors the hatred, persecutions and displays of antisemitism directed against the Jews at any time and in any form and from any source."

We recall and abide by what Pope John Paul II, addressing the leaders of the Jewish community in Strasbourg in 1988, stated: "I repeat again with you the strongest condemnation of antisemitism and racism, which are opposed to the principles of Christianity." The Catholic Church therefore repudiates every persecution against a people or human group anywhere, at any time. She absolutely condemns all forms of genocide, as well as the racist ideologies that give rise to them. Looking back over this century, we are deeply saddened by the violence that has enveloped whole groups of peoples and nations. We recall in particular the massacre of the Armenians, the countless victims in Ukraine in the 1930's, the genocide of the Gypsies, which was also the result of racist ideas, and similar tragedies which have occurred in America, Africa and the Balkans. Nor do we forget the millions of victims of totalitarian ideology in the Soviet Union, in China, Cambodia and elsewhere. Nor can we forget the drama of the Middle East, the elements of which are well known. Even as we make this reflection, "many human beings are still their brothers' victims."

V. Looking together to a common future

Looking to the future of relations between Christians and Jews, in the first place we appeal to our Catholic brothers and sisters to renew the awareness of the Hebrew roots of their faith. We ask them to keep in mind that Jesus was a descendant of David; that the Virgin Mary and the Apostles belonged to the Jewish people; that the Church draws sustenance from the root of that good olive tree on to which have been grafted the wild olive branches of the Gentiles (Cf. Romans 11:17-24); that the Jews are our dearly beloved brothers, indeed in a certain sense they are "our elder brothers."

At the end of this Millennium the Catholic Church desires to express her deep sorrow for the failures of her sons and daughters in every age. This is an act of repentance (teshuva), since, as members of the Church, we are linked to the sins as well as the merits of all her children. The Church approaches with deep respect and great compassion the experience of extermination, the Shoah, suffered by the Jewish people during World War II. It is not a matter of mere words, but indeed of binding commitment. "We would risk causing the victims of the most atrocious deaths to die again if we do not have an ardent desire for justice, if we do not commit ourselves to ensure that evil does not prevail over good as it did for millions of children of the Jewish people ... Humanity cannot permit all that to happen again."

We pray that our sorrow for the tragedy which the Jewish people has suffered in our century will lead to a new relationship with the Jewish people. We wish to turn awareness of past sins into a firm resolve to build a new future in which there will be no more anti-Judaism among Christians or anti-Christian sentiment among Jews, but rather a shared mutual respect, as befits those who adore the one Creator and Lord and have a common father in faith, Abraham.

Finally, we invite all men and women of good will to reflect deeply on the significance of the Shoah. The victims from their graves, and the survivors through the vivid testimony of what they have suffered, have become a loud voice calling the attention of all of humanity. To remember this terrible experience is to become fully conscious of the salutary warning it entails: the spoiled seeds of anti-Judaism and antisemitism must never again be allowed to take root in any human heart.

Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, President
The most Reverend Pierre Duprey, Vice-President
The Reverend Remi Hoekman, O.P. Secretary

APPENDIX VIII

National Jewish Scholars Project DABRU EMET

A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity

In recent years, there has been a dramatic and unprecedented shift in Jewish and Christian relations. Throughout the nearly two millennia of Jewish exile, Christians have tended to characterize Judaism as a failed religion or, at best, a religion that prepared the way for, and is completed in, Christianity. In the decades since the Holocaust, however, Christianity has changed dramatically. An increasing number of official Church bodies, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, have made public statements of their remorse about Christian mistreatment of Jews and Judaism. These statements have declared, furthermore, that Christian teaching and preaching can and must be reformed so that they acknowledge God's enduring covenant with the Jewish people and celebrate the contribution of Judaism to world civilization and to Christian faith itself.

We believe these changes merit a thoughtful Jewish response. Speaking only for ourselves – an interdenominational group of Jewish scholars – we believe it is time for Jews to learn about the efforts of Christians to honor Judaism. We believe it is time for Jews to reflect on what Judaism may now say about Christianity. As a first step, we offer eight brief statements about how Jews and Christians may relate to one another.

Jews and Christians worship the same God. Before the rise of Christianity, Jews were the only worshippers of the God of Israel. But Christians also worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; creator of heaven and earth. While Christian worship is not a viable religious choice for Jews, as Jewish theologians we rejoice that, through Christianity, hundreds of millions of people have entered into relationship with the God of Israel.

Jews and Christians seek authority from the same book – the Bible (what Jews call “Tanakh” and Christians call the “Old Testament”). Turning to it for religious orientation, spiritual enrichment, and communal education, we each take away similar lessons: God created and sustains the universe; God established a covenant with the people Israel, God's revealed word guides Israel to a life of righteousness; and God will ultimately redeem Israel and the whole world. Yet, Jews and Christians interpret the Bible differently on many points. Such differences must always be respected.

Christians can respect the claim of the Jewish people upon the land of Israel. The most important event for Jews since the Holocaust has been the reestablishment of a Jewish state in the Promised Land. As members of a biblically based religion, Christians appreciate that Israel was promised – and given – to Jews as the physical center of the covenant between them and God. Many Christians support the State of Israel for reasons far more profound than mere politics. As Jews, we applaud this support. We also recognize that Jewish tradition mandates justice for all non-Jews who reside in a Jewish state.

Jews and Christians accept the moral principles of Torah. Central to the moral principles of Torah is the inalienable sanctity and dignity of every human being. All of us were created in the image of God. This shared moral emphasis can be the basis of an improved relationship between our two communities. It can also be the basis of a powerful witness to all humanity for improving the lives of our fellow human beings and for standing against the immoralities and idolatries that harm and degrade us. Such witness is especially needed after the unprecedented horrors of the past century.

Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon. Without the long history of Christian anti-Judaism and Christian violence against Jews, Nazi ideology could not have taken hold nor could it have been carried out. Too many Christians participated in, or were sympathetic to, Nazi atrocities against Jews. Other Christians did not protest sufficiently against these atrocities. But Nazism itself was not an inevitable outcome of Christianity. If the Nazi extermination of the Jews had been fully successful, it would have turned its murderous rage more directly to Christians. We recognize with gratitude those Christians who risked or sacrificed their lives to save Jews during the Nazi regime. With that in mind, we encourage the continuation of recent efforts in Christian theology to repudiate unequivocally contempt of Judaism and the Jewish people. We applaud those Christians who reject this teaching of contempt, and we do not blame them for the sins committed by their ancestors.

The humanly irreconcilable difference between Jews and Christians will not be settled until God redeems the entire world as promised in Scripture. Christians know and serve God through Jesus Christ and the Christian tradition. Jews know and serve God through Torah and the Jewish tradition. That difference will not be settled by one community insisting that it has interpreted Scripture more accurately than the other; nor by exercising political power over the other. Jews can respect Christians' faithfulness to their revelation just as we expect Christians to respect our faithfulness to our revelation. Neither Jew nor Christian should be pressed into affirming the teaching of the other community.

A new relationship between Jews and Christians will not weaken Jewish practice. An improved relationship will not accelerate the cultural and religious assimilation that Jews rightly fear. It will not change traditional Jewish forms of worship, nor increase intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews, nor persuade more Jews to convert to Christianity, nor create a false blending of Judaism and Christianity. We respect Christianity as a faith that originated within Judaism and that still has significant contacts with it. We do not see it as an extension of Judaism. Only if we cherish our own traditions can we pursue this relationship with integrity.

