

Christians and Jews Confer

BY RABBI MARC H. TANENBAUM

Three "block-buster conferences" dealing with relationships between Christians and Jews were held in Europe this past month. If their momentum is maintained during the coming months, they promise to advance understanding and solidarity between Jews and Christians in many parts of the world.

The first conference was that of the World Council of Churches' Committee on the Church and the Jewish people held nearby London. After days of intensive debate in which this writer freely participated as an official observer, the World Council group adopted a set of Guidelines on Jewish-Christian Relations for World Protestants and Eastern Orthodox Christians. If the Guidelines will manage to survive pressures from the PLO before the final adoption by the WCC, they promise to be probably one of the best statements on Jewish-Christian relations ever formulated.

The second major conference was that held between the Lutheran World Federation and the International Jewish Committee for Inter-religious Consultations (IJCIC). Held in Copenhagen, it was a model of civility and mutual respect.

The third conference was that of the International Council of Christians and Jews held in Heppenheim, Germany, the home of Martin Buber. The latter dealt mainly with progress in religious textbook revision.

In future columns, I plan to give detailed reports about the significant achievements of each of these major interreligious consultations and their possible meanings for American Jewry and Israel.

MOON CHURCH UNDER THE GUN

NEW YORK (WNS) -- The American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress said that they "reject" charges by the Unification Church of the Rev. Sun Moon that the two organizations "used the powerful means they control to force cancellation of a 'World Conference for Judeo-Christian Dialogue' which the Church planned to hold in Jerusalem during the month of August.

A joint statement issued by the two groups said: "To the extent that this cancellation is due to action taken by our two organizations, as the Unification Church assets, we can only be glad.

We reject the Church's charges... that we used our 'power' or acted in ways contrary to the tenets of free speech or tolerance in expressing our opposition. The only 'power' exercised was that of freedom of information, to make public to Jewish scholars our view of the Unification Church as we urged them to turn down invitations to any such conference.

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