

Canada, N.Y.

Back in the year 300 of this era The Council of Elvira in Spain was probably the first national church council to legislate concerni Jews. Among the decisinns of that council were canons which forbade the marriage of Christian girls to heretics and Jews, admonis landholders not to suffer the fruits of their feilds ~~to~~ be blessed by Jews and ordered any person, whether cleric or layman, not to accept food or hospitality from Jews.

(v.Marcus Med. Jews pl01)

The Council of Lãodicea meeting in Phrygia in Asia Minor somtime between 343 and 381 in Canon 29 said: "Christians must not judaiz and sit ~~in~~ idle on the Sabbath, but ought to work on that day. They must ~~honor~~ honor the Lord's Day (Sunday) in whatever way they can by resting, inasmuch as they are Chritians. But if they persist in being Jews they ought to be an anathema to Christ." Op.cit P106

The Council of Nicaea in 325 forbade the celebration of Easter at the same time as the Passover.

It was ~~o~~ ~~o~~ Pope Innocent III (early 13th

century) who instituted some of the major patterns of anti-semitic behavior in the christian world. In November of 1215 in the Latern Church in ~~Rome~~ Rome the Fourth Latern Council , an international conference of Catholics met at the call of the Pope and enacted orders which forbade the Jew from charging heavy interest on loans, that Jews should be distinguished from Xtians in dress tht during during the last three days before Easter and on Good Friday Jews were not to go forth in public, that Jews should not be appointed to public offices ~~xx~~ and that converts to Xtianity from the Jews should not observe any of their former customs. The work and character of the Spanish Inquisition is well known and need not be recounted here.

In modern times ~~xxxx~~ at the time of the coronation of Pope John 23, a Papal letter was dispatched by the new Pope to Yitzhak ben Zvi, President of the State of Israel. The letter was sent in perfect Latin and the reply was syled in Biblical Hebreḥ.

Previously , it was Pope Pius the 11 who said that "Abraham is called our father . Spiritually we are Semites." While the phrase has been greatly overworked and does not mean that kind of identity which many Jews would like to ~~make~~ make it mean , it is a kind of liberalized attitude akin to that of the ~~Pxx~~ present pope who said in response to the salutation of a delegation from the UJA: " I am Joseph, your brother." *which while friendly is not as pro-Semitic as it sounds.*

Of more significance, by far, was his ~~xx~~ historic decision ~~xx~~ to remove the phrase "the perfidious Jews" from the liturgy of Good Friday and other offensive phrases about Jews and Judaism from the service of the church.

On the present ~~agenda of the Ecumenical Council or Vatican II~~ suggested agenda of the Ecumenical Council or Vatican II which has just been recessed there is a ~~resolution~~ resolution intended to remove the accusation of Deicide which has been the age-old ~~practice-of~~ practice of the church to level at the Jews and Judaism.

It is also reported that when the present Pope was asked why he had decided to convene

the present Ecumenical Conference he replied that the church needed to have the windows thrown open to let in fresh air.

The juxtaposition of the examples I have given you from early and contemporary high Church policy are sufficient of themselves to indicate that the relationships between the Jewish People and the Catholic Church has over the course of the long centuries obviously improved ~~if not~~ in ~~great~~ degree⁺ certainly in mood and in attitude.

On the humanitarian level, in contradistinction to the theological, the church in modern times has on significant occasion been even more conspicuous in direct aid to Jewish people. ~~Such was the case with Pope Pius XII, who before he became~~ Pius 11 was vigorous in his opposition to Naziism and thruout WWII French, Dutch and Ukrainian bisops aided Jews on direct orders from the Pope. It is a matter of record that the present Pope while yet serving as Apostolic Delegate in the Middle East toward the end of WWII made available

baptismal certificates which enabled the rescue of thousands of Jewish men, women and children from the Nazi death camps.

With these comparisons and only suggestive illustrations in mind, we can readily understand why Jews ~~will~~ take ^{keen} special interest in the Ecumenical Council of the Church convened by John. This point in Jewish-Catholic relations may well represent the most cordial in centuries.

But some observations need to be made abundantly clear. It has been asked; why, if the church has allowed and invited non-Catholic Christian denominations to the Council are there not Jewish observers as well.

The answer is clear and unmistakable. The Council concerns doctrinal and organizational matters of concern to the Christian Church ~~xxxxx~~ and are being dealt with from the sole point of view of Catholic theology and Catholic canon law. In this there is and understandably should be no compromise. And In this Jews have no right of participation or even of dialogue. We are, at best, interested observers

from OUTSIDE the church.