Jews and Christians must work together for justice and peace. Jews and Christians, each in their own way, recognize the unredeemed state of the world as reflected in the persistence of persecution, poverty, and human degradation and misery. Although justice and peace are finally God's, our joint efforts, together with those of other faith communities, will help bring the kingdom of God for which we hope and long. Separately and together, we must work to bring justice and peace to our world. In this enterprise, we are guided by the vision of the prophets of Israel:

It shall come to pass in the end of days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established at the top of the mountains and be exalted above the hills, and the nations shall flow unto it . . . and many peoples shall go and say, "Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in his paths." (Isaiah 2:2-3)

Tikva Frymer-Kensky, University of Chicago
David Novak, University of Toronto
Peter Ochs, University of Virginia
Michael Signer, University of Notre Dame

APPENDIX IX

A JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF A JUST SOCIETY

A statement of the Theology Committee
of the International Council of Christians and Jews
(July 2001)

PREFACE

This paper on a Jewish and Christian understanding of a just society is presented by the Theology Committee of the International Council of Christians and Jews. Its genesis lies in the ICCJ Conference in Kiev, Ukraine in July 1999. This was the first ever meeting of the ICCJ in one of the former republics of the Soviet Union. The recent collapse of a social system that had lasted for the greater part of the 20th century and the apparent devastating consequences for many of the societies within that system was highlighted. This, coupled with a growing understanding of certain negative consequences of an unrestrained capitalist system, prompted the participants in the Conference to focus on the need to set out a joint Jewish and Christian understanding for a just society.

This paper should be seen as continuity within earlier theology papers produced by the ICCJ in 1993 and the Mainz 1996 Consultation, as well in continuing with ICCJ founding principal: a response to society's moral lapse during the Nazi Era. It is intended as a further step on the way of growing understanding between Christians and Jews who share the belief that humankind was created in the image of One God. They therefore consider it their task to join their actions in exploring ways of making this world a better place for all of God's creation.

However unlike the preceding papers, this document is not a deep scholarly theological paper, but it is rather intended for all our member organisations, and members within them, to initiate a debate and contribute to their perception. Hopefully, it will lead them to join in initiatives that go beyond discussion, initiatives for activities that may strengthen our common efforts to build a just society. Also, though the second part of the document presents a few sources from both traditions to support the proposals made in the paper, the selection is far from exhaustive. The Catholic Social encyclicals and documents from the World Council of Churches and various Jewish organisations will provide additional important sources. Finally, it should be made clear that the ICCJ is fundamentally (at the moment) a Christian/Jewish organisation. The need to include Muslim responses is realised and it is hoped that these will be forthcoming from the ICCJ Abrahamic Forum.

A JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF A JUST SOCIETY

I Changing Society

We live in a world that has witnessed the founding and failure of a number of attempts to create a good and just society. We live in a world that sees changes in many areas of life occurring at an ever-increasing pace. Some changes in the realm of science, medicine, economics and society are to the good. Others bring new problems to humanity and our physical environment.

We live in a world that has recently seen the perversion and subsequent collapse of one such attempt, namely communism. We also live in a world that has seen the end of colonial rule and abandonment of racist structures like Apartheid, yet sees the emergence of new nationalisms.

We live at a time that benefits from globalisation which has made possible interaction at unprecedented level, such as intercultural encounter, and easy access to consumer goods. Yet we also recognise the serious problems brought about by unrestrained globalisation of a system that is wedded to the free market, when the richer minority of nations increase the poverty of the poor nations through overbearing debts and when there is also unfair use of the mineral and other natural resources of the poorer nations.

We live at a time when we are becoming aware of our destructive power and our responsibility to preserve the earth. We have seen our ability to cause havoc and damage that the earth itself cannot repair and are beginning to realise our deep interdependence with the earth itself.

Our Jewish and Christian traditions long ago sought to describe the vital aspects of a just and ideal society and this paper bases itself on these traditions and tries to apply them to our current situation.

II Human beings are created in the image of God

Our traditions lead us to believe that:

- the world is the creation of the One God
- that God is beyond/(or “greater than”) any being, power or idea
- that we must recognise God’s sovereignty in mercy and justice over all humanity and all creations
- that every human being is created in the image of God (imago dei/b’tzelem elohim) and we are precious to God

- that human beings, as God's children, are responsible for each other and God's creation.

If this is so, that all human beings are created in the image of God, it means all are equal in God's sight, male and female, young and old, sick and healthy, poor and rich, those with power and those without, all peoples and creations.

If this is so and if we are to attempt to live in the image of God (*imitatio dei*) we must accept our responsibility to work towards the attainment of the vision of shalom, a state of peace, contentment and completeness for all.

The modern world, in particular, presents many challenges to this task. We must recognise the power we have for determining the survivability of life on our planet, of maintaining the integrity and harmony of God's creation. Our modern sciences present us with many benefits, but also difficult decisions that could affect the future of God's creation (e.g. cloning, genetic engineering, etc). As never before we may have to act proactively, not retrospectively, if we are to ensure our future survival on this planet, let alone the nature of human society on it.

III What then does God require of us

What are the mandates and actions required of us, according to our religious traditions, that will lead to *tikkun olam*, a mending of our fractured world, that will lead to the realisation of the hope of our traditions, true shalom, true peace and harmony, we know as the Kingdom or Reign of God, our ultimate goal.

In our time, some crucial mandates are:

1. To promote and defend the values of political and religious freedom
2. To direct our attention and energies to the marginalised: to the plight of the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers. To free those trapped in all forms of slavery, servitude and bondage, including sexual slavery, child slavery and economic slavery.
3. To alleviate the suffering of the poor at a time in which their misery is intensifying as a result of the unchecked, unrestricted capitalism in this era of globalisation.
4. To promote health, safety and caring homes and environments for the children of our societies, so that they are given courage and confidence in their future.

5. To promote the acceptance of the variously disabled people as full human beings, and to create conditions for their maximal functioning.
6. To live in awareness of the increasing damage done to the earth by over-consumption and the pollution of resources, and to commit ourselves to live in a responsible and sustainable way.
7. To heal the sick; including victims of catastrophes, and of disastrous diseases all over the earth; to act to prevent illness and to maximise the quality of life for those who are sick.
8. To ensure that there is respect for the elderly, appropriate care for their advancing years, and opportunities for their special gifts and insights to be appreciated.
9. To treat animals in the knowledge that they are also part of God's creatures.

IV Ethical imperatives

The inherited values of our traditions and the lessons taught by our history create new awareness of ethical imperatives for our time: To eliminate expressions of hatred, discrimination and oppression of people on the grounds of nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability and disease.

1. To strengthen the value of family life. To protect its members from exploitation and abuse both from within and without.
2. To promote the appreciation of difference, diversity and otherness. To defend the rights of individuals to live in accordance with their conscience. This includes the rights of persons living in a diversity of life-styles.
3. To promote more equitable distribution of resources and access to new technology. To take moral responsibility in our personal economic affairs.
4. To change patterns of human living which damage and destroy the eco-systems.
5. To work towards the eradication of debts nationally and internationally which have impaired the ability of people and nations to live in a dignified manner.
6. To commit ourselves to the task of peace making and conflict resolution. To work to end the arms race and the exploitation of conflict through the unrestrained trade in military and personnel weaponry.

V Initiatives

Our ability to do these things, and our awareness of all that needs to be done, has to be developed through the enrichment of the spirit by prayer, study, meditation and contemplation.

Some concrete suggestions, initiatives and projects to help us begin to accomplish these goals and imperatives are:

- To work within our respective faith communities to educate for justice, peace and sustainable living.
- To engage in activities and support organisations in combating racism and anti-Semitism as an expression of our commitment flowing from the Jewish-Christian dialogue.
- For the ICCJ and its member organisations to engage with other regional and national bodies such as councils of Churches or Synagogues and public authorities to strengthen the effects of our common efforts. To commit ourselves to concrete ecological activities that enhance sustainable living. To mark with other international religious bodies (e.g. WCC, WUPJ) to co-ordinate such a search for a just, sustainable world.
- To establish joint study groups in the areas of genetic engineering and cloning. For the ICCJ and its member organisations to join in initiatives to bring about debt relief for the developing world.
- To identify and eradicate those seeds of conflict embedded in our own traditions that can cause intolerance, violence or repression.
- To continue co-operation with people of other faiths, in particular with Islam as an integral partner of the Abrahamic tradition.
- To hold our religious communities and leadership to the same ethical standards of behaviour to which we hold individuals.

