

# NEWS

FROM THE

# COMMITTEE

**THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE** Institute of Human Relations, 165 E. 56 St., New York, N.Y. 10022, PLaza 1-4000

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

*MORTON YARMON, Director of Public Relations*

FOR RELEASE AFTER 11 A.M.  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1976

NEW YORK, Dec. 28....A group of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish leaders joined forces today in denouncing the movement headed by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon for promoting "bigotry against Christians and Jews."

Declaring Rev. Moon's Unification Church to be "anti-democratic, anti-Jewish, and in direct conflict with basic Christian teaching," the Christian and Jewish leaders, each of whom had made an intensive study of the beliefs and methods of the Moon movement, called on the American people, especially young people, not to be misled by Moon's appeals to patriotism and national unity. They also called on the United States Congress to continue its investigation of Moon's involvement with South Korean intelligence forces in this country and their reported illegal lobbying and bribery.

The charges were made at a news conference at the national headquarters of the American Jewish Committee, chaired by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, AJC's National Director of Interreligious Affairs. The speakers were the Rev. James J. LeBar, County Coordinator of the Office of Communications, Catholic Archdiocese of New York; Dr. Jorge Lara-Braud, Executive Director of the Commission on Faith and Order, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.; and Rabbi A. James Rudin, Assistant Director of AJC's Department of Interreligious Affairs.

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While concentrating on the "bigotry" expressed by Rev. Moon in his book, Divine Principle, which serves as the basic text of his movement, the religious leaders voiced equal concern about other aspects of his activities. They were critical of his methods of indoctrination which have been reported by former Moonies who have defected from the group.

Rev. LeBar announced that his office had sent earlier this year a letter to all priests in the Catholic Archdiocese of New York, warning them of "the acute dangers" that Rev. Moon's Unification Church represents.

"It is important to bear in mind that Rev. Moon's teachings are in direct conflict with Catholic theology and, therefore, render his movement suspect for Catholic participation," he said.

Both in his letter and in a special television presentation over the Archdiocesan closed circuit network, Father LeBar urged all priests to "inform the people of your parish of the dangers implicit in this movement."

The Catholic official made public a list of 62 "front organizations of the Unification Church" and stated: "It is interesting to note that the Unification Church resorts to such methods. If their teachings and practices were that attractive, why would there be need to hide behind such fronts, which often deny any association with Sun Myung Moon and his followers?"

Dr. Lara-Braud, quoting from a working paper of the Commission on Faith and Order of the National Council of Churches on Rev. Moon's book, declared that Moon's doctrines "deny the classic Christian understanding of Jesus Christ" in salvation, and "claim a deficiency for Christ's work which Christians could not accept." He also charged that Rev. Moon "compromises the monotheism of Christian doctrine and badly distorts the Christian view of the trinity."

The Protestant theologian also pointed out that Moon's Divine Principle "fosters continuing anti-Semitism" in that it claims that "Christ failed because the Jews did not believe in him and put him to death." He termed that teaching "double indemnity" against the Jews.

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Rabbi Rudin accused Rev. Moon of reviving the "worst traditions of theological and cultural anti-Semitism." Referring to his study of Moon's book, in which he documented 125 hostile references to Jews and Judaism, he stated that the Moon movement perpetuates such canards as "the entire Jewish people betrayed, rejected and crucified Jesus; Jewish suffering and persecution, through the present day, are punishment for the collective sin of the Christ-killers; God's heritage has been taken away from the Jewish people."

"Nowhere in Divine Principle does Rev. Moon acknowledge the authenticity and integrity of Jews or Judaism, either ancient or modern," Rabbi Rudin asserted. "From Abraham until the present day, Jews are seen only as a people devoid and emptied of any genuine faith and spiritual qualities. The Jewish people are depicted as collectively responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus as allies of Satan. They have been replaced by a 'second Israel' who, interestingly enough, must soon be replaced by the 'third Israel'-- the followers of Rev. Moon."

Referring to recent statements by Rev. Moon in which he said that he "categorically condemns anti-Semitism and anti-Christian attitudes" Rabbi Tanenbaum said: "We trust that the Rev. Moon's public condemnations of anti-Semitism and anti-Christian teachings will now result in concrete actions that will demonstrate that he means what he professes. A comprehensive and systematic removal of negative and hostile references to Jews and Judaism and to Christians and Christianity which abound in the Divine Principle would be one such demonstration that his statements are serious and are made in good faith and are not simply public relations pieties."