Secondly, it should be clearly understood by Jews (and indeed by all non-Catholics) that while the Council has taken on the tone and ~~perhaps~~ perhaps the direction of reformation, this ~~reformation~~ reformation or liberalization of internal Catholic matters will in no way alter or remove the basic Christian and , therefore, Catholic doctrine that there is no salvation outside the church. And in making this statement I am well aware of the extenuations of the doctrine in canon law, ^{which mitigate it} but which are not in point here. We, Jews, therefore should not be deluded by pronouncements of the church or church officials which SOUND as if they are more pro-Jewish than they really are. Pius the 11th's statement that "spiritually we are all semites" is a statement of historic and theological fact. But it does not alter the church's firm conviction that the semitism of which he speaks and the semitism, if you will, that we understand are entirely different matters. When ~~John~~ John says "I am Joseph your brother." his remark was explained by ~~Mon.~~ Mon. John Oesterreicher, a Jewish apostate,

that "Pope John spoke as a man, for Joseph is his own first name. At the same time he spoke in the name of Christ for to the Church fathers Joseph , loved, humbled and raised, is a type of Christ." Now that is a far cry from anything a believing Jew could accept or that ^{any thinking} a Jew ~~could~~ could consider a warm ~~fattery~~ *salutation of Jewish identity*.

As for the elimination of offensive passages from the church liturgy , let it be said that while this is to be applauded , it can only be the hope of the Jew that the far more well known , damaging and offensvive references to the Jews, the Phraisees and the Scribes (all precious and respected terms among us) might be stricken from the popular textbooks and the religious education of the church. These occur in the vernacular of every land where Catholics live and are not quite so esoteric as ~~the~~ were the stricken referenes in the Latin service. We've a long way to go espeically in view of the dismal prospect of the inviolability of the New Testament passages which proclaim in sacred accents for the ~~the~~ Christian the Jewish guilt and guile involved in the crucifixion. Let Jews

understand this once and for all and be aware that no blandishments of good fellowship nor even of the common decency which we have a right to expect from any moral man removes the necessity for purging religious literature and instruction of the beastly accusation that has fanned Christian hatred of Jews thru the ages.

Thirdly, we Jews together with all non-Catholics must be aware that the hoped for unity of which Pope John speaks is not the kind of unity religiously in which a majority of the world can participate. The unity sought is a unity of ~~what has by the Pope~~ those whom the Pope has termed the "separated brethren" (meaning Christian separated brethren) with the one Universal Church. In this we Jews dissent on two counts. First, we are not Christians and secondly, speaking for ourselves and for ALL men everywhere, we believe that "all righteous peoples of the world have a share in the world to come." We ^{declare} ~~accept~~ no universal religion, ^{even on our own reasoning for salvation.} only a universal God and a universal human family.

Still I believe the Ecumenical Council commands the close attention and the hopefulness of Jews. Pope John is by far and above the most liberal and well disposed pontiff in modern times. And the Council bears the stamp of his personality and desire.

We Jews are intersted in any effort that would make religion--of any denomination or church--- come to grips with the realities of the present life and world. We Jews andx especially we reform Jews , look with hopefulness and with tremendous concern upon any attempt to break the tyranny of inflexible dogma and authoritari- anism that makes of antiquity a virtue in its own right^{+ without discrimination.} The present chruch council is directed to reformation be it ever so minimal and be it well within Catholic limits. But it is a sign of liberalization and such ~~must~~ mean the enlightenment of human minds and spirits. The agenda itself is impressive whether or not every item or even a majority of them become changes in the church. Becase if not now-- then some day they will. The main purpose being the modernization of the church procedures and

organization, we can expect a new breadth of concern that will have its effect on religions and peoples everywhere for good. This may for us as Jews mark the beginning of a new ^{new} surge in Jewish Christian relationships that will carry on the slow but sure improvement of historic interactions between the Church and the Jewish people.

In June of 1959 Pope John said this as a statement of his objective: "Each should tend not towards what can divide the minds but what can unite them in mutual understanding and reciprocal esteem."

What better statement could there be of his desire and ours and the desire of all faithful men everywhere? If the Council furthers that aim then we Jews will have benefited not because we are Jews but because we are men. And if those purposes be pursued honestly and devoutly, Jewish suffering from hatred and misunderstanding and malignment ~~xx~~ will one day become a thing of the past *as it will for all men.*

Let us give heart & mind & strength to
Meanwhile, our own faithfulness to the heritage that is ours which proclaims our

'believe as we state in every service we offer
to God that we yearn for the day when This shall
be the faith of all mankind: One God over all
and one brotherhood of all", ~~urgency of effort~~

~~Prayer~~ AMEN.