SOURCES

Please note: This is but a preliminary list of sources. Many others could be quoted and we ask individuals and groups in studying this paper to suggest others, sending them to the ICCJ in Heppenheim, marking their suggestions “ICCJ Just Society Paper”. And note, that sources from which the quotes below originate will be listed and explained at the end of this section.

II Human Beings are Created in the Image of God

II: 1 – God is the Creator of all that exists

God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind: and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground, of every kind. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created human beings in the Divine image, making them male and female. (Genesis 1:25–27)

Rabbi Akiva used to say: How privileged we are to have been created in God’s image; how much more privileged still to have been made aware that we were created in God’s image. (Pirke Avot 3:14)

How were the Ten Commandments arranged? Five on the one tablet and five on the other. On the one tablet was written: “I am the Lord thy God.” And opposite it on the other tablet was written: “Thou shalt not murder.” This tells that if one sheds blood it is accounted to him as though he diminished the divine image. To give a parable: A king of flesh and blood entered a province and the people set up portraits of him, made images of him, and struck coins in his honour. Later on they upset his portraits, broke his images, and defaced his coins, thus diminishing the likeness of the king. So also if one sheds blood it is accounted to him as though he had diminished the divine image. For it is said: Whoso sheddeth man’s blood ... for in the image of God made He man” (Gen. 9:6.) (Mechilta De-Rabbi Yishmael, Tractate Bachodesh 8)

I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day that I have set before you life or death, blessing or curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live. (Deuteronomy 30:19)

It is for this reason that only one human being was created in the beginning: to teach us that anyone who destroys a single soul is considered by Scripture as if they had destroyed a whole world, and anyone who saves a single soul as if they had saved a whole world. (Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5)

The duty to save life overrides the Sabbath. (Babylonian Talmud: Shabbat 132a)

We stamp many coins with one seal, and they are all alike, but God has stamped all human beings with the seal of Adam, yet none is like another. Therefore everyone must say: the world was created for my sake. (Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5)

II: 2 – Imago dei/b'tzelem elohim

The Sifre to Deuteronomy elaborates on this idea in a comment on the injunction “to go in God’s ways”: *As God is merciful, so you too be merciful. The Holy Blessed One is called “gracious”, so you too be gracious ... and give freely. God is called “righteous”, so you too be righteous, God is called “devoted”, you too be devoted, for thus it is written “all who are called by my name, I have created for my glory”. (Isaiah 43:7)*

The same idea is expressed by Matthew’s teaching: *“Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect”. (Matthew 5:48)*

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us, and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice for God. Forgive one another as God forgave and live a life of love as Christ loves us. (Paul: Ephesians 5:1-2)

Abba Saul said: *“Resemble God! Just as God is gracious and merciful, so you should be gracious and merciful” (Mechilta Shirata 3 on Ex. 15:2b)*

Jacob said: “No please: if I find favour with you, then accept my present from your hand; for truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God – since you have received me with such favour”. (Genesis 33:10)

III What Does God Require of Us?

III: 1

Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all its inhabitants. (Leviticus 25:10)

Not only is freedom of thought and speech compatible with piety and the peace of the State, but it cannot be withheld without destroying at the same time both the peace of the State and piety itself. (Spinoza, Theologico-Political Treatise, 1670)

On Religious Freedom: “this Vatican Synod declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom... This freedom means that all are to be immune from coercion... in such wise that in matters religious no one is forced to act in a matter contrary to his own beliefs”. (Declaration of Religious Liberty, II Vatican Council)

III: 2

You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, since you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 23:9)

The strangers who live with you shall be to you like the natives among you, and you shall love them as yourself. (Leviticus 19:34)

Our Rabbis taught: We support the poor of the Gentiles along with the poor of Israel, and visit the sick of the Gentiles along with the sick of Israel, and bury the dead of the Gentiles along with the dead of Israel, for the sake of peace". (Babylonian Talmud Gittin 61a)

I call heaven and earth to witness: whether a person be Gentile or Jew, man or woman, male or female servant, solely according to their conduct does the Holy Spirit rest upon them. (Seder Eliyahu Rabbah: 10)

*Emmanuel Levinas: "But to follow the Most High is to know, also, that nothing is of greater importance than the approach made to one's neighbour, the concern with the fate of "the widow and the orphan, the stranger and the poor man", and that no approach made with empty hands can count as an approach. The adventure of the Spirit also unfolds on earth among men. The traumatism of my enslavement in Egypt constitutes my very humanity, that which draws me closer to the problems of the wretched of the earth, to all persecuted people". ("Revelation in the Jewish Tradition", in *The Levinas Reader*, ed. Sean Hand, Oxford: Blackwell 1989 p. 202).*

*"Who is man? A being in travail with God's dreams and designs, with God's dream of a world redeemed, of reconciliation of heaven and earth, of a mankind which is truly his image, reflecting his wisdom, justice and compassion. God's dream is not to be alone, to have mankind as a partner in the drama of continuous creation. By whatever we do, by every act we carry out, we either advance or obstruct the drama of redemption; we either reduce or enhance the power of evil". (Abraham J Heschel, *Who is Man?* Stanford University Press 1966, p. 119)*

III: 3

Yose ben Yochanan of Jerusalem used to say: Let your house be open wide and let the poor be members of your household. (Pirke Avot 1:5)

Teaching of Jesus, according to Luke: "Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town, and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you: cure the sick who are there and then say to them: 'The Kingdom of God has come near to you'. But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into the streets and say: 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe it off in protest against you. Yet know this: The Kingdom of God has come near; I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town". (Luke 10: 1-12)

According to Jewish tradition “the people of Sodom have no portion in the world to come” for “the people of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly”. (Mishnah Sanhedrin citing Genesis 13:13). In connection with this statement, the Babylonian Talmud brings legends (aggadah) that demonstrated that the great sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was the way they treated strangers. One involved good: “If a poor man happened to come there, every resident gave him a denar (of gold), on which he wrote his name but they gave him no bread. When he died (of starvation), each came and took back his (denar)”. The other involved lodging: “They had beds upon which travellers slept. If he was too tall, they shortened him; if he was too short, they stretched him out”. The mistreatment of strangers was part of the fabric of Sodomite law. A stranger could get no justice from the judicial system. (Stories from Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 109:11–13)

If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your settlements in the land that the Eternal One your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart and shut your hand against such a needy person. But you shall give liberally, and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Eternal One your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. (Deuteronomy 15:7, 10)

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to God, and will be repaid. (Proverbs 19:17)

Then the King will say to those at his right hand: “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me”. Then the righteous will answer him: “Lord, when was it that we saw You and gave You food, or thirsty and gave You something to drink?... “and the King will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:34–40)

With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned land or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles’ feet and it was distributed to each as any had need. (Acts 4:33–35).

When you make a loan to another man, do not enter his house to take a pledge from him. Wait outside, and the man whose creditor you are shall bring the pledge out to you. If he is a poor man, you shall not sleep in the cloak he has

pledged. Give it back to him at sunset so that he may sleep in it and bless you; then it will be counted to your credit in the sight of the Lord your God.

You shall not keep back the wages of a man who is poor and needy; whether a fellow countryman or an alien living in your country in one of your settlements. Pay him his wages on the same day before sunset, for he is poor and his heart is set on them: he may appeal to the Lord against you, and you will be guilty of sin. (Deuteronomy 24:10–17)

You that turn justice upside down and bring righteousness to the ground, you that hate a man who brings the wrongdoer to court, and loathe him who speaks the whole truth: for all this, because you levy taxes on the poor and extort a tribute of grain for them, though you have built houses of stone, you shall not live in them. Seek good and not evil, that may live. (Amos 5: 7–11, 14)

As they took it, they grumbled at their employer: “These latecomers have only done one hour’s work, yet you have put them on a level with us, who have sweated the whole day long in the blazing sun!” The owner turned to one of them and said, “My friend, I am not being unfair to you. You agreed on the usual wage for the day, did you not? Take your pay and go home. I choose to pay the last man the same as you. Surely I am free to do what I like with my own money. Why be jealous because I am kind?” Thus will the last be first, and the first, last. (Matthew 20:1–16)

You know yourselves how you ought to copy our example: we were no idlers among you; we did not accept board or lodging from anyone without paying for it; we toiled and drudged; we worked for a living night and day; rather than being a burden to you - not because we have not right to maintenance, but to set an example for you to imitate. For even during our stay with you we laid down this rule: the man who will not work shall not eat. We mention this because we hear that some of your number are idling their time away. (2 Thessalonians: 6–10)

Whoever withholds an employee’s wages, it is as though he has taken the person’s life from him. (Babylonian Talmud, tractate Bava Mezia, p. 112a)

If a person hires workmen and asks them to work in the early morning or late evening, at a place where it is not the local custom to work early or late at night, he cannot force them to do so. Where it is customary to provide food for workmen, he must do so, If it is customary to give them dessert, he must do so – it all depends on local custom. (Mishnah, tractate Bava Mezia, 7:1)

Just as the employer is enjoined not to deprive the poor worker of his wages or withhold it from him when it is due, so is the worker enjoined not to deprive the

employer of the benefit of his work by idling away his time, a little here and a little there, thus wasting the whole day deceitfully . . . Indeed, the worker must be very punctual in the matter of time. (Maimonides, Code, “Laws Concerning Hiring”, 13:7)

A worker must not work at night at his own work and then hire himself out during the day; not plough with his cow in the evenings and hire her out in the mornings; nor should he go hungry and afflict himself in order to feed his children – for by doing so he steals labour from his employer. (Tosefta, tractate Bava Mezia, 8:2)

It should also be noted that the justice of a socio-economic system and, in each case, its just functioning, deserve in the final analysis to be evaluated by the way in which man’s work is properly remunerated in the system. Here we return once more to the first principle of the whole ethical and social order, namely, the principle of the common use of goods. In every system, regardless of the fundamental relationships within it between capital and labour, waged, that is to say remuneration for work, are goods which are intended for common use: both the good of nature and manufactured goods... Hence in every case, a just wage is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole socio-economic system and, in any case, of checking that it is functioning justly. (Pope John Paul II, Encyclical: On Human Work, (Laboren Exercens), Section 19)

III: 4

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?” He called a child whom he put among them and said, “Truly I tell, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.” (Matthew 18:1–4)

When God asked Israel, “Will you accept My Torah?” they answered, “Yes”. When God demanded, “Give Me surety that you will observe it”, they replied, “Abraham, Isaac and Jacob shall stand surety for us.” When God objected that they had had their faults, Israel proposed, “Our children shall be our sureties.” (Maimonides, Laws of Kings¹²).

For so it says: “out of the mouths of babes and sucklings shall come strength,” and the strength referred to is Torah. (Midrash Tanchuma Va-yiggash 2; quote is Psalm 8:2)

III: 5

You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall revere your God. (Leviticus 19:14)

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongue of the dumb shall shout aloud. (Isaiah 35:5-6)

Many practical problems faced by the handicapped result from the lack of implementation rather than from the lack of an existing theoretical religious or halachic bases by which to justify solutions. Here there is no need to challenge the religious or halachic status quo at all. But merely to invite application of that which the Halacha already affirms in principle. The fascination with the variety of human experience expressed in the benediction “who makes his creatures diverse” must become a spur for making the challenging reality of the handicapped population a more bearable one. “The Creator, as it were, impaired reality in order that mortal man could repair its flaws and perfect it”, claims Rabbi Soloveitchik, in his famous depiction of Halachic Man (1983, p. 101). To illustrate: we must all be persuaded that “tikkun olam” – “repairing the reality” which the handicapped inhabit, is “not in the heavens...neither is it beyond the sea” (Deuteronomy 30:12)

Mental habits must be confronted which create psychological and physical barriers that alienate the able-bodied from the disabled. There is a strong emphasis in Judaism on the uniqueness of each person. Hence, you must not make judgments of another person “unless you have stood in his place”. (Pirke Avot 2:4)

One of the lessons to be drawn from the human being’s having been created a lone individual was to teach that the “King of kings stamped every man with the seal of the first person, yet none is identical with the other.” (Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5, Talmud Sanhedrin 37a)

III: 6

If you besiege a town for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you must not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them. (Deuteronomy 20:19)

After creating Adam, God took him round all the trees of the Garden of Eden, and said to him: “See how lovely and excellent My works are; I have created them all for you. Take care not to spoil and destroy My world, for if you spoil it there will be no one to repair it after you”. (Kohelet Rabbah 7:12)

The heavens belong to the Eternal One, but God has given the earth to humankind. (Psalm 115:6)

This means that we are like God’s stewards on earth, charged to exercise responsibility in God’s name for all that exists. (Ibn Ezra on above)

All needless destruction is included in this prohibition; for instance, whoever burns a garment or breaks a vessel needlessly, contravenes it. (Maimonides, Sefer Ha-Mitzvot 57)

He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:39-41)

Most high, almighty, Good Lord God, to the belongs praise, glory, honour and all blessing.

Praised be my Lord God with all his creatures, and especially our brother the sun, who brings us the day and who brings us the light; fair is he and shines with a great splendour; O Lord. He signifies to us thee.

Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon, and for stars, the which he has set clear and lovely in the heaven.

Praised be my Lord for our sister water, who is very serviceable unto us and humble and precious and clean.

Praised by my Lord for our brother fire, through whom Thou givest us light in the darkness, and he is bright and pleasant and very mighty and strong.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth, the which doth sustain us and keep us, and bringeth forth divers fruit, and flowers of many colours, and grass.

Praised be my Lord for all those who pardon one another for His love's sake, and who endure weakness and tribulation; blessed are they who shall peaceably endure, for Thou, O most Highest, shalt give them a crown.

Praised be my Lord for our sister the death of the body.

Blessed are they who are found walking by Thy most Holy Will.

Praise ye and bless ye the Lord, and given thanks unto Him, and serve Him with great humility. (Francis of Assisi: Canticle of the Sun)

The profound sense that the earth is suffering is also shared by those who do not profess our faith in god. Indeed, the increasing devastation of the world of nature is apparent to all. It results from the behaviour of people who show a callous disregard for the hidden, yet perceivable requirements of the order and harmony which govern nature itself. (Pope John Paul II, Message for World Peace Day, 8th December 1991: Peace with God the Creator, Peace with all Creation)

Environment – see also ICCJ paper “Jews and Christians Reading the First Chapters of the Bible in an Attempt to Articulate the Common Religious Basis of Judaism and Christianity” (1996)

III: 7

Heal me, Eternal One, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for You are my praise. (Jeremiah 17:14)

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom, and curing every disease and sickness. (Matthew 9:35)

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. (Matthew 10:1)

The Torah grants physicians permission to heal. Healing is, in fact, a religious duty that falls under the rules for saving a life.

If a physician withholds treatment when he is able to give it, he is regarded as a murderer, even if there is someone else who can heal a patient, because it may be that in this case it is the special merit of this physician to provide the healing for this patient.

However, a person should not practice medicine unless he is an expert, and there is one immediately available who is more competent than he; otherwise, he is regarded as a murderer.

If a person gives medical treatment without the permission of the Jewish court (or today, a medical licence), he is subject to payment of indemnities, even if he is an expert.

If he had proper credentials but he erred in his judgement and negligently injured the patient, he is exempt from the laws of man but is held responsible by the laws of heaven. If the physician caused a death because of negligence, he is exiled according to the laws that deal with a person who killed another accidentally. (In early days such a person was banished to a city of exile, where the murdered person's family was not permitted to pursue him.) (Joseph Caro, Code of Jewish Law, Yoreh De'ah 336:1)

May it be Your will, Eternal One, our God and God of our ancestors, speedily to grant a perfect healing, of body and soul, to all who are sick. (Babylonian Talmud, tractate Megillah 17b)

III: 8

Honour your father and your mother. (Exodus 20:12)

You shall rise in the presence of grey hair, give honour to the aged, and fear your God. I am the Lord. (Leviticus 19:32)

Do not cast me off in old age; when my strength fails, do not forsake me!... I come with praise of your mighty acts, O Eternal One; I celebrate Your beneficence, Yours alone. You have let me experience it, God, from my youth; until now I have proclaimed Your wondrous deeds, and even in hoary old age do not forsake me, God until I proclaim Your strength to the next generation. (Psalm 71:9, 16–18)

It is natural for old people to be despised by the general population when can no longer function as they once did, but sit idle, and have no purpose. The commandment “Honour your father and mother” was given specifically for this situation. (Gur Aryeh ha-Levi, 17th century, commentary on the Fifth Commandment in Melech Matsevet)

According to all the standards we employ the aged person is condemned as inferior. Conditioned to operating as a machine for making and spending money, with all other relationships dependent upon its efficiency, the moment the machine is out of order and beyond repair, one begins to feel like a ghost without a sense of reality . . . Regarding himself as a person who has out-lived his usefulness, he feels as if he has to apologise for being alive.

May I suggest that man’s potential for change and growth is much greater than we are willing to admit, and that old age be regarded not as the age of stagnation but as the age of opportunities for inner growth.

The years of old age are indeed formative years, rich in the possibilities to unlearn the follies of a lifetime, to see through inbred self-deceptions, to deepen understanding and compassion, to widen the horizon of honesty, to refine the sense of fairness. (Abraham Joshua Heschel, To Grow in Wisdom, in Judaism, Spring 1977)

III: 9

You shall not muzzle an ox when he treads out the corn. (Deuteronomy 25:4)

God carries out His purpose through everything, even through a snake, even through a gnat, even through a frog. (Genesis Rabbah 10:7)

We are forbidden to eat before we have fed our animals, for it says “I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle,” and then it says: “you shall eat your fill” (Deuteronomy 11:15). (Babylonian Talmud, tractate Berachot, p. 40a)

If, along the road, you chance upon a bird’s nest, in any tree or on the ground, with fledglings or eggs and the mother sitting over the fledglings or on the eggs, do not take the mother together with her young. Let the mother go and take only the young, in order that you may fare well and have a long life. (Deuteronomy 22:6)

It is prohibited to kill an animal with its young on the same day so that people should be restrained and prevented from killing the two together in such a manner that the young is slain in the sight of the mother; for the pain of the animals under such circumstances is very great. There is no difference in this case between the pain of man and the pain of other living beings, since the love and tenderness of the mother for her young ones is not produced by reasoning but by imagination, and this faculty exists not only in man but in most living beings...

The same reason applies to the law that enjoins us to let the mother fly away when we take the young ... If the law provides that such grief should not be caused to cattle or birds, how much more careful must we be not to cause grief to our fellow man. (Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed, 3:48)

IV Ethical imperatives

A few source books:

See Hans Ucko, Peter Selby, *Grace and Mortgage: the Language of Faith and the Debt of the World*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1997)

Michael Northcott: *Fate Worse than Debt*, (SPCK, 1998)

Pope John Paul II: *Tertio Millennio Adveniente: Towards the Third Millennium*, 1997

Notes on Sources (in the order in which they occur in the Sources)

Pirke Avot: a collection of ethical maxims found in the *Mishna*

Mechilta d'Rabbi Yishmael: a collection of rabbinic comments on the Book of Exodus from the 2nd Century CE.

Mishna: the collection of rabbinic sayings and legal decisions codified by Rabbi Judah the Prince in 200 CE. It forms part of the *Talmud*.

Babylonian Talmud: further rabbinic discussion was based on the *Mishna*, and called *Gemara* – the combination of the two became called the *Talmud*. One *Talmud* was codified in Babylon (2nd – 6th Century CE), and the other in Palestine (2nd – 3rd Century CE).

Sifre: a rabbinic commentary dealing with the legal material in Numbers and Deuteronomy.

Seder Eliyahu Rabba: a collection of rabbinic homiletical commentary on Genesis (c.900 CE).

Tosefta: a collection of rabbinic commentaries and legal decisions contemporary with the *Mishna*.

Maimonides (1135 – 1204): the greatest post-Talmudic authority in Judaism and commentator on Bible and *Talmud*. His *Code of Jewish Law* (*Mishne Torah*) put the laws of the Talmud in a logical order. *Guide for the Perplexed* was a philosophical handbook to Judaism.

Kohelet Rabbah: a collection of homiletic commentaries on Ecclesiastes (c.900 CE)

Abraham ibn Ezra (1089 – 1164): commentator on Bible and *Talmud*.

Joseph Caro (1488 – 1575): after Maimonides, the next great producer of a Code of Jewish Law (*Shulchan Aruch*).

APPENDIX X

A SACRED OBLIGATION – Rethinking Christian Faith in Relation to Judaism and the Jewish People

**A Statement by the Christian Scholars Group
on Christian-Jewish Relations
September 1, 2002**

Since its inception in 1969, the Christian Scholars Group has been seeking to develop more adequate Christian theologies of the church's relationship to Judaism and the Jewish people. Pursuing this work for over three decades under varied sponsorship, members of our association of Protestant and Roman Catholic biblical scholars, historians, and theologians have published many volumes on Christian-Jewish relations.

Our work has a historical context. For most of the past two thousand years, Christians have erroneously portrayed Jews as unfaithful, holding them collectively responsible for the death of Jesus and therefore accursed by God. In agreement with many official Christian declarations, we reject this accusation as historically false and theologically invalid. It suggests that God can be unfaithful to the eternal covenant with the Jewish people. We acknowledge with shame the suffering this distorted portrayal has brought upon the Jewish people. We repent of this teaching of contempt. Our repentance requires us to build a new teaching of respect. This task is important at any time, but the deadly crisis in the Middle East and the frightening resurgence of antisemitism worldwide give it particular urgency.

We believe that revising Christian teaching about Judaism and the Jewish people is a central and indispensable obligation of theology in our time. It is essential that Christianity both understand and represent Judaism accurately, not only as a matter of justice for the Jewish people, but also for the integrity of Christian faith, which we cannot proclaim without reference to Judaism. Moreover, since there is a unique bond between Christianity and Judaism, revitalizing our appreciation of Jewish religious life will deepen our Christian faith. We base these convictions on ongoing scholarly research and the official statements of many Christian denominations over the past fifty years.

We are grateful for the willingness of many Jews to engage in dialogue and study with us. We welcomed it when, on September 10, 2000, Jewish scholars

sponsored by the Institute of Christian and Jewish Studies in Baltimore issued a historic declaration, *Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity*. This document, affirmed by notable rabbis and Jewish scholars, called on Jews to re-examine their understanding of Christianity.

Encouraged by the work of both Jewish and Christian colleagues, we offer the following ten statements for the consideration of our fellow Christians. We urge all Christians to reflect on their faith in light of these statements. For us, this is a sacred obligation.

1. *God's covenant with the Jewish people endures forever.*

For centuries Christians claimed that their covenant with God replaced or superseded the Jewish covenant. We renounce this claim. We believe that God does not revoke divine promises. We affirm that God is in covenant with both Jews and Christians. Tragically, the entrenched theology of supersessionism continues to influence Christian faith, worship, and practice, even though it has been repudiated by many Christian denominations and many Christians no longer accept it. Our recognition of the abiding validity of Judaism has implications for all aspects of Christian life.

2. *Jesus of Nazareth lived and died as a faithful Jew.*

Christians worship the God of Israel in and through Jesus Christ. Supersessionism, however, prompted Christians over the centuries to speak of Jesus as an opponent of Judaism. This is historically incorrect. Jewish worship, ethics, and practice shaped Jesus' life and teachings. The scriptures of his people inspired and nurtured him. Christian preaching and teaching today must describe Jesus' earthly life as engaged in the ongoing Jewish quest to live out God's covenant in everyday life.

3. *Ancient rivalries must not define Christian-Jewish relations today.*

Although today we know Christianity and Judaism as separate religions, what became the church was a movement within the Jewish community for many decades after the ministry and resurrection of Jesus. The destruction of the Jerusalem Temple by Roman armies in the year 70 of the first century caused a crisis among the Jewish people. Various groups, including Christianity and early rabbinic Judaism, competed for leadership in the Jewish community by claiming that they were the true heirs of biblical Israel. The gospels reflect this rivalry in which the disputants exchanged various accusations. Christian charges of hypocrisy and legalism misrepresent Judaism and constitute an unworthy foundation for Christian self-understanding.

4. Judaism is a living faith, enriched by many centuries of development.

Many Christians mistakenly equate Judaism with biblical Israel. However, Judaism, like Christianity, developed new modes of belief and practice in the centuries after the destruction of the Temple. The rabbinic tradition gave new emphasis and understanding to existing practices, such as communal prayer, study of Torah, and deeds of loving-kindness. Thus Jews could live out the covenant in a world without the Temple. Over time they developed an extensive body of interpretive literature that continues to enrich Jewish life, faith, and self-understanding. Christians cannot fully understand Judaism apart from its post-biblical development, which can also enrich and enhance Christian faith.

5. The Bible both connects and separates Jews and Christians.

Some Jews and Christians today, in the process of studying the Bible together, are discovering new ways of reading that provide a deeper appreciation of both traditions. While the two communities draw from the same biblical texts of ancient Israel, they have developed different traditions of interpretation. Christians view these texts through the lens of the New Testament, while Jews understand these scriptures through the traditions of rabbinic commentary. Referring to the first part of the Christian Bible as the “Old Testament” can wrongly suggest that these texts are obsolete. Alternative expressions – “Hebrew Bible,” “First Testament,” or “Shared Testament” – although also problematic, may better express the church’s renewed appreciation of the ongoing power of these scriptures for both Jews and Christians.

6. Affirming God’s enduring covenant with the Jewish people has consequences for Christian understandings of salvation.

Christians meet God’s saving power in the person of Jesus Christ and believe that this power is available to all people in him. Christians have therefore taught for centuries that salvation is available only through Jesus Christ. With their recent realization that God’s covenant with the Jewish people is eternal, Christians can now recognize in the Jewish tradition the redemptive power of God at work. If Jews, who do not share our faith in Christ, are in a saving covenant with God, then Christians need new ways of understanding the universal significance of Christ.

7. Christians should not target Jews for conversion.

In view of our conviction that Jews are in an eternal covenant with God, we renounce missionary efforts directed at converting Jews. At the same time, we welcome opportunities for Jews and Christians to bear witness to their respective experiences of God’s saving ways. Neither can properly claim to possess knowledge of God entirely or exclusively.

8. *Christian worship that teaches contempt for Judaism dishonors God.*

The New Testament contains passages that have frequently generated negative attitudes toward Jews and Judaism. The use of these texts in the context of worship increases the likelihood of hostility toward Jews. Christian anti-Jewish theology has also shaped worship in ways that denigrate Judaism and foster contempt for Jews. We urge church leaders to examine scripture readings, prayers, the structure of the lectionaries, preaching and hymns to remove distorted images of Judaism. A reformed Christian liturgical life would express a new relationship with Jews and thus honor God.

9. *We affirm the importance of the land of Israel for the life of the Jewish people.*

The land of Israel has always been of central significance to the Jewish people. However, Christian theology charged that the Jews had condemned themselves to homelessness by rejecting God's Messiah. Such supersessionism precluded any possibility for Christian understanding of Jewish attachment to the land of Israel. Christian theologians can no longer avoid this crucial issue, especially in light of the complex and persistent conflict over the land. Recognizing that both Israelis and Palestinians have the right to live in peace and security in a homeland of their own, we call for efforts that contribute to a just peace among all the peoples in the region.

10. *Christians should work with Jews for the healing of the world.*

For almost a century, Jews and Christians in the United States have worked together on important social issues, such as the rights of workers and civil rights. As violence and terrorism intensify in our time, we must strengthen our common efforts in the work of justice and peace to which both the prophets of Israel and Jesus summon us. These common efforts by Jews and Christians offer a vision of human solidarity and provide models of collaboration with people of other faith traditions.

Signed by members of the Christian Scholars Group
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APPENDIX XI

12 POINTS OF BERLIN A TIME FOR RECOMMITMENT

BUILDING THE NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

In the summer of 1947, 65 Jews and Christians from 19 countries gathered in Seelisberg, Switzerland. They came together to express their profound grief over the Holocaust, their determination to combat antisemitism, and their desire to foster stronger relationships between Jews and Christians. They denounced antisemitism both as a sin against God and humanity and as a danger to modern civilization. And to address these vital concerns, they issued a call in the form of 10 points to Christian churches to reform and renew their understandings of Judaism and the relationships between Judaism and Christianity.

Now, more than 60 years later, the International Council of Christians and Jews issues a new call – this one to both Christian and Jewish communities around the world. It commemorates the anniversary of the Seelisberg gathering, which was also the genesis of the International Council of Christians and Jews. Today's call reflects the need to refine the Ten Points of Seelisberg, consistent with the advances in interreligious dialogue since that groundbreaking document of 1947.

This new call contains 12 points – presented as goals, and addressed to Christians and Jews, and to Christian and Jewish communities together. After listing the 12 points and several specific tasks for each one, the document reviews the history of the relationship between Christians and Jews, which has provided the contextual framework and impetus for our initiative.

We members of the International Council of Christians and Jews speak together in this new call as active members of our traditions with a centuries-long history of alienation, hostility and conflict, punctuated by instances of persecution and violence against Jews in Christian-dominated Europe, as well by as moments of graciousness and mutual recognition from which we can take inspiration

Spurred by the Seelisberg initiative, we have worked to overcome the legacy of prejudice, hatred and mutual distrust. Through a serious commitment to dialogue, self-critical examination of our texts and traditions, and joint study and

action for justice, we better understand each other, accept each other in the fullness of our differences, and affirm our common humanity. We understand that Jewish-Christian relations are not a “problem” that is going to be “solved,” but rather a continuing process of learning and refinement. Perhaps most important, we have found friendship and trust. We have sought and found light together.

The journey has been neither simple nor easy. We have encountered many obstacles and setbacks, including conflicts – some quite serious – over theological or historical developments. But our determination to pursue the dialogue in spite of difficulties, to communicate honestly, and to assume our partners’ good will has helped us stay the course. For these reasons, we believe that the history, the challenges, and the accomplishments of our dialogue are relevant for all those who are dealing with intergroup and interreligious conflicts.

In that spirit, we issue this call to Christian and Jewish communities around the world.

A TIME FOR RECOMMITMENT: THE TWELVE POINTS OF BERLIN

A CALL TO CHRISTIAN AND JEWISH COMMUNITIES WORLDWIDE

We, the International Council of Christians and Jews and our member organizations, resolve to renew our engagement with the Ten Points of Seelisberg that inspired our beginnings. Therefore, we issue these calls to Christians, Jews, and all people of good will:

A CALL TO CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

We commit ourselves to the following goals and invite all Christians and Christian communities to join us in the continuing effort to remove all vestiges of contempt towards Jews and enhance bonds with the Jewish communities worldwide.

1. To combat religious, racial and all other forms of antisemitism

Biblically

- By recognizing Jesus' profound identity as a Jew of his day, and interpreting his teachings within the contextual framework of first-century Judaism.
- By recognizing Paul's profound identity as a Jew of his day, and interpreting his writings within the contextual framework of first-century Judaism.
- By emphasizing that recent scholarship on both the commonality and gradual separation of Christianity and Judaism is critical for our basic understanding of the Jewish-Christian relationship.
- By presenting the two Testaments in the Christian Bible as complementary and mutually affirming rather than antagonistic or inferior/superior. Denominations that use lectionaries are encouraged to choose and link biblical texts that offer such an affirming theology.
- By speaking out against Christian misreading of biblical texts regarding Jews and Judaism that can provoke caricatures or animosity.

Liturgically

- By highlighting the connection between Jewish and Christian liturgy.

- By drawing upon the spiritual richness of Jewish interpretations of the scriptures.
- By cleansing Christian liturgies of anti-Jewish perspectives, particularly in preaching, prayers and hymns.

Catechetically

- By presenting the Christian-Jewish relationship in positive tones in the education of Christians of all ages, underlining the Jewish foundations of Christian belief and accurately describing the ways Jews themselves understand their own traditions and practices. This includes the curricula of Christian schools, seminaries and adult education programs.
- By promoting awareness of the long-lived traditions of Christian anti-Judaism and providing models for renewing the unique Jewish-Christian relationship.
- By underscoring the immense religious wealth found in the Jewish tradition, especially by studying its authoritative texts.

2. To promote interreligious dialogue with Jews

- By understanding dialogue as requiring trust and equality among all participants and rejecting any notion of convincing others to accept one's own beliefs.
- By appreciating that dialogue encourages participants to examine critically their own perceptions of both their own tradition and that of their dialogue partners in the light of a genuine engagement with the other.

3. To develop theological understandings of Judaism that affirm its distinctive integrity

- By eliminating any teachings that Christians have replaced Jews as a people in covenant with God.
- By emphasizing the common mission of Jews and Christians in preparing the world for the kingdom of God or the Age to Come.

- By establishing equal, reciprocal working relationships with Jewish religious and civic organizations.
- By ensuring that emerging theological movements from Asia, Africa and Latin America, and feminist, liberationist or other approaches integrate an accurate understanding of Judaism and Christian-Jewish relations into their theological formulations.
- By opposing organized efforts at the conversion of Jews.

4. To pray for the peace of Jerusalem

- By promoting the belief in an inherent connectedness between Christians and Jews.
- By understanding more fully Judaism's deep attachment to the Land of Israel as a fundamental religious perspective and many Jewish people's connection with the State of Israel as a matter of physical and cultural survival.
- By reflecting on ways that the Bible's spiritual understanding of the land can be better incorporated into Christian faith perspectives.
- By critiquing the policies of Israeli and Palestinian governmental and social institutions when such criticism is morally warranted, at the same time acknowledging both communities' deep attachment to the land.
- By critiquing attacks on Zionism when they become expressions of anti-semitism.
- By joining with Jewish, Christian and Muslim peace workers, with Israelis and Palestinians, to build trust and peace in a Middle East where all can live secure in independent, viable states rooted in international law and guaranteed human rights.
- By enhancing the security and prosperity of Christian communities both in Israel and Palestine.
- By working for improved relations among Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Middle East and the rest of the world.

A CALL TO JEWS AND JEWISH COMMUNITIES

We commit ourselves to the following goals and invite all Jews and Jewish communities to join us in the continuing effort to remove all vestiges of animosity and caricature toward Christians and to enhance bonds with Christian churches of the world.

5. To acknowledge the efforts of many Christian communities in the late 20th century to reform their attitudes toward Jews

- By learning about these reforms through more intensive dialogue with Christians.
- By discussing the implications of changes in Christian churches regarding Jews and their understandings of Judaism.
- By teaching Jews of all ages about these changes, both in the context of the history of Jewish-Christian relations and according to the appropriate stage of education for each group.
- By including basic and accurate background information about Christianity in the curricula of Jewish schools, rabbinic seminaries and adult education programs.
- By studying the New Testament both as Christianity's sacred text and as literature written to a large degree by Jews in an historical-cultural context similar to early Rabbinic literature, thereby offering insight into the development of Judaism in the early centuries of the Common Era.

6. To re-examine Jewish texts and liturgy in the light of these Christian reforms

- By grappling with Jewish texts that appear xenophobic or racist, realizing that many religious traditions have uplifting, inspirational texts as well as problematic ones. The emphasis for all religious traditions should be on texts that promote tolerance and openness.
- By placing problematic texts within their historical context, in particular writings from the times when Jews were a powerless, persecuted and humiliated minority.

- By addressing the possible re-interpretation, change or omission of parts of Jewish liturgy that treat others in problematic ways.

7. To differentiate between fair-minded criticism of Israel and anti-semitism

- By understanding and promoting biblical examples of just criticism as expressions of loyalty and love.
- By helping Christians appreciate that communal identity and interconnectedness are intrinsic to Jewish self-understanding, in addition to religious faith and practice, therefore making the commitment to the survival and security of the State of Israel of great importance to most Jews.

8. To offer encouragement to the State of Israel as it works to fulfil the ideals stated in its founding documents, a task Israel shares with many nations of the world.

- By ensuring equal rights for religious and ethnic minorities, including Christians, living within the Jewish state.
- By achieving a just and peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

A CALL TO BOTH CHRISTIAN AND JEWISH COMMUNITIES AND OTHERS

We commit ourselves to the following goals and invite Jews, Christians and Muslims, together with all people of faith and goodwill, always to respect the other and to accept each other's differences and dignity.

9. To enhance interreligious and intercultural education

- By combating negative images of others, teaching the foundational truth that each human being is created in the image of God.
- By making the removal of prejudices against the other a high priority in the educational process.

- By encouraging mutual study of religious texts, so that Jews, Christians, Muslims and members of other religious groups can learn both from and with each other.
- By supporting common social action in the pursuit of common values. To promote interreligious friendship and cooperation as well as social justice in the global society
- By rejoicing in the uniqueness of each person, and promoting everyone's political, economic and social well-being.
- By recognizing as equal citizens members of faith traditions who have migrated to new homelands where they may have become part of a religious minority.
- By striving for equal rights for all people, regardless of their religion, gender or sexual orientation.
- By recognizing and grappling with the fact that feelings of religious superiority – and an accompanying sense that other religions are inferior – are present in each tradition, including one's own.

11. To enhance dialogue with political and economic bodies

- By collaborating with political and economic bodies whenever possible to promote interreligious understanding.
- By benefiting from political and economic groups' growing interest in inter-religious relations.
- By initiating discussion with political and economic bodies around the urgent need for justice in the global community.

12. To network with all those whose work responds to the demands of environmental stewardship

- By fostering commitment to the belief that every human being is entrusted with the care of the Earth.
- By recognizing the shared Jewish and Christian biblical duty toward creation, and the responsibility to bring it to bear in public discourse and action.

To all these challenges and responsibilities, we – the International Council of Christians and Jews and its member organizations – commit ourselves.

Berlin, Germany, July 2009

At the International Conference and the Annual General Meeting of the International Council of Christians and Jews.

APPENDIX XII

ICCJ ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL SIR SIGMUND STERNBERG AWARD

To encourage younger people as well as veterans, Sir Sigmund Stemberg, the ICCJ's, long-serving Chairman of the Executive Committee, and the Council's only businessman, has in 1985 instituted the Annual ICCJ International Sir Sigmund Stemberg Award for sustained contribution in the furtherance of inter-religious understanding which has had impact and influence beyond the society of the recipient's country. Thanks to his endeavours the Award is always presented by one of the particular country's leading personalities.

The ICCJ remains grateful to Sir Sigmund for his untiring efforts to keep the work of the ICCJ before a world-wide public and for his generous support of all our activities.

Year	Recipient	Presented by
1985	The Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest in memory of Rabbi Alexander Scheiber	Dr Victor Goldbloom President ICCJ
1986	Prof. Dr Marcel Dubois, O.P.	Chaim Herzog, Jerusalem President of the State of Israel
1987	Dr Gertrud Luckner, Freiburg, of the Germany	Dr Helmut Kohl, Chancellor Federal Republic of Germany
1988	Sisters of Zion, Sr Ionel and Sister Esperanza, Madrid	Queen Sophia of Spain
1989	Prof. Dr Paul van Buren Philadelphia, USA	Mrs Jacqueline Wexler President NCCJ
1990	Dr Desider Galsky, President of the Jewish Community of Prague	Prince Carl von Schwarzenberg, Chancellor to the President of the CSFR
1991	Father Bernard Dupuy, Paris	French Ambassador to the United Kingdom
1992	Rev. Simon Schoon Netherlands	Mr E.M.H. Hirsch Ballin, Minister of Justice

1993	SIDIC, Rome	H.E. Idris Cardinal Cassidy, Rome
1994	Lord Donald Coggan, Rev. Andrew White	Prof. Dr Martin Stöhr, President ICCJ
1995	Arpad Göncz, President of the Republic of Hungary	Prof. Dr Martin Stöhr, President ICCJ
1996	Ruth Weyl	Prof. Dr Martin Stöhr, President ICCJ
1997	Study Programme “Studium in Israel”	Prof. Dr Martin Stöhr, President ICCJ
1998	H.E. Idris Cardinal Cassidy	Prof. Dr. Martin Stöhr, President ICCJ
1999	Rabbi Prof. Dr. Nathan Peter Levinson	Rabbi Prof. David Rosen, President ICCJ
2000	Ambassador Shmuel Hadas	Rabbi Prof. David Rosen, President ICCJ
2001	Cardinal Jorge Mejia	Rabbi Prof. David Rosen, President ICCJ
2002	Prof. Klaus Schwab and Jubilee International Movement for Economic and Social Justice	Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President Latvia
2003	Cardinal Johannes Willebrands	Sir Sigmund Sternberg
2004	Dr. Mustafa Ceric, Grand Mufti of Bosnia	Rev. Dr John T. Pawlikowski, OSM President ICCJ
2005	Dr. Mary Boys	Rev. Dr John T. Pawlikowski, OSM President ICCJ
2006	Prof. Kurt Schubert, Vienna	Rev. Dr John T. Pawlikowski, OSM President ICCJ
2007	Dr. Sr. Marianne Dacy	Rev. Dr John T. Pawlikowski, OSM President ICCJ

APPENDIX XIII

INTERFAITH GOLD MEDALLION – PEACE THROUGH DIALOGUE

The Interfaith Gold Medallion is funded solely and independently by the Sternberg Charitable Foundation.

Those who will qualify for consideration as prize-winners will have met at least three of the following criteria:

1. In their public and private lives they will always have manifested an openness towards and an interest in people of faiths other than their own and will have demonstrated this by their participation in activities, actions or organizations which display these attributes.
2. If in positions of authority, they will have taken no action which might be considered deliberately inimical to the interests of any member of any recognized faith community, and, if lay persons, they will not have participated in any action of organisation which might be considered deliberately inimical to the interests of any member of a recognised faith community.
3. In their individual or group approach to relations between faiths, especially between the Abrahamic faiths, but not only, they will have displayed that degree of tolerance and search for mutual understanding which speaks from the one to the other in respect and equality.
4. They will have initiated, or been partners to the initiation, of policies, measures, laws or common acceptances which regard each religion, and members of each religion, as due the same degree of respect as any other, their own included.
5. When religious minorities, or a religious minority, have come under pressure from the dominant religious persuasion to act in a manner contrary to its religious commitment, they will have rallied to as advocates and, if need be, as public protectors, of those so threatened.
6. They will have taken some initiative – whether by way of action, organisation or publication – which goes beyond the expectation of good behaviour between members of one religion and another and which has as its purpose the furtherance of respect, toleration and dialogue between the faiths.

7. They will have been involved in their capacity as committed members of their own faith community in the reconciliation or peace-making process between communities or nations.
8. Organisations can also qualify for the award.

**INTERFAITH GOLD MEDALLION –
presented under the auspices of the ICCJ**

(In alphabetical order):

AMBASSADOR SENOR FELIPE DE MORENA (SPAIN)
AMBASSADOR PFIRTER (ARGENTINA)
AMBASSADOR STEMPOWSKI (POLAND)
APPLE RABBI RAYMOND
BENNETT DR GEORGETTE
BOOTHROYD THE RT HON BETTY (BARONESS BOOTHROYD)
BURDA DR HANS
CANTERBURY ARCHBISHOP OF, LORD RUNCIE
CARDINAL ARINZE, FRANCIS
CARDINAL BASIL HUME
CARDINAL MARTINI
DORON FOUNDATION
FIGEL, M. JAN
FISHER PROF. EUGENE
GEE MICHAEL
GOLDBERG RABBI DAVID
GREEN, EDWIN
GREGORIAN UNIVERSITY
GREGORIOS ARCHBISHOP OF THYATEIRA AND GREAT BRITAIN
HADDAS HE SHMUEL
HARRIES BISHOP OF OXFORD RT. REV. RICHARD
HENDERSON BISHOP
KING HASSAN II OF MOROCCO
KING OF SWEDEN
KOLLEK TEDDY
KÖNIG CARDINAL
KRONISH DR RON
KÜNG PROF DR HANS
LAUDER RONALD
LEVINSOHN RABIN DR PETER

LIPMAN IRA
LONGLEY CLIFFORD
MCALEESE PRESIDENT MARY
MCTERNAN FATHER OLIVER
MEJIA CARDINAL GEORGE
MENUHIN SIR YEHUDI
MITCHELL SENATOR GEORGE
MORRIS PROF. PAUL
O'CONNOR CARDINAL
PERES SHIMON
PRESIDENT ARPAD GÖNCZ
PRESIDENT FREI OF CHILE
PRESIDENT KOVAC
PRESIDENT MARY ROBINSON
PRICE WATERHOUSE MR ROZENZWEIG AND MR GOODWIN
RAU JOHANNES, PRESIDENT OF GERMANY
RAVIV HE MOSHE (ISRAEL)
SAN EGIDIO
SANGUINETTI DR, PRESIDENT OF URUGUAY
SCHWAB PROF KLAUS
SINGHVI HE DR L M (INDIA)
SIRAT CHIEF RABBI RENE
SOETENDORP RABBI DR AVRAHAM
STERLING LORD
TANENBAUM RABBI MARC
TEMPLETON SIR JOHN
VON HABSBERG DR OTTO
VON MOLTKE, HE GEBHARDT
WEATHERILL RT. HON. LORD BERNARD
WEYL RUTH
WHITE REV ANDREW
WILLEBRANDS CARDINAL JOHANNES
WIRTZ DR. RUDOLF

APPENDIX XIV

CURRICULUM VITAE:

Ruth Weyl



Ruth Weyl was born in 1924 in Berlin into very long established German Jewish families with a Liberal Jewish background. Brought up with a strong Jewish identity, yet also part of what was once termed ‘German culture’ and pacifism taught by her father, a First World War soldier in the Kaiser’s army.

Friendship with Rabbi Leo Baeck led to much involvement in that Rabbi’s synagogue. Fleeing from Germany to what was then Palestine in 1938 her parents and siblings were able to get there a few weeks before the outbreak of the Second World War.

Married in 1944 to a lawyer, she lived in Jerusalem under the British Mandate and throughout the siege of Jerusalem and the establishment of the State of Israel as a close neighbour also to Martin Buber. Eventually in 1958 the family moved to England. Upon her husband’s death in 1974 she became assistant to the late Rev William W (Bill) Simpson, General Secretary of the International Council of Christians and Jews, where over the years she held various positions, spending considerable time in the head office in the former home of Martin Buber in Heppenheim, Germany. Ruth continues her involvement as the ICCJ’s consultant.