Rabbi Tanenbaum concluded: "In light of the fact that all major Christian bodies and religious authorities -- from Vatican Council II to the World and National Council of Churches, to Dr. Billy Graham, to the Southern Baptist Convention -- have unambiguously repudiated these anti-Jewish canards, and major Jewish bodies which have rejected anti-Christian and other forms of religious and racial bigotry, we call upon Rev. Moon to stop replanting these poisonous weeds which so many faithful people have labored over decades to uproot."

# Rev. Moon Strongly Criticized by Religious Leaders

By DAVID F. WHITE

A panel of Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish leaders met yesterday and issued a stern statement that the writings of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon and the principles of his Unification Church were "anti-Jewish, anti-Christian and antidemocratic."

In presenting what was described as the first "line-by-line" religious analysis of Mr. Moon's book, "Divine Principle," which they said served as a basic text for the sect, the panelists charged that the book included writings that were heretical in the eyes of the Roman Catholic church and contained more than 125 anti-Semitic references.

They also said at a news conference at the office of the American Jewish Committee that copies of their findings would be forwarded to all members of Congress along with an appeal that a Federal investigation be continued into Mr. Moon's alleged connection with the South Korean intelligence agency and reports of South Korean influence-peddling on Capitol Hill.

"We are confronted with 125-plus examples of unremittingly anti-Jewish teachings," said Rabbi A. James Rudin, assistant director of the American Jewish Committee's department of interreligious affairs, who prepared the study of Mr. Moon's book.

He said these examples included statements that Jews were collectively responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus and that the holocaust, during which six million Jews died under the Nazi regime in World War II, had been punishment for the crucifixion.

## Jewish Patrons Enraged

At the news conference, which was conducted by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, the Rev. James J. LeBar, county coordinator of the office of communications of the Catholic Archdiocese of New York, said that statements contained in the book, such as an assertion that Jesus could not be considered God, were heretical in the eyes of the church.

Father LeBar also produced a list of 62 so-called "fronts" for the Unification Church that have been established to seek new members or funds, never identifying themselves as being affiliated with the sect.

Rabbi Tanenbaum said that one such front in San Francisco had organized a concert by a group called "The Tel Aviv Quarter" and advertised the concert so that "the whole image was that it was sponsored by a U.J.A. (United Jewish Appeal) chapter or a synagogue."

Substantial numbers of tickets were sold to Jews, who became enraged when

they discovered the concert had been organized by an affiliate of the Unification Church, he said.

"There's a lot of anger about the Unification Church and its deception," Rabbi Tanenbaum said, explaining why the meeting, which was said to be the first interfaith action against Mr. Moon, had been called.

"We know we're dealing with a phenomenon that is spreading around the country and we're getting more and more reaction from people who say 'you've got to deal with this,'" he said.

During the conference, at the national headquarters of the American Jewish Committee at 165 East 56th Street, Rabbi Tanenbaum also said that a full-page advertisement in The New York Times taken recently by the Unification Church to proclaim its brotherhood with Christians and Jews represented only "public relations pieties."

Another panelist, Dr. Jorge Lara-Braud, executive director of the Commission on Faith and Order of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., another panelist, said that he was con-

cerned that the Unification Church posed a grave threat to families.

"I have a bulging file of painful letters, very thoughtful letters, written by anguished parents," he said. "I am not convinced that the teaching of the Unification Church is conducive to re-establishing relationships between church members and parents."

During the meeting, a staff member of one affiliate of the Unification Church, Shawn Byrne, who identified himself as an inactive Catholic priest, rose and said there had been "many exaggerated statements on anti-Semitism and anti-Christianity" at the conference.

He said Mr. Moon was not "anti-Christian or anti-Semitic."

"He is anti-evil," he said.

Rabbi Tanenbaum replied that the Unification Church should stop dealing in what he termed deceptive generalities.

A spokesman for the sect, which claims to have 30,000 followers in the United States, said the Unification Church was preparing a response to yesterday's conference, but would have no immediate comment.