

AJ Congress And World Jewish Congress Hail Pope's Historic Visit To Synagogue In Rome

The American Jewish Congress and the World Jewish Congress have praised the Pope's visit to Rome's central synagogue as "an important and hopeful new chapter in the history of Catholicism's relations with Judaism."

The joint statement was issued by Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress who has just been named chairman of the World Jewish Congress' Commission on Interreligious Affairs.

The text of the statement follows:

Both the visit of Pope John Paul II to the Rome synagogue and the content of his eloquent remarks constitute an important and hopeful new chapter in the history of Catholicism's relations with Judaism.

The Pope's formulation of that relationship bespoke an unusual warmth and friendship that embrace and confirm the considerable progress that has occurred in the past 20 years since Vatican II. More important, it holds the promise of further progress in that relationship.

The Pope's words also seemed intended to

JERUSALEM (WNS) — President Chaim Herzog opened a two-month intensive campaign on behalf of Soviet Jewry here by declaring that "The State of Israel has no conflict with the USSR and no hatred toward it." He conceded, however, Israel's disappointment that the new Soviet government headed by Mikhail Gorbachev, which came to power last year has not eased the condition of Soviet Jews.

undo the impression created by him in his recent Lenten homilies that Catholicism sees itself as having displaced Judaism, which therefore no longer has religious value. Because such a view precludes any serious dialogue between Judaism and Christianity, the Pope's remarks at the Rome synagogue seemed intended to remove the obstacles that his Lenten homilies might have created.

We hope this understanding of his intentions will be confirmed in our discussions with the

Catholic Church in the days ahead.

We also continue to hope that the Pope's warm words of friendship will find expression before too long in the normalization of relations between the Vatican and the State of Israel. We continue to believe that the absence of such normal diplomatic ties with the country that is the heart and home of the Jewish people constitutes a grievous wound at the very center of the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people.

Bronfman Honored



Edgar M. Bronfman (second from right), president of the World Jewish Congress, receives a hand-crafted silver Passover plate from Rabbi Arthur Schneier, chairman of the 50th anniversary dinner of the WJC. L. to r.: Michael Sovern, president of Columbia University; former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger; Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, a vice president of the WJC; and Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel, featured speaker. In presenting the gift in behalf of the 66 national constituents of the WJC around the world, Rabbi Schneier hailed Mr. Bronfman as "a leader of the Jewish people, a man of action, determination and resolve. The WJC president was guest of honor at the dinner, attended by 1,500.

